

Y IS FOR YET

A GROWTH
MINDSET
ALPHABET

Shannon Anderson
Illustrated by Jacob Souva

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free spirit
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This book is dedicated to my Aunt Linda, who taught me to believe in myself and not to settle for average.



What can you do with a growth mindset?

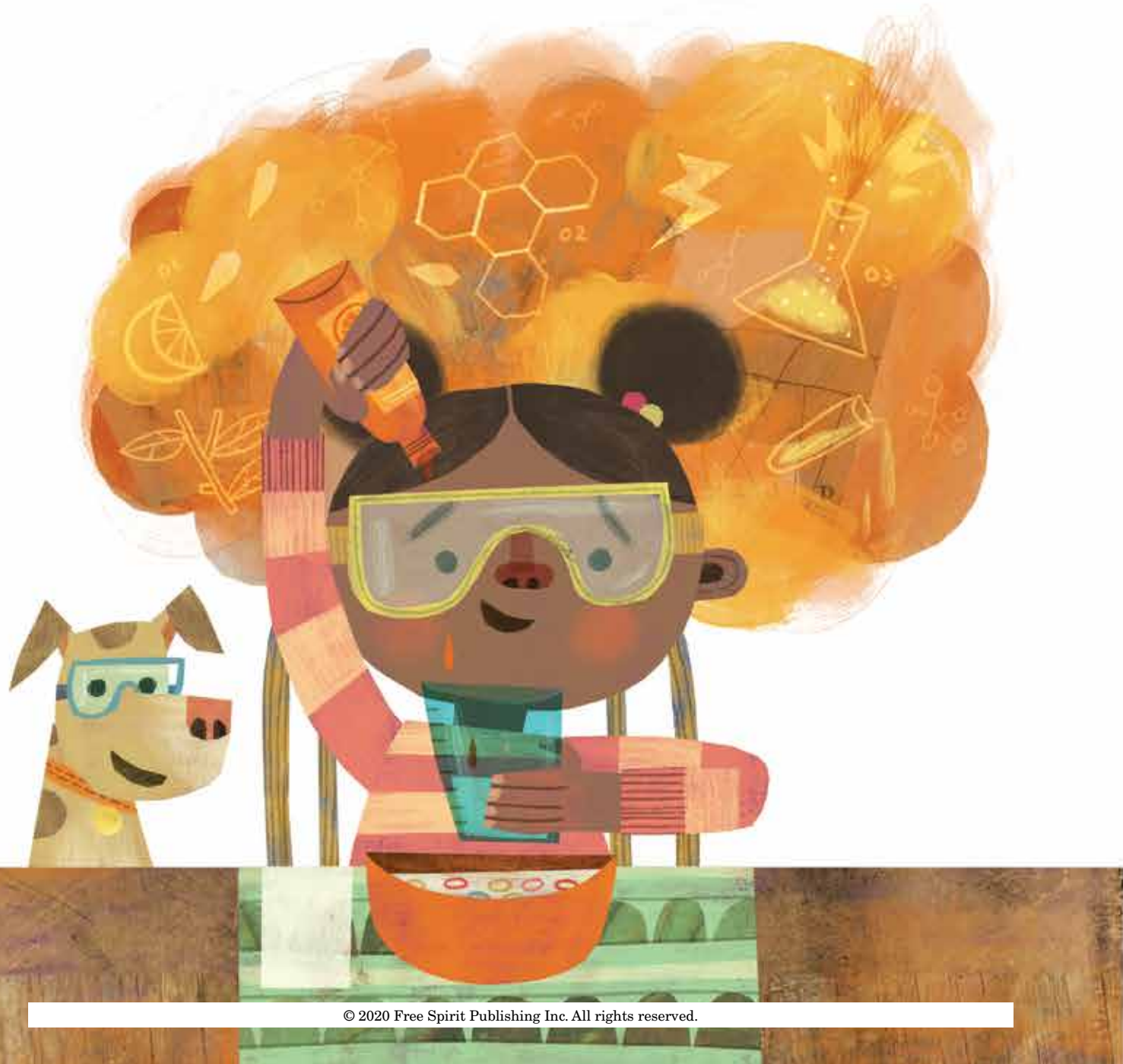
You can strengthen your brain. You can stay positive.
You can learn from your mistakes. And so much more!



In other words . . . there's almost nothing
you *can't* do with a growth mindset!

Aa

You have the **ABILITY** to do great things—
especially when you have a growth mindset.



Bb

Your **BRAIN** is like a muscle. It gets stronger
and stronger as you learn more and more.



Glossary

ability: the power or skill to do something

accomplish: to do or to finish a task

attitude: the way you think or feel about someone or something

determined: having a strong feeling or being very decided about something

feedback: information that one person gives another to help them improve

opportunity: the chance to do something

persevere: to keep trying or working toward an achievement, even when it gets hard

positive: having a good attitude and looking on the bright side

resilient: able to bounce back and try again after facing a challenge

setback: a difficulty or obstacle that causes your progress to slow or stop

strategies: ways you try to achieve a goal or solve a problem

strive: to work hard toward a goal

visualize: to create a picture in your mind

Helping Kids Embrace the Power of Yet: Activities to Build a Growth Mindset

You can use the activities in this section to explore, build, and strengthen a growth mindset in the kids you work with—whether you're a teacher, counselor, family member, or other caring adult. Feel free to adapt these in ways that work best for your group. (Most of these activities also work well if you're reading the book one-on-one!)

MINDSET MATCH-UP

Talk with kids about the difference between having a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset. A growth mindset is the belief that you can learn or improve at anything with enough practice and time. Someone with a growth mindset understands that they learn from mistakes and that

challenges help them grow. A fixed mindset is the belief that there's a limit to ability or intelligence. Someone with a fixed mindset may give up when a new skill becomes hard, thinking they can't do it and might as well not try to get better.

To explore these ideas further, play a match-up game. You'll need fixed-mindset statements paired with growth-mindset statements on notecards. Write one statement on each notecard and make sure each is paired with another statement demonstrating the opposite mindset. Ideally, you will have one card for each student. (If you have an odd number of kids in your group, you could have one of the cards yourself.) For example:

Fixed-Mindset Statements

- * I'm not good at math.
- * I can't draw.
- * I'm no good at making friends.
- * I'm bad at sports.
- * My handwriting is terrible.

Growth-Mindset Statements

- * I'm learning more math facts every day.
- * My drawings aren't great yet, but they're getting better.
- * I'm a good friend and I can work on meeting new people.
- * I can keep practicing my sports skills.
- * I can improve my handwriting with practice.

Pass out the notecards and have kids move around the space, talking and comparing thoughts to match up the pairs of growth-mindset and fixed-mindset cards. When they feel they have matched all the cards, have students read them aloud. Discuss who has the growth-mindset cards and who has the fixed-mindset cards and which ones they relate to most. Did anyone disagree on what statements showed which mindset?

MY BUMPY BRAIN

Kids love learning about their brains! In this activity, explain how our brains have billions of tiny nerve cells called neurons. Our neurons send messages to each other as we learn and practice skills.

Have each kid draw a bumpy oval representing their brain. Next, have them draw eight to ten neurons inside the brain. (They can just draw dots for these, or they can get more creative if they choose!) Ask kids to think of a skill they have practiced a lot and are good at. Suppose it is tying their shoes. Kids can draw a thick line connecting two dots (neurons) and write "tying my shoes" on the line.

Now have kids think of something they have not learned to do well yet. Maybe it is learning to multiply. Have them draw a thin or dotted line connecting two different dots and write "multiply numbers" on the dotted line.