

# Using Culture and Growth Mindset to Create Identity Safe Spaces for Diverse Students



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University of Washington

# Identity Safe Spaces

Identity-safe spaces communicate to ALL people that they belong and can be successful in that context.

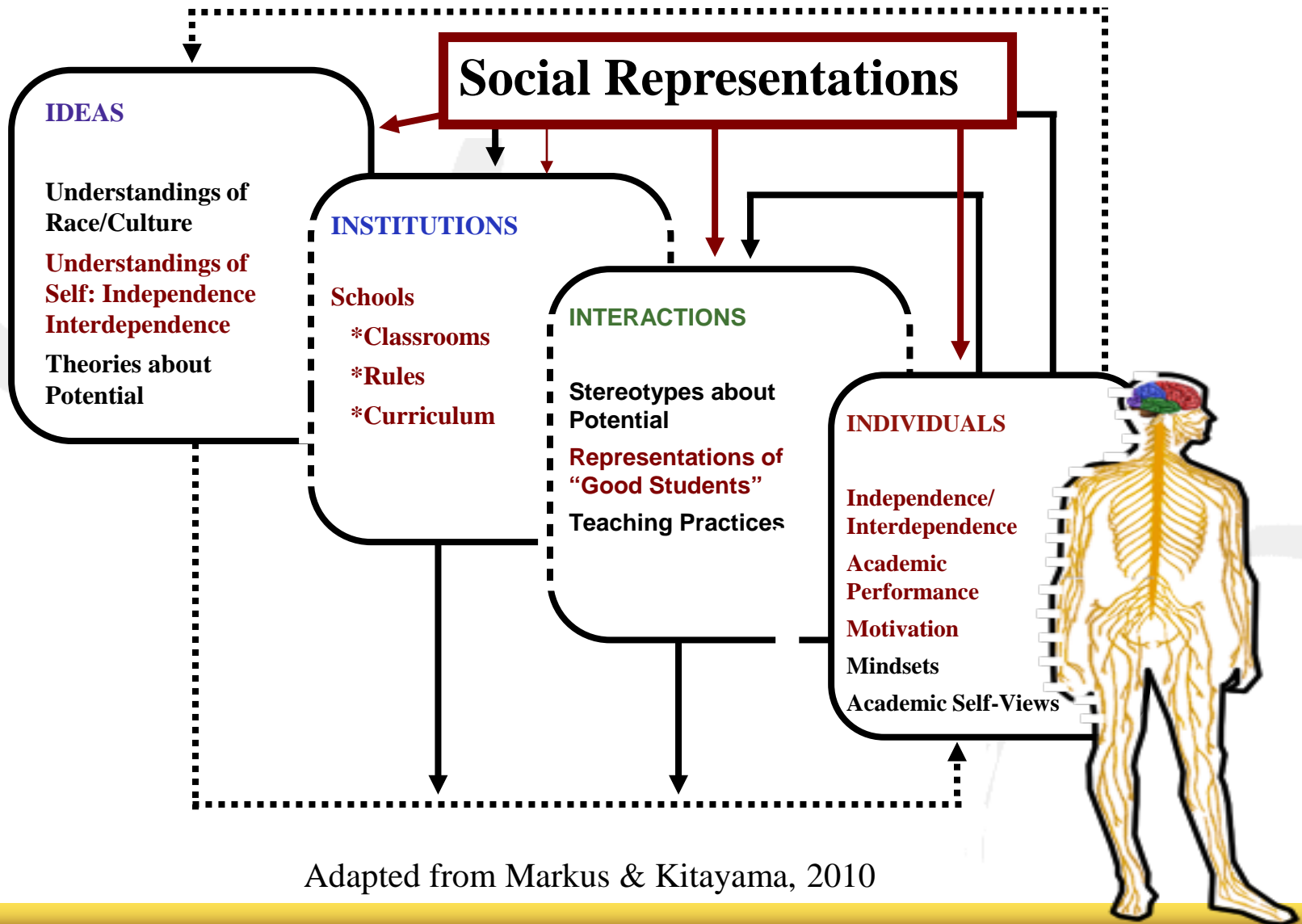
- Spaces that promote culture-congruent (matching) models of self
- Spaces free from stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination
- Spaces that include positive and inclusive representations of diversity

Culture consists of explicit and implicit patterns of historically derived and selected ideas and their embodiment in institutions, practices, and artifacts.

Cultural systems may, on one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.

(Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963, p. 357)

# Using Culture Cycle to Promote Identity Safety



Adapted from Markus & Kitayama, 2010

I'M GLAD I'M A BOY!



I'M GLAD I'M A GIRL!

BY

Whitney Darrow, Jr



**Boys fix things.**





Girls need things fixed.



**Boys invent things.**





**Girls use what boys invent.**

# “Struggling’ Native Student” Narrative

- In 2010-2011, the graduation rates for American Indian and Alaska Native high school students was below 60%.
- Even when Native students graduate, they are not adequately prepared to achieve success in higher education.

