

**Lesson #M3: Mindset: What Mindset Means to You**   **Time: 50 minutes**

Overview

This is the third lesson in the Mindset Series that helps young people believe that their brains are malleable. Instead of attempting to persuade young people directly, this lesson focuses on how young people can help others learn about a growth mindset. Youth take time to practice positive thinking, to advise a grandmother, and finally, to produce a letter or videos that give advice to next year’s youth.

In order to promote a growth mindset among young people, we avoid persuading them directly. As Professor Elliot Aronson shows, “…direct attempts at persuasion typically produce such small effects...” He goes on to point out that, “…one of the most powerful paradigms …has been referred to as *counter-attitudinal advocacy,* wherein people are induced to try to convince others of the rightness of a position that differs from their own privately held belief.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

Objectives

*By participating in this lesson, young people will:*

1. Advise other youth about why a growth mindset is true and helpful.
2. Advise about the benefits of a growth mindset.
3. Teach growth mindset as it relates to brain science.
4. Advise growth mindset as it relates to intelligence, personality, and physical ability.

Materials

* Projector and computer; sound system; paper & pencils
* Video Clip: *Michael Jordan Video*
* Youth notes from earlier Mindset lessons
* Costume prop for grandmother (optional); Cookies or other treats for Cookie Party (optional)
* Brain Toolkit
* Advice Letter Worksheet

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| **Lesson Outline** | | | **Lesson Description** |
| **ENROLL**  (2 min) | Door Greeting  Enroll youth into helping others. | | **Build relationships with students as they walk in the door. Build relationships with young people as they arrive.**  **Use Four-At-The-Door! (Name, eyes, hand, heart)**  **Slide #2: We need your help!**   * Today we’d like your help in advising next year’s youth about Growth Mindset. * We know it’s one thing for adults to give advice to youth, and quite another for young people to hear tips from each other. * We need your help today, to deliver a really clear, entertaining, and compelling message. * We’ll have some fun getting our message clear, and then you’ll write letters of advice to next year’s youth. * We’ll end this session with a cookie party to celebrate our efforts. |
| **ENROLL**  (2 min) | | Youth give labels to famous Americans. | **Slide #3: What labels would you give them?**   * (Ask youth to give labels for the person described in each statement.) * It turns out that in each example, these are the same people. * Who can guess who each of two people are? (Answer: Thomas Edison, Michael Jordan) * In fixed mindset, we use labels to explain everything. * All we tend to look at is the outcome. But, we really need to look at the process. * Only with a growth mindset do we stick with a goal and understand that failure is a pathway to success. * Let’s watch this short video about Michael Jordan, a famous basketball NBA star. |
| **EXPERIENCE**  (3 min) | | Video Clip: Michael Jordan | **Show Michael Jordan Failure Nike™Commercial.**  **Slide #4: Michael Jordan Video**   * What did you see and hear in this video? * What do you think Michael Jordan’s beliefs are about failing? * What is Jordan’s mindset? * Did you know that people used to say that Michael Jordan’s brother was going to be the basketball star. * They used to say that his brother was the “natural athlete.” * In fact Michael got cut from his high school basketball team. * He once missed a free throw at the buzzer and then stayed after the game for six hours shooting free throws over and over again. * He was always the first at practice and the last to leave. * He definitely put his 10,000 hours to get to mastery. |
| **LEARN & LABEL**  (5 min) | Youth study a portion of the Brain Toolkit to prepare for convincing another. | | **Handout: Brain Toolkit**  **Say:**   * In a few minutes you all are going to have a chance to convince an older grandmother about the growth mindset. * To get ready for that, I’m going to give you just 5 minutes to study the section called “The Growth Mindset.” * On your marks, get set, go! |
| **LEARN & LABEL** (12 min) | Youth convince “a grandmother about the benefits of a growth mindset.  Groups answer questions and plan.  (5 min)  Each group convinces facilitator.  (2 min/group)  Debrief | | **Slide #6: Grandmother Persuasion**  **Say:**   * This grandmother has heard about your crazy ideas about “How people can change.” * They learned when they were growing up, that “People are just born a certain way and they don’t have a great ability to change.” * We’d like you to help them learn about how people can change fundamental things about themselves. * I’m going to play the part of a Grandmother. * You all are going to take turns trying to convince me that people can change. * Each group will only have about 2 minutes to convince me. * In a minute, we’re going to break into teams of five to answer these questions. (Please be as specific as possible and you use all your notes to help you:   **Facilitator writes these questions on the board.**   1. What is a growth mindset? 2. What evidence do you have that people can change? (Give real examples.) 3. Why would this be helpful to the Grandmother?   Facilitator breaks the group into teamsof 3-6so that there are no more than 4 teams**.**  **Groups have 5 minutes to answer their questions.**  They write the answers on paper to plan how they will convince the Grandmother.  **Facilitator wears any props (optional).** Facilitator allows 2 minutes for each group to come up and make a convincing case. Facilitator plays ignorant, skeptical, and tries to poke holes in the arguments. The facilitator doesn’t get convinced too easily.  Facilitator solicits a round of applause for all and debriefs the activity.  **Say:**  What happened?   * How did it feel to try and convince “Grandmother?” * Was it easy or hard?   So What   * What were some of the most convincing arguments?   Now What?   * What do you think you might remember if you had to do this again? |
| **DEMONSTRATE & REVIEW**  (20 min) | Youth write letters to convince other youth that people can change with effort and good strategies.  Instructions  (2 min)  Writing  (15 min)  Reading/clearing up of misconceptions  (3 min) | | **Slide #8: Advice Letters!**  **Say:**   * Now we’re going to participate in the most important part of the day. * In your same groups, write real letters that we will share with next year’s youth. * Imagine if your little brothers or sisters were in this group next year. * What advice would you give them about mindsets? * Your first step will be to plan your presentation by using this Advice Letter Worksheet. * On the worksheet, you’ll outline what you want to say, in at least three paragraphs. * Use your notes and handouts to help you come up with a convincing message. * You’ll have fifteen minutes to write your letter. * Be creative and convincing. * When you are done writing, we’ll ask a few of you to share what you wrote. * My own piece of advice is this: As an example, if you want to use the Phineas Gage story, In your letter (or video), you shouldn’t say, “You should really believe this because of Phineas Gage…” Instead, tell the specifics of that story so that next year’s group knows what you are talking about. * What questions do you have?   **Facilitator hands out the Advice Letter Worksheet**  **Youth are allowed fifteen minutes to write.**  Facilitator moves from group to group, giving advice.  **Facilitator asks several youth to read their letters, and clears up** **any misconceptions** in the letters.  Give each reader a round of applause. |
| **CELEBRATE**  (5 min) | Youth celebrate their learning. | | **Cookie Party!**  Handout cookies (or other treats) and congratulate youth on a job well done. |

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1. Aronson, E. (1999). The Power of Self Persuasion. *American Psychologist, 54*, 875-884 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)