elevate
education

STUDENT ELEVATION

Student Template Pack

Activity 1 – Belief

Let's get a few things out of the way early on: do we think you can do whatever you believe you can? No. If I sit around and say over and over again, "I believe I can get top marks in the country." Will I? Obviously not. Secondly, can talking about belief sound clichéd and simplistic? Do clichés like "If you can believe it, you can achieve it" sound corny? 100% yes. But does that mean that it is irrelevant? Research would suggest that the answer is no.

In this activity, we are going to be talking about this idea of belief, and it makes perfect sense if you feel sceptical. Belief is something we hear a lot of, on TV shows and movies – it's always the team that believes in themselves that ends up winning. It all sounds great when Hollywood does it, but what does belief actually do to your performance at school. Before we get too academic here, it's important to note there is a lot of science behind what beliefs students adopt in school and this module is built around that research. Most notably is the work of Carol Dweck from Stanford University, who has dedicated her research to looking in to the "mindset" of top performing students. Put simply, top students aren't the most amazingly talented, naturally gifted individuals, but almost all of them have one key thing in common – they have a **Growth Mindset.** We will be talking about what that means throughout the activity, however, these students hold the following belief:

- Success is based on hard work not talent or IQ.
- The harder you work, the better you become at something.
- Problems can be corrected. These students believe that doing badly doesn't mean you are stupid, it just means that you need to make changes to do better next time.

This will form the crux of the following exercise. However, before we give away all of the answers, get started and work through the survey on the next page. As you progress through you will be evaluated on where you beliefs are currently sitting. For this exercise to work, you need to **<u>completely honest</u>** with yourself. No one else needs to see this document if you don't like them to, however it will help you to discuss your thoughts and responses when the teacher invites you to. If you are honest with yourself and your classmates, this exercise will go a long way to helping you develop a growth mindset!

Mind-Set – Workbook

Start with this simple quiz

Your level of intelligence will determine your results at school.

Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly agree
1	2	3

Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
4	5	6

Your intelligence is something that you can't change very much.

Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly agree
1	2	3

Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
4	5	6

You can learn new things but you can't really change your basic intelligence

Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly agree
1	2	3

Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
4	5	6

Add up the numbers that correspond with your answer.

How did you go?

☐ + ☐ + ☐ = ☐

What does my score mean?

3 – 6	7 – 12	13 – 18

Fixed	Partially Fixed	Growth
In a fixed mindset students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb.	*Both mindsets are widely held. Generally we find about 40% of people, students and adults, endorse the growth mindset, 40% the fixed and the remainder are in the middle – they can't make up their minds.*	*In a growth mindset students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don't necessarily think everyone's the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it.*

http://onedublin.org/2012/06/19/stanford-universitys-carol-dweck-on-the-growth-mindset-and-education/

What is the point of all of this?

Dr Carol Dweck of Stanford University, one of the world's leading experts on student performance has found that the number 1 predictor for how well a student performs over a number of years is not IQ, or talent, but your mindset.

Dweck found that students whose grades tended to go up over a number of years, had a certain set of beliefs that she referred to as a "growth mindset". On the other hand, Dweck found that students whose grades tended to remain static or even decrease had a set of beliefs that she referred to as a "fixed mindset".

Don't worry if it looks like you have a fixed mindset!

The good news is that it can be changed!

Answer these questions:

What do you think is the highest GCSE / A level result you could get right now?

_____

Why do you believe that this is the highest result you could get?   For example, why don't you believe that you could beat this result?

Do you think you prepare and study the same way for exams and assignments as the students who are top of the class?

Yes   No

Do you think you spend as much time preparing or studying for exams and assignments as the top students in your class?

Yes   No

Do you always prepare the same way for an exam?

Yes   No

Have you spent time trying to correct your past mistakes?

Yes   No

We would normally guess that your answers to these questions were No, No, Yes, Yes. In this case, the reason that you might not have done so well, is not because you lack intelligence, but rather because there is something wrong with the way you work through the subject.

In other words, maybe it isn't you, maybe it is just your approach. The good thing is that your approach can easily be changed. Change your approach and you almost certainly will change your results.

Can you achieve higher than the GCSE/A level result you wrote at the beginning?

The answer is clearly YES

But how do we do it?

Write down 10 things you could do right now to lift your grades

If you were to make the 10 changes listed above do you think you could achieve higher grades?

YES   **NO**

Activity 2 – Set Your Goal

When you get home from school in the afternoon, you have 2 basic choices: study or do something fun. When we think about what we should do, our brain basically has a default setting that is set to fun, and as a result, 9 times out of 10 we pick fun over study. However, 1 time out of 10, we pick study. Why?

Normally, the reason is that something has changed that makes study a higher priority than watching afternoon kid's shows. The thing that changes is normally the fact that we have an exam or an assignment due the next day. In this case, the urgency increases the priority of study, and we choose it over fun. This is exactly what goal-setting does: it lifts the importance of study, so it becomes more important and urgent than most of the little time wasting activities we have in our normal schedules. Goal setting has one major impact on you then: it ensures your brain doesn't automatically go to the default and pick fun. Instead, the brain calculates "if we do the fun activity, we might miss out on the goal. The goal is more important. Let's pick study."

That's it. Nice and simple. No magic. The goal simply provides you with the reason to work. The amount of work we actually do will in turn be determined by how compelling that reason is. Which leads us onto an important point. A goal is often compared to a target. But it's not. **A goal is not a target.** A target implies something that we would like to do or hit. It is sort of like a wish. However, to be compelling enough to get you sit to down and work, a goal needs to be more than this. We need to have an emotional connection to it. It needs to be something we really, really want. The following exercise will walk you through how to set a goal, but more importantly, how to create a strong emotional connection to that goal.

Work through the exercise and make sure you are being **completely honest**. Don't be afraid to set yourself high goals and indulge your largest aspirations. This isn't a question of "where do I think I will end up?" but "where do **I want** to end up?" Think about career choices, university courses and what you would like to be doing straight after school. Lastly, whilst this may be a very personal exercise for you, it does help to share these with your teachers, parents and/or classmates. If you are comfortable to tell certain people your goal it will help to make that goal feel more real, increasing you motivation and accountability to actually achieve it!

Goal Setting – Workbook

What do I want to do after high school?

Option 1: _____ at _____

Option 2: _____ at _____

Option 3: _____ at _____

↓

Do I need certain grades?

YES   NO

Scores: _____

Other Requirements:

_____

↓

Why am I working towards this goal?

How will Year 13 help me achieve my goal?

What am I willing to give up to achieve my goal?

What is really important to me?
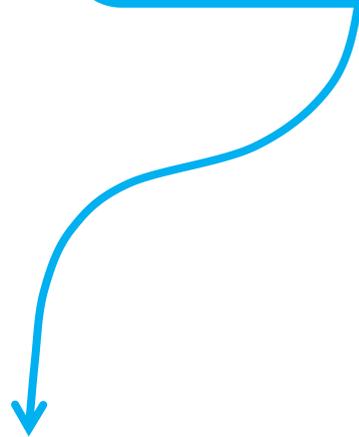
What obstacles am I likely to face?

Problem	Solution
1.	• •
2.	• •
3.	• •
4.	• •
5.	• •

Create your support team

Support Member	Role
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

What if don't get my first option?

MAKE THE GOAL REAL