



# Primary Lesson Plans

Ideal for Grades K-2

### Every Lesson:

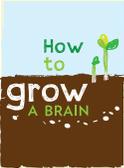
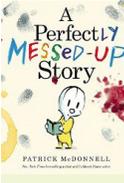
- Identifies key vocabulary and tricky phrasing
- Includes discussion starters and questions to check for understanding
- Features engaging writing prompts
- Includes activities and at least one printable activity or resource

### Aligned to Common Standards

Every lesson plan aligns with grade-level standards in **Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening and Literacy.**  
Every lesson plan supports **ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors.**

Six lesson plans that introduce and focus on growth vs. fixed mindset

IDEAL FOR PRIMARY K-2 LESSON PLANS

Book Title and Author	Printable Activities	Big Ideas
 <p><b>How to Grow A Brain</b> Introducing a Growth vs. Fixed Mindset</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NED's Poems:</b> <i>Teaching Aid</i></li> <li>• <b>T-Chart:</b> <i>Compare/Contrast</i></li> <li>• <b>Card Set:</b> <i>Growth Mindset Practice</i></li> </ul>	Determination Do Your Best Grow Your Brain Growth Mindset I Can
 <p><b>The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes</b> by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein and illustrated by Mark Pett</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Trace Sheets:</b> <i>Writing Practice</i></li> <li>• <b>Story Planning Sheets:</b> <i>Creative Writing</i></li> <li>• <b>Bookmarks:</b> <i>Art Project</i></li> <li>• <b>Encouragement Notes:</b> <i>Home Connection for Parents</i></li> </ul>	Learn from Mistakes Never Give Up Overcoming Obstacles Perfectionist Perseverance
 <p><b>A Perfectly Messed-Up Story</b> by Patrick McDonnell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Now I Can:</b> <i>Draw/Write Practice</i></li> <li>• <b>4 Thoughts:</b> <i>Personal Reflection</i></li> <li>• <b>Fingerprints Poem:</b> <i>Art Project</i></li> <li>• <b>NED Feelings:</b> <i>Emot. Intelligence Exercise</i></li> <li>• <b>Magnets:</b> <i>Home Connection for Parents</i></li> </ul>	

IDEAL FOR INTERMEDIATE 3-6 LESSON PLANS

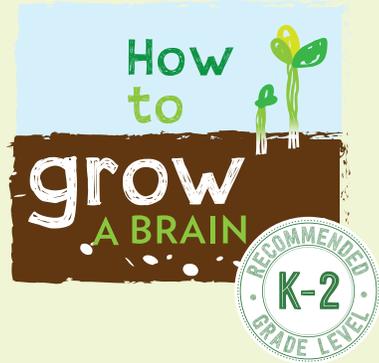
Book Title and Author	Printable Activities	Big Ideas
 <p><b>How to Grow A Brain</b> Introducing a Growth vs. Fixed Mindset</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 Mindsets:</b> <i>Personal Reflection</i></li> <li>• <b>NED Says:</b> <i>Group Activity</i></li> </ul>	Determination Do Your Best Failures are Important Grow Your Brain Growth Mindset I Can
 <p><b>The Most Magnificent Thing</b> by Ashley Spires</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bookmarks Art Project</b></li> <li>• <b>Story Planning:</b> <i>Pre-Write Brainstorm</i></li> </ul>	Learn from Mistakes Never Give Up Overcoming Obstacles Perseverance
 <p><b>Mistakes That Worked</b> by Charlotte Foltz Jones and Illustrated by John O'Brien</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cause &amp; Effect:</b> <i>Sequential Thinking</i></li> <li>• <b>Summary:</b> <i>Story Reflection</i></li> <li>• <b>Encouragements Notes:</b> <i>Home Connection for Parents</i></li> </ul>	

# How to Grow A Brain

Introducing Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

## Objectives

Growth Mindset  
Grow Your Brain  
Do Your Best  
Never Give Up  
I Can  
Learn from Mistakes



Compare and contrast these two poems (printable sheets included) to introduce kids to the idea that just like plants, brains can grow! These lesson concepts are based on three decades of systematic research by Carol Dweck, professor of psychology at Stanford University on Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset. NED's message of Never give up, Encourage others, Do your best can help your students achieve their potential, embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks, and see mistakes and failures as a necessary to grow and master useful skills.

### Key Vocabulary

**Growth Mindset:** *Everyone has a brain! Your smarts and abilities can grow if you challenge yourself and exercise your brain by trying new things and doing your best all the time. You may not always succeed at first, but you can't give up – you will make mistakes but you must keep trying and learning from your every mistakes.*

*Mistakes help your brain to grow. Every mistake is a step closer to success. Don't say, "I can't do that." Instead say, "I can't do that YET." Keep your brain growing and learning. NED reminds us to believe in ourselves and the power of our brains.*

**Fixed Mindset:** *Some people believe or act as though some brains are better than others. If you have a fixed mindset, you believe that it doesn't matter how hard you work, you just can't get better at it. NED knows that if you do your best – your best will get better.*

*If you have a fixed mindset, you don't want others to know that you haven't learned something yet, so you might pretend to know things that you really haven't learned yet. You might be afraid to try new things because you might fail and once you make a mistake, you don't want to try again or try a different way. NED says to never give up and keep trying so you will learn something new each time and eventually get better at it.*



PRINTABLE:  
**NED's Poems**

## Building Background

Read NED's Plant Poem (printable).

Have a classroom discussion or have students work in small groups to pre-think their ideas.

**1. How does a plant grow? What does it need to grow? Can you do anything to make a plant grow better? Can you do anything to make a plant stop growing?**

*Answers will vary. Seed needs dirt, water and sunlight to grow.*

**2. Does talking to a plant help it grow?**

*Answers will vary*

# How to Grow A Brain

Introducing Growth vs. Fixed Mindset



PRINTABLE:  
**T-Chart**

Create a T-chart as a visual during classroom discussion or print for student use if grade appropriate.



