

Assignment Description

After reading *Mindset* by Carol Dweck (Introduction & Chs.1-3 at the very least--or more if you read ahead), take some time to reflect on your own mindset. Think about whether or not you have a growth mindset or a fixed mindset or a hybrid of both. Consider the things that have influenced your mindset. These might include things like educational experiences, family experiences (how you were raised, messages you were taught about the world, etc.) as well as singular events (a profound failure you experienced, a big mistake, or what you learned from a big failure/mistake).

In a four-page, double-spaced, Times New Roman font essay with page numbers (no cover page), explain whether or not you have a growth mindset, a fixed mindset, or a hybrid of both, AND WHY. Your answer is your thesis.

The "why" part is the important part. Of course you are not a psychologist and what you say here is based only on your perceptions/interpretations of things that have happened to you, but what else do we have to go on? This is not your autobiography; nothing you argue in this essay is set in stone. Don't overthink your interpretations/claims. *The objective of this essay is for you to demonstrate your understanding of growth/fixed mindset*; it is not to be 100% accurate about your internal psychology. Just use this as an opportunity to learn a little more about yourself and don't overthink it.

Your Works Cited does not count as a page. If you are having trouble getting to four pages, read ahead on the short *West Guide* chapters (13 & 14) on Introduction and Conclusion, and see if you can add some "meat" to your essay there. Also, make sure you spend at least 1-2 paragraphs defining and explaining the mindsets and Dweck's book.

Please have a Works Cited page for this essay, even if you only cite (mention) the *Mindset* book. Finally, if you do not feel comfortable sharing personal examples in the essay, feel free to stretch the truth. I will never know what's true or not. The only thing that matters is that you give examples that demonstrate and define the mindsets and that I have a chance to evaluate your writing and organization. You are not writing your autobiography!

Sample Thesis and Topic Sentences--If I was going to write this essay!

Sample Thesis: Though I began my life with a fixed mindset, my growth mindset is growing.

Topic Sentence 1: My east-coast religious upbringing shaped my fixed mindset for the first thirty years of my life.

Topic Sentence 2: After reading *Mindset* in my late thirties, I am growing and establishing growth mindset.

Topic Sentence 3: I am learning that people can change.

Topic Sentence 4: I am learning to learn from my mistakes.

Do you see how these all relate back to my thesis? I would need to have more paragraphs, and more topic sentences, but these give you an idea...

Sample Map Thesis: I have a fixed mindset because of how I was raised, my authoritative work environment, and how I raise my kids.

Guidelines

- Use examples from your life and as applicable, quotes from the book to support your assertions. At the end of every sentence in which you use a quote, put a page citation like so (56).
- It is okay to begin the essay wherever you are in the book.
- It is okay to research information on the internet or databases--make sure to cite any outside sources you use on a Works Cited page--but it is also acceptable to simply use our readings as your only sources.
- Make sure that your essay has an introduction, conclusion, and topic sentences for body paragraphs. These concepts are addressed in modules and in *The West Guide*. In this essay, your thesis is when you state which mindset you have. Everything else in the essay should be organized around that.
- This is largely a narrative essay, so it's okay to use first person "I" voice to describe your experiences. But make sure every claim is supported with something--something from your personal experience or something from the book (or another resource on mindset). Don't say "I think"--just say what you think. See example below.

Example:

Original: ~~I think~~ one aspect of my growth mindset is that I persist at tasks without giving up.

Better: One aspect of my growth mindset is that I persist at tasks without giving up.