If a teacher who has had great success in teaching White students does not get comparably good results with Native children, she thinks this is because the Native children are less bright. As a matter of fact, the trouble is often that the incentives which have worked beautifully to make white children bestir themselves leave Native children cold, or even actively trouble and confuse them. For instance, the teacher holds out the hope of a college education with all that this implies for 'getting on' in the white world; to at least the younger Native child, this means mainly a threat of being taken even further from home and country.

(Kluckhohn & Leighton, 1946/1974, p. 315)

# Overview

- Culture-Relevant Education
  - Cultural Models of Self and Academic Performance
  - Re-framing Cultural Models and Motivation
- Growing Student Mindsets
  - Positive Academic Self-Views and Classroom Behavior
  - Academic Performance
- Enhancing Cultural Toolkits and Student Mindsets Teacher Training Institute



# **CULTURAL MODELS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**



# Cultural Models of Self

## Independent Model of Self

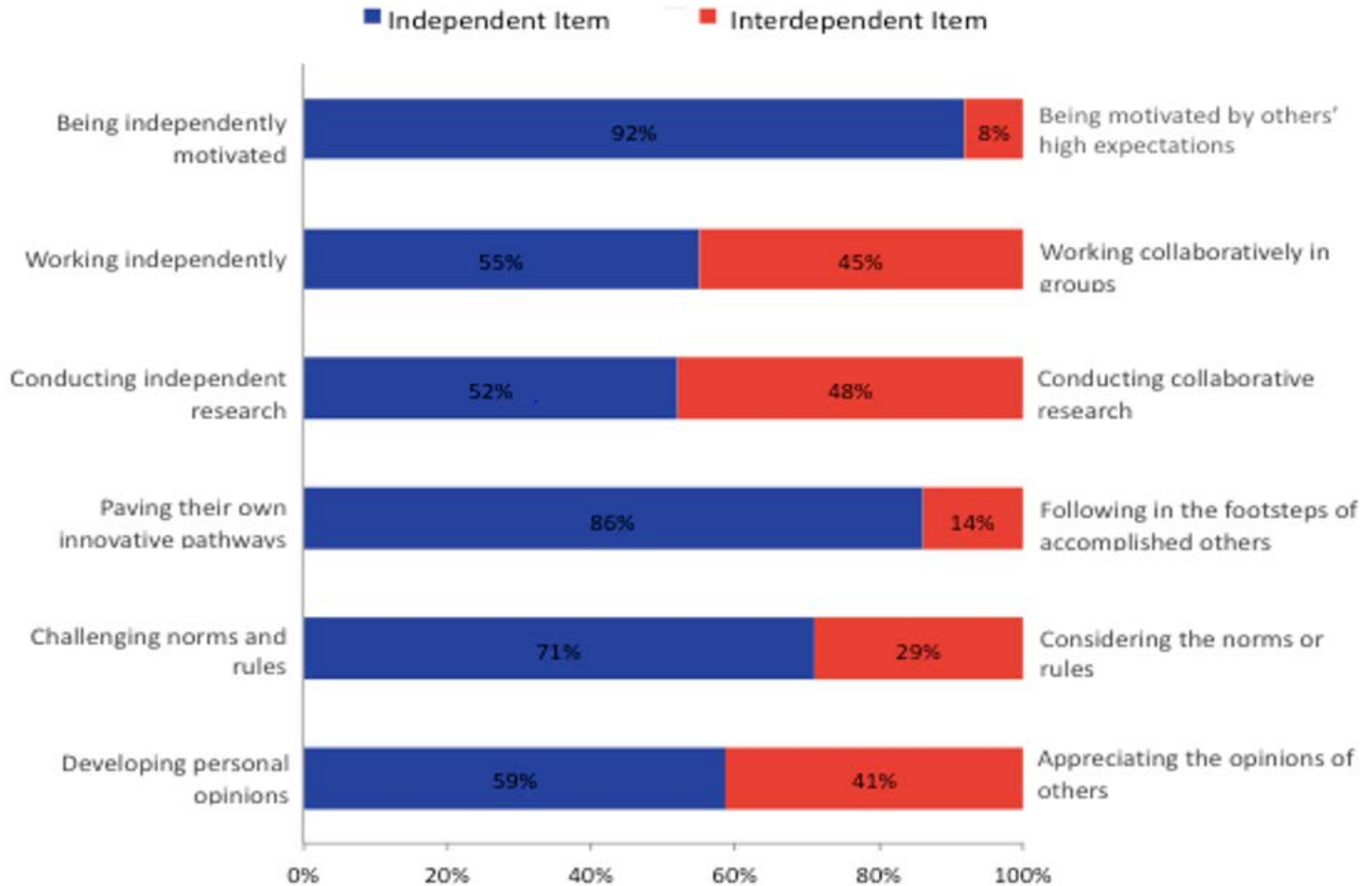
- Understanding of self as independent from others and the social context.
- “Good” actions promote separation from others and individual self-expression.

## Interdependent Model of Self

- Understanding of self as interdependent with others and the social context.
- “Good” actions promote connection to others and attention to others’ preferences.

(Markus & Kitayama, 1991, 2003; Markus, Uchida, Omoregie, Townsend, & Kitayama, 2006)

# Results



# Results

- 71% characterized their university as independent.
- 20% characterized their university as equally independent and interdependent.
- 9% characterized their university as interdependent.

