

Growth Mindset and Change: Game-Changing Opportunities



CREATE™ Relationships



Introduction

Most changes occur in small increments, some so subtle that they are hardly noticed. But in 2020, there were major disruptions to work, school, and social gatherings. In this project children will create games that require flexible thinking to help them deal with dramatic change and gain a sense of confidence in dealing with it. Whether reacting to change or working to make it happen, having a *growth mindset*—a view of self and the world that is based on optimism and accepting one's own mistakes—is essential. Children will use the CREATE framework which instills *can do* attitudes and fosters relationships that help people move forward when they face challenges. The game design process teaches how to set goals, identify several paths forward, respond flexibly to unexpected challenges, and succeed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will:

- build awareness of *growth mindset* and how it is different from a *fixed mindset*;
- identify a series of changes that have been challenges for them personally, within their community, the nation, or the world;
- create and play an original game that enables players to select a variety of paths and choose how to respond to ever-changing challenges; and
- identify ways to apply the *growth mindset* to the changes and challenges they face in everyday life.

Vocabulary

growth mindset	plan
fixed mindset	pathways
flexible	options
challenge	strategies
opportunity	success
disposable mistakes	optimism

Supplies

- Crayola® Erasable Colored Pencils
- Paper for sketching draft games
- Cardboard or a blank game board
- Blank cards
- Model Magic® for game pieces and dice
- Crayola Markers or Washable Paint
- Brush Pens

Prepare

Select and organize an appropriate space where the game can be designed and modified over time. Practice making drafts on sketch paper or recycled cardboard. Plan ahead before sculpting with Model Magic since it will dry quickly after the packets are open. The final characters and dice will dry completely in about 24 hours.

Essential Questions

- What is a *growth mindset* and how is it different from a *fixed mindset*?
- Why is optimism important?
- What helps build a sense of confidence?
- What types of challenges help develop a *growth mindset*?
- Why are relationships important to achieve goals?
- What is needed to effectively CREATE relationships?

Guiding Questions

- How can an originally designed game help teach strategic planning, decision making, and how to learn from mistakes?
- How can a challenge be visualized as a set of choices or paths that lead to different outcomes?
- Why is it important to define the goal before making a decision or setting off on a journey?



CELEBRATE STRENGTHS and personal qualities.

RESPECT DIVERSITY by learning what is unique and universal.

ENGAGE FULLY while honoring multiple voices and learning styles.

ACCEPT MISTAKES AS HUMAN LEARNERS since mistakes build growth mindset.

TRUST ONE ANOTHER with positive intent.

EXTEND LEARNING with high expectations.



- Explain that children will be creating an original *Changes and Challenges* board game that shows how people can use mindset and relationships to address changes and challenges. Ask them to think about games that they enjoy playing and imagine a new game where they design the board, rules, and game pieces.
- Discuss the CREATE Relationships framework and why each statement is a pillar that fosters strong relationships with others. Ask children to consider ways they could use those six ideas in their board game. Perhaps the letters could be noted on the dice indicating how players should respond to a challenge. Or each area of the board could represent a part of the framework and guide how everyone will respond when they land in that area.
- Identify the types of characters or game pieces that will be used in the game. These could be realistic and represent people they know or have learned about, or they could represent imaginary characters. What are the goals for players? How do players win? Not all games are competitive. Sometimes rules honor collaboration and the player who helps others the most wins!
- How will cards be used in the game? Perhaps there will be chance or change cards that players are randomly dealt or problem and solution cards that are drawn from a stack throughout the game?



- What changes and challenges do children want to include in the game? These can be realistic and relevant to their current situation or they can be problems they anticipate that have not yet emerged in their school, home, community, or beyond.
- Provide exploration time and feedback as children design draft sketches and decide what environment to draw on the board. What visual paths or steps will players follow from beginning to end? What changes might occur and what decisions will players make along the way? What other game components might they include in their game design?



Have children present their games and invite others to play it (either with family members at home, a small cohort group at school, or remotely using technology that allows players to see the board).



