

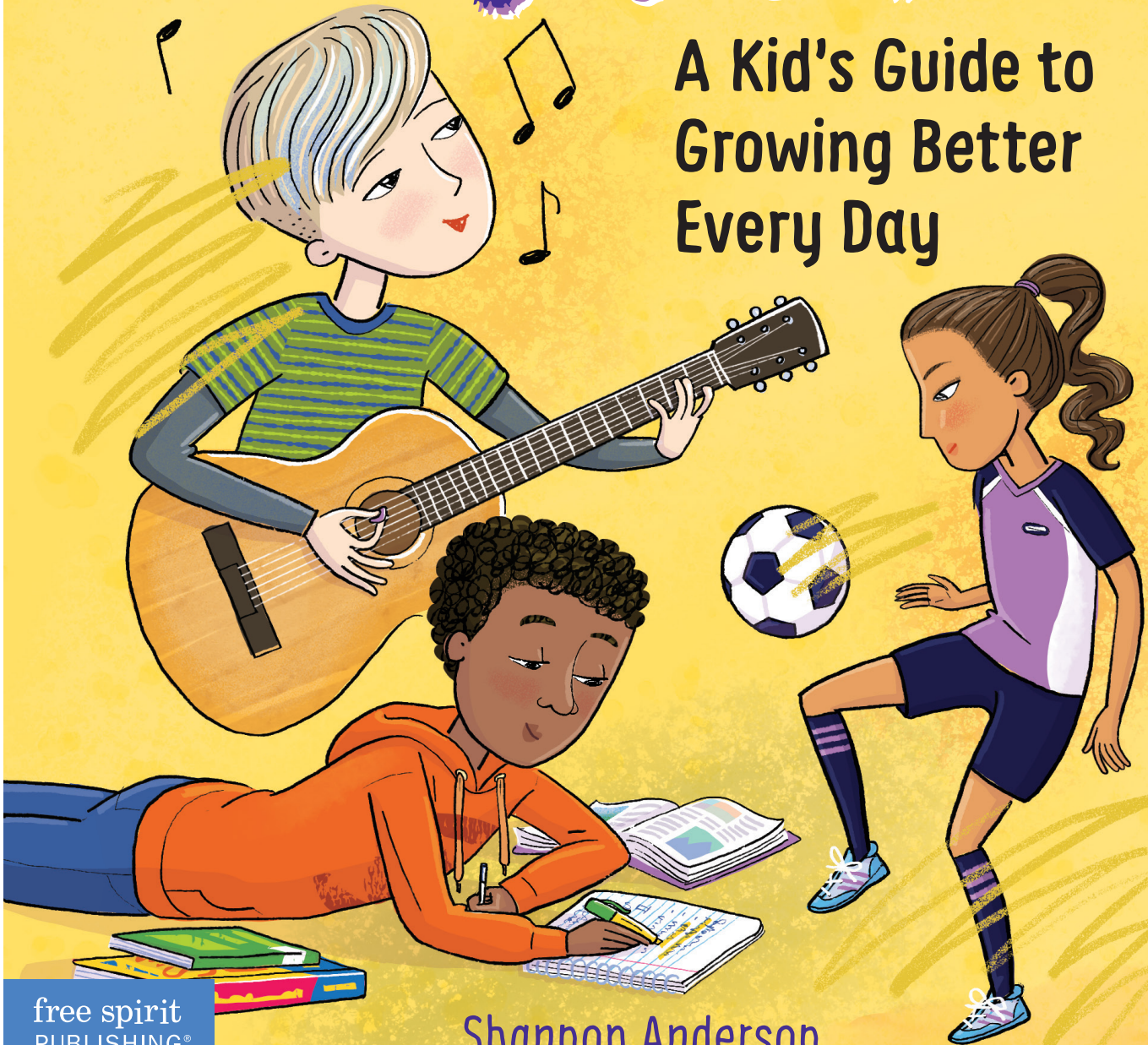
Self-help
for kids®

A Leader's Guide to

MINDSET

POWER

A Kid's Guide to
Growing Better
Every Day

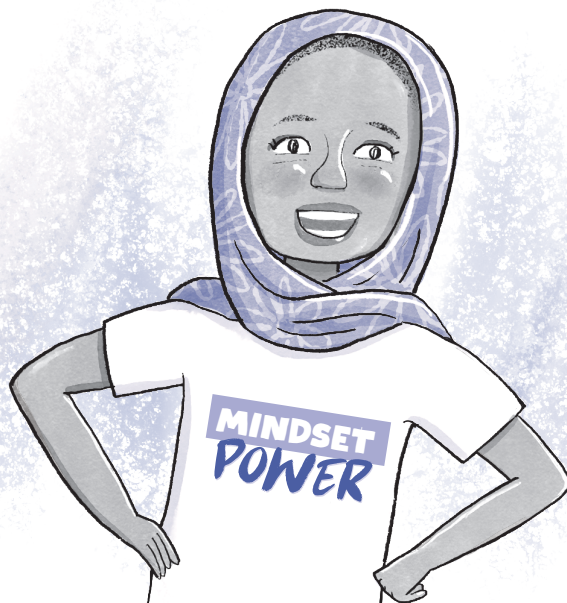


free spirit
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Shannon Anderson

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS LEADER'S GUIDE

A growth mindset can help kids think about their daily choices in different ways so they can develop positive habits. Kids can discover how to use mistakes and failures as tools to learn and grow. Teaching students how to develop a growth mindset is an empowering way to help them believe that they can learn to do just about anything they set their minds to—a critical life skill!

This leader's guide is meant to help teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and caregivers support students as they read the *Mindset Power: A Kid's Guide to Growing Better Every Day* and as they work to learn about and cultivate a growth mindset.

Using This Guide

The guide is a tool for facilitating discussions and encouraging your students or children throughout their reading of *Mindset Power*. The book and leader's guide can be used with kids who are reading independently or as a book study with others. The guide provides key terms and suggestions for what to ask before and after reading each chapter, along with one or more activity suggestions.

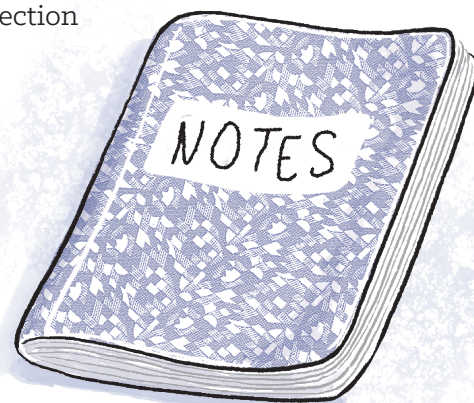
Most of the content and tasks found in *Mindset Power* are geared toward kids in upper-elementary and middle school, but you may wish to adjust the level of complexity for younger students. Depending on the age and maturity of your readers and the amount of time you can allot to this study, you may choose to work on