PRINTABLE:  
**NED's Poems**

## Before Reading

### 1. Does your brain grow like a plant grows? How is it the same/different?

Answers will vary.

PLANT	BRAIN
Starts from a tiny seed	Starts small and gets larger.
Seed eventually goes away as plant grows	Brain gets bigger and bigger but never goes away
Seed needs sun (light), oxygen, water, and nutrients in soil to grow	Brain needs water, food, exercise to grow
Roots are like branches that connect the plant to water	Nerve cells are like branches that connect to other nerve cells to allow you to think and solve problems.
The bigger the plant, the bigger the roots	The more new things you learn, the more your brain cells grow.
Plant gets stronger as it grows – stem thickens and can support more weight	Brain changes and gets stronger when you use it. It shrinks and gets weaker if you stop using it
Takes time for a baby seed to grow into a full-size plant and flower	Brain takes time too. Babies aren't stupid - they just haven't learned it YET.
Feeding a plant, regularly, can help it grow	Feeding a brain healthy food and exercise can help it grow
Some plants have a long life (Example: trees)	Brain has a long life.

## After Reading Discussion for NED's Brain Poem

Read NED's Brain Poem (printable)

### 1. How does a brain grow? What does it need to grow? Can you do anything to make your brain grow better? Can you do anything to make your brain stop growing?

Answers will vary.

### 2. Compare and contrast these two poems. How is a growing brain the same/different from a growing plant?

Answers will vary.

### 3. Does talking to yourself help your brain grow?

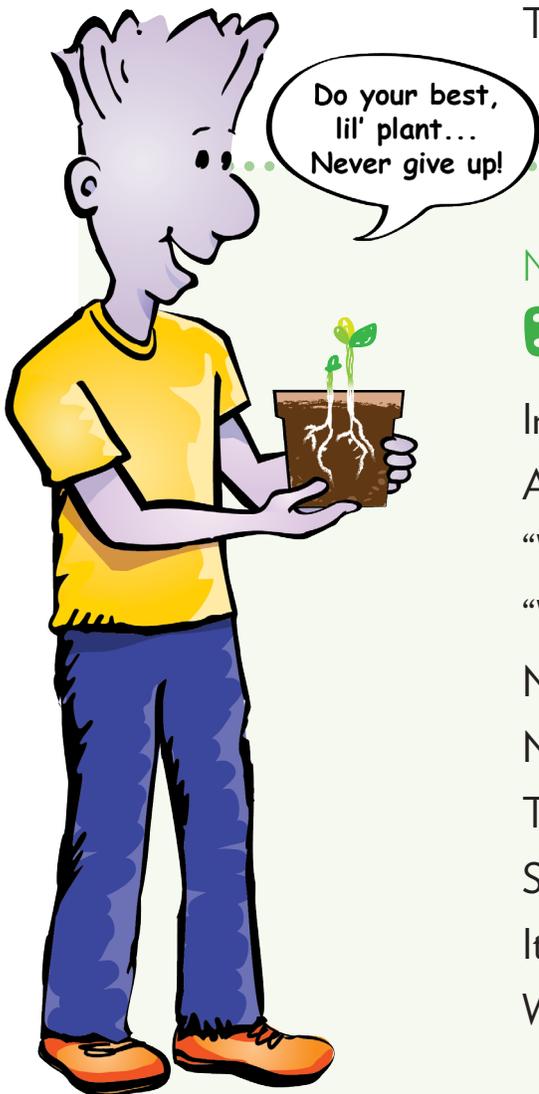
Answers will vary. Discuss mindset and how self-talk can help you have a growth mindset

**Teacher Note:** Use Question #3 to kick-start a discussion on ways to talk to yourself that would grow your brain. Discuss mindset and how self-talk can help you have a growth mindset. Point out that some self-talk can grow a brain (and create 'brain fireworks') or put a brain to sleep.



## NED'S PLANT POEM

In the heart of a seed, buried deep so deep,  
A tiny little plant lay fast asleep.  
“Wake” said the sunshine, “Creep to the light.”  
“Wake” said the voice of the raindrops bright.  
“Never give up and do your best,  
NED knows you can do it so don't get stressed.  
The little plant heard and it wanted to see,  
What the wonderful outside world might be.  
It stretched its roots and grew so tall  
To be the best it could and not miss it all.



