



SELF-EFFICACY

Sample Strategies

Self-Efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to succeed in achieving a specific outcome or reaching a specific goal.ⁱ Students with high levels of self-efficacy participate more in class, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when encountering difficulties than students with lower self-efficacy.ⁱⁱ For a more detailed description of this competency, please click [here](#).

Transforming Education has developed a **toolkit** to help educators learn more about self-efficacy. The toolkit includes a more detailed explanation of self-efficacy, video interviews of students’ relaying their own experiences related to self-efficacy, an animated introduction video, as well as a variety of strategies that teachers can use to help support students’ development of self-efficacy. To download the Self-Efficacy Toolkit, [click here](#).ⁱⁱⁱ

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS’ SELF-EFFICACY

Below is a list of strategies that can be integrated into any curriculum and adapted for various grade levels. They are useful for directly supporting individual students’ self-efficacy by helping them define and understand how they can be successful, track their own progress towards their goal, and persist through potential barriers.

That’s “Success”! Define “success” in clear and relevant ways. Display pictures or videos of students at work on projects with comments about the *skills* being demonstrated.^{iv}

Relaxed and Ready. Encourage students to feel more relaxed and not threatened in the classroom. This will help them feel more confident in their ability to succeed.^v Learn more about how you can use mindfulness practices to help achieve this [here](#).^{vi}

Success Adds Up. Celebrate small amounts of progress and leverage momentum by tracking and displaying a classroom- or school-wide goal (for example, with a goal thermometer). Focus on what’s already been achieved by showing students that they’re already x% of the way to meeting their goal (even if x is a low number). Celebrate each incremental step towards the goal to give students the experience of being successful in small ways.^{vii}

If You Can, I Can. Highlight students who initially struggle but eventually succeed at an activity or with challenging content. If they’re willing, ask them to share how they accomplished their success. Find ideas for how to facilitate conversations with peer models [here](#).^{viii}

Feel the Moment. Prior to beginning a challenging task or project, ask students to identify specific times that they have felt confident in their ability to succeed and describe what they were thinking and feeling in those moments.^{ix}

Reframe. Encourage students to reframe their stress into a mindset of excitement and anticipation by asking them, “What is exciting about this situation?”^x Have students describe how stress sensations (for example, sweaty palms, racing heart) can be interpreted as preparation for a big challenge. Adapt [these](#) strategies for your students for stress reframing.^{xi}

Engage to Succeed. Focus on learning activities that are relevant and engaging so that students see inherent value in succeeding. Invite students’ opinions and ideas into the flow of the activity to keep the lesson relevant.^{xii}



Link Past & Present. Connect activities with students' previous knowledge and experiences to ensure that activities are personally relevant and meaningful to them.^{xiii} Explore Character Lab's playbook on [Building Connections](#) for more ideas.^{xiv}

If-Then. Encourage students to use "if-then planning" to plan for specific intentions and overcoming challenges.^{xv} Learn more about "if-then planning" [here](#) or by exploring Character Lab's [WOOP Playbook](#).^{xvi, xvii}

Road to Success. Provide students with a learning progression—a roadmap towards mastery of a skill or task—for their assignment that clearly represents what success means at different stages of achievement.^{xviii} This creates an opportunity for students to regularly track their growing understanding and accomplishments throughout the project. Find a video example [here](#).^{xix} To learn more about working towards mastery, check out Character Lab's [Expert Practice Playbook](#).

Beyond "good job!" Provide students with specific feedback about what's driving their performance by following this sequence:

- 1) State what drove the student's success (e.g., strategy, skill);
- 2) Explain the degree of success;
- 3) Use words related to achievement, such as "great job," or encouragement, "try it again," at the end.^{xx}

Have students create an ongoing list of skills and strategies that help them succeed. Have them continuously add on to the list.

GRADE-SPECIFIC STANDALONE LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

Below is a list of standalone lessons about self-efficacy, categorized by grade levels. However, keep in mind that all the lessons are adaptable for students of different grade levels than those indicated.

Elementary School

- **Ask students to keep a record** of something new they learned or something at which they excelled by making a note of it each day on a calendar. Or, have students reflect on past successes using [this worksheet](#).^{xxi}

Middle School

- Learn about ways to build academic self-efficacy in language arts classrooms by reading the vignettes and recommendations in [this article](#).^{xxii}

High School

- Help students learn from others who demonstrated self-efficacy skills and examine how they might apply those skills in their own lives by following [this lesson plan](#).^{xxiii} Reference quotes from historical figures about achieving the impossible [here](#).^{xxiv}
- Use personal projects to help students practice building their self-efficacy. Find a guide [here](#).^{xxv}



Self-Efficacy: Additional Readings & Resources

Readings	Videos	Websites & Other Learning Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sway of Self-Efficacy^{xxvi} • Teaching Self-Efficacy with Personal Projects^{xxvii} • Self-Efficacy: Helping Children Believe They Can Succeed^{xxviii} • Classroom Strategies to Improve Student Self-efficacy and Learning Outcomes^{xxix} • Attempting the Impossible: Inspirational quotes about self-efficacy from historical figures^{xxx} • Self-Efficacy: A Key to Literacy Learning^{xxxi} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Importance of Self-Efficacy? A video for teachers, students, and parents^{xxxii} • Video Lecture on Self Efficacy^{xxxiii} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming Education's Self-Efficacy Toolkit^{xxxiv} • Transforming Education's Mindfulness Toolkit^{xxxv} • Multimedia Resources for Introducing Mindfulness to Your School^{xxxvi} • Character Lab's Expert Practice Playbook^{xxxvii}

Find an online board with these self-efficacy strategies and other resources online at: http://bit.ly/TE_SEstrategies



SOURCES

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- ^v Maddux, J. E., & Gosselin, J. T. (2003). Self-efficacy. *The Wiley Handbook of Positive Clinical Psychology*, 89-101.
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- ^{ix} Adapted from materials developed by the Motivation Research Institute.
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- ^{xviii} Margolis, H., & McCabe, P. P. (2006). Improving self-efficacy and motivation what to do, what to say. *Intervention in school and clinic*, 41(4), 218-227.
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- ^{xxi} Three Things. *Reachout.com*.
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