a chapter per week or every few days. With younger students, you might break up the chapter into smaller segments. You might decide it is best for students to read a chapter or segment by a certain date and then meet to discuss it, or you may want to read alongside younger students.

It's a good idea to equip kids with a notebook or journal for reflection and note taking. You can also download all the forms in the book to print or project for lessons and discussions. If students have a tablet or laptop, they may opt to fill out the forms electronically and write their notes and reflections there.

Encouraging Growth Mindset

If you are familiar with psychologist Carol Dweck's research and writing on growth mindset, you know that she conducted experiments on the effects of the types of praise kids receive.

Dr. Dweck found that when students were praised for their intelligence or natural



talent with a task, they were less apt to take on challenges. The students didn't want to lose this label of being "smart" or "gifted" in some way.

However, when students were praised for their *effort* on a task, they were more likely to take on challenges because they could earn that praise for working hard again. Parents and teachers can keep this in mind as they talk with students about their work on something. It calls for a small change in wording that can make a huge difference! Here are a couple of examples:

Instead of: "You're brilliant! Straight A's again!"

You might say: "You must have studied a lot and worked really hard to earn these scores!"

Instead of: "You are so smart! Are you Einstein or something?"

You might say: "You must have learned a lot through all of those experiments. You really stuck with it. Way to persevere!"

