

Theme Three: Mindset language: action plans.

Alternative Activity 1: Traffic Lights Game.

Learning Objective:

- To consider the language associated with fixed and growth mindsets, and to understand that some language can be helpful or unhelpful in terms of how it affects our motivation to learn.

Materials required:

- Traffic lights and statements

Worksheet available?

- No.

Activity description

- Begin by asking pupils about the comments we hear when people talk about success and failure. The following are comments you might hear from pupils (more are included in the description for Activity 1):
 - “You’re so clever”
 - “This is definitely one of your talents”
 - “You’re so lucky – you can do it so easily”
 - “You just don’t have a natural talent for this”
 - “Never mind, you are good at other things”
 - “This just isn’t your thing”
- Discuss a few of the examples with the class to highlight the difference between fixed and growth mindset statements.
- At this stage, highlight the fact that the messages we hear might affect how we *feel* about learning. For example, we might hear messages that make us feel good, but they might not be very helpful. These comments might convey the message that the reason we are good at something is just down to talent, something innate that we’re born with, as opposed to the fact that we’ve worked really hard at something. Alternatively, if we are told that we do not have a talent for something, we may believe that there is no point in trying at all.
- In order to inspire learning, the message that we want to convey is that individuals are in control of their own learning, and that we can all get better at things, it just takes effort and hard work which is something that we are all able to do. (For more information about the effect of language and praise, refer to the slides in the training day presentation).

- Give out traffic lights to the pupils (pupils can each have their own set of traffic lights, or work as a group).
- There are two ways you can use the traffic lights:

1. Just Green and Red (simple)

- Read out the statements and ask pupils to hold up the green light for growth mindset statements, and the red traffic light for fixed mindset statements.

2. Green, Amber and Red (advanced)

- If you want to make this game a bit more complex, you can include the amber traffic light.
- Green remains the same- pupils hold this up in response to a growth mindset statement.
- Amber should be held up for positive fixed mindset statements (i.e. when the statement is something that might make them feel good at the time, but is actually a fixed mindset statement).
- Red should be held up for negative fixed mindset statements.

Examples:

- You tried really hard on that task, well done (GREEN).
 - You have a real talent for that (AMBER or RED).
 - Football just isn't your thing (RED).
- Discuss their answers, and recast if necessary. The amber traffic lights in particular often stimulate discussion and debate.