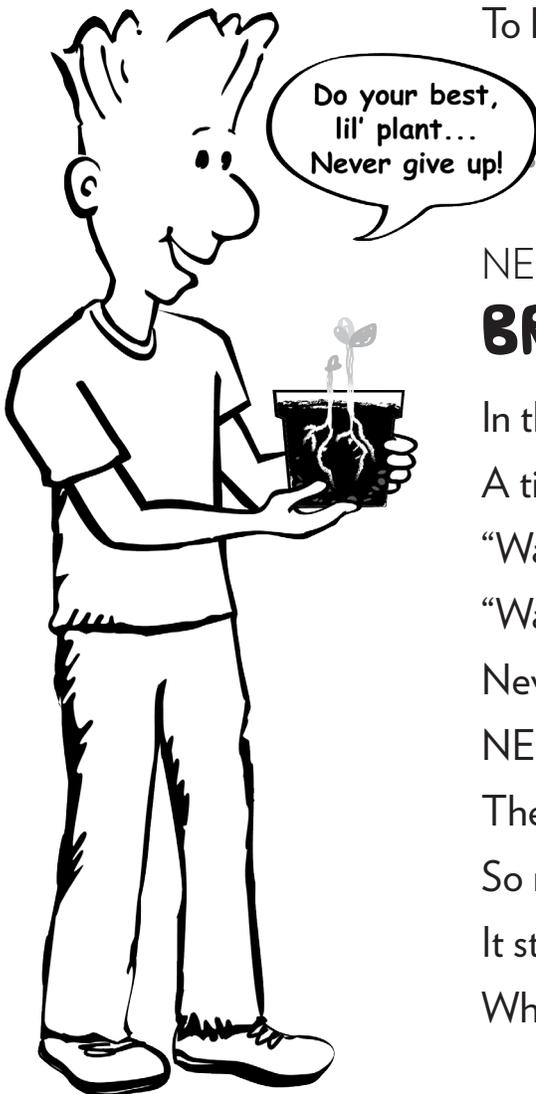
## NED'S BRAIN POEM

In the middle of your brain, buried deep so deep,  
A tiny little brain lay fast asleep.  
“Wake,” said your family, give it all your might.  
“Wake” said your teacher with a smile so bright.  
Never give up and do your best,  
NED knows you can do it so don't be stressed.  
The little brain heard and it wanted to grow.  
So many wonderful things it could learn and know.  
It stretched its abilities and never said no,  
When asked to try new things and give it a go.

NED'S

## PLANT POEM

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A tiny little plant lay fast asleep  
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NED'S

## BRAIN POEM

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So many wonderful things it could learn and know.  
It stretched its abilities and never said no,  
When asked to try new things and give it a go.



**I'm not good at this**

**I can't do this**



**I give up**

**I'll never be that smart**

**It's good enough**

**Plan A didn't work**

**I can't make this any better**

**My friend is 'the smart one', not me**

**This is too hard**

**I ruin everything**

**I made a mistake**

Write your own

**I can't do this YET**

**Ask yourself "What am I missing?" "What could I do to get better?"**



**I will learn with more time**

**I'll try a different strategy**

**There's always Plan B**

**Is this my best effort?**

**We are both smart**

**I can always improve**

**I believe in myself**

**This may take some time**

Write your own

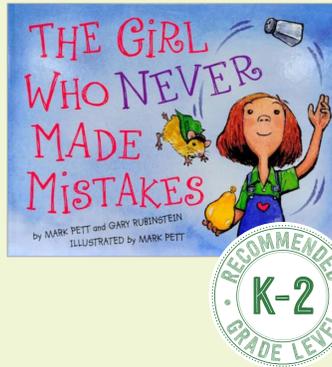
**Mistakes help me to learn**

# The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes

by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein and illustrated by Mark Pett

## Objectives

Growth Mindset  
 Do Your Best  
 Never Give Up  
 Determination  
 Perfectionist  
 Learn from Mistakes



Beatrice has *never* made a mistake. She never forgets to feed her hamster, she never wears mismatched socks and she never forgets her homework. After her “almost mistake,” Beatrice is worried about messing up and making a mistake at the school talent show. This heartwarming story will help any perfectionist in your class understand the importance of learning from mistakes and having fun in the process.

**Note to teachers:** If your students are not familiar with Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset, we encourage you to first use NED’s How to Grow a Brain introductory lesson to build background.

### Key Vocabulary

**Juggling:** to keep options in motion in the air by tossing and catching them  
**Mistake:** an incorrect action or thought  
**Wobbled:** to move or tip from side to side, unbalanced  
**Auditorium:** large room for performances  
**Stunned:** shocked or surprised. Frozen in position  
**Giggle:** silly, lighthearted little laugh  
**Chuckle:** soft laugh, often held back a little  
**Polka dot:** pattern of small spots  
**Plaid:** pattern of different size stripes that cross each other

### Tricky Phrasing

**Proper feet:** the correct ones - right shoe on right foot, left shoe on left foot  
**Fans:** admirers (not air movers)  
**Auditorium was packed:** all the seats in the room had people sitting in them  
**Didn’t miss a beat:** just kept going and didn’t stop  
**Kablooie:** fun sound word, onomatopoeia.  
**Pepper rained down:** flakes of pepper fell down and looked like black rain  
**Roar with laughter:** loud sound caused by people laughing together

## Before Reading: Discuss Starters

- 1. What is a mistake?**  
 To understand or do something wrong, not correct, something happens not the way you wanted it to.
- 2. How do you feel when you make a mistake?**
- 3. What mistakes have you made today?**  
 Consider sharing a mistake that you made today so students can feel safe to share their mistakes.
- 4. Do you know anyone who has never made a mistake? Would it be easy to never make a mistake?**
- 5. When could it be good to make a mistake?**  
 Encourage kids to talk about times that maybe they learned something from their mistakes or laughed after a mistake.

# The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes

by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein and illustrated by Mark Pett

## Before Reading: Discuss Starters

**1. What happens each day when Beatrice leaves her home? Why?**

*Her fans greet her. They ask if she remembered to do everything. Since she was perfect - and not many people are - they treated her like a rock star with a talent far better than others.*

**2. What happened when Beatrice almost made her first mistake on the cooking team?**

*Her legs slipped out from under her and the eggs went flying.*

**What would have happened if she DID make a mistake and didn't catch the eggs?**

*They would have fallen and broken. She would have had to clean up and get 4 more eggs.*

**3. How did Beatrice react when Millie made a mistake and dropped a piece of rhubarb?**

*How was she like NED? Beatrice told Millie not to mention it, not to worry-it was no big deal. She wasn't upset, she didn't make fun of her even though she made a mistake. Beatrice was like NED - an encourager of others who make mistakes.*

**4. What did Beatrice do after she almost made a mistake? Is this a fixed mindset or growth mindset? What could she have done differently to have a growth mindset?**

*She couldn't stop thinking about what almost happened. She didn't join her friends skating, didn't eat, didn't smile. She had a fixed mindset. A growth mindset would let her say "mistakes aren't bad-they are part of learning. I will keep trying and see what I can learn next time."*

**5. Beatrice felt her stomach jumping around inside her before the talent show. What does that mean? Have you ever felt like that?**

*She was nervous - felt like butterflies, tummy upset. Encourage students to share stories.*

