

Introduction

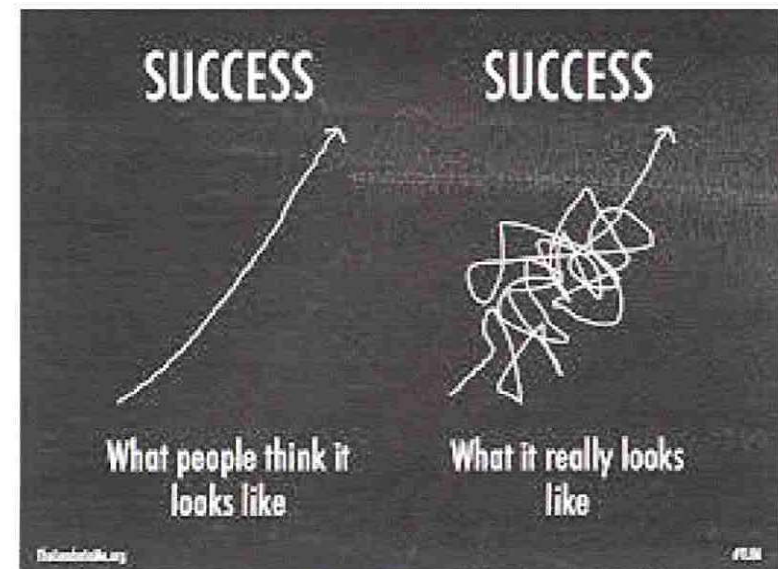
You may have heard your child talking about having a **growth mindset**, or may have read or heard a comment from a teacher referring to it, and wondered what it actually means. This booklet will give you an insight as to what a growth mindset is and why this is something we promote as a school.

What is Growth Mindset?

Growth mindset is a concept developed by world-renowned psychologist **Carol Dweck** after decades of research on achievement and success - it is a simple idea that can make all the difference. It has been embraced in the business world and has proven to increase motivation, self-esteem and productivity. The theory is that by being more open minded about talent and ability, we can foster a belief that challenges are something that can be overcome. Put simply, our ability to do something we find difficult initially improves through effort, practice and hard work - i.e. the quality of the input we put in affects the quality of the output. With a growth mindset we aren't simply 'good' at something or 'not good' at something (this would be a fixed mindset): instead, we embrace challenges - we

may not be able to do it now but with a bit of effort and practice we will get better at it.

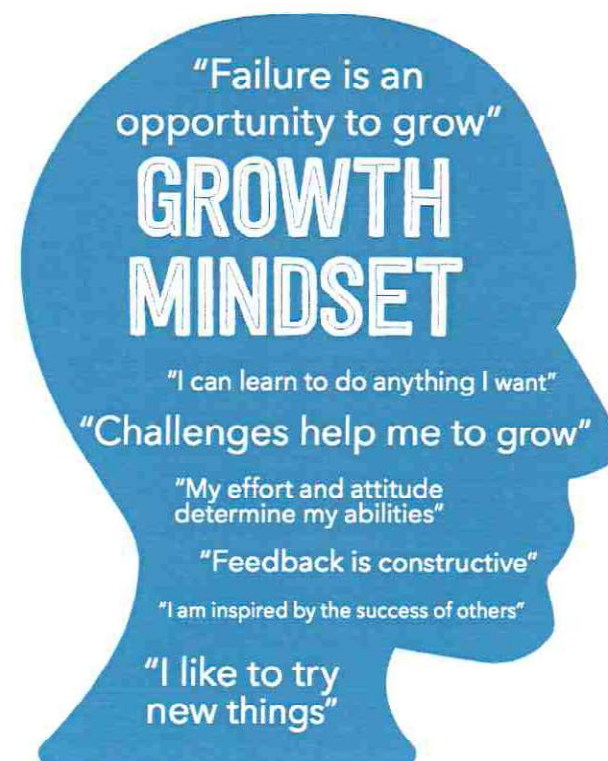
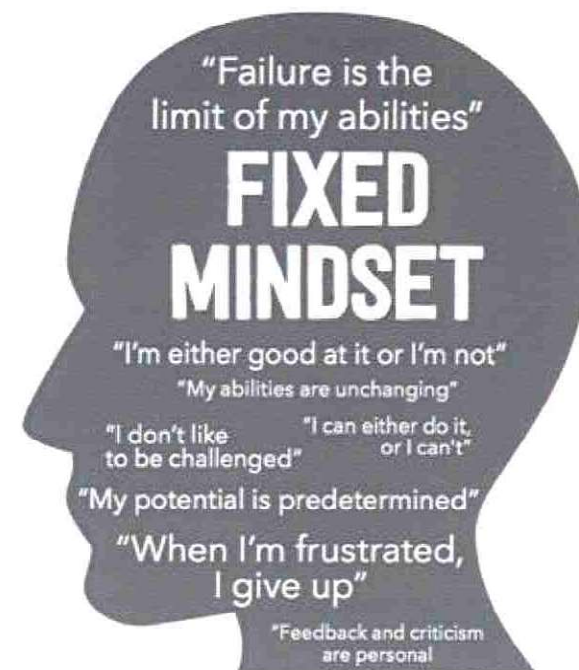
All too often we hear children say "I'm rubbish at maths" and we see a lack of engagement and effort in lessons. In addition to this, when they fail they feel worthless and give up and their low self-esteem can plummet even further. Lack of confidence is a huge barrier to learning but is something that we can help children to overcome through helping them to develop a **growth mindset**.



