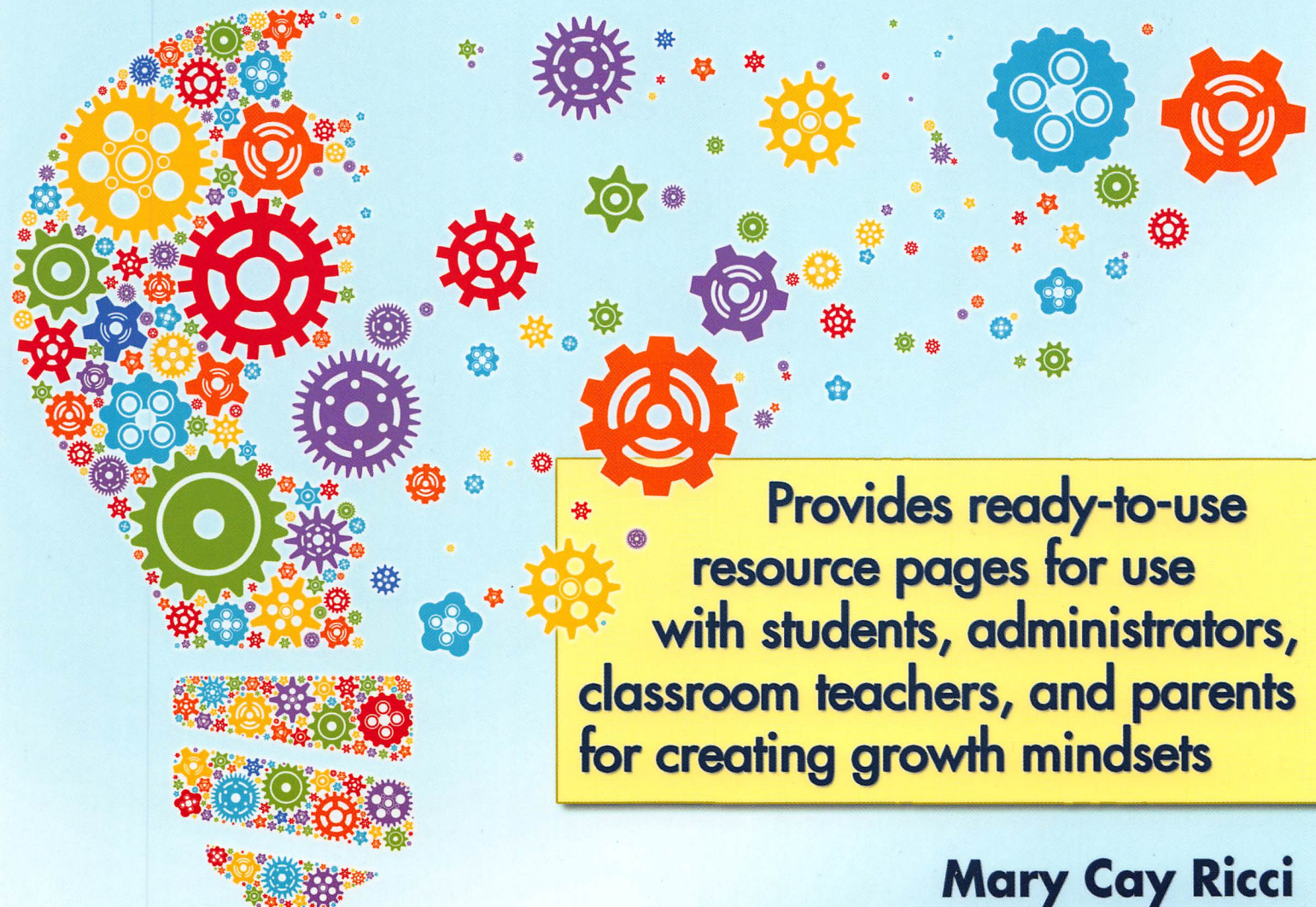


**READY-TO-USE
RESOURCES FOR**

Mindsets in the Classroom

Everything Educators Need for School Success



**Provides ready-to-use
resource pages for use
with students, administrators,
classroom teachers, and parents
for creating growth mindsets**

Mary Cay Ricci

Recognizing Fixed and Growth Mindset Words and Actions

Evaluation of video clips from movies is another way to view fixed and growth mindsets in a variety of situations. The Observation of Fixed and Growth Mindset form in Resource 7 (p. 17) is a simple, yet effective way to ask both adults and students to view a clip and observe the characters' words and actions. As educators or students view the film clip, they will look for evidence of both fixed and growth mindsets.