As role models in our students' and children's lives, we can help kids develop a growth mindset through praising and encouraging appropriately, modeling tenacity when we are challenged, and focusing on improvement and progress rather than perfection or a win. Mastering a skill is a process, and students need to feel safe to try new things. Our modeling can help provide that safety.

Thank you for teaching students to develop a growth mindset! You are equipping them with healthy ways to tackle trials as they grow and learn.

Shannon Anderson

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

GROWING BETTER ALL THE TIME

(pages 1–5)

Summary: This introduction gives kids a heads-up on what they can expect to learn while reading this book. It sets a purpose for learning about growth mindset so students will understand the focus of the content. Students will find an overview of each chapter and an invitation to share what they learn with the author.

Key terms: potential, challenges, opportunities

Discussion Questions before Reading

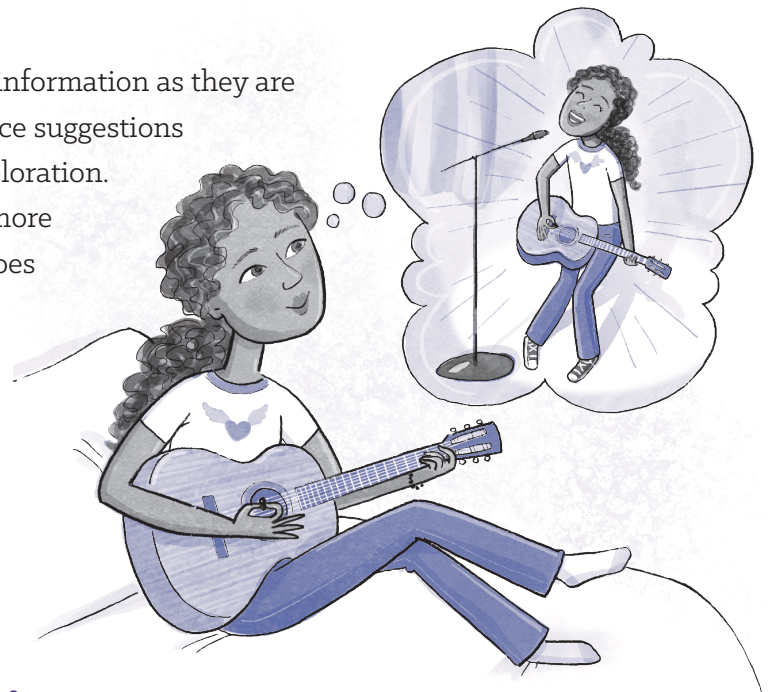
1. Based on its title, *Mindset Power*, what do you think this book will help you do?
2. What does it mean to reach your potential?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. When does your brain start learning? When does your brain stop learning?
2. Which chapter do you feel will be the most helpful to you? Why? In what way?

Activities

- Have students choose a notebook or device for recording their reflections. They will also have opportunities to “Jot Their Thoughts” throughout the book and write answers to questions.
- Discuss ways students can find *more* information as they are reading. For example, there are resource suggestions in the back of the book for further exploration. Book studies and discussions are far more interesting not only when everyone does the reading, but also when students bring extra information on each topic to the table. This can add new perspectives, highlight additional ideas, and teach research and communication skills.



CHAPTER 1

CHANGE YOUR THINKING TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

(pages 6–11)

Summary: Everyone faces struggles and challenges that can cause them to doubt themselves or feel like they aren't capable of certain skills. This chapter shows students that they have the power to choose how to react to challenges. Positive reactions lead to positive outcomes.

Key terms: fear, doubt, power, attitude, negative, positive, choices

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. Do you think your thoughts have power? Explain.
2. What is the advantage of taking notes in a journal as you go through each chapter?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. Have you ever wanted to try out for a team or position? How did you build your confidence to give it a try?
2. Think about Jagger's story. What was it that turned his doubts into action?
3. Page 8 tells us we have the power to do many things. How do our choices give us power?

Activity

- Encourage kids to follow the instructions in the “Jot Your Thoughts” prompt on page 11 for writing a letter to a fear or doubt about something in their lives. Allow them to share letters if they feel comfortable.



CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS A GROWTH MINDSET?

