

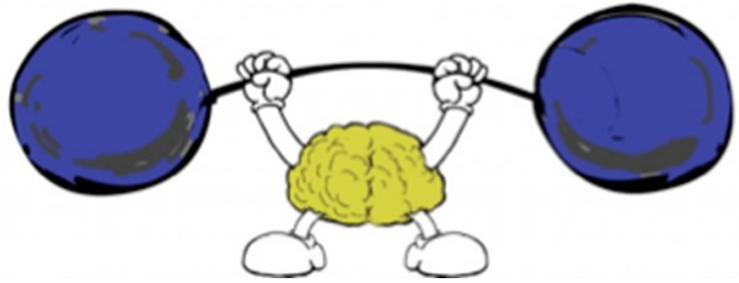
APRIL 2013

AAP NEWSLETTER



ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

MINDSET



Earlier this year in my November newsletter, I briefly discussed the idea of “mindset.” Since that time, the Mason Crest staff spent four weeks together exploring the book *Mindset* by Carol Dweck. We believe that the ideas behind this philosophy strongly align with the culture we aim to foster here at Mason Crest Elementary!

What is Mindset?

According to Carol Dweck, there are two types of mindsets. People who have a **growth mindset** believe that ability can be improved over time with effort, hard work, and dedication. On the other hand, people with a **fixed mindset** believe that abilities such as intelligence, athletic ability, and artistic ability are fixed traits, which cannot be changed. People do not necessarily have one mindset or the other. Rather, the mindsets form a continuum and vary depending on the activity or experience being undertaken.

At Mason Crest, we believe that all students, teachers, and parents should strive to embrace a growth mindset in any situation. It is our goal to foster this mindset in our students so that they **KNOW** they are capable of learning at high levels. We want students to be risk takers, to embrace challenges, and to understand that learning is not always supposed to be easy.

During our professional development, grade level teams developed action plans to implement with their students to encourage growth-minded thinking. We also had several parent participants. Monica Buckhorn, Rock Rockenbach, and Sarah Given read *Mindset* with the staff and brainstormed a list of strategies parents can use at home with their children to encourage growth-minded thinking. On the following pages, you will see some of the thinking from our course, as well as ways you can encourage a growth mindset with your children at home!

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Growth Mindset Sentence Stems

Rather than praising children for “being smart” or completing a task quickly, try to praise effort and persistence. The sentence stems below encourage students to take on new challenges, rather than to fear failure.

- I like that you took on that challenging project!
- It will take a lot of work, but you’re going to learn a lot of great things.
- I’m really excited you are stretching yourself and working to learn hard things.
- I really admire the way you concentrated and finished that.
- That picture has so many beautiful colors. Tell me about them.
- You put so much thought into this.
- The passion you put into that gives me a real feeling of joy. How do you feel about it?
- Whoops. I guess that was too easy. I apologize for wasting your time. Let’s do something you can really learn from.
- I can see you are working hard. You must feel proud.
- I can see you put a lot of effort into that.
- I liked the effort you put in, but let’s work together some more and figure out what it is you don’t understand.
- It may take more time for you to catch on to this and be comfortable with this material, but if you keep at it like this you will.
- Everyone learns in a different way. Let’s keep trying to find the way that works for you.
- I’m proud that you’ve stuck to it and kept learning.

