Take a Closer Look and Grow your Brain!
Using Close Reading and a Growth Mindset to improve Standardized Test Performance

Background

Pennsylvania State Standardized tests have defined students’ abilities with rankings and graduation requirements. Creating a growth mindset in which students believe they can change and develop their brain, abilities and talents will encourage them to use literacy strategies to increase performance on the comprehensive end of the year exams.

Research Questions

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<td>Secondary questions: What are the effects of combining reading strategies with a growth mindset intervention on students’ attitude and motivation?</td>
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<td>What are the effects of combining reading strategies with a growth mindset intervention on teachers’ attitude and motivation?</td>
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Treatment

Students in the study were explicitly taught about mindsets and provided with strategies to change and foster a growth mindset in a learning environment. Students working within a belief system that intellectual ability is something that can be improved, will more than likely use the strategies they have been taught to improve their skills (Dweck, 2006).

A literacy strategy called close reading was also implemented over two units. The students interacted with various sources of informational texts to learn how to engage with a focus on the purpose of the article. Close reading is a literacy strategy that can improve reading comprehension as measured by standardized and experimental texts (Katz & Carlisle, 2009).

Results

The student growth scores on the standardized Classroom Diagnostic Test (CDT) increased after the Action Research intervention. Students were aware of fixed mindset behaviors and shifted towards growth mindset behaviors by increasing effort and positive attitude.


Mindset survey results for non-treatment and treatment groups, (N=51).