**7. What mistake did Beatrice make in the talent show? She grabbed the pepper shaker instead of the salt and it made Humbert the hamster sneeze. The sneeze startled him and he popped the water balloon which dumped everything on top of Beatrice's head. How did Beatrice feel when she made her first mistake? At first she froze (stood very still). She almost cried and wanted to run off the stage. How did her feelings change? When she saw the soaked hamster, she giggled, then chuckled and then laughed.**

**8. How did the audience react to Beatrice's mistake during the talent show? If NED were in the audience, how would he have reacted?**

*At first, the crowd was stunned - sat silently and stared. They couldn't believe that she made a mistake. That was not very encouraging, but when the crowd heard Beatrice giggle - they giggled too! NED would have encouraged Beatrice from the beginning.*

**9. Why did Beatrice sleep better than she ever had the night after the talent show?**

*She was no longer stressed about having to be perfect all the time - she had made her first mistake and realized it was okay.*

**10. Why were there no fans outside her house at the end of the story?**

*Beatrice was no longer the ONLY girl who had never made a mistake. Everyone makes mistakes.*

**11. What did Beatrice do after she realized that she wasn't the girl who never made a mistake? She wore different socks, put PB&J on the outside of bread, made messes, skated and fell. Why could she do those things now? She laughed as she took new chances and tried new things because she didn't have to worry about never making a mistake.**

# The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes

by Mark Pett and Gary Rubinstein and illustrated by Mark Pett

PRINTABLE:  
*Trace Sheet*

## Writing Prompts

Use the printable tracing and color sheet with the message “Do your best and your best will get better.”

**Describe a mistake** you’ve made and what you have learned because you never gave up.

PRINTABLE:  
*Story Planning  
Sheet*

## Activities

**Choose your own mindset adventure:** Write your own story with a character who faces a challenge. Write two different endings – one where main character has a fixed mindset and the other with a growth mindset.

PRINTABLE:  
*Bookmarks*

**Self-Talk Bookmark** Make yourself a bookmark and list three positive things you can tell yourself that will help you never give up.

PRINTABLE:  
*Encouragement  
Notes*

## Home Connection

### Notes of Encouragement from Parents to Kids

Make this printable available for parents in your newsletter or website, or handout at parent conferences. Encourage parents to give to children at home or in their lunches.

More Resources

## For more info...

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 147343

Inspire your class!  
Grab this printable  
**GROWTH MINDSET POSTER**  
[theNEDshow.com/mindsetposter](http://theNEDshow.com/mindsetposter)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Trace the letters below. Draw a picture of yourself with NED