Now let's take a look in more detail at what a fixed and growth mindset actually is.

With a **fixed mindset**, people believe their basic qualities (like intelligence or talent), are simply fixed traits. They tend to label themselves as 'good at' and 'bad at' different activities, with thoughts such as "I am good at maths but not good at writing". They believe that talent alone creates success, without effort. This means that when they come up against something they find difficult, or that is not something they are 'talented' at, they give up easily because they believe they should be able to do things with ease. This mindset can hinder children's progress, as it has a detrimental impact on their willingness and ability to learn.

With a **growth mindset**, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment in both education and work later on in life. Teaching a growth mindset creates motivation and productivity in the worlds of business, education, and sports and promotes that everyone has the potential for greatness. Research indicates that pupils with a growth mindset are more effective learners, and ultimately make better progress and have better educational attainment as a result.



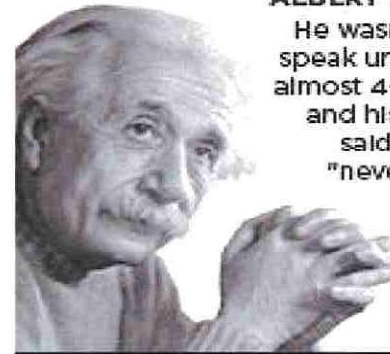


FIXED MINDSET		GROWTH MINDSET
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOMETHING YOU'RE BORN WITH• FIXED	SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COME FROM HARD WORK.• CAN ALWAYS IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOMETHING TO AVOID• COULD REVEAL LACK OF SKILL• TEND TO GIVE UP EASILY	CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SHOULD BE EMBRACED• AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW.• MORE PERSISTANT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNNECESSARY• SOMETHING YOU DO WHEN YOU ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH	EFFORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESSENTIAL• A PATH TO MASTERY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GET DEFENSIVE• TAKE IT PERSONAL	FEEDBACK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USEFUL• SOMETHING TO LEARN FROM• IDENTIFY AREAS TO IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BLAME OTHERS• GET DISCOURAGED	SETBACKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USE AS A WAKE-UP CALL TO WORK HARDER NEXT TIME.

Assemblies

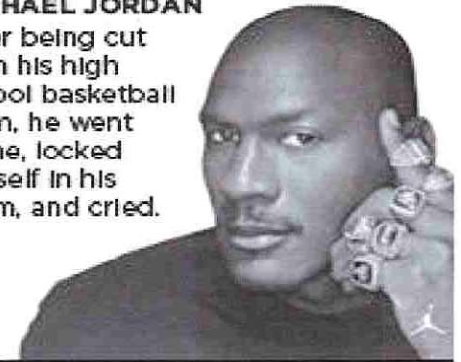
Growth mindset is also promoted through assemblies. For example, we had a visitor who has achieved success in running several marathons - the children were in awe of his medals and he explained how hard he had worked and how much practice he had put in to achieve his goal. He also talked about barriers that he had to overcome. We also share examples of aspirational figures who overcame struggles to achieve their goals (e.g. JK Rowling who was rejected by numerous publishers before Harry Potter was finally accepted; Michael Jordan who didn't make it into the school basketball team) - we talk about what qualities they must have had, e.g. determination, resilience, and how this helped them to succeed. Other assemblies have involved the children talking about their own successes and the steps they took to achieve them, or their future goals. In singing assemblies we have also learnt some songs that have a growth mindset theme.