- Refresh children's understanding of *growth mindset* and *fixed mindset*. Invite players to reflect on how they played the game and if their avatars or game pieces used one or both of those during the game.
- Respond to the discussion by creating a chart that compares *fixed mindset* and *growth mindset* and tie this to the behaviors observed during game play or daily life.



For example:

FIXED MINDSET	GROWTH MINDSET
Afraid to make mistakes	See mistakes as a way to learn from experiences
Give up because this seems too difficult	Bravely try again
Everyone has predetermined skills and abilities. We have to live with what we have and can do.	Everyone can learn new skills and grow their brains. Hard work, persistence, and asking for help can turn frustration into success.
We can't do it.	We can't do it, yet!



Addressing challenges during a child-made game helps children gain a sense of mastery and confidence. Connect the strategies and mindsets they used during the game, especially the pillars of CREATE Relationships, to how people can face real-life challenges. Ask children how having a *growth mindset* can lead to more effective problem solving. Instead of conveying the notion that *change happens* to people help children consider the types of change they can create. What needs to be reimaged, modified, and fixed in the world? How can they contribute ideas and energy to support the change they want to see?

▶ For Younger Children

Help young children connect the essence of a *can do growth mindset* with just one part of the CREATE Relationships framework. *Celebrate strengths* or *Accept mistakes as human learners* are easy ways to help young children make these connections. Then discuss the personal challenges they are excited to tackle, perhaps wearing a mask for a long time, remembering how to socially distance by staying six feet from others, taking more responsibility for learning in remote settings, staying focused during remote learning sessions, and sharing what they created with the group using technology. Help them develop a plan for a challenge, talk about the changes that made this necessary, and apply a *growth mindset* to their plan.

Help young children think of a favorite game with simple rules that could be modified to deal with challenges and change. A game board where players can climb ladders to new opportunities and slide down chutes when they make a mistake may feel familiar enough that they can customize the rules and play setting so it feels original.



▶ For Older Children

One strategy for addressing challenges is to reimagine the problem or see a situation from another's point of view. Several key ideas in the CREATE Relationships framework help children change their perspective. *Celebrate strengths*, *Respect diversity*, and *Extend learning with high expectations* fit well with perspective shifting. Ask students to explore a historically based story by viewing it through the lens of someone who was not represented. Why is it important to see how change and challenges affect people whose stories were not told? How can this story become a foundation for a board game where characters face challenges and changes along their journey? How can the board be designed so various paths would lead to different outcomes?



Child Reflections

- How does thinking of ways to CREATE Relationships help people deal with change and work together to overcome challenges?
- Why is having a *growth mindset* important for learning and in life?
- How does creating a game help build skills and confidence for dealing with life's ups and downs?

Adult Reflections

- How does the CREATE Relationships framework help children form meaningful, positive interactions with others?
- In what ways did designing and playing an original game help children gain a sense of mastery and confidence in dealing with change and challenges?
- What benefits did you see from discussions around *growth mindset* and *fixed mindset*? How will you keep those ideas front of mind for yourself and your students?



STANDARDS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Educational standards outline what children should know and be able to do. These recommendations guide how children move through a progression of skills and understandings. This project helps children use a growth mindset while they choose personally relevant challenges, persevere through ever-present changes, and learn from mistakes.

This project aligns with the following educational standards:

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Make strategic use of media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

MATH

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning done by others.
- Use mathematical habits of mind to reason from a quantitative and spatial perspective.
- Demonstrate application of math content to make sense of and solve problems.
- Persevere and automatically employ the mathematical habits of mind to find solutions.

SCIENCE

- Understand that events have causes, sometimes simple and sometimes multifaceted.
- Decipher causal relationships and the mechanisms by which they are mediated.
- Consider and understand conditions, critical elements, and factors that affect/control stability and rates of change, for both designed and natural systems.

VISUAL ARTS

- Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.
- Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.
- Revise artwork in progress on the basis of insights gained through discussion.
- Select and describe works of art that illustrate daily life experiences of oneself and others.
- Determine messages communicated by an image. “Read” a work of art as text.
- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.