

# Feedback and growth mindset

## Webinar handout

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### What is growth mindset?

***“This growth mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts.”*** (Dweck, 2006, p.3)

The term growth mindset, coined by Carol Dweck in *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, describes a proactive attitude towards learning. It involves a willingness to experiment and take risks. Individuals with a growth mindset attribute success and failure to their effort, while those with a set mindset believe abilities are innate. A set mindset may limit one’s capacity for learning, as it encourages individuals to seek opportunities to validate their strengths rather than expose their weaknesses. Here are three activities which can help you cultivate a growth-mindset in your learners.

### Activity 1: Using inclusive feedback

Many teachers use feedback which includes not only *correction*, but also *validation* (highlighting what students expressed well) and *enrichment* (suggestions on how to expand language range). My suggestion is to use comments which address students with different levels of mastering the target feature at the same time. The comments also target multiple levels of students’ performance: content, structure, pronunciation, word choice.

**Example 1** Students have discussed their first job interviews, some of them made errors in tenses. The comments seek to involve everyone:

*You shared some interesting memories of your first interviews, so, the question is, for everybody, what would be the best tense here?*

Teacher writes on the board: ***I remember when I (have) my first interview.. / I (feel) really nervous.***

*How can you change this?*

**Example 2** In their discussion, students used the words *unemployment* / *effectively* / *communication*, some of them with standard and some with non-standard word stress:

*You've used some very good expressions, and let's see where the word stress is.*

*Teacher models the words.*

*unemployment / effectively / communication.*




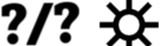

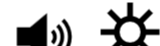

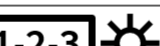

*Can we all try?*

All students are encouraged to help, try, explain, and ask.

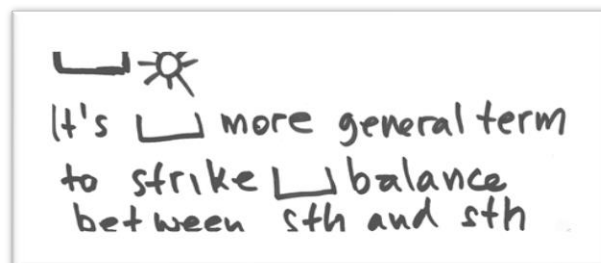
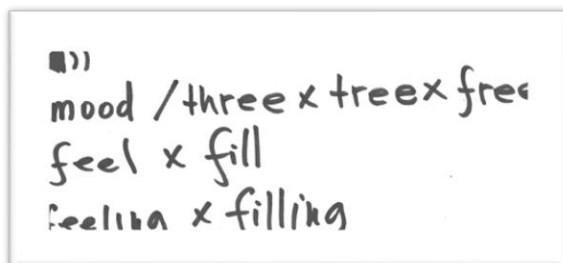
Effort and questions are praised as much as correct answers.

## Activity 2: Card swap

The activity seeks to actively engage students in feedback, rather than allowing them to simply receive it. While monitoring a speaking task in pairs or small groups, the teacher prepares a **feedback task**. Relevant examples from students' speech include simple instructions illustrated by icons:

Activity cards: Instructions			
	Complete		Complete and explain
	Choose		Choose and explain
	Say		Say and explain
	Organise		Organise and explain
	Paraphrase		

Examples:



Each team receives 2-4 cards. With the teacher's help, teams discuss (not write) their answers. Then they swap used cards with another team. The activity continues until all teams have seen all cards. Answers are then summarised and reviewed next time.

### Activity 3: My collection

The teacher encourages each student to choose 3 relevant tips out of all spoken or written comments given during a writing, speaking, listening or reading task. Students write their tips on separate slips of paper.

All students stand up, share their tips and try to find people with the most similar ones. The most original relevant comments are also praised. Students then stick their tips on the cover page of their notebooks and review them before the next task. The aim is to improve these certain areas and get new tips.

Examples:

1) Use your article in front  
of countable nouns.  
It was **a** really good story

3) You have to use your voice  
and use sentence stress.

2) Such a - with noun phrase  
So - with adjectives  
1) it was **such** a good story!  
2) You are **so** good

### Summary:

- **Inclusive feedback:** It is safe to experiment / nobody feels put on the spot / encourage effort / encourage teamwork
- **Active participation:** Feedback tasks rather than receiving feedback
- **Sense of gain:** Students “collect” tips rather than receive criticism
- **Sense of control:** Students select tips they find useful / Receiving and providing help is encouraged / Feedback includes communication strategies

### Reference:

Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. Random House.