(pages 12–36)

Summary: This chapter teaches how the right mindset, or mental attitude, can help students overcome setbacks, achieve goals they care about, and believe in themselves. It is one of the longer sections, so you may want to allow more time for the reading and digesting of this chapter.

Key terms: growth mindset, fixed mindset, gradual, effort, praise, neurons, failures, setbacks

Check-In

Discuss what it was like to write the letter to a doubt or fear. How has this activity influenced students?

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. What do you already know about a growth mindset and a fixed mindset?
2. Do you think people have only one or the other—a growth mindset or a fixed mindset? Explain.

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. After reading the stories about Jessie and Ayden on pages 15 and 16, ask students to share a time they were excited to try something new and whether their mindsets were more like Jessie's or Ayden's. In what ways? Why?
2. The last time you learned something new, what part of the process had to happen gradually, and which parts happened quickly? How might knowing that help you develop a growth mindset?



Activities

- Have students take the quiz on page 19 and then go over the mindsets behind each statement afterward. Discuss beliefs about luck and inherited weaknesses.
- Have students complete the survey on page 28. Talk about which mindset they tend to lean toward and how they feel about that.
- Ask students about setbacks they have experienced. Is there a setback that made them think differently and try something new? Or is there something they now think could have been a set-up rather than a setback? Discuss.
- In a journal or printed handout, have kids write answers to their reflections on the prompts from “In a Fix . . . or Growing Strong?” on pages 35–36.



CHAPTER 3

BRAIN BOOSTING

(pages 37–52)

Summary: This chapter is about the brain research behind growth mindset and also about how to take good care of the brain. Students will learn about the complex processes that happen in our minds as we make decisions throughout the day. They'll find strategies for how they can help their brains change and grow.

Key terms: neurons, signals, synapses, neural pathways, neuroplasticity, foundational skills, feedback, endorphins

Check-In

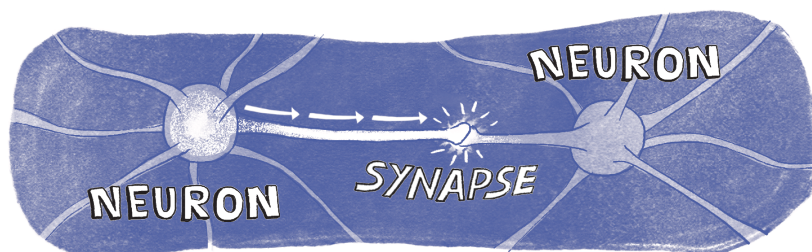
Discuss students' experiences thinking about growth mindset and turning setbacks into set-ups. What insights have students had?

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. What do you already know about your brain?
2. At what age do you think your brain stops developing?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. You read about your neurons firing and wiring together. How can this information let you explain the saying, "Use it or lose it!"
2. What is something you learned and then forgot how to do? Was it the rules of a game? Your multiplication facts? Words in a different language? What caused you to forget what you already knew?
3. What activities cause your endorphins to increase?
4. What are some things you do to keep your brain healthy and working at its best? What is something new you could try to take better care of your brain?



Activities

- Have kids do the activity on page 43. Discuss which neural pathways they want to strengthen and how they could do that.
- In a journal or printed handout, have kids follow the “Jot Your Thoughts” writing prompt on page 45. Briefly discuss foundational skills and how we build on them.
- Have kids choose a challenge for “Something to Try” on page 47 to see the results of consistent practice. Have them write it down and commit to doing the challenge for the full ten days. Check on their progress halfway through and have them write a reflection. Do this again after the ten days are over. (Remind students to focus on purpose and pay attention to feedback.)



CHAPTER 4

THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

(pages 53–73)

Summary: This chapter focuses on the benefits of having and spreading a positive vibe rather than a negative one. There is a long section on ideas for staying positive that could easily be broken into two parts: you could have students read up to the “How Positive Is Your Attitude?” rating scale and then stop after completing it. You could discuss the rating scale results and then have students finish the rest of the chapter for your next discussion meeting time.

Key terms: positivity, optimism, perseverance, attitude, comparison, generate, gratitude

Check-In

Ask how students are doing with their practice challenges. What’s going well? What obstacles are happening? Share ideas.

