"We learn wisdom from failure much more than success. We often discover what we will do, by finding out what we will not do." -Samuel Smiles

OVERCOMING FAILURE

We all know the story about the boy who never made the high school basketball team yet went on to be one of the most accomplished athletes of the sport, Michael Jordan. He endured failure after failure, but he persevered. Gifted students often find many learning tasks easy and yet they struggle when presented with challenges. How can you help your students overcome failure?

Self-regulation, or working through the task despite the challenges, is often difficult for students due to outside factors such as lack of family support. *Stereotyping* is another obstacle that impairs self-regulation. Parents or educators often have preconceived ideas of what makes a gifted and talented student so it is important to understand how gifted students' learn and work. Classmates can also put pressure on students, which may include the idea that is "not cool" to be smart. Finally a *fixed mindset* will seriously affect the ability to self-regulate. If the student believes they are not capable, lacks confidence, or is unable to learn the content on their own and does not have the skills or feel safe to ask for help, they will shut down.

Educators do not have control over every issue that affects self-regulation so focusing on ***growth mindset*** is the best place to start. This is done by identifying areas where students are getting stuck and giving them tools and strategies to move forward. *The goal is for students to internalize motivation for learning activities.* This is not a quick fix. The challenge is to foster confidence through motivation. **Helping students develop a growth mindset will move them towards self-regulation**. There are four steps:

1. Empower students
   - Reassure them they have the skills, talents and abilities for success.
   - Include them in goal-setting, which should include risk taking. Including them will help assess their current mindset.
   - Compare their work to how athletes push past barriers. Muscles only grow when we work them *just* more than what they're used to. So doing one more push-up or one more mile. If we stop, our muscles don't grow.

I got this.

   - Do a brainstorming session to come up with different situations where struggling past the difficult part is important.
2. Plan for the task
   - Don't assume they have the proper skills. Prepare them for success (study skills, organizing, listening, failing, etc.)
   - Have students complete a "brain preassessment"
3. Do the task
   - Ask them about their confidence level during a task to ensure they are comfortable
   - Post and refer to the phrase "We Only Get Stronger When It's Difficult"
4. Review successes and failures.
   - Celebrate failures and take time to learn from them. This is no greater teachable moment.
   - Brainstorm when and why failure could be important
   - Study famous people who overcame failure

See the attached excerpt (pg 122-136) from Mindsets in the Classroom: Building a Culture of Success and Student Achievement in Schools by Mary Cay Ricci for some activities and games to introduce growth mindset to your classroom.

Resources:
"Helping Underrepested Students Overcome Failure with Self-Regulation" by GT Ignite
"We Only Get Stronger When It's Difficult" by www.byrdseed.com
Mindses in the Classroom by Mary Cay Ricci

7 Ways to Add Complexity

Add Strange Restrictions	
1. Tiny Time limits	Take a task that has become simple, give a time limit, and complexity increases. On the other hand, give more time to reduce complexity.
2. Very Short Lengths	140 characters, or 10 words, or three sentences, etc. Interestingly, this can both increase and decrease complexity: advanced students must cram their ideas into a small space, while struggling students have less content to produce.
3. Reduce Resources	Sometimes a strange set of tools produces an interesting result. This could mean limiting research materials, writing tools, electronics, writing surfaces, size of paper, type of paper, etc. For example, have 6th graders write an essay on kindergarten paper. You can bet this changed their approach to writing.

*Note that these restrictions parallel what you see in shows like *Top Chef, Project Runway,* of *Chopped*. Take a group of experts and give them unexpected limits. The results are often incredible feats of creativity.

**Restrictions Change Expectations

If the time limit is five minutes, you don't expect the same results as if students had a week. If they're limited to writing on a notecard, the expectation is not the same as if they had a computer to type on. The point is for students to see what they can do *with* the restriction.

Complicate the Content	
4. Dig into the ethical issues of an idea. The pros and cons. What's good and what's bad?	A previously dry topic might come to life with ambiguity and conflict.
5. Explore multiple perspectives	What would _ think about this? It gets even more interesting if this new perspective is a bit of a surprise. What would George Washington think of Ancient China? How would Juliet, from *Romeo and Juliet* judge Hermione Granger?
6. Change over time	What was this idea like in the past? How will it be in the future? How have people's views towards it changed?
7. Teacher-led small groups	Think about the power of bringing your five top kids together (even for *ten minutes a week*) and pushing them a little. In a small group, you can facilitate a deeper discussion, ask probing questions, tease out better responses, and push your expert students further. Is it a math lesson? Give them a couple "tricky" problems and see how they do. Reading a story? Ask about more advanced ideas: ethical dilemmas, similarities to other stories, theme, or author's tone.

