



USE WITH:

Individual students, small group, or whole class



GRADE LEVEL:

Upper elementary, middle school, or high school



CONTEXT:

Remote friendly

EDUCATOR PRACTICE

Celebrate Students' Growth and Development

Empower students by praising their growth.

Created by [Understood](#)

Description:

Read how one teacher celebrates her students' growth and development. Then create your own way to recognize your students. By celebrating their growth, you can create a positive feedback loop that encourages persistence and a growth mindset.

Est. time to complete:
30 minutes

Steps:

1. Read [A Letter to My Students: Let's Celebrate Your Growth](#), an example of how one teacher writes an end-of-year letter to celebrate her students' growth and development.
2. Brainstorm ways your whole class has grown this school year. Then think of ways each individual student has developed. Finally, consider ways you've grown as their teacher this year. As you brainstorm, jot down your ideas in a notebook, record audio notes on your phone, or sketch your ideas in a journal.
3. Choose how to show your students the growth you've seen in them. For example, you could write a letter, create a picture collage, or make a video.

4. Make one version that highlights the growth of your whole class. Then find a way to personalize it for individual students. For example, add a sticky note or a handwritten message to point out specific growth areas for individual students.
5. Plan how and when you'll share this creation with your students. Remember to consider how to make it accessible for all students. For example, some students might benefit from the letter being read aloud. Or if you create a video, make sure it has captions and a transcript.
6. Share what you created with the teachers in the grade above you. Tell them about your students' strengths and growth. By giving your colleagues this information, you'll help them welcome your students and honor the assets they bring to the classroom. This knowledge can help your colleagues build positive relationships with their new students.

Tips for Educators:

- Try a follow-up student activity after you share. For example, you may want to have a group discussion about how far they've come this year. Or, you could have students write letters to each other highlighting ways they've seen resilience and growth in each other. Encourage students to be as specific as possible, as this will make it more meaningful to all students.

Inspired by:

1. Haimovitz, K., & Dweck, C. S. (2017). The origins of children's growth and fixed mindsets: New research and a new proposal. *Child Development*, 88(6), 1849-1859. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12955>

Related Materials:

A Letter to My Students: Let's Celebrate Your Growth

<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/for-educators/empathy/a-letter-to-my-students-lets-celebrate-your-growth>