

This resource has been written for Teachit by Mike Gershon. Mike is an experienced teacher and an author of more than thirty books on teaching and learning.

Research suggests there are two types of ‘mindset’ - growth and fixed. With a growth mindset people believe that intelligence, talent and ability are open to change, whereas with a fixed mindset people believe these traits are fixed and can’t be improved on.

Some people will have a combination of these mindsets. It is entirely possible that someone who has a growth mindset for one school subject will have a fixed mindset in another.

A growth mindset is beneficial to learners because it makes them:

- be resilient
- persist in the face of obstacles
- see effort as a path to mastery
- enjoy learning
- see learning as a non-threatening experience.

One of the best ways to promote growth mindset amongst your students is to focus on the language you use.

Rather than rewarding correct answers, use ‘process praise’ to reward:

- effort
- strategies
- focus
- perseverance
- improvement.

Here are some examples of small changes that could make a big difference:

Instead of	‘That’s great’	try	‘That’s great because you went through three attempts first, before settling on the one which works best.’
Instead of	‘Super work’	try	‘Super work - I can see how you changed your thinking in response to the challenge.’
Instead of	‘That’s wrong’	try	‘It’s wrong - can you tell me why? Talk me through what you think.’
Instead of	‘You’re a genius’	try	‘You’ve produced something really impressive because of the effort you put in over the fortnight.’
Instead of	‘You don’t get it’	try	‘You don’t get it yet, have you tried...?’
Instead of	‘You’ve got it all right’	try	‘Your next challenge could be ...’