

About This Unit

Children who use a growth mindset—the belief that they can improve with practice and effort—do better in school, handle school transitions better, and are less likely to show aggression than children who believe that their abilities and personalities are fixed.^{1,2} Setting goals and making plans to improve based on a growth mindset are associated with increases in self-efficacy,^{3,4} positive personal relationships,^{5,6} increased empathy,⁵ and prosocial behavior.^{4,7,8} This unit teaches the importance of making mistakes while learning, the brain science behind learning, growth mindset strategies, and a goal-setting process that can be applied to group or personal goals. Refer to the Second Step Elementary digital program Review of Research for additional information.

Progression of Skills and Knowledge Across the Grades

From Kindergarten through Grade 2, Unit 1 lessons are designed to help students develop the skills needed to pay attention and avoid distractions. Students are also introduced to growth mindset language as a useful tool for encouraging themselves and others. Lessons highlight the importance of practice and effort—and the value of making mistakes—when it comes to learning something new.

Grade 3 introduces the brain science behind learning, practice, and planning. With this foundation, Grades 4 and 5 shift to focus on the goal-setting process. Students first work to develop a class goal and plan in Grade 4. In Grade 5, they set personal goals and create plans to achieve them. Growth mindset language and strategies for getting better at something are reinforced throughout Grades 3, 4, and 5 as students follow through on reaching their goals.

Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming or showing behaviors that help them pay attention (e.g., turning toward the speaker, listening, watching, staying quiet) • Suggesting kind words to encourage themselves when they make a mistake • Suggesting kind words to encourage others when they make a mistake • Naming “practice” and “keep trying” as ways to get better at something
Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to pay attention while learning something new (e.g., turning toward the speaker, watching and listening carefully, not talking) • Behaving in ways help them manage distractions (e.g., changing places, taking deep breaths, reminding themselves to pay attention) • Practicing and trying again in order to improve a new skill • Using helpful thoughts to encourage themselves when they make a mistake

Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the benefit of making mistakes Identifying strategies to use after making a mistake Identifying helpful and unhelpful thoughts in a given context Replacing unhelpful thoughts with helpful thoughts
Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naming a repeated action they can do to practice a skill Identifying who they can learn from or other ways they can try to learn a skill Explaining what happens in their brain when they practice a skill
Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting a group goal that is specific, challenging, and doable Making a plan to reach a group goal Evaluating progress toward reaching a group goal Identifying roadblocks that may be getting in the way of achieving a group goal Making changes to overcome roadblocks Responding to reflection questions
Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting a personal goal that meets the given criteria Making a plan to reach a goal Evaluating progress towards reaching a goal and identifying roadblocks that may be getting in the way Making changes to overcome roadblocks Responding to reflection questions

Grade 1 Lessons at a Glance

The Unit 1 lessons in Grade 1 are designed to help students learn to pay attention despite distractions, recognize the importance of practice and effort to improve a skill, and use helpful thoughts to keep going when they are doing something challenging.

As part of supporting students' developing sense of identity and appreciation of diversity, it's important to model empathy and respect for the various ways students pay attention and how they respond to distractions. For example, find opportunities within the lessons to validate that different things may distract different people and that people manage distractions in different ways. The Prep & Extend documents give specific examples of when and how to do this.

The unit ends with Lesson 5, a performance task, where students demonstrate the skills and knowledge they learned throughout this unit. They use their skills for paying attention and managing distractions as they learn to draw Pepito, a character from Second Step Elementary digital program animated videos. A performance task rubric is included as part of the lesson to help you determine if the class is meeting the goals of the unit.

Grade 1 Lessons at a Glance, continued

To learn more about the benefits of performance tasks and how to use them in Second Step programs, refer to **What Are Performance Tasks?** on SecondStep.org.

By teaching students all components of each weekly lesson, in this order, they will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet the goals of this unit.

	Title	Objective	Key Concepts & Skills	Vocabulary	Resources
Lesson 1	Time to Pay Attention	With adult support, students will be able to demonstrate how they would pay attention in given scenarios.	We can pay attention in different ways depending on the situation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation
Lesson 2	Everyone Gets Distracted	With adult support, students will be able to suggest behaviors that can help them pay attention when they encounter distractions.	<p>A distraction is something that takes our attention away from something else.</p> <p>Some ways to manage distractions are taking deep breaths, reminding ourselves to pay attention, and moving to a different spot.</p>	Distraction (n.) something that takes our attention away from something else	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation
Lesson 3	You Did It!	With adult support, students will be able to name at least one skill they have learned and how they got better at it (practice, kept trying).	We can learn and get better at the things we want to do through practice and effort.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation
Lesson 4	Helpful Thoughts	With adult support, students will be able to suggest helpful thoughts to keep going when they are doing something challenging.	Helpful thoughts can help us keep going when we are doing something challenging.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation
Lesson 5	Performance Task: We Can Do It!	With adult support, students will be able to demonstrate practicing and paying attention, despite mistakes and distractions, to learn something new.	Students will practice managing distractions and using growth mindset language and strategies while learning to draw Pepito.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation

References

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