# Story Plan

Title

Characters

Setting

**Opening**

*Introduce character and set the scene*

**Event/Build-up**

*Build up to problem*

**Problem**

*Describe the situation and feelings*

**Solution A**

*Fixed Mindset*

**Solution B**

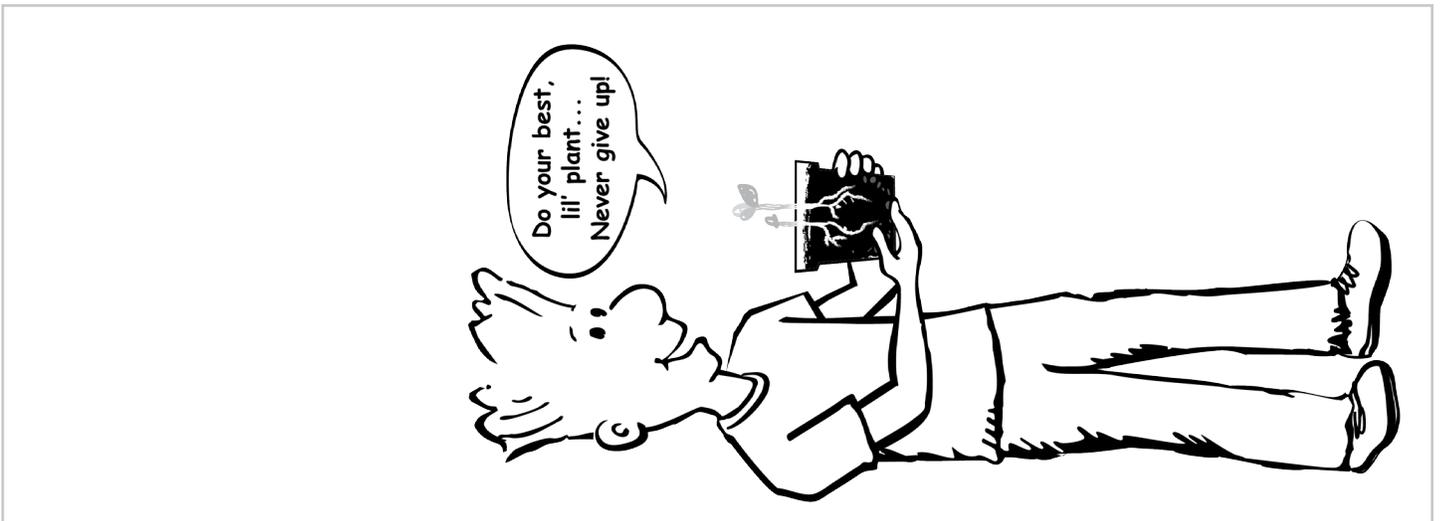
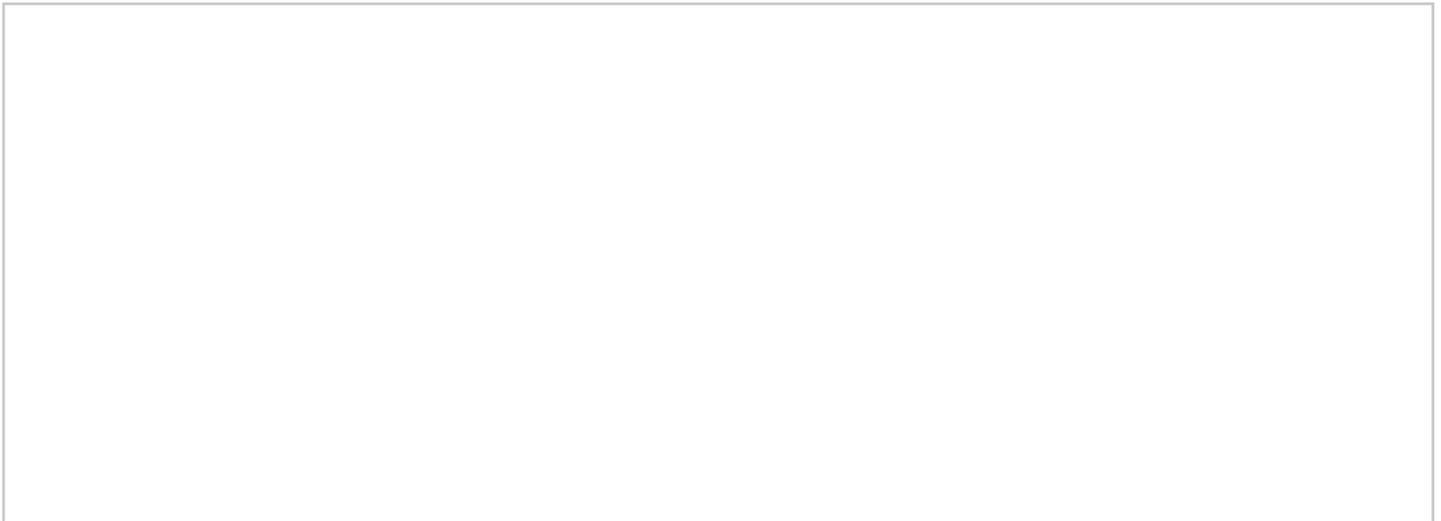
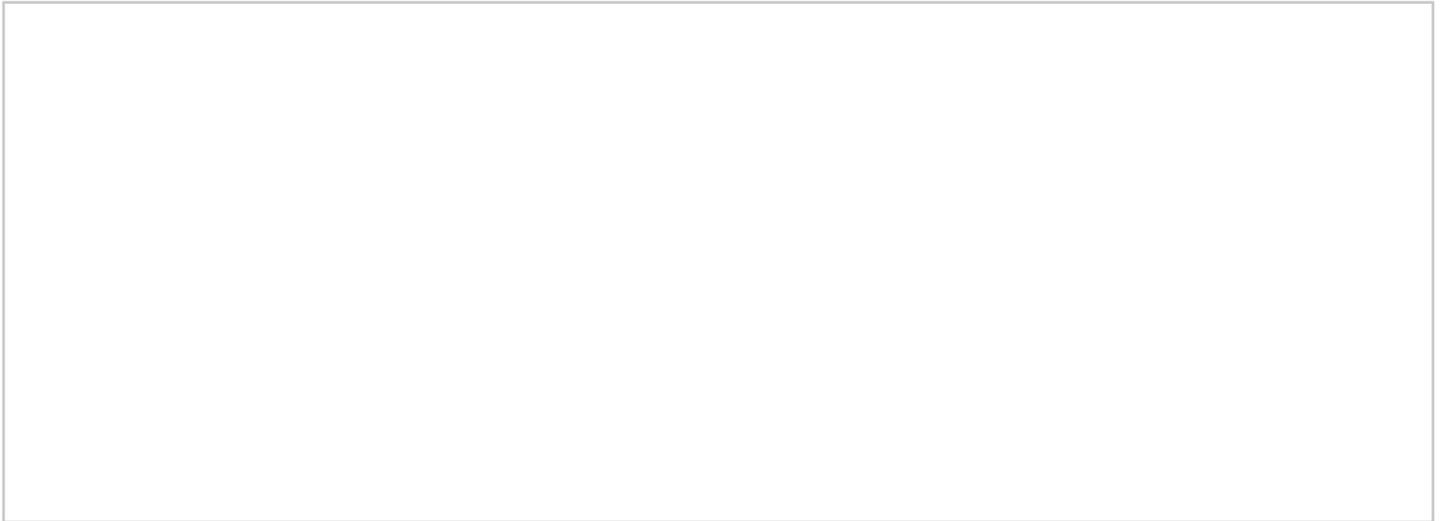
*Growth Mindset*

The End



**Directions**

Illustrate bookmarks with 3 things you could do to tell yourself to keep a Growth Mindset.



# WOW!

look at how much  
you've improved!

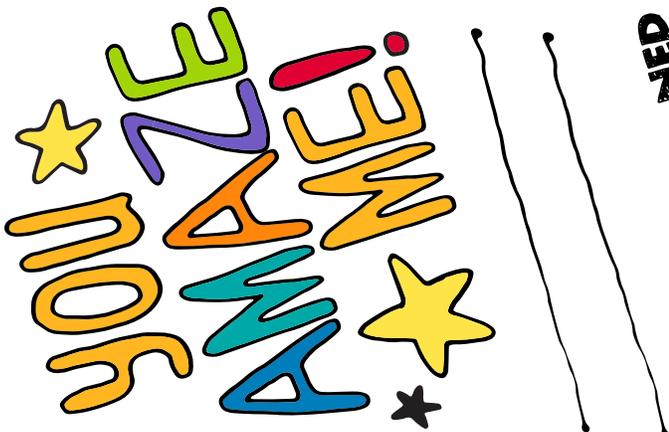
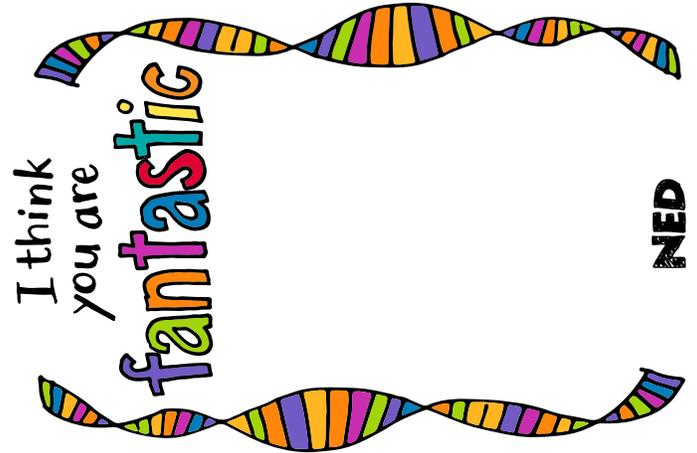
NED



# YES!

I knew  
**YOU**  
could  
do it!

