

### Teacher Mindsets

Carol Dweck (2006) is a researcher as well as a psychology professor at Stanford, and her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* discusses motivation and intelligence. She explains that some people have different beliefs about intelligence and ability. Dweck believes that people are on different places on the continuum between *fixed* and *growth* based on their view of intelligence, effort, and success. You are said to have a growth mindset if you believe success and abilities come from hard work and you “keep on keeping on” despite challenges and disappointments. People with a growth mindset believe in multiple opportunities to be successful. Those with a fixed mindset, on the other hand, believe that intelligence is an innate ability that has limits. Failure for them reinforces their view of limitations, and they are not motivated to continue working at the task. Effective teachers have positive mindsets that guide their behavior in the classroom and their interactions with students (R. Brooks & Goldstein, 2008).

A teacher’s mindset influences students’ mindsets. Everything we say and do should give the message of possibility and influence the students’ perception of their capabilities while fostering optimism and tenacity. Both students’ successes and efforts should receive feedback and response giving them the message that we all can continue to get better. The phrases in Figure 2.1 may be used to respond to students’ successes and earnest attempts. These both validate achievement and encourage student perseverance.

## CLASSROOM CULTURE AND LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Culture is often referred to as “the way we do things around here.” People who live and work in a culture sometimes can’t explain or describe it, but they can certainly

**Figure 2.1** Encouraging Feedback Prompts to Use With Students

<i>Feedback for Success</i>	<i>Feedback to Encourage</i>
Great effort	You’re on the way
Well done	Keep practicing
You did it	Keep trying
Your practice paid off	You’ll get it
I knew you could do it	One more time and you’ll have it
You’ve hit the mark	I know you can
Aren’t you proud of yourself	You will
You’ve got that down pat	Don’t stop now
Nice going	You’re on the right track
I never doubted you	Keep on trucking
	Try, try, try again