Chapter Two

Lesson 2.1 - A Baby’s Mindset

Main Idea: We all start out life with a “can do” attitude – embracing and mastering difficult physical and mental challenges. A baby’s determination, when learning to walk and talk, exemplifies the growth mindset.

Suggestions:
- Read the lesson with your students, and discuss the reflection questions.
- Encourage students to share one of their baby pictures and to write a funny story about something that happened when they were a baby.

Lesson 2.2 - Students are Sometimes Puzzling

Main Idea: As children get older, some begin to lose the baby’s mindset (growth mindset), and shift toward a fixed mindset. Nathan is excited when faced with challenging puzzles, while Emily is easily discouraged, and quickly exclaims that the puzzles are boring. The dialogue between Nathan and Emily reveals that a person’s mindset affects his or her behavior and willingness to put forth effort in difficult situations.

Suggestions:
- Read the lesson with your students, and discuss the reflection questions.
- Read the following quote to your students and ask them to explain and elaborate on it.

“It’s one thing to pass up a puzzle. It’s another to pass up an opportunity that’s important to your future.”

Carol Dweck

Lesson 2.3 - John McEnroe

Main Idea: John McEnroe’s biography exemplifies the fixed mindset. His decisions and actions are rigid and inflexible; they lack the pliability that indicates growth.

Suggestions:
- After reading the McEnroe biography, assist students in compiling a list of characteristics that describe the fixed mindset.
- Read the description of the fixed mindset below. Ask students to highlight evidence in the McEnroe biography that suggests he has a fixed mindset.

The fixed mindset is the belief that basic human qualities are set in stone and are unchangeable. People with a fixed mindset believe that intelligence and character – as well as athletic, artistic and musical talents – are mostly determined by genetics; that they are inherited. An individual with a fixed mindset is concerned about hiding deficiencies, and will not take risks, avoiding challenging situations for fear of failure. He or she
believes that if something requires a lot of effort, the difficulty must be due to a lack some innate ability.

- Encourage students to provide examples of other individuals who exemplify the fixed mindset.

**Lesson 2.4 - Michael Jeffery Jordan**

*Main Idea:* Michael Jordan’s biography exemplifies the growth mindset. His growth mindset is reflected in his decisions and actions.

*Suggestions:*

- After reading the Jordan biography, assist students in compiling a list of characteristics that describe the growth mindset.

- Read the description of the growth mindset below. Ask students to highlight evidence in the Jordan biography that suggests he has a growth mindset.

The *growth mindset* is the belief that intelligence, character, and other abilities can improve through effort and practice. Individuals with the growth mindset look at difficult challenges as opportunities to get smarter, or to learn something new. When someone with a growth mindset experiences failure, that person sees it as a *temporary* setback, or an opportunity to grow and learn. Individuals with the growth mindset believe that more effort results in more ability.

- Encourage students to provide examples of other individuals who exemplify the growth mindset.

**Lesson 2.5 - Mindset Questionnaire**

*Main Idea:* The questionnaire will help students review the characteristics of the fixed and growth mindsets.

*Suggestions:*

- Provide an opportunity for students to reflect and answer in writing the following question: Would you describe yourself as having a *fixed*, or a *growth* mindset? Explain, and give four examples to support your answer.