NED



# WOW!

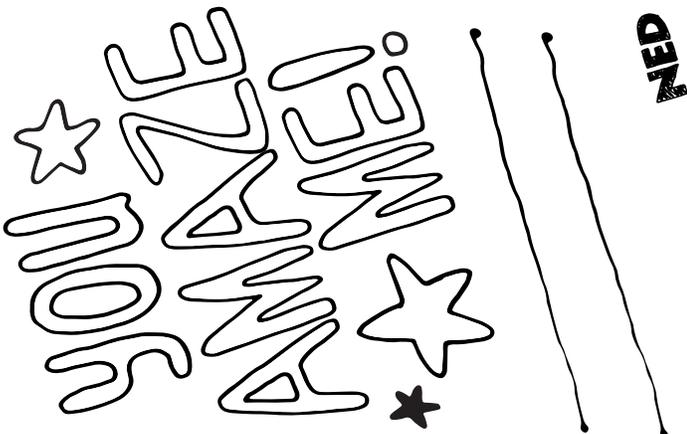
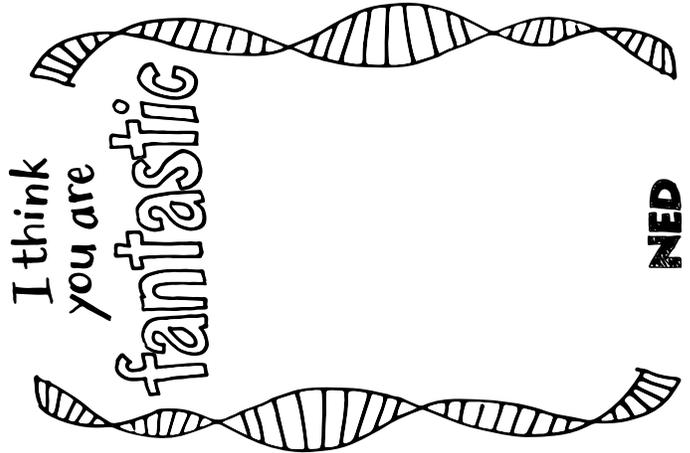
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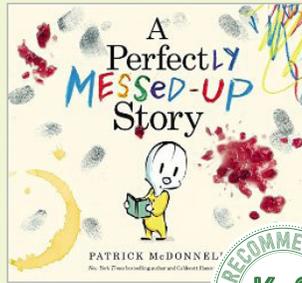


# A Perfectly Messed-Up Story

by Patrick McDonnell

## Objectives

Growth Mindset  
 Do Your Best  
 Never Give Up  
 Determination  
 Perseverance  
 Perfectionist  
 Overcoming Obstacles



Little Louie is trying to tell his story but it keeps getting messed up. He badly wants it to be perfect but things keep happening to the pages of his book like a jelly drop and a peanut butter smear. After several tantrums, he finally stops and takes a deep breath and realizes that everything doesn't have to be perfect for it to be good. This story can help your students accept the fact that life gets messy-it's not perfect but you must work through it and go on.



**Note to teachers:** If your students are not familiar with Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset, we encourage you to first use NED's How to Grow a Brain introductory lesson to build background.

### Key Vocabulary

**Merrily:** in a happy, cheerful way  
**Stain:** a spot or mark, discolored by a different object  
**Respect:** valued or admired, to take care of something because it is important  
**Inspire:** encourage you to do something important or good, influence  
**Ruined:** destroyed,  
**Perfect:** without mistakes or errors

### Tricky Phrasing

**Know in your heart:** totally believe it  
**Arg:** sound of frustration

## Before Reading: Discussion Starters

- 1. What does it mean if something is perfect?**  
*Answers will vary. Without flaws, without mistakes, exactly as planned*
- 2. Can a person be perfect?**  
*Answers will vary. Refer back to their definitions from question 1.*
- 3. What do you do when you want something perfect and it doesn't come out that way?**  
*Answers will vary. Try again, give up, angry, sad, frustrated, determined, etc. Record a large list of emotion words for later discussion*

## After Reading: Discussion Starters

- 1. How was Louis feeling in the beginning of the story? How do you know (look for clues in the text/illustration) Why did he feel that way?**  
*He was happy-smile on face, skipping merrily along, singing tra-la-la-la. He was happy to tell his story because he knew (in his heart) that the story was going to be perfect.*

## A Perfectly Messed-Up Story

by Patrick McDonnell

**2. List the obstacles that Louie faced in the story. Why were they challenges to him?**

*Jelly stain, peanut butter blob, fingerprints, orange juice splatters, crayon scribbles. He had a plan to read the story and these distractions kept ruining his plan. He didn't think we would keep reading the book if there were messes on the pages.*

**3. What was Louie feeling as he faced each obstacle?**

*Answers will vary as students describe his escalating frustration. Add to your word list of emotions: Proud, Confident, Content, Happy, Joyful, Shocked, Surprised, Alarmed, Curious, Angry, Disturbed, Frustrated, Mad, Out-of-control, Pleading, Begging, Determined, Distraught, Give up, Depressed, Sad, Don't care, Persistent, Hopeful,*