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. Have you heard of someone saying they see the glass as half-full or half-empty? What does that mean as it relates to their outlook on life?
2. Do you believe that attitudes are contagious? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. How can a person change negative thinking to positive thinking? What is something you see as negative? How could you look at it in a positive way?
2. Look at the story of Faye and Cadence. Has anything like that ever happened to you? What did you do, or what could you have done, to feel more positive about the situation?



3. What is meant by the analogy of people being like popcorn on page 63? Do you agree with this?
4. Why does gratitude help us look on the bright side of things?
5. Who are some people you admire for their positive attitude? Who can support you in building a positive attitude?

Activities

- Have students complete the “How Positive Is Your Attitude?” rating scale on page 59 and allow them to reflect on their results on the next page. Are they surprised by their results? Why or why not?
- Share ideas for positive self-talk.
- Encourage students to try the “Daily Deeds” challenge (pages 72–73) for a week or a month. Have them record their acts of kindness and the reactions they received if they witnessed them. Discuss these when the challenge is over. How did it feel to do something unexpected for someone? Did it make them want to do it more?
- Encourage students to complete and think about the “Jot Your Thoughts” writing prompt on page 73.



CHAPTER 5

SETTING YOUR GOALS

(pages 74–89)

Summary: This chapter is all about setting a goal as a first step in learning something new. Students will learn how to set goals and build a plan for success.

Key terms: specific, target, effort, timeframe, success, improvement

Check-In

Ask how students are doing with their “Daily Deeds” challenge and in their efforts to keep a positive attitude. What’s going well? What obstacles are happening? Briefly share ideas.

Discussion Questions before Reading

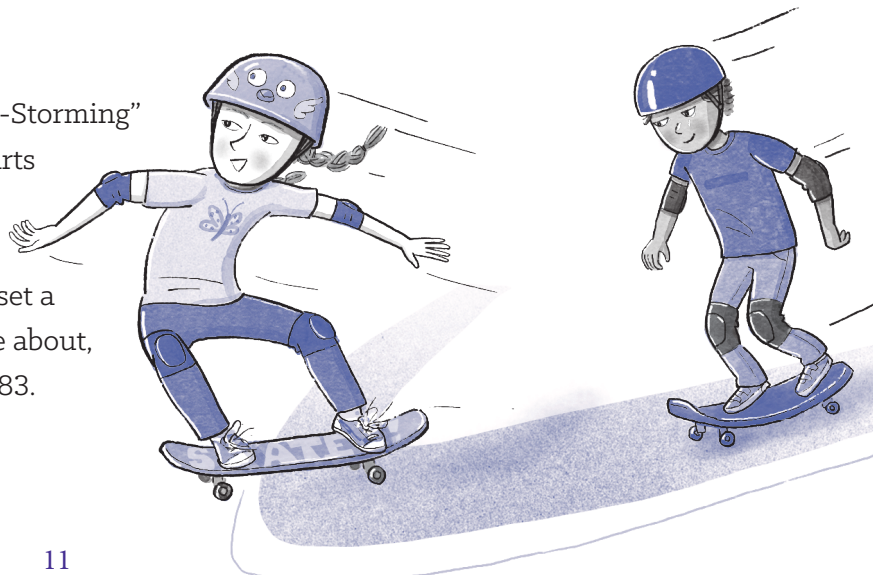
1. What kinds of things have you set a goal for before? Do you currently have a goal you are working on?
2. What do you think is the key to meeting your goals?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. On page 80, we read about some students in a class who set goals for themselves. Why do you think Salma had a hard time knowing if she had met her goal or not? What could she do to help her know?
2. What is the Success Cycle? How does it work? Do you think this cycle is true for all goals? Explain.

Activity

- Have students participate in “Goal-Storming” (pages 76–77). Discuss the three parts of the SET method and review the example on page 79. Then have them use the SET method to set a goal for one of the areas they wrote about, using the “My Goal” form on page 83.



CHAPTER 6

HOCUS POCUS, TIME TO FOCUS

(pages 90–101)

Summary: This chapter is about staying focused on goals once students make them. Students will learn tips for avoiding distraction and staying on track.