*Examples of these tools in action:

- Alexander the Great writes a tweet critiquing or praising Napoleon's leadership.
- Compare and contrast a success or a problem in the U.S., looking at 1776 versus 1812. Write your response as a haiku.
- Create a scripted conversation between The Boy in *The Giving Tree* and Brian from *Hatchet.* One character must give the other advice about their main problem. You have ten minutes. GO!

Resource: Excerpt from "7 Ways to Add Complexity" from www.byrdseed.com

![ACESC logo - Striving for Excellence in Education in Auglaize County]

WHAT IS RIGOR REALLY?

Often overused and misunderstood in today's learning environments, what does rigor really mean? Many educators misinterpret rigor to mean making experiences harder and more stringent; however, academic rigor refers more to quality over quantity and conceptual thinking rather than memorization. **It is the quality of students' thinking and responses that defines rigorous learning.** Rigor is developmentally appropriate at all grade and any content level.

Download the table ["Rigor: What It Is and Is Not"](#) for details defining rigor in comparison to common misconceptions. Below are some tips for implementing rigor with high-ability learners.

1. Rigor is relative depending on student's background and readiness. Gifted student's readiness levels can vary widely.

2. Emphasize content depth with high-level thinking to avoid redundant practice.

3. High-level learning processes include critical and creative thinking, observation, complex and in-depth information processing, and communication using academic vocabulary.

4. Encourage and provide access to resources and materials above grade level.

5. High-ability learners excel with the support of adults and peers who realize their potential for advanced learning.

The skills gained from a rigorous curriculum include:

1. Cognitive skills and increase academic gains
2. Self-management skills
3. Collaboration skills
4. Creativity and adaptability skills
5. Communication skills
6. Knowledge of learning cultures

Resource:

Rigor and Engagements for Growing Minds by Bertie Kingore, Ph.D

READY TO USE MATERIALS/RESOUCES

- You need to see it to believe it…Growth Mindset in action. Check out this video ["Encouraging Students to Persist Through Challenges"](#)

- ["Strategies to Encourage Growth Mindset"](#). Activities and ideas to foster growth mindset in your classroom.

- ["Teachers' Feedback to Students"](#). A quick reference tool on what learning behaviors to look for before giving students feedback in order to support growth mindset.

- ["Growth Mindset: Clearing Up Some Common Confusions"](#) by Eduardo Briceno. The 5 most common confusions about growth mindset research and practice.

- ["The Curious Case of the Imposter Syndrome"](#) by Ian Byrd. Gifted students may appear confident and self-assured, but what is really hidden underneath the surface?

- ["Rigor: What It Is And Is Not"](#). This comparative tool clarifies the concept of rigor versus the misconceptions of it.

- ["Questioning for High-Level Thinking"](#). Question prompts for while students work and after students finish to add complexity.

  - Task Boards: [Literature Task Board](#) &

    [Math Task Board (top) / Science Task Board (bottom)](#)

Want to talk "gifted" with other teachers? Plan to come to _"Teacher Time"_ at the ACESC. See the [flyer](#) **for dates.**

Can't Miss Opportunities for Your Classroom

Teach Math with the Rubiks' Cube to:
- Increase motivation
- Boost confidence
- Encourage risk taking
- Reach different learner types
- Encourage perseverance and logical thinking
- Meet 21st Century Skills and Ohio Learning Standards
- And so much more

Kits and curriculum can be purchased or borrowed from the YCDTRC Lending Library at www.youcandothecube.com. And it is not just for math…check out lessons in art as well. There are many free lessons available to try on their website as well.

Great for:
-Math Class   -Art Projects   -Study Hall   -After School Programs
-Enrichment   -School Pride Time   -Team building and leadership   -STEM

Or HOST YOUR OWN COMPETITION! Details on the competition are here.

*If you are interested in this program and would like help getting started, here is an implementation guide. You may also contact me for additional support.

HOUR OF CODE

The Hour of Code is a global movement reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries. Anyone, anywhere can organize an Hour of Code event. No experience needed. **Ages 4 to 104.**

What? A 1 hour introduction to computer science, designed to demystify code and show that anyone can learn the basics.

When? Anybody can host anytime, but the Hour of Code week is December 7-13, in celebration of **Computer Science Education Week.**

Why? *Every* students should have the opportunity to learn computer science. It nurtures problem solving skills, logic, and creativity. It meets 21st Century and STEM skills

Will work on PCs, smartphones, tablets, and more. No log in is necessary. Tutorials range from themes including *Frozen* to *Angry Birds.*

Go to https://hourofcode.com/us to learn more or check out their brochure here.