**4. Why was Louie upset about the book pages being messed up?**

*He was upset that they didn't show respect for books. He thought books were important because they teach and inspire.*

**5. Discuss Louie's mindset throughout the story. When did he have a fixed mindset? When did he have a growth mindset? What did he learn when he had a growth mindset?**

*First... When Louie first encountered the stains and plops of food and fingerprints on his book – he never gave up – he felt frustrated that someone would mess up his story but he wanted to get on with his story so he started over again. This is what someone with a growth mindset would do.*

*Then... The second time he encountered the crayon marks – he became a little more upset and gave up. He said "Stop, forget it, it's all over." He was thinking with a fixed mindset who doesn't know what to do when it's hard or seems impossible to keep going. Note that he changed his emotions from mad to sad as he gave up.*

*Last...Then he realized that even though it wasn't perfect – it was fine. He changed his thinking back to a growth mindset and got up and started again.*

**6. How was Louie like NED?**

*He was determined to finish this and nothing was going to stop him. He remembered the N in NED's name means Never Give Up,*

### Writing Prompt

 PRINTABLE:

*Now I Can*

**Now I Can**

Use the printable to trace and fill in this sentence: "I could not \_\_\_\_\_ until I \_\_\_\_\_."

*Example: I could not spell elephant until I wrote it over and over again.*

**I didn't give up when I ....**

Everyone has had to do something that was hard. Having a "never give up" attitude is so important. Just like Louie had to work hard to overcome obstacles in the story, you do too. Write about a time that you had to work hard and not give up to accomplish something.

### Activities

**4 Thoughts** Students should write or draw pictures of 4 things they could tell themselves to have a growth mindset, using the printable sheet.

 PRINTABLE:

*4 Thoughts*

# A Perfectly Messed-Up Story

by Patrick McDonnell

PRINTABLE:

*Fingerprints Poem*

PRINTABLE:

*NED Feelings*

PRINTABLE:

*Magnets*

## Activities, Con't

**Fingerprints Grow Too** Make copies of the printable poem. Encourage students to decorate the frame around the poem with their own fingerprints. Challenge them to draw details that will change their fingerprints into fun items such as lady bugs, fish, etc.

### NED Has Feelings

Have students add words to each NED head to make a deck of emotion cards. Use the printable sheet of blank NED heads for students to draw in faces and describe their feelings.

**Growth or Fixed Mindset?** Emotions are real feelings but sometimes they impact how you think. They can stop you from moving forward (like Louie when he saw the crayon marks smeared on the page) or they can motivate you (like when Louie was giving up but then realized that everything was fine and he could just keep reading his story).

Use the Emotion picture/word cards above. Have kids discuss how each of them could lead to having a growth mindset.

EX: If I was (discouraged), I could have a growth mindset by (never giving up and trying it again in a different way).

### I Am Not Perfect Posters

Design class or school posters that reflect this message

- Never Give Up...I'm NOT perfect
- Never Give Up...I can't do it YET
- Never Give Up...Make lemonade out of lemons
- Never Give Up...Go with the flow
- Never Give Up...wipe the slate clean
- Never Give Up...swim with the waves

## Home Connection

Encourage parents to attach to full size magnet stickers or cut out and display on refrigerator with separate magnets

More Resources

### For more info...

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 170605

Inspire your class!  
Grab this printable  
**GROWTH MINDSET POSTER**  
[theNEDshow.com/mindsetposter](http://theNEDshow.com/mindsetposter)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Trace the letters and fill in the blank. Then, draw yourself and what you can do!

