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Assignment 5- Developing a Growth Mindset Plan
Creating Significant Learning Environments EDLD-5313
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PART A: Developing a Growth Mindset Plan

Introduction

For years, teachers have been encouraged to "teach a growth mindset" as if it were a magic recipe or silver bullet for student success. But, the recent Case Western Reserve University meta-analysis, which reviewed over 300 studies, found that mindset alone does not produce significant or lasting academic gains. According to Dweck (2006), mindset beliefs influence motivation, but as the Case Western meta-analysis confirms, mindset requires environmental supports as well to produce measurable outcomes. This reinforces Harapnuik's (2023) argument that learning environments, not slogans drive transformation. This means we as educators must rethink how we use mindset in our classrooms. We can no longer teach growth mindset as a motivational slogan. Instead, it must be shown. Real growth mindset needs to be supported by the learning environment, instructional design, emotional safety, and the relationships students experience daily.

My goal is to create a learning culture where students believe growth is possible because the environment makes growth possible. This plan explains how I will adjust my approach, how I will model growth mindset authentically, and how these ideas connect to my overall work creating significant learning environments and implementing my VR Innovation Plan.

1. Adjusting My Use of Growth Mindset

Growth mindset cannot stand alone. Students don't grow simply because we tell them to "try harder." Growth requires:

- Clear structures
- Meaningful feedback
- Safe relationships
- Opportunities to try, fail, and try again

- Instruction that supports learning differences
- Authentic tasks that matter to students

The meta-analysis confirms what many teachers already see: students only adopt a growth mindset when the environment supports it. So, instead of teaching mindset as a lesson, I will integrate it into:

✔ my language
✔ my routines
✔ my instructional structures
✔ my VR-based learning experiences
✔ my feedback cycles
✔ and my classroom expectations

As Fink (2013) notes, significant learning requires alignment between learner motivation, authentic application, and meaningful tasks. Growth mindset is strengthened when placed within this type of intentionally designed learning environment. Growth mindset becomes a practice, not a poster. The ultimate goal is progress, not performance!

2. Helping Learners Develop a Growth Mindset

To help learners adopt a growth mindset, I will:

Create a predictable, emotionally safe learning environment

This is essential because students cannot take risks when they fear embarrassment, failure, or judgment.

Use strategic feedback

I will focus feedback on effort, strategy, and improvement, not ability:

- "You're improving because you tried a new strategy."
- "Your revision made your thinking clearer."
- "What you learned from the mistake matters more than the mistake."

Normalize productive struggle

We will celebrate challenge instead of avoiding it. This includes reflection circles, mistake journals, and VR simulations where students safely “try again.”

Model my own learning

Students must see me working through struggle, asking questions, and being excited about my own progress.

Provide multiple ways to learn

Growth only happens when students feel capable. VR experiences, hands-on tasks, small-group supports, visuals, and scaffolds make growth accessible for all learners, especially SPED and multilingual learners.

3. Other Factors That Impact Growth Mindset

Growth mindset requires more than belief. Students need:

- Belonging
- Emotional safety
- Relevant tasks
- Teacher modeling
- Clear expectations
- Opportunities to revise and retry
- Access to tools that support learning differences

Mindset thrives when the whole ecosystem supports learning.

4. Modeling “Yet”

The message of “yet” is powerful, but it must be authentic. I will model “yet” by:

- Sharing moments when I struggle and narrating the strategy I chose next

- Celebrating drafts, revisions, and progress- not perfection
- Saying things like:
    - “You can’t do it yet, and that’s okay, learning is a process.”
    - “Let’s find the strategy that gets you closer.”

VR naturally reinforces the message of “yet” because it creates low-stakes opportunities to retry, revise decisions, and see consequences immediately. This aligns with growth mindset principles by shifting learners from performance to iterative improvement. In VR especially, students see “yet” in action, they retry simulations, practice skills, and explore without punishment.

5. Growth Mindset, Feedback, and Cheating

When students fear being seen as “not smart,” they avoid feedback and sometimes cheat. Growth mindset, when paired with safety and structure changes this:

- Feedback becomes part of learning, not a judgment.
- Mistakes are treated as data.
- Cheating decreases because the focus shifts from performing to understanding.
- Students learn that intelligence is not something you prove, it’s something you grow.

6. Limiting Grade Obsession & the Role of Grit

Many students obsess over grades because they believe grades define their intelligence. Growth mindset helps shift that narrative.

Grit supports mindset when used correctly, meaning:

- **Perseverance, not perfection**
- **Commitment, not burnout**
- **Courage, not suffering in silence**

But grit must NOT become forced rigor. Students should not be told to "push through" when they are overwhelmed or unsupported.

Researchers warn that grit can be misapplied when used to justify excessive rigor or when students are pushed to persist without adequate supports (Duckworth, 2016). It should enhance resilience, not excuse inequitable learning conditions.

Healthy grit = supported persistence.