One of my favorite clips to use is the Chris Gardner interview clip in *The Pursuit of Happyness* (Alper, Clayman, D'Esposito, Zee, & Muccino, 2006; see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHXKitKAT1E>). In this scene, many of the gentlemen around the table who are participating in the interview demonstrate fixed mindset actions from the beginning; no eye contact when shaking hands, facial expressions, etc. Conversely, Chris Gardner demonstrates growth mindset thinking through his words and actions, for example, when he references not knowing something he strongly states, "I will find the answer." A variety of other video clips for viewing fixed and growth mindset can be found in Figure 1.

After viewing the chosen video clip, discuss what was observed with the group. Some discussion may occur regarding the interpretation of what was seen. This exercise can open the eyes of all who are participating and allow self-reflection—particularly in the area of nonverbal actions that could inadvertently be sending a fixed mindset message. I also like to use this exercise as a formative assessment for both teachers and students.

Fixed Mindset Practices

Monitoring and reviewing progress toward a growth mindset environment is as important as building one. Chapter 9 will offer a resource focused on what to "Look For" as you build your growth mindset environment. However, we need to take a fresh look around our schools in order to identify fixed mindset thinking.

Observation of Fixed and Growth Mindset

| Character | Fixed Mindset Statements and Actions | Growth Mindset Statements and Actions | Other Observations |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |



Ready-to-Use Resources for Mindsets in the Classroom

- Kathy Bates as Miss Sue in *The Blind Side* (Hancock, 2009)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38Xuz-r8Q5U&feature=youtu.be&list=PLfM-YfRN00toPuUcmpGa2avMI6QOYtbUi>
- Surf scout scene in *Surf's Up* (Brannon & Buck 2007)
<http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/surfs-up/surf-scout>
- Wonders of science in *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2* (Cameron & Pearn, 2013)
<http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/cloudy-with-a-chance-of-meatballs-2/wonders-of-science>
- Test launches in *October Sky* (Johnston, 1999; this is a good one for students to observe resiliency)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP_OM5VVcSo

FIGURE 1. A FEW OPTIONS FOR OBSERVING FIXED AND GROWTH MINDSET.

When I visit schools now, I notice things that I would have previously overlooked when I was a classroom teacher. I always make a point to look around and see what is lining the halls and classrooms. Something that can be overlooked in schools trying to build a growth mindset culture is the fixed mindset displays and bulletin boards. For example, in one elementary school, I saw a bulletin board that had big letters saying “Top Dog” on it. I noticed that student papers that were displayed were, for the most part, neat and correct. What message does this send about the value of struggle, errors, and failure? How might the phrase “Top Dog” be interpreted by students?

At the elementary level, I have noticed lots of charts displaying stickers for students who have mastered basic facts in a given time period—note that just the students who have mastery are recognized with a sticker. I saw no stickers for showing improvement or growth in basic facts. By the way, what about those stickers? Take a look at what some of those stickers that we use in the classroom say: “Perfect!”, “100%”, “A+”. Throw those away and find stickers that celebrate effort, growth, or progress. Instead of giving parents bumper stickers that read “My son is an honor roll student at Chestnut Hill Elementary School” why not say, “My son demonstrates perseverance at Chestnut Hill Elementary School” or “My daughter puts forth great effort at Chestnut Hill Elementary School”?

Reflect on your school celebrations as well. Several educators have asked about the value of the often-used honor roll assembly. One educator in Colorado explained to me that in her school they hold these assemblies quarterly and the same kids are always sitting in the back two rows—those who are never recognized. If this is an event that you hold in your school or district, then gather your leadership team together and ask them what the purpose of this event is. If the response is to recognize good grades, I would argue that the “reward” was the grade. (On a side note—

some of the A's were made without a whole lot of effort from the students; they were underchallenged.) If the response is to motivate others, then, take note, are the same students being unrecognized every time? Is this assembly really motivating others? If this is an event that can't possibly be eliminated due to outside pressure, then use the time to celebrate growth and hard work rather than grades.

Look at all of your school practices through a growth mindset lens (see Resource 53 later in this book). Challenge your staff to do the same and you may be surprised about what you see.