Key terms: focus, distraction, paralysis, analysis, overwhelmed

Check-In

Ask how students are doing on working toward the goal they set. What's going well? What obstacles are happening? Share ideas. If it's helpful, return to strategies for turning setbacks into set-ups, continuing to practice a skill, and building positivity.

Discussion Questions before Reading

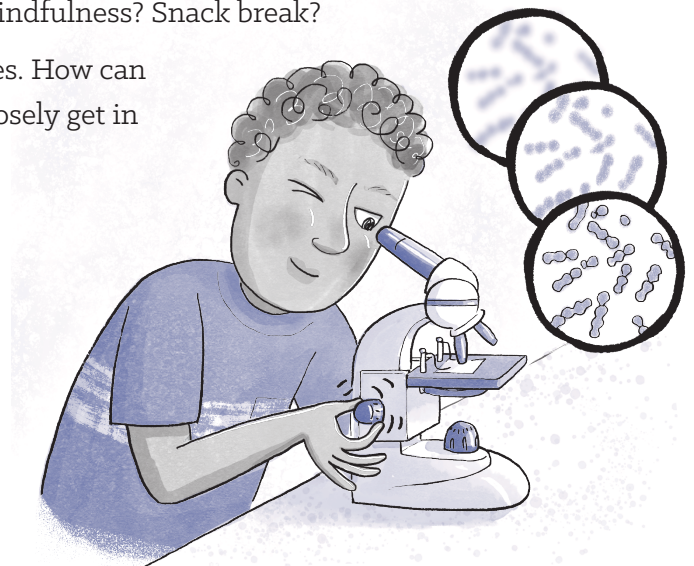
1. What is your best advice for helping someone focus on a task?
2. When you do struggle to stay focused? What causes the struggle?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. How does it help to stay focused on a task if you understand why it is important? Why does that make a difference? Have you ever had to do something but didn't understand why you had to do it? Did that affect your ability to focus on completing it?
2. Do you think it helps to take breaks? How often should you take them? What are your favorite types of breaks? Movement? Mindfulness? Snack break?
3. What is paralysis by analysis? Invite examples. How can being stuck from looking at something too closely get in the way of reaching your goals?

Activities

- Have students make a "To-Don't List" and explain why the items on their list make it hard for them to focus.
- Encourage students to take time to do the "Jot Your Thoughts" activity on page 101.



CHAPTER 7

DESTINATION: DETERMINATION

(pages 102–125)

Summary: This chapter gives strategies for sticking with things that are important when students face setbacks or make mistakes. This is another lengthy chapter that may require a longer period of time to read. (Good thing it is the determination chapter!)

Key terms: determination, destination, rejection, growth spurt, expected, inspected, respected, adjustments, define, diminish, develop, flexible, grit

Check-In

Ask how students are doing in keeping focused as they work toward their goal. What obstacles are happening? Share ideas and encourage and support students in continuing their efforts or reexamining goals as needed.

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. What does it mean to have a setback? Can you share a time you had a setback when you were trying something new? What did you do to get back on track?
2. If you talk to anyone who has had success at something, chances are, the person failed at something along the way. Why do you think that is? What causes people to fail? Can failure ever be viewed as a good thing? How, or why not?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. Why should we expect mistakes? Why should we inspect our mistakes? Why should we respect our mistakes?
2. What does it mean to let a mistake define you? Diminish you? What does it mean to use a mistake to help develop you? How can mistakes support you in keeping a growth mindset?
3. On page 121, it says, “Making mistakes is good, but you want to be making new mistakes most of the time.” What does that mean?
4. What is your favorite way to celebrate when you meet a goal?



Activities

- Briefly share ideas about strategies like positive self-talk, being a beginner, finding help, and being flexible while working toward a goal. What experiences have students had and what has helped them?
- Ask students to think of someone they know who can do something really impressive. Have them reach out to that person in a letter, email, or phone call and ask them how they got started learning that skill. What did that person do when they faced a setback? What did they do in their effort steps to make progress? How did they celebrate when they got really good at the skill?
- Encourage students to take time on their own to do the “Jot Your Thoughts” activities on pages 105 and 123.
- With students, create a celebration table or space, as described in “Something to Try” on page 124, to be used whenever they make an improvement, overcome a challenge, or meet a goal.



