

## How to Shift Stories Toward Growth Mindsets

If you uncover stories that seem to be cultivating a fixed mindset or impeding educators' ability to believe they truly can help all students you may want to intentionally shift these stories. What follows are a few ways to move towards collective stories that support growth mindsets.

- Start meetings with a few minutes of student strength “shout outs.” Put a piece of student work up and use an asset lens to name what this student CAN do and has learned to do. It shifts the tone of meetings to begin focusing on strengths.
- Stop labeling. Easier said than done to break habits like this, but talk to colleagues about the negative effects of labeling students. Help one another by committing to talk about students without labels. No more “low students” or “high students.” Instead, shift to talking about each student as an individual person with her own strengths and needs.
- Run a workshop on how to give feedback that reinforces a growth mindset rather than a fixed one. Give teachers and administrators time to practice their feedback with one another and come up with ways that feel authentic to them. In my book, [Mindsets and Moves](#), I suggest these four qualities when offering feedback that supports a growth mindset.
  - Be specific.
  - Name what the learner IS doing.
  - Make sure it can transfer to other learning experiences.
  - Take yourself out of it. Avoid language such as “I like...” and make it about the student’s work, not your opinion.
- **Watch the film:** This suggestion might seem silly, but a good underdog with a growth mindset film can go a long way. If Rocky is not your thing, choose any number of others that fit this description—*The Mighty Ducks*, *Hoosiers*, *Rudy*, *Hidden Figures*... But don’t just watch them for the plot; pay attention to the mindset and how the characters actively believe they can succeed. Watch with the question in mind, “What can I learn and take with me into my classroom and my internal story that will help me be like Rocky?” I know more than one educator who starts their day with *Eye of the Tiger* as their theme song. What theme song will help you shift your story?



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