

Respect

In the second week of this unit, students continue the conversation about mindset, this time looking at what it means to have a fixed mindset and how this impacts their ability to be respectful. Students have the chance to self-reflect, shift their mindsets from fixed to growth, and recognize their personal strengths from a growth mindset perspective.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset

This lesson continues the theme from the primary lesson in Week 1 where students learned about the brain and having a growth mindset. This week we talk about what it means to have a fixed mindset and how we can work to overcome that fixed state and move into a state of growth. (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Reframe the Mindset

Failing can make us feel like quitting. When we tell ourselves we can't do something or that we'll never be good at something, we are engaging in a fixed mindset. This is different from a growth mindset. With a fixed mindset we don't make plans for improving and we don't believe in our ability to grow and change and improve. A fixed mindset keeps us stuck. A fixed mindset also prevents us from treating ourselves and others with the respect we all deserve. It is important to recognize when you are in a fixed mindset and use language that shifts you into a growth mindset.

In small groups, read a variety of fixed mindset expressions and rewrite them so they are growth mindset expressions.

- I will never be good at this.
- I don't have what it takes.
- This is too hard for me.
- I may as well quit.
- I really hate this.
- Everyone is better than I am.
- Of course I don't know how to do this!
- Nothing ever goes right for me.
- This is my worst subject!

For Partners
15 minutes



Moving from Fixed to Growth

What is something you have a fixed mindset about? How does this fixed mindset limit your ability to respect yourself or others? How can you change it so you have a growth mindset? In what ways will this change how you think and feel about yourself and/or others?

For Individuals
15 minutes



Journal: Fixing your Fixed Mindset

Journal: What is something you know or believe you are good at? Why do you think this? Now, what is something you do not think or believe that you are good at? Why do you doubt your abilities? Write one sentence that states that you are GOOD at the thing you just identified as a struggle. (For example, if you feel you are not good at math, you would write, "I am good at math.") Write this sentence 10 times. The next time you are faced with this thing, repeat this sentence to yourself.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



How does Technology Overwhelm Us?

What are some ways that technology is almost "too much" for our brains? How do you and your family/friends "unplug" and reset your mind when faced with too much tech? How does unplugging help us give and receive respect?

Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset

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Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

☐ Computer, Projector, or Whiteboard

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Differentiate between a fixed mindset and a growth mindset.
- Discuss how having a fixed mindset hinders our ability to respect ourselves and others.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Respect in the classroom begins with you. Hopefully you have taken some time to work on your ability to first respect yourself. Students will have a hard time respecting themselves if they don't see self-respect modeled for them. Remember how strong and good and valuable you are! Own that! This week, also evaluate how well you respect others. This may seem like a "no brainer" to teachers, as we love our students and what we do! But, we all get tired, we all experience burn-out, and we all have students who challenge us. This is especially true as these middle school-aged kids start pushing some boundaries and experience some strong physical, mental, and emotional changes. In these times especially remember that everyone deserves respect even if it doesn't feel like they have earned it. This doesn't mean we forgo classroom management or discipline strategies but we can approach every situation with respect and kindness. Some things to consider this week: How do you listen to your students (and to your colleagues, for that matter)? Do you listen to *hear* or listen to *respond*? How is your patience tank? Pretty full or running on fumes? Do you have parents who make it hard to want to show respect to them or to their student? When you feel challenged, tired, frustrated, or even sad, and struggle to respond in a kind and respectful way, remember that you are OKAY. Things will be okay. You can reinsert a measure of respect in a variety of ways: use active listening strategies, take five deep breaths before responding to a situation, use I-statements rather than you-statements, lower your voice and take a gentle approach to a challenging situation, or, call in backup (if you have a PLC group or teacher-partner and need a breather, ask for help!). You can grow in your ability to show respect for others, and if you fail, acknowledge it, apologize, and move on. Tomorrow is a new day.



Share

5-7 minutes

Last week we talked about the brain and having a growth mindset. Who can remind us what a growth mindset is? (Invite student responses.)



