

Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset – Reading Comprehension Worksheet

READING PASSAGE:

Many students believe that people are born smart or not smart, and that nothing can change this. This belief is called a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset makes people think that their abilities are “fixed,” like a stone that cannot change its shape. Students with a fixed mindset often avoid challenges because they are afraid of making mistakes. They worry that mistakes mean they are “not good enough.” As a result, they stop trying new things and miss many chances to grow.

But scientists and teachers have discovered something very important: the brain can grow and change. When you learn something new, your brain builds new connections. When you practise, these connections become stronger. This means that your abilities are not fixed at all. They can improve with effort, practice, and the right strategies. This belief is called a growth mindset.

A growth mindset helps students see mistakes differently. Instead of thinking, “I failed, so I’m not smart,” they think, “I failed because I’m still learning.” They understand that mistakes are not signs of weakness. Mistakes are signs that your brain is working hard and growing stronger. Every time you struggle, your brain is building new pathways. In fact, scientists have seen this happen in brain scans. When students try difficult tasks, their brains become more active and grow stronger connections.

Let’s look at an example. Imagine a student named Alex. Alex used to believe he was “bad at math.” Whenever he saw a difficult problem, he felt scared and gave up quickly. He thought other students were naturally better than him. This is a fixed mindset. But one day, his teacher explained that the brain grows when it faces challenges. She told Alex that struggling is not a sign of failure — it is a sign of learning.

Alex decided to try a new approach. Instead of saying, “I can’t do this,” he added one small word: yet. “I can’t do this... yet.” This small change helped him feel more hopeful. When he made mistakes, he didn’t feel ashamed. He looked at them to understand what went wrong. Slowly, he improved. After a few months, Alex became more confident and even started helping other students.

A growth mindset does not mean everything will be easy. It means you believe you can improve. It means you understand that effort matters. It means you are not afraid of challenges, because challenges help you grow. When you face something difficult, your brain is learning the most.

So the next time you feel frustrated, remember this: your brain grows when you struggle. Every mistake is a step forward. Every challenge is a chance to become stronger. You are not “bad” at something — you are simply not there yet. With practice, patience, and courage, you can achieve more than you think.

CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS:

1. A fixed mindset is the belief that abilities are:
A. Always improving B. Unchangeable C. Easy to learn D. Not important
2. What happens to the brain when you learn something new?
A. It becomes smaller B. It builds new connections C. It stops changing D. It becomes fixed
3. Alex improved in math because he:
A. Stopped trying B. Believed he could grow C. Avoided mistakes D. Compared himself to others
4. A growth mindset helps students:
A. Fear challenges B. Avoid practice C. See mistakes as learning D. Believe intelligence is fixed

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:

1. Why do students with a fixed mindset avoid challenges?
2. How does a growth mindset change the way students see mistakes?
3. What lesson can you learn from Alex’s story?
4. Why is the word “yet” powerful for students who feel discouraged?

ANSWER KEY:

CLOSE-ENDED:

- 1 - B
- 2 - B
- 3 - B
- 4 - C

OPEN-ENDED (DETAILED):

1. Students with a fixed mindset avoid challenges because they believe their abilities cannot change. They fear mistakes because they think mistakes prove they are not smart, so they avoid difficult tasks to protect themselves.

2. A growth mindset helps students see mistakes as part of learning. They understand that mistakes help the brain grow stronger, so they use mistakes to improve instead of feeling ashamed.

3. Alex's story teaches that abilities can improve with effort and the right attitude. Even if you feel bad at something now, you can grow if you practise and stay positive.

4. The word "yet" reminds students that learning takes time. It shows that they are still improving and have not reached their full potential. It turns discouragement into hope.

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