FAMOUS FAILURES



ALBERT EINSTEIN

He wasn't able to speak until he was almost 4-years-old and his teachers said he would "never amount to much"



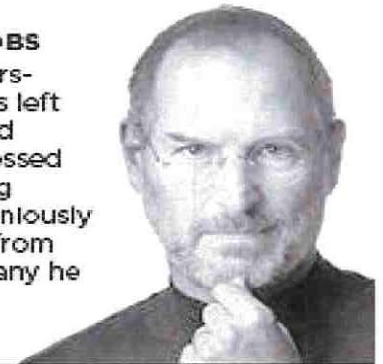
MICHAEL JORDAN

After being cut from his high school basketball team, he went home, locked himself in his room, and cried.



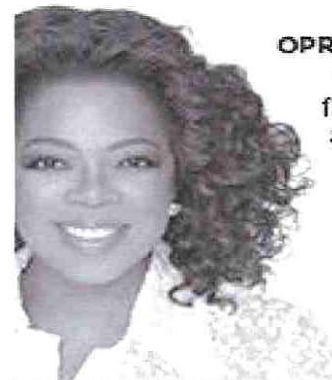
WALT DISNEY

Fired from a newspaper for "lacking imagination" and "having no original ideas."



STEVE JOBS

At 30-years-old he was left devastated and depressed after being unceremoniously removed from the company he started.



OPRAH WINFREY

Was demoted from her job as a news anchor because she "wasn't fit for television."



THE BEATLES

Rejected by Decca Recording Studios, who said "We don't like their sound—they have no future in show business."

**IF YOU'VE NEVER FAILED,
YOU'VE NEVER TRIED ANYTHING NEW**

Language we use with children

Research shows that the **type of praise** you give a child can affect their mindset towards activities, or to learning overall, and can affect their self-esteem and how they view themselves. In school we avoid praising children for **intelligence/ ability** (E.G. 'You are very clever', 'You are really good at this'), as this reinforces a fixed mindset - it implies you are either a clever person or you are not, you are either 'good' at something or you are not. Instead, we focus our praise on the **desirable learning behaviours** that we want to see from children which help to make them effective learners (E.G. 'You tried really hard at this', 'Well done - you persevered with that', 'You have really challenged yourself today'). Research into growth mindset shows that praise that values **effort** over **intelligence/ ability** has a much more positive impact on children's learning and progress.

DON'T PRAISE

INTELLIGENCE
OR
ABILITIES

DO PRAISE

THE PROCESS
AND
EFFORT

Carol Dweck on praise:

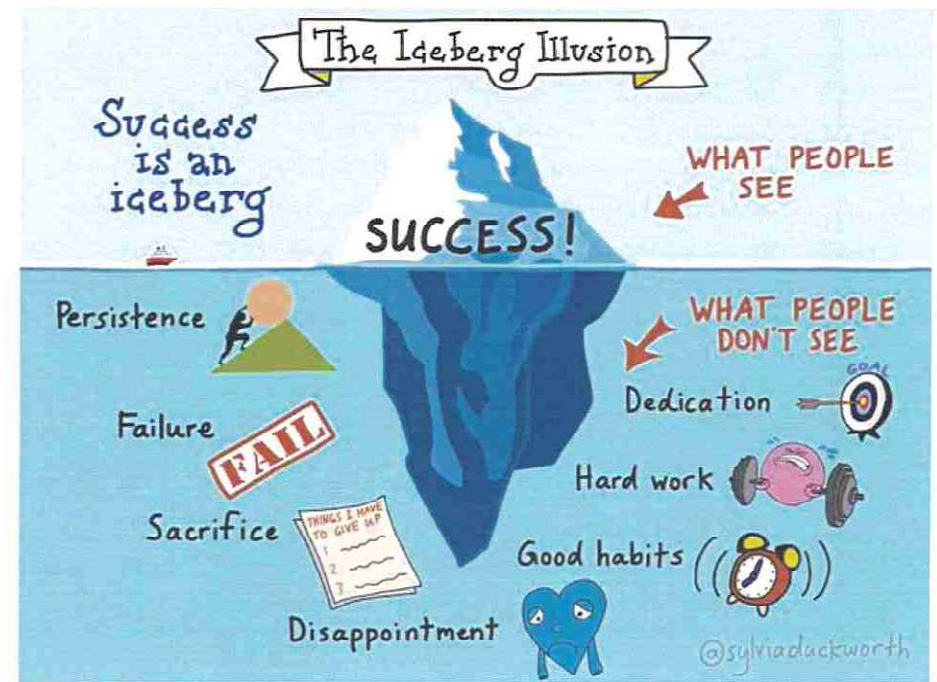
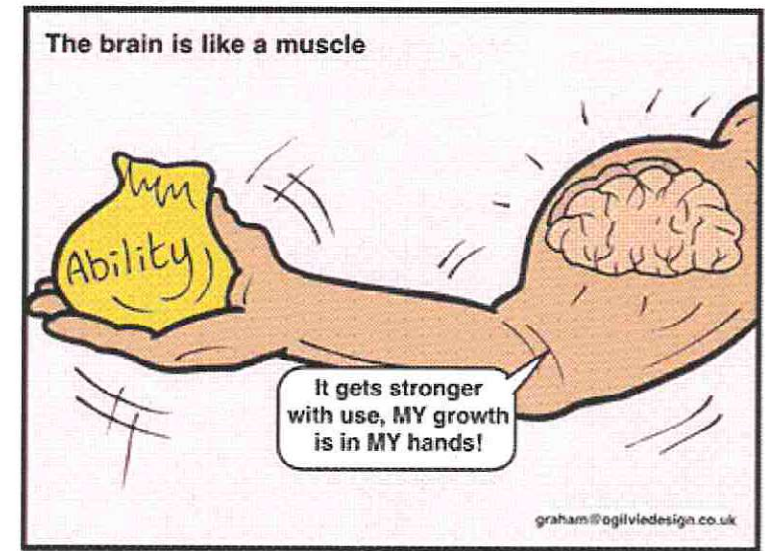
"Praising students' intelligence gives them a short burst of pride, followed by a long string of negative consequences."

"The wrong kind of praise creates self-defeating behaviour; the right kind motivates students to learn."

Intelligence/ Ability Based Praise	Effort/ Process Based Praise
You got the maths problem right - well done, you're so good at maths.	You really persevered with that maths problem - well done!
Wow that's really good - aren't you clever!	Wow that's really good - you must have worked so hard on it!
You can do this so easily!	You are really improving at this!
Well done, you're so good at art.	Well done - you have tried really hard with your picture.

School displays

Children spent time during transition week designing motivating posters to be displayed on their classroom walls. There are also display boards and posters dedicated to promoting a growth mindset in the corridors of the school. Some classrooms even have their own growth mindset slogans - e.g. 'Are you a Pelican, or a Pelican't?'



Build a Growth Mindset Culture



Teachers

Parents

Children



With These Groups Working Together

GROWTH MINDSET

"If parents want to give their children a gift, the best thing they can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning. That way, their children don't have to be slaves of praise. They will have a lifelong way to build and repair their own confidence".

-Carol S. Dweck

GROWTH mindset

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

1

TALK ABOUT IT

Talk with your child about their day, but guide the discussion by asking questions like:

- Did you make a mistake today? What did you learn?
- What did you do that was difficult today?

2

PRAISE THE PROCESS

Instead of saying, "You're so smart!" praise effort, goal setting, persisting through challenges, or being creative.

You can say something like:

- "Wow! You must have worked really hard on this!"

5

ENCOURAGE FAILURE (SAY WHAT?!)

Your child needs to know that failure can (and often does) happen and **it is okay!** Remind them that each time they fail and try again, their brain is growing stronger! Don't step in to prevent your child's failure - this is how they learn to persevere in the face of challenges.

THE BRAIN CAN GROW!

Remind your child that **their intelligence is not fixed**. Remind them that when things are difficult, their brain grows if they persist through the challenge. Each time they learn something new, their brain is making new connections. Your child needs to know this is possible!

3

HELP THEM CHANGE THEIR DIALOGUE

The way your child talks to themselves makes a huge impact on their mindset. If they say, "This is too hard!" help them change that to "I can't do this yet, but I will keep trying." Give them the words to say when they are feeling defeated by modeling it yourself!

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