Inspire

3-5 minutes

Good! A growth mindset means we believe that we can get smarter or grow our cognitive ability through hard work, studying, paying attention, and learning from mistakes. We have the power to be more!

So, the opposite of that is called a fixed mindset. When our mindset is fixed, we are stuck. We assume we will always have, always will be, and always know what we have, are, and know today. We can't ever be good at _____. For me, it was [teacher, insert what he/she may be used to think they were not good at in school as an 8th grader]. But, the problem is that those lies are easy to believe and so we often create a fixed mindset for ourselves. We choose to be stuck.

This is pretty understandable, though, considering all of the messages we receive on a regular basis. The media is often telling us what we can or cannot do or be. Our parents might tell us what we are or what we can do; you are a basketball player, you are a piano player, you are a theater star, you need to stay home and help with your siblings, etc. Maybe your teachers are the ones telling you what you can or cannot do or become. It's a lot to take in.



Empower

15 minutes

The environment around us also gives us messages and, in reality, our brains simply cannot take it all in.

Let's watch this short video about the limitations our brains have that might help us figure out how to push past a fixed mindset into a growth mindset:

Watch: [Limitations of the Brain](#)

If you cannot watch, the following points highlight the primary information presented:

- Our senses help us take in and process information.
- Our eyes alone take in the equivalent of 1MB of information every second; this is like reading an entire encyclopedia every minute.
- Our skin has over four million receptors that help us process information.
- Our brain has to filter all of the information our senses give it every second. It often filters it through what is dangerous, important, pleasing, or interesting.
- Our brain uses our memories, experiences, and current feelings to help make guesses as to what the information it is processing means. Often our brains guess correctly, but sometimes we misinterpret what we are seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, or smelling.

- It can be hard for our brain to keep up with all of the messages it is receiving.
- Our brain can take in thousands of messages at a time, but it can only process about four simultaneously. This means we are distracted by or miss vital information all the time.
- Our experience of the world depends on our attention and perception; perception makes us aware of our environment and helps us take in the details all around us. Attention helps perception in that it tells us which of the details we should pay attention to.
- By understanding how our brains, perception, and attention work (and where the limitations are), we can live more consciously and focus more on our goals and what really needs to be done. This can help us have a growth mindset over a fixed one.

Sometimes our brains get overwhelmed with all of the information we take in. It is a lot of work to weed through what is true, important, and healthy. It can be easier to simply remain fixed in our way of thinking, which might feel comfortable at first but usually prevents us from truly respecting ourselves and others.

When we feel fixed, what we need are strategies to help recenter our attention and our focus so that we can learn and grow. What are some of the things that 7th graders are bombarded with every day that overwhelm your brain? (Invite student response.)

How do these things give us a fixed mindset vs. a growth mindset? (Invite student response.)

How does having a fixed mindset prevents us from respecting ourselves and others? (Invite student response.)

What are some simple things we can do to help us refocus our brains so that we are better able to learn and grow? When you get flustered or frustrated, what helps you calm down and recenter? (Invite student response. Discuss breathing techniques, exercise, reading, talking with someone, etc.)



Reflect

5-7 minutes

To wrap up, let's do a rapid fire response. I am going to read some phrases to you and you say "fixed" if you think it represents a fixed mindset or "growth" if you think it represents a growth mindset. For example, if I say, "I will never learn this!" you would say, "Fixed!". Here we go:

- I don't know how to play, but I am willing to try! - Growth
- I guess I will never be good enough. - Fixed
- This is too hard for me. - Fixed
- If I work hard, I will achieve my goals. - Growth
- I can do anything I set my mind to. - Growth
- I may not be as good as you, but I am making progress. - Growth
- (This one is tricky!) I don't understand. - Growth if it leads to more questions and learning; fixed if it leads to resignation and defeat.

The next time you feel like saying you cannot do something or it's too hard so you may as well quit, remember that you have the power to grow. And, if you feel overwhelmed by the environment, like your brain can't keep up, take a break. Take a deep breath. Focus your attention and perception and just take things in. You can respond to your surroundings; you don't have to react to them. Respect yourself enough to take a break until you are ready to be alert and move forward.