7. Preventing Growth Mindset From Becoming a Fad

Growth mindset becomes a fad when:

- Teachers say the words but don't change the environment
- Students receive slogans instead of support
- Mindset is used to blame students for not trying hard enough

To prevent misuse:

- I will align mindset with real instructional design, especially VR experiences
- I will provide scaffolds, choices, and multiple entry points
- I will use mindset to support equity, not pressure
- I will ensure reflection is part of every lesson
- I will teach teachers and students that mindset is a tool, not a judgment

8. Growth Mindset Is a Start, But Not Enough

Mindset opens the door, but learning environments determine what happens next.

Students need:

- Design that supports autonomy

- Lessons that matter
- Hands-on exploration
- Space to solve real problems
- Instruction aligned with their identities, needs, and interests

Mindset shifts beliefs. Significant learning environments shift outcomes.

9. Moving Learners Toward a Learner's Mindset

While growth mindset focuses on the belief that ability can improve, a Learner's Mindset emphasizes ownership, purpose, and ongoing engagement with learning. This distinction reframes students from passive recipients to active constructors of knowledge.

A Learner's Mindset goes beyond "I can grow" to:

- "I am responsible for my learning."
- "I understand how I learn best."
- "I take ownership of my growth."
- "I pursue learning because it matters."

To support this, I will:

- Use VR to offer choices and authentic experiences
- Give students ownership over reflection, strategy selection, and goal setting
- Shift language from *teacher-driven* to *learner-driven*
- Create meaningful, real-world tasks

Students become active participants, not passive recipients.

10. Connection to My Innovation Plan

Growth mindset is essential to my VR Innovation Plan because VR requires:

- Risk-taking
- Curiosity
- Exploration
- Iteration
- Reflection

Students and teachers must believe they can grow in new environments, with new tools, and new challenges. VR gives students opportunities to fail safely, try alternate strategies, and see immediate feedback, which strengthens mindset practices authentically.

PART A Conclusion

My updated Growth Mindset Plan recognizes that mindset does not work alone. It must live inside a Significant Learning Environment that supports belonging, curiosity, relevance, and ownership. This plan outlines how I will build that environment and model the mindset I want students to adopt as learners, innovators, and leaders.

PART B: Final Compilation & Integration of Course Assignments

Introduction

This final compilation brings together the major assignments from the course, *A New Culture of Learning*, *My Learning Philosophy*, *Situational Factors & 3-Column Table*, *UbD Design*, and the *Growth Mindset Plan.* Together, these works show how I think about learning, how I design learning, and how I plan to create transformative, student-centered environments using Virtual Reality in DeSoto ISD.

My goal is to show clearly that all these elements fit into one cohesive approach to innovation.

How the Pieces Fit Together

1. A New Culture of Learning

This assignment helped me understand why traditional instruction no longer meets the needs of modern learners. It grounded my innovation plan in exploration, curiosity, and community, essential elements for Significant Learning Environments.

2. Learning Philosophy

My philosophy blends constructivist and humanistic theories. It explains that learning happens through exploration and belongs to the learner. This philosophy is the *heart* of my VR design work.

3. Learning Environment / Situational Factors + 3-Column Table

This work forced me to contextualize my learners, district, challenges, and opportunities. It prepared the foundation needed for designing meaningful and realistic VR learning experiences.

4. UbD Design Template

UbD allowed me to structure my innovation work into clear outcomes, assessments, and learning plans that align with TEKS and CCMR goals. It connected the *why* to the *how*.

5. Growth Mindset Plan (Part A)

This final component explains how I will support students emotionally, cognitively, and academically as they navigate innovative, immersive learning experiences.

Together, these assignments show a complete picture of how I design learning environments where:

- Students feel safe
- Instruction is meaningful
- VR becomes purposeful
- Equity is prioritized
- Growth is achievable

- Learning is significant

How This Supports My Innovation Plan

Everything in this compilation directly strengthens my VR Innovation Plan.

- **Learning Philosophy** → shapes the design of VR tasks
- **Situational Factors** → ensure VR fits the real needs of DeSoto ISD
- **3-Column Table** → aligns goals, activities, and assessments
- **UbD** → structures the VR learning experience
- **Growth Mindset Plan** → ensures students are emotionally ready to learn, explore, and take risks

Together, they create a sustainable vision for how VR can transform learning in DeSoto ISD.

PART B Conclusion

The ePortfolio section is organized so that each artifact links to the next in a logical progression—from philosophy to environment, from design to mindset—ensuring visitors can follow the development of my innovation plan step by step. My e-Portfolio can be found here: https://jhandsome1.wixsite.com/jasmineheportfolio/s-projects-side-by-side-3

This compilation represents my growth as a designer, educator, and change agent. It shows the logic, research, and intentional planning behind my innovation work. More importantly, it shows how focusing on learning, not technology, is what truly drives meaningful and equitable student outcomes. Collectively, these artifacts demonstrate a unified design approach grounded in learner-centered philosophy, strategic instructional planning, and innovation aligned to district goals.

References

Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. Scribner.
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Fink, L. D. (2013). *Creating significant learning experiences*. Jossey-Bass.
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