CHAPTER 8

YOUR BEST IS YET TO COME!

(pages 128–131)

Summary: This chapter sums up how students can be the best versions of themselves when they boost their brain power, use a growth mindset, stay positive, and focus on their goals.

Key terms: potential, instant gratification

Check-In

Discuss how it went to reach out to an admired person and hear about ways the person dealt with setbacks in reaching goals. What did students learn from this?

Discussion Questions before Reading

1. What is the best tip you've learned so far about developing a growth mindset?
2. If having a growth mindset is so good, why doesn't everyone have one?

Discussion Questions after Reading

1. Why don't we learn as much or as well in our comfort zone?
2. What are some things you have learned how to do without having to think about them much now? For example, you probably don't have to think about the steps for tying your shoes anymore. You bend over, grab the laces, and your hands seem to know that to do. What are other examples?
3. What does it mean to delay gratification? Why should we develop the ability to do this?
4. How are your thoughts powerful when it comes to turning setbacks into set-ups? When it comes to positivity? When it comes to learning and growing from mistakes?
5. Why will we never reach our full potential?



Activity

- Give students a copy of the instructions for writing themselves a letter found on page 17 of this leader's guide. Encourage students to thoughtfully write their letters. For students who wish to share the letters, set a future time to meet and do so.

Tell students: "Way to 'Grow!' You finished *Mindset Power!* If you apply the lessons you've learned in this guide, you will know how to boost your brain, remain positive, learn from your mistakes, and set yourself up for success! Now get out there and be the best you!"



A Letter to Myself

Write a letter to yourself. Include the following:

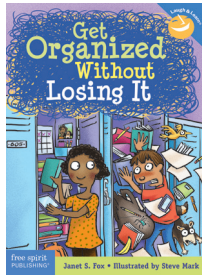
- _____ one goal you are going to try, using the SET method
- _____ what your first Success Cycle could look like
- _____ what you will tell yourself when you lose focus
- _____ what you will tell yourself when you fail
- _____ how you will learn from your setbacks
- _____ how you will celebrate when you meet your goal

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shannon Anderson is a third-grade teacher who loves to encourage her students to develop a growth mindset and to learn from their growth spurts. She shares her Indiana home with her police-chief husband, two teen daughters, one very large dog, two cats, and two lizards. Shannon loves to write books for kids and read books that help her teach and learn in new ways. Shannon earned her master's degree in education and holds a special license for teaching gifted and talented students. Some of her other books include *Y Is for Yet*, *Penelope Perfect*, and *Coasting Casey*, all Free Spirit titles. Shannon was honored to receive the 2018 JC Runyon Person of the Year award for her work helping kids with social and emotional needs. You can find out more about her at shannonisteaching.com.

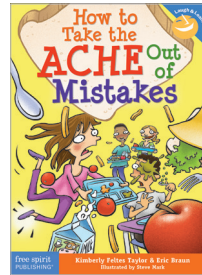


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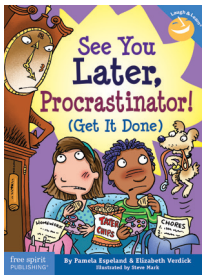
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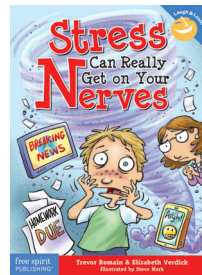
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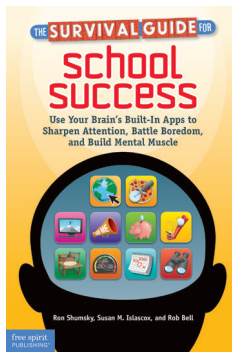
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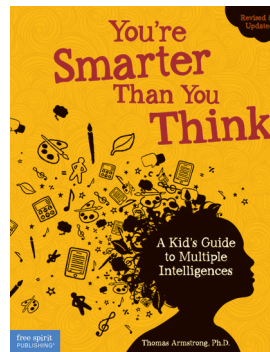
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