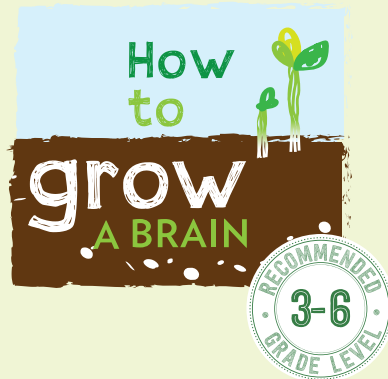


# How to Grow A Brain

Introducing Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

## Themes

Mindset  
 Grow Your Brain  
 Do Your Best  
 Never Give Up  
 I Can  
 Learn from Mistakes



Introduce your students to the concepts of Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset (based on three decades of systematic research by Carol Dweck, professor of psychology at Stanford University). NED’s message of Never Give Up and Do Your Best can help your students achieve their potential, embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks, and see mistakes and failures as a necessary to grow and master useful skills.

Key Vocabulary

**Mindset:** *your attitude or ideas with which you approach a situation. Your mental disposition that determines your response to problem solving, overcoming obstacles or facing challenges.*

**Growth Mindset:** *Everyone has a brain! My smarts and abilities can grow if I challenge myself and exercise my brain by trying new things and doing my best all the time. I may not always succeed at first, but I can’t give up – I will make mistakes but I must keep trying and learning from my every mistakes. Mistakes help my brain to grow. Every mistake is a step closer to success. I don’t say, “I can’t do that.” Instead I say, “I can’t do that YET.” I keep my brain growing and learning and believing in myself and the power of my brain. NED calls this using your “GO Brain” and he can help you remember to keep a Growth Mindset by NEVER GIVING UP and DOING YOUR BEST!*

**Fixed Mindset:** *Everyone has a brain but some brains are better than others. It doesn’t matter how hard I work, I just can’t get better at it. I don’t want others to know that I haven’t learned something yet, so I pretend to know things I haven’t learned. I am afraid to try new things because I might fail. Once I fail, I don’t want to try again so if doesn’t work the first time, I don’t like to try it a different way. NED calls this having a “Brain Freeze.”*

## Building Background

### 1. Brainstorm a list of things that are “fixed.” Define fixed in each example given.

Provide additional examples that help kids to think outside their definitions to include:

- mend or repair
- prepare to state of completion
- make steady or stable
- fasten securely
- bring into a final or unalterable state
- firmly establish

Examples:

Fixed date – New Year’s Day is always January 1, unchangeable

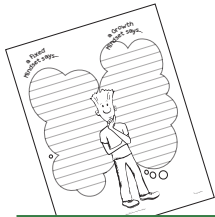
Fixed dog – spayed; altered so no puppies can be made; permanent, unaltered state

Fixed table leg – repaired after damage

Fixed dinner – prepared and completed

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PRINTABLE  
2 Mindsets

### 2. What does it mean if your MINDSET is fixed? Define mindset.

*Answers will vary. Stuck on one idea, unchangeable, can't grow, etc.*

### 3. What is the difference between a GROWTH MINDSET and a FIXED mindset?

*Answers will vary. Use the printable to allow students to think before discussing. Then lead the discussion to build on understanding of these two important concepts:*

## Videos



### Parable of the Two Builders – Wise & Foolish (2:10)

by Max7

[www.max7.org/en/resource/WiseFoolishBuilders#](http://www.max7.org/en/resource/WiseFoolishBuilders#) or [vimeo.com/130593967](https://vimeo.com/130593967)

Discuss the different mindsets you see in this video

- Attitudes when facing a challenge (2 boys-2 different reactions)
- Learning from mistakes (take note of instructions given at beginning)
- Being a risk taker (one boy embraces project/other boy sits back and watches to completion)
- Seeing other's success (decides to copy)
- Confident vs fearful when new challenge arises (weather)
- Other observations



### Ormie the Pig (4:00)

by Arc Productions

[www.vimeo.com/27256955](https://www.vimeo.com/27256955) or [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUm-vAOmV1o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUm-vAOmV1o)

Discuss the “never give up attitude” and growth mindset. Why did Ormie keep trying a new idea after one didn't work?

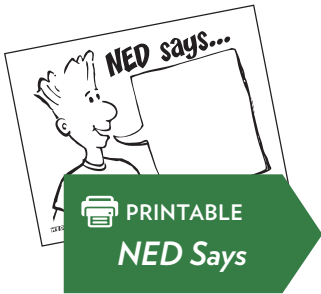
## Writing Prompts

**There once was a day that I was stuck in a “Brain Freeze.”** Write about a time when you faced a challenge or obstacle with a FIXED mindset. Write about your actions, attitude and emotions during the process. What could you have done differently in the same situation to see your “GO Brain and have a GROWTH mindset?

**There once was a day that I mastered a “Growth Mindset.”** Write about a time when you faced a challenge or obstacle with a GROWTH mindset and a “GO Brain”. Write about your actions, attitude and emotions during the process.

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## Activities

### NED Says

Create NED says messages to post around your school. Encourage others with reminders to have a growth mindset.