I could not  
until I \_\_\_\_\_

# Growth Mindset

1

2

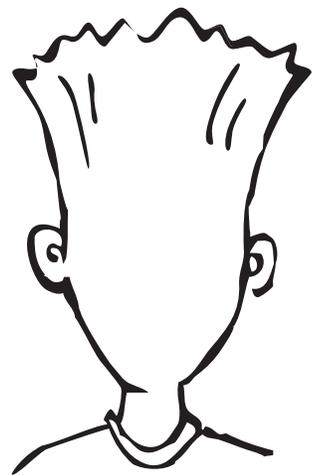
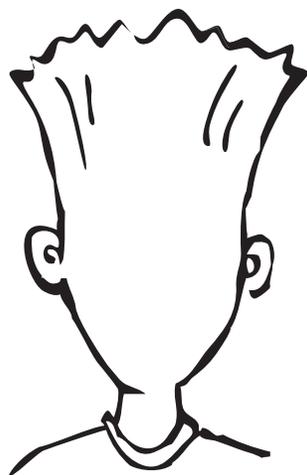
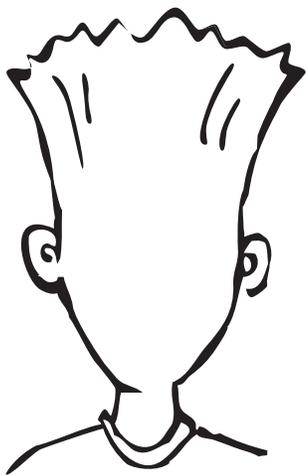
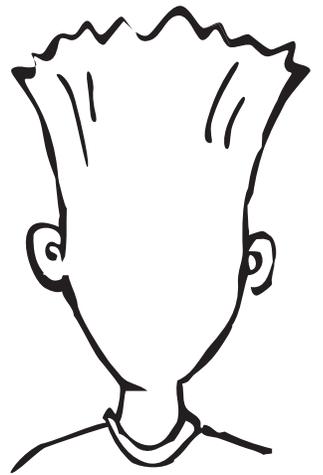
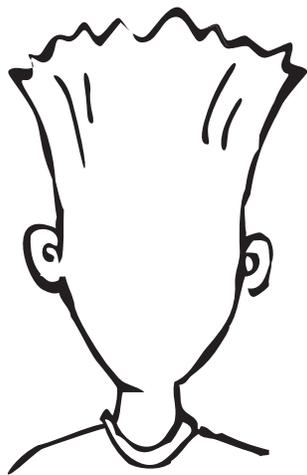
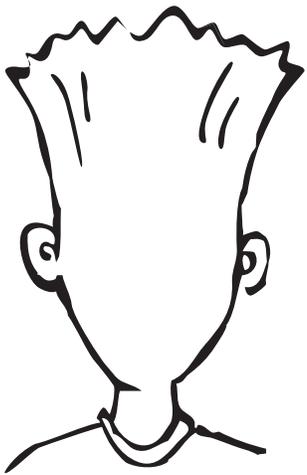
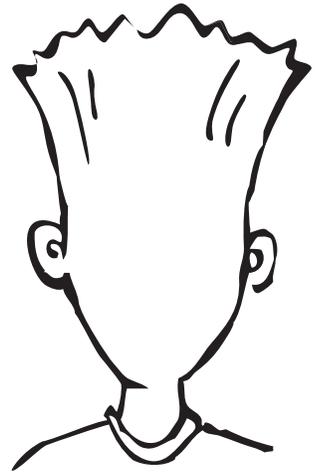
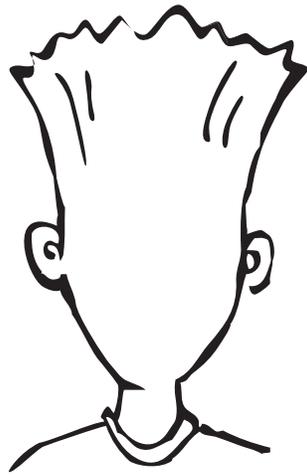
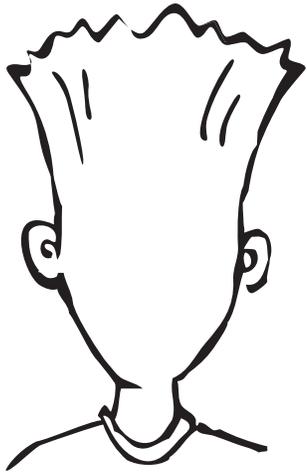
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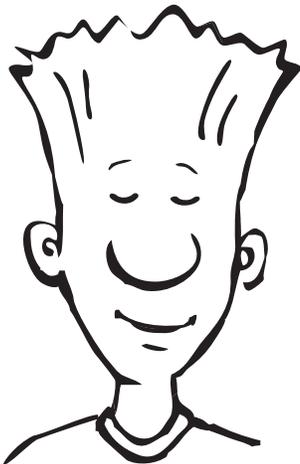
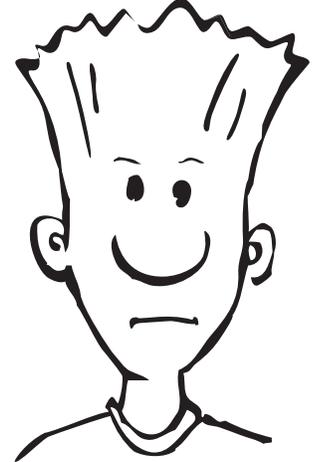
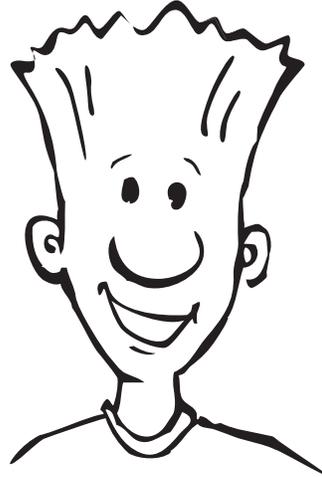
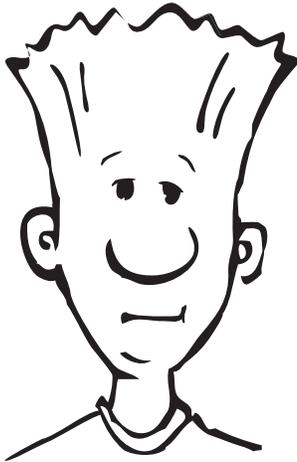
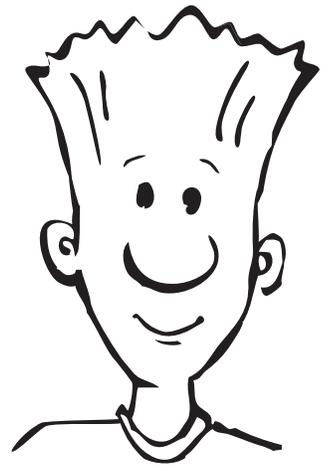
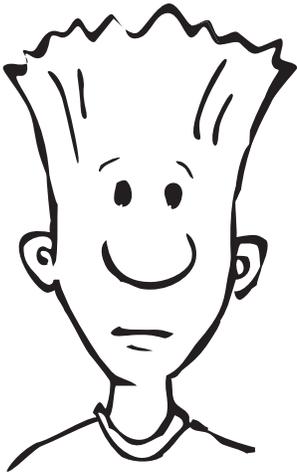
4

Directions: Write or draw pictures of four things you could tell yourself to have a growth mindset!

## FINGERPRINTS GROW TOO

Sometimes you get discouraged  
because I am so small  
And always leave my fingerprints  
on furniture and walls.  
But every day I'm growing  
I'll be grown some day  
And all those tiny fingerprints  
Will surely fade away  
So here's a little fingerprint  
Just so you can recall  
Exactly how my fingers looked  
When I was very small.





# Growth Mindset Magnets

Directions: Print this page onto magnetic paper using an inkjet printer. (Avery Magnet Sheets #3270 are available at most office supply stores). Or, print on cardstock and glue magnets to the backs. These refrigerator magnets will remind kids of NED's three messages, promoting attitudes of growth. Share the second set with friends or a teacher.

