

Lesson Plan: Exploring Fixed vs. Growth Mindset

Grade level: 5th

Subject: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and ELA

Duration: 100 minutes

Montana Content Standard:

- **MTSEL.6-8.2.e.** Identify strategies for persistently planning, prioritizing, motivating oneself, self-regulating, and managing time when working toward short- and long-term goals (personal and/or collective).
- **RL.5.2.** Determine the theme of a story, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges and summarize the text.

Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between fixed and growth mindsets.
- Identify the characteristics of fixed and growth mindsets in real-life examples.
- Reflect on how to shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.
- Apply growth mindset principles through creative and reflective activities.

Materials:

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| • Graphic Organizer for mindset reflection (printed or digital) | • Whiteboard |
| • Copies of the fixed mindset letters (White and Black Crayon) | • The book <i>The Day the Crayons Quit</i> (Drew Daywalt) |
| • T-chart template (printed or digital) | • Journals or paper for reflection |
| • Marker | |

Lesson Outline:

1. Initial Engagement: (10 minutes)

- Begin with a short check-in: "Think of the moment when you can overcome difficulties. How did you feel when it was hard? How did you feel when you made it through those difficult moments?"
- Introduce the concept of mindset by explaining that our mindsets influence how we approach challenges, learn, and grow.
- Explain that today we will learn about fixed and growth mindsets and how adopting a growth mindset can help us tackle challenges more effectively.

2. Explicit Instruction: (20 minutes)

T-Chart Activity: Fixed vs. Growth Mindset

On the whiteboard, create a T-chart to compare fixed and growth mindsets using the descriptors provided:

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Intelligence and abilities are set.	Intelligence and abilities can grow through effort and practice.
Effort is unnecessary for success.	Effort is key to growth and improvement.
Avoids challenges to prevent failure.	Embraces challenges as opportunities to learn.
Setbacks are seen as permanent failures.	Setbacks are temporary and opportunities for improvement.

Discuss each category, prompting students to share examples of behaviors or thoughts they might associate with either mindset. Use the descriptors to guide the conversation.

3. Guided Practice: (20 minutes)

Read the following statements. Students call out whether they reflect a fixed or growth mindset. For each statement, guide a brief discussion on how to shift from a fixed to a growth mindset.

- a. "This is so hard; I quit."
(Response: **Fixed Mindset** – *Don't quit! When doing hard things, your brain grows.*)
- b. "You are a natural at soccer. You don't need to go to practice today."
(Response: **Fixed Mindset** – *With practice, you'll get even better.*)
- c. "Last time I played this game and did that move, my character died. Next time, I will do this instead."
(Response: **Growth Mindset** – *I learned from the mistake, and I'll try a different approach next time.*)
- d. "I'm a math person, not a reader."
(Response: **Fixed Mindset** – *But the more you read, the easier it'll be.*)

After each example, the class will generate ideas about how the person in the scenario can change their thinking to reflect a growth mindset.

4. Collaborative Activity: (25 minutes)

- In small groups, students will read [*The Day the Crayons Quit*](#) by Drew Daywalt, stopping after each crayon's letter. Using evidence from the text, students will discuss which mindset each crayon reflects and chart the crayons' mindsets on the T-chart.

Examples of crayon mindsets:

- Red Crayon: **Fixed Mindset** – Feels overworked and unappreciated.
 - Yellow and Orange Crayon: **Growth Mindset** – Both have strengths and show willingness to cooperate, despite the rivalry.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** Students will discuss why the fixed mindset crayons should adopt a growth mindset. After discussing with a partner, the teacher will chart reasons as to why a crayon's mindset might be limiting and how shifting to a growth mindset could improve their outcomes. *Example:* Red Crayon should embrace the challenge of coloring more pictures and not feel burdened by it.
 - **Graphic Organizer:** Students complete an individual graphic organizer where they identify reasons and evidence for why specific crayons should adopt a growth mindset.

5. Independent Application: (15 minutes)

Students receive copies of the White and Black Crayon fixed mindset letters. They are asked to rewrite these letters with a growth mindset perspective. They should focus on how the crayon would think or feel if they embraced challenges, effort, and mistakes as opportunities to grow. *Example:* White Crayon's letter might shift from feeling left out to recognizing how important they are in the crayon box and how embracing new roles can help them grow.

6. Closing: (10 minutes)

- **Reflection Prompt:** Ask students to reflect on a situation where they might have had a fixed mindset. How could they apply a growth mindset next time? Students can write a journal or share their reflections with the class.
- **Reinforcement:** Reinforce the idea that a growth mindset is not just about academic success. It helps us in all areas of life, from relationships to personal challenges.

7. Plan for Continued Integration

Ask students to track a personal goal where they can apply a growth mindset (e.g., learning a new skill, improving in a subject). They should journal their progress and reflect on setbacks and successes.