Examples:

- I give up trying; I'll try it a different way
- It's good enough; Is this really my best?
- I can't make this any better; I can always do better
- This is too hard; This may take some time
- I made a mistake; Mistakes can help me learn
- I just can't do this; I am going to train (exercise) my brain
- I'll never be that smart; I will learn how to do this
- Plan A didn't work; There's always Plan B
- My friend can do this; I will learn from them
- I can't do this; I can't do this YET

## Home Connection

**Teaching Growth Mindsets** - Kelly Corrigan's video for parents  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhLJPhxuvGM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhLJPhxuvGM)

Direct parents to watch this compelling conversation between a parent and Dr. Christine Carter, executive director of the Greater Good Science Center. This four and a half minute video is part of a discussion series called HALF FULL - Social Science for Raising Happy Kids.

More Resources

### For more info...

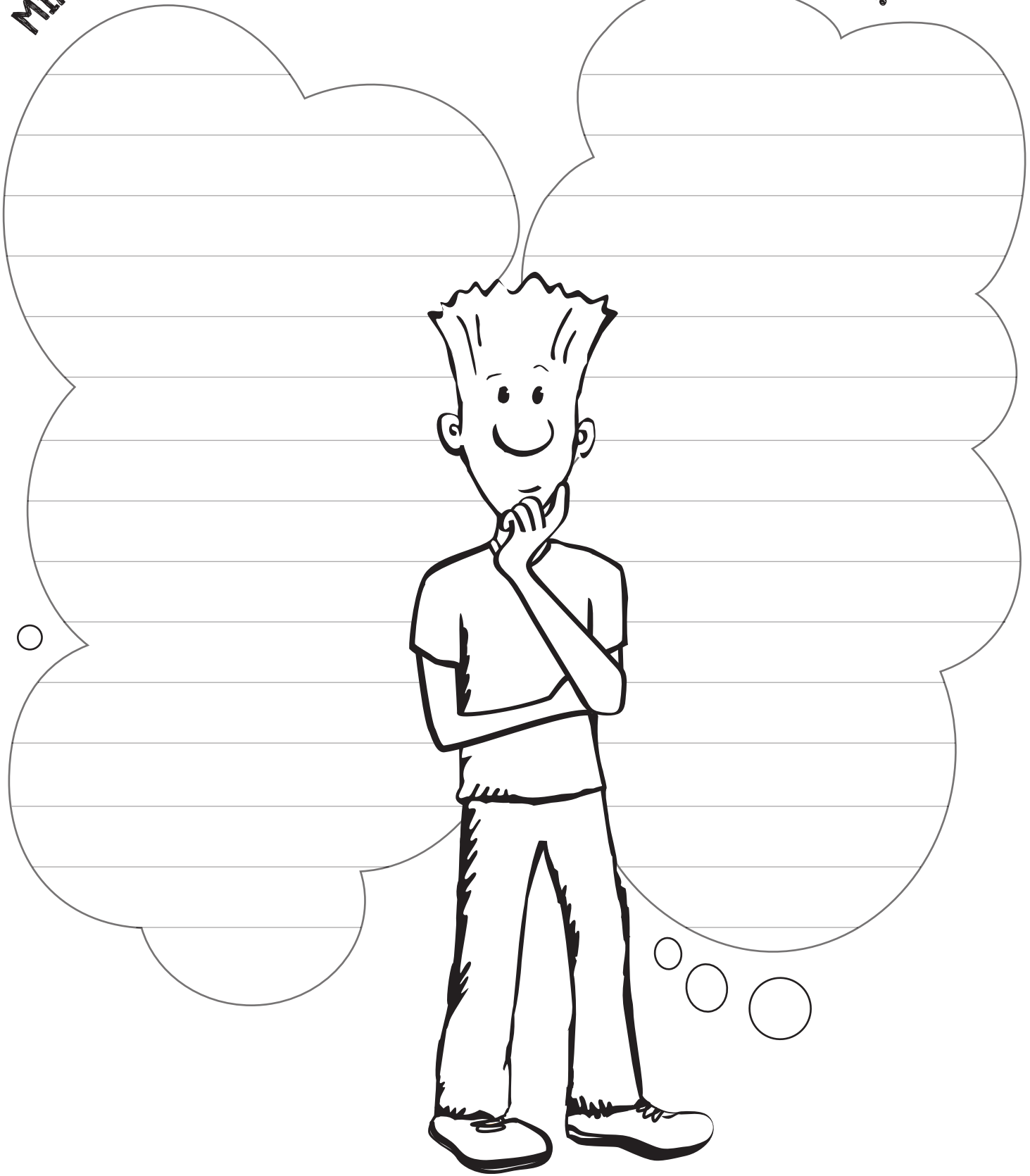
Check out this article by Michael Graham Richard called *Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset: Which one are you?*  
Available at: <http://bit.ly/1lhon9B>

Inspire your class!  
Grab this printable  
**GROWTH MINDSET POSTER**  
[MindsetMission.com/Teachers](http://MindsetMission.com/Teachers)



a Fixed  
Mindset says...

a Growth  
Mindset says...



**NED** says...