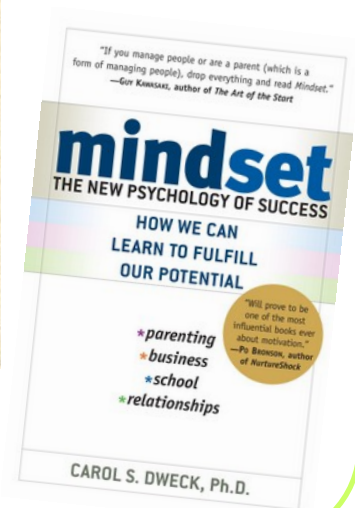
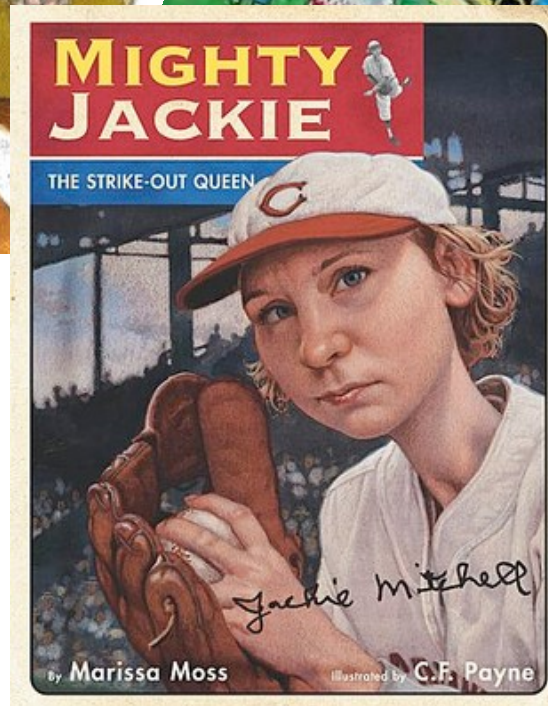
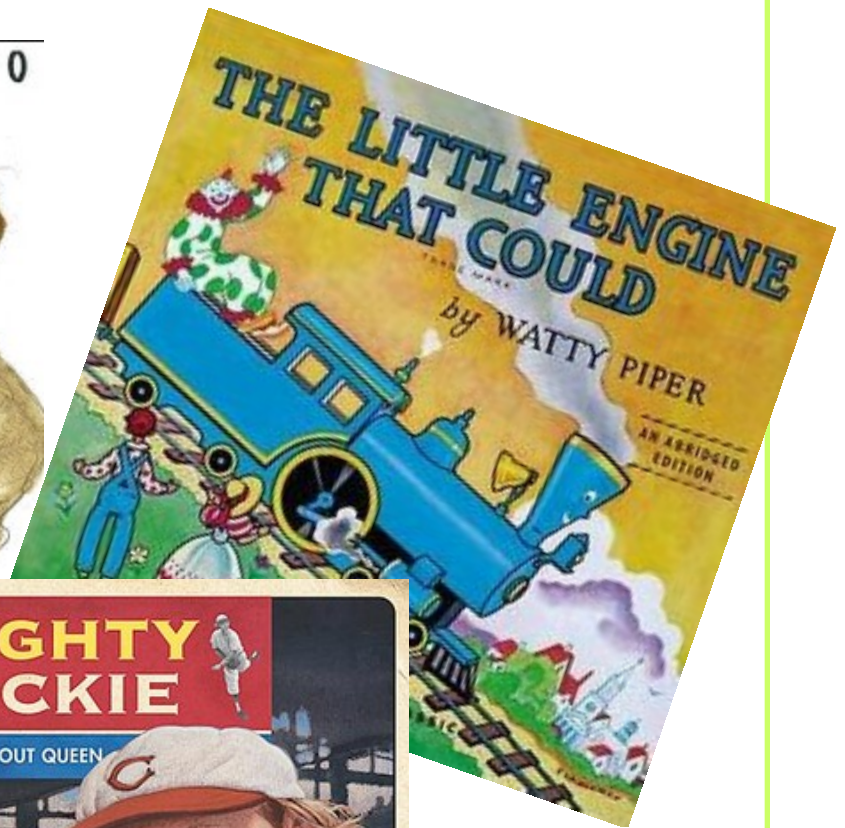
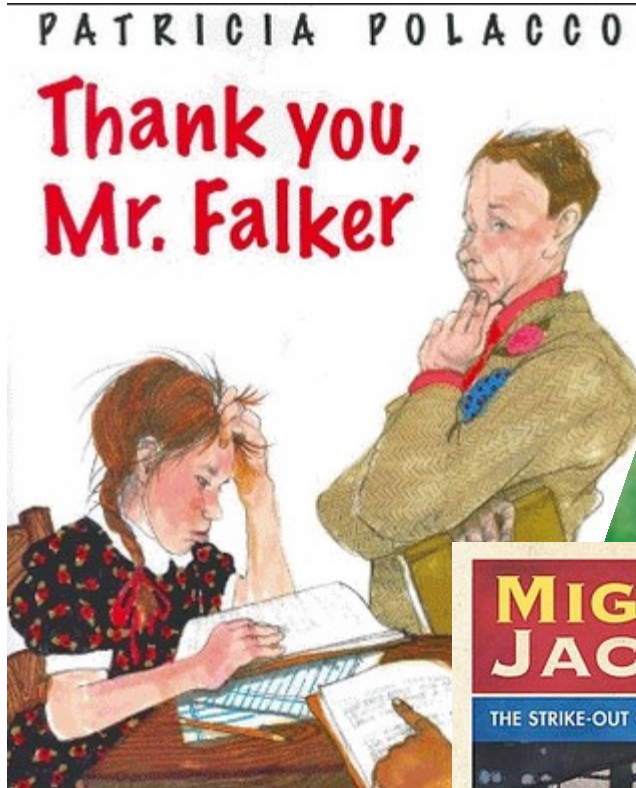
Exercise Your Brain!

Teach your children the importance of exercising their brains. Even though the brain is not a muscle, it works a lot like one. In the same way that we make our arms stronger by doing pull-ups, push-ups, and lifting weights, we can make our brains stronger by thinking in new, challenging ways.

Talk about “exercising your brain” with your children at home and be sure to model the same behaviors yourself! By embracing a growth mindset and being willing to make mistakes, you are modeling that it’s ok to make mistakes and learn from them.

Books that Promote a Growth Mindset

If you're looking for good books to read at home with your children, check out some of these stories that promote a growth mindset!



For some of your own reading, check out *Mindset* by Carol Dweck!