

Growth Measurement vs. Fixed-Rank Measurement

When we measure students against each other, we trigger a fixed mindset. When we measure students against their own past performance, we activate the growth mindset that drives real learning.

THE TEACHING DECISION

How do you track and communicate student progress?

CONVENTIONAL APPROACH

- Percentile rankings that compare students to peers
- Person praise: "You're so smart" (Dweck found this harmed motivation; 40% of praised students later lied about scores)
- Failure = permanent verdict; a low score is a label
- Every situation is an evaluation: "Will I look smart or dumb?"
- Standards seen as sorting tools to rank students

FRAMEWORK APPROACH

- Personal best tracking that compares students to themselves
- Process praise: "Your strategy on that problem really worked" (increases persistence and risk-taking)
- "Not Yet" reframes failure as a position on the learning curve
- High standards + nurturing atmosphere (Marva Collins taught Shakespeare to kids others gave up on)
- "Becoming is better than being" — growth is the metric

MONDAY MORNING ACTION

Create a Personal Best Tracker — a two-column card for each student with "Last Time" and "This Time." Update it after every assessment. Replace "you scored in the 74th percentile" with "you improved by 3 points on this standard."

THE BOOK

***Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck**

My Personal Best Tracker

Every assessment is a chance to beat YOUR last score.

Name: _____

STANDARD / SKILL	LAST TIME	THIS TIME	GROWTH

REMEMBER

You're not competing with anyone else on this card. The only score that matters is whether you beat your own last score. If you didn't beat it this time, that just means "not yet." Look at what you tried, change your strategy, and go again.