

Growth-Minded Feedback

There is specific feedback language educators can use with their students to guide and motivate them. This language helps students process their learning/mistakes, seek strategies for improvement and reflect on prior learning so they can remain gritty in the face of challenges. The examples of feedback that follows will help you create growth-minded environments, and students will respond with greater effort.

Use or adapt these language frames when interacting with your students in the following situations.

When they struggle despite a strong effort

- OK, so you didn't do as well as you had hoped. This is really an opportunity for you to learn what strategies worked well and what else you might try next time.
- How did you do to prepare for this? Is there anything you could do to prepare differently next time?
- You are not there/here **yet**. I know you can get there/here with some more support or more effective effort.
- Remember this is a mistake-tolerant space/classroom/school.
- This work is challenging. I expect that mistakes will be made, and you will learn from them.
- When you think you can't do it, remind yourself that you can't do it **yet**.
- Your mistakes are an opportunities to learn. The types of mistakes you make will help me, help you.
- Let's take a look at some work examples from the beginning of the term/semester/school year to see where you were and note the growth you've made.
- Look at how much progress you made on this! Do you remember how much more challenging this was (yesterday/last week/last year)?
- I know you've been working very hard and wonder if you're too frustrated to continue right now. Let's take a break and come back in 5-minutes/an hour/tomorrow to start again.
- It may be hard, but remember challenging work – even when we're making mistakes – helps our brains grow stronger.
- If it were easy, you wouldn't be learning anything!
- You can do it – it's tough, but you can; your classmates and I are here to help.
- I admire your persistence, and I appreciate your hard work. It will pay off.

When they struggle and need help with strategies

- Where exactly are you struggling? Let's break it down in steps for better understanding.
- Here are two strategies we've been working on. Give each a try and let me know if they help. If not, we can find other strategies you can work on for greater understanding.
- Describe how you ended up here. Listening to your process will let us know where you may have made a misstep.
- Have you practiced this skill in class and at home? Maybe you just need to practice it a few more times to help move the process to your long-term memory.
- I'd suggest trying a few problems on your own or with a classmate. Working through a few difficult problems individually or with a peer may spark your memory.
- Let me try explaining this task a little differently, or we can ask a peer.
- Remember when you were feeling frustrated last week with a similar assignment? Think back and remember what you did to solve it.
- Let's write a plan for practice.

When they succeed with strong effort

- Your time, effort and practice are paying off!
- How were you able to do it? Let's talk about the strategies you used.
- How does it feel to succeed after putting in some much hard work?
- Even though you struggled at times, you were determined to understand the material.
- In the future when you're challenged in this class or another, what skills and strategies might you use again to help you learn?
- There's a certain amount of pride that comes with working hard. Hold onto that feeling and strive to get there again next time you're challenged.
- Congratulations – you really used great strategies for studying, managing your time or applying the skills learned.
- I want you to remember for a moment how challenging this was when you began. Look at how far you have come!
- What choices did you make that contributed to your success?
- It's exciting to see the difference in your work now when I compare it to your earlier work.
- I can see you really enjoyed learning_____.

When they are making progress

- I notice a difference in this work compared to earlier this week/term/school year. You have really grown in this area/concept.
- I see you're using the strategies/tools/notes/etc. we've shared in class. Keep it up and you'll understand the assignment/material.
- You've been working on this for a while, and you didn't quit. How does it feel?
- I see you've spent a great deal of time on this problem/assignment/lab/writing/etc. and you're getting closer to completing it. What strategies have you used? What's another you'd like to try?
- Your hard work is evident in your process/project/essay/assignment.
- Could you please share your strategies/effort/thinking/process with the class, so they can learn from your effort as well?
- You're closer to a solution/answer. What do you need to do to get there or need from me?
- The study/practice plan we developed looks like it's paying off. Keep referencing it for understanding.
- You're on your way. Keep on putting in the time and your progress will continue.
- It's OK. You noticed a mistake in your thinking – that's just as important as understanding the problem/assignment/lab. Now is the time to keep on keeping on. Your hard work and use of strategies will get you there.

When they succeed easily without effort

- Wow! You already understand this. I need to find something that's more challenging, so you'll learn and grow.
- It looks like your skills weren't really challenged by this assignment. How would you like to be challenged?
- You breezed right through that assignment/paper/lab. Sorry for wasting your time.
- You already understand the material in this assignment/unit. I don't want you to be bored, so I have an exciting challenge ready for you. I know you'll enjoy it and learn a lot!
- You've already learned this material on your own. Let's use that same motivation to take you farther.
- You're ready for something more difficult.
- What would you like to work on next?
- What topic would you like to learn more about next?

Growth-Minded Framing

Framing student learning is just as important as providing feedback for it. Framing is your opportunity to build a culture for learning before students begin to work - a place to communicate tolerance for mistakes, how we learn from mistakes and expect and accept challenges. When you do so, you communicate clearly how learning will take place and your confidence in your students' ability to learn. Students will respond by meeting your expectations!

Creating Classroom Culture

- I don't expect you to know this material. Since it's new this will be an opportunity to stretch. So let's do it!
- Today's learning objective will give everyone an opportunity to stretch.
- Today, your brain will get stronger through expending effort to learn this difficult concept.
- This pre-assessment will let me know, who may understand material in the new unit and who may not. I will adjust my teaching based on what you know or don't know.
- I really want us to stretch beyond our comfort zone on this. When we do, our brains will grow!
- If you make a mistake on this assignment, I want you first to share it with a partner/your group and then report out the mistake to the whole class. We're likely to find both shared and unique mistakes that will help us learn.
- With your partner, please share one thing that is really confusing about our current work.
- The point of the lesson is learning. For all us to learn together, I need to know what parts are unclear so we can all meet our learning target.
- Today's target for learning is _____. By tomorrow our goal is _____.
- I do not expect you to know this already. I am here to help you learn difficult material.
- Today, I want you to challenge yourself. I'll put 10 minutes on the timer for you to put forth a focused effort to learn this. Remember to use the learning strategies that are posted on the wall.
- Today's lesson is very challenging. I am not going to hold you accountable for understanding all of it right away, but I want you to give it a first try.
- This is just the first draft—you'll have lots of chances to improve it.
- I want you to push yourselves to tackle this concept. Think of your brain stretching and working like a muscle. You may initially feel the ache of effort, but it will pay off and make you stronger.
- You won't be graded on this. It's time to practice, fail and repeat until you begin to understand the material.
- Remember in this class FAIL, can also mean: First Attempt In Learning.
- We're in the learning zone today. Mistakes will help us!

Setting Learning Expectations

- I **know** that everyone in this class has the ability to do this, so I have set the bar high. Struggle and mistakes are expected.
- This will be a challenging concept to learn, but all of us can reach the goal.

- If it were easy, we wouldn't be learning. So expect to stretch in this class!
- I'll be asking you to share your learning process in this class, so be sure to communicate with me about your progress so I can provide support to you.
- I am going to push you all to learn more because that's part of my job! Supporting you in doing so is another important part of my job, and you'll receive that as well.
- This is challenging. If you haven't felt the reward yet, don't worry you will!
- I know this may be difficult right now, but you're likely to remember it for the rest of your life.
- Here is my challenge for you. I know you can meet it. I want you to challenge yourself.
- I have seen you stretch and succeed in the past. Let's do it again.