

## 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.<sup>1,2</sup> Setting goals and making plans to improve based on a growth mindset are associated with increases in self-efficacy,<sup>3,4</sup> positive personal relationships,<sup>5,6</sup> increased empathy,<sup>5</sup> and prosocial behavior.<sup>4,7,8</sup> 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"> <li>• Naming or showing behaviors that help them pay attention (e.g., turning toward the speaker, listening, watching, staying quiet)</li> <li>• Suggesting kind words to encourage themselves when they make a mistake</li> <li>• Suggesting kind words to encourage others when they make a mistake</li> <li>• Naming “practice” and “keep trying” as ways to get better at something</li> </ul>
Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to pay attention while learning something new (e.g., turning toward the speaker, watching and listening carefully, not talking)</li> <li>• Behaving in ways help them manage distractions (e.g., changing places, taking deep breaths, reminding themselves to pay attention)</li> <li>• Practicing and trying again in order to improve a new skill</li> <li>• Using helpful thoughts to encourage themselves when they make a mistake</li> </ul>

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

## Grade 3 Lessons at a Glance

The Unit 1 lessons in Grade 3 are designed to teach students how their brain changes when they learn and practice new skills. The unit also teaches students how to create a practice plan that names what they want to get better at, how they will practice, and what they can do in case practice alone is not leading to improvement.

To support students' developing sense of identity and appreciation for diversity, it's important to provide opportunities for students to learn more about each other and what they want to get better at, and to have empathy for one another when their goals, practice plans, or resources are different. 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. Using a handout, each student creates an individual practice plan listing actions that will help them get better at a skill of their choice. 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. To learn more about the benefits

## Grade 3 Lessons at a Glance, continued

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	<b>Changing Your Brain</b>	With adult support, students will be able to state what happens in their brain when they learn a new skill.	<p>Our brains can change.</p> <p>When we learn something new, different parts of the brain have to communicate.</p> <p>Messages travel on pathways in the brain.</p> <p>Pathways can connect to make a network.</p> <p>A network helps the brain get better at sending messages for a particular skill.</p>	<p><b>Pathway (n)</b> a way for messages to travel through the brain</p> <p><b>Network (n)</b> connected pathways that work together to send messages in the brain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep &amp; Extend</li> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Handout</li> </ul>
Lesson 2	<b>Getting Better With Practice</b>	With adult support, students will be able to describe the connection between their own practice and changes to the networks in their brain.	<p>Practice helps the brain get better at sending messages for that skill.</p> <p>Practice makes networks in the brain stronger.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep &amp; Extend</li> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Handout</li> </ul>
Lesson 3	<b>More Than Practice</b>	Students will be able to name two additional actions they can take besides practice and effort to improve a skill: learning from others and trying a new way.	When one way of practice doesn't lead to improvement, it's helpful to try new ways of practicing or to learn from others.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep &amp; Extend</li> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• Presentation</li> </ul>
Lesson 4	<b>Planning for Practice</b>	With adult support, students will be able to make a practice plan with a partner.	<p>Students will make a practice plan.</p> <p>A practice plan includes what the person wants to get better at, a way to practice, and another strategy such as a new way to try or a person to learn from.</p>	<b>Practice plan (n.)</b> a set of actions to help you get better at something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep &amp; Extend</li> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Handout</li> </ul>

## Grade 3 Lessons at a Glance, continued

	Title	Objective	Key Concepts & Skills	Vocabulary	Resources
Lesson 5	<b>Performance Task: Make a Practice Plan</b>	Students will be able to use a handout to make a practice plan for a skill they want to get better at.	Students will make a practice plan.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep &amp; Extend</li> <li>• Lesson Plan</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Handout</li> </ul>

## References

1. Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805>
2. Yeager, D. S., Miu, A. S., Powers, J., & Dweck, C. S. (2013). Implicit theories of personality and attributions of hostile intent: A meta-analysis, an experiment, and a longitudinal intervention. *Child Development*, 84(5), 1651–1667. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12062>
3. Bong, M. (2009). Age-related differences in achievement goal differentiation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(4), 879–896. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015945>
4. Hulleman, C. S., Schrager, S. M., Bodmann, S. M. & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2010). A meta-analytic review of achievement goal measures: Different labels for the same constructs or different constructs with similar labels? *Psychological Bulletin*, 136, 422–449. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018947>
5. Poortvliet, P., & Darnon, C. (2010). Toward a more social understanding of achievement goals: The interpersonal effects of mastery and performance goals. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 19(5), 324–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721410383246>
6. Rodkin, P. C., Ryan, A. M., Jamison, R., & Wilson, T. (2013). Social goals, social behavior, and social status in middle childhood. *Developmental Psychology*, 49(6), 1139–1150. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029389>
7. Ohtani, K., & Okada, R. (2018). Relationship between classroom social goal structures, gender, and social outcomes in Japanese elementary school children. *School Psychology International*, 39(5), 435–453. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034318788120>
8. Yang, F., Frye, D., & Dubow, E. F. (2018). When preferences are in the way: Children's predictions of goal-directed behaviors. *Developmental Psychology*, 54(6), 1051–1062. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000490>