

The Most Magnificent Thing

by Ashley Spires

Themes

Mindset
 Do Your Best
 Never Give Up
 Determination
 Perseverance
 Overcoming Obstacles
 Learning from Mistakes



This is a story about a little girl with a big plan to make the most magnificent thing. She quickly discovers that her perfect plan doesn't work as perfectly as she planned. Through a wide range of emotions, she learns that by having perseverance and a growth mindset, her plan can still work in the end as long as she is willing to keep trying new ideas.

Note to teachers: If your students are not familiar with Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset, we encourage you to first use NED's How to Grow a Brain introductory lesson to build background.

Key Vocabulary

Magnificent: *over the top wonderful, most wonderful*

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

Perseverance: *ability to keep trying even when frustrated.*

Imagination: *ability to dream without boundaries-this means thinking of things that don't exist yet*

Tricky Phrasing

Easy-peasy: *super simple*

Tinkers: *tries to fix with simple steps*

Fiddles: *same as tinkers*

Tweaks: *makes small adjustments*

Before Reading: Discussion Starters

1. Brainstorm a list of synonyms for the word "magnificent".

Answers will vary. Brilliant, splendid, glorious, impressive, fantabulous, splendiferous, magnificent, excellent, resplendent, superb, first-class, glorious, bright, smart as a whip, brainy, splendid, brilliant, vivid. Post in the classroom for visual reminders for writing, discussion, building self-esteem, etc.

2. If you could make the most magnificent thing (not a toy) that could help you – what would it be and how could it help?

3. How does something become a magnificent thing?

Discuss the process for creating. Lead the discussion to include what happens in the process when you reach an obstacle.

4. If you had a fixed mindset – how would you react to an obstacle in the process? If you had a growth mindset – how would you react to a challenge you face?

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5. Make a list of emotions you might feel during the creative process.

Answers will vary....get a list of words and then have kids discuss whether the emotion word fits best under fixed mindset or growth mindset. Allow kids to debate and support their answers as the point of this is for them to see it's not the emotion or feeling that determines mindset, it's the action you take after you feel the emotion. Example: Frustration can cause you to quit and give-up (fixed mindset) but if you walk away and keep thinking about the challenge and ways to solve it, you will return and try again with new ideas (growth mindset).

After Reading: Discussion Starters

1. What positive attitudes do you see in the girl during her creative process?

Thoroughness, creativity, organized, determination, persistence, flexibility etc.

2. Did the girl see her "GO Brain" or have a "Brain Freeze"? What did she do and feel when she met a challenge?

Answers will vary. Discussion should focus on specific examples that show her displaying both mindsets with growth mindset winning! In the beginning, she had a growth mindset that allowed her to keep trying new and different ways. She had a fixed mindset when she got angry, smashed her work, and quit. In the end, she came back to the project and looked at it in a totally new way.

3. Why was she so mad when her hard work attracted a few admirers? Why did they admire her hard work?

She was wanting to create a magnificent thing and in her mind – her hard work wasn't enough. Hard work is important to growing your brain – sometimes results don't happen but without hard work – you can't persevere and keep trying. It is a positive character trait to never give up and do your best.



PRINTABLE
Bookmarks

Writing Prompts and Activities

Self-Talk List: Make a list of 10 things you could tell yourself to keep a Growth Mindset. Share your 10 things with 3 others in your classroom and add one thing from their list to your list. Choose your top 3 and make a bookmark to remind yourself.

Once I quit but I wished I didn't: Write about a time you gave up. Describe the situation and your feelings. What could you have done differently if you had used your "GO Brain"? What kind of self-talk would have helped you to have a growth mindset?

My Most Magnificent Thing If I could make the most magnificent thing, it would be _____. Write about what you would make and why it would be magnificent.

Choose your own mindset adventure: Write your own story with a character who faces an obstacle or challenge. Write 2 different endings – one where the main character has a Fixed Mindset and the other with a Growth Mindset. Use the printable Story Planning sheet to create your adventure.



PRINTABLE
Story Planning

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Activities

Create a Deconstruction/Construction Zone

Bring in old appliances, toys and take-apart tools. Allow students to deconstruct junk for the parts. Encourage free creativity to make something new, reminding them to be in a growth mindset – be flexible, try alternative options, redesign when necessary and, most importantly, to never give up.



Encourage Your Classmates How can you encourage your classmates with examples of self-talk that will remind them to have a growth mindset? Create growth mindset posters for your classroom or school.

Home Connection

Invite parents to share stories of “growth mindset” that they see at home. Use your newsletters, conferences or open house events to encourage parents to look for “growth mindset” moments.

More Resources

For more info...

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 164735

Inspire your class!
Grab this printable
GROWTH MINDSET POSTER
MindsetMission.com/Teachers

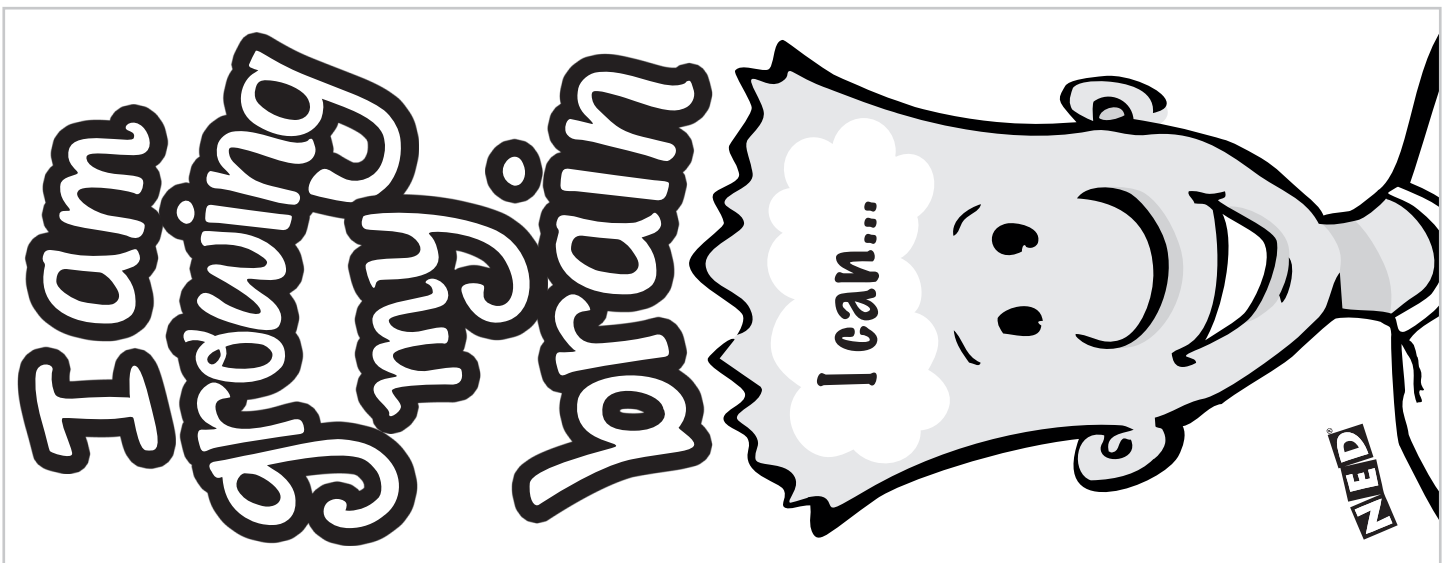


Directions

Create inspiring bookmarks about things you can do to grow your brain.

Blank space for creating a bookmark.

Blank space for creating a bookmark.



STORY PLAN HELPER

Title:

Characters:

Setting:

Opening:

*Introduce character
and set the scene*

**Events
building up
to problem:**

**Problem,
Challenge,
obstacle:**

*Describe the situa-
tion and feelings*

Events building to **Solution A:**

Events building to **Solution B:**

Ending A:

Ending B