# Standardized regression coefficients : What predicts grades?

Predictor Variables	European Americans	American Indians
Trust for Teachers	.26	.41**
<u>Interdependent</u> Representations of Self	.25	.38**
Independent Representations of Self	.39*	-.28†
$R^2$	.15*	.36***

• † =  $p < .10$ , \* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < .001$

# Academic & Social Difficulties

Compared to continuing-generation, first-generation students have:

- Lower grades, higher drop out rates
- Smaller academic gains in first year
- Less satisfaction with college environment
- Lower feelings of belongingness
- Fewer close relationships with peers
- Fewer relationships with professors

(Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2005; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Schooler, 2007; Pittman & Richmond, 2007; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996)



# Potential Explanations for Discrepancies?

First-generation students:

- Come from **working-class** backgrounds.
- Lack **middle-class** cultural capital (i.e., the “right” or dominant understanding of how to be a student in middle-class (college) contexts).
- Engage cultural models of self that do not match the college context.

# Social Class at Work in College

**FIRST-GENERATION =**

Both parents have less than a BA

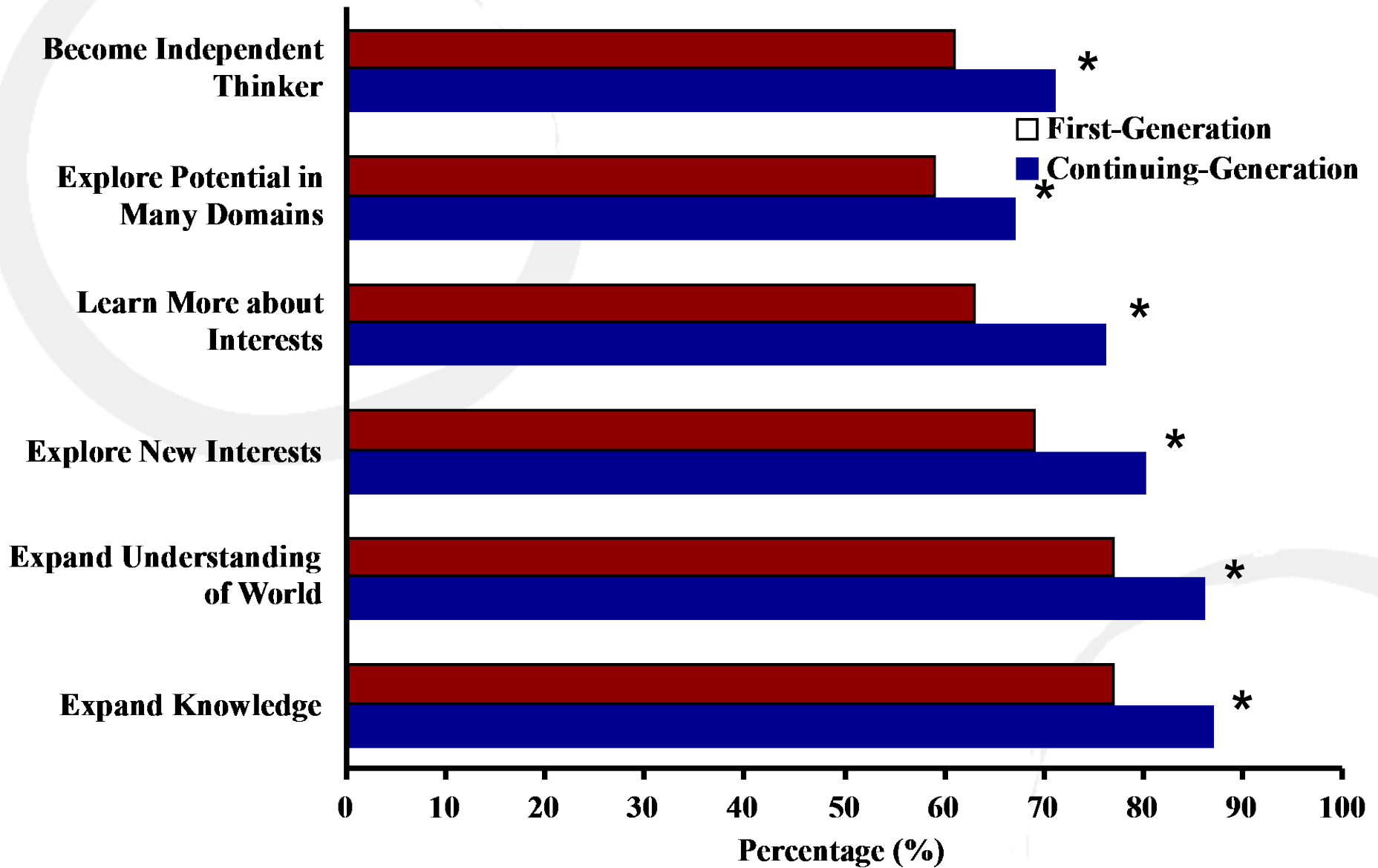
**CONTINUING-GENERATION =**

At least one parent has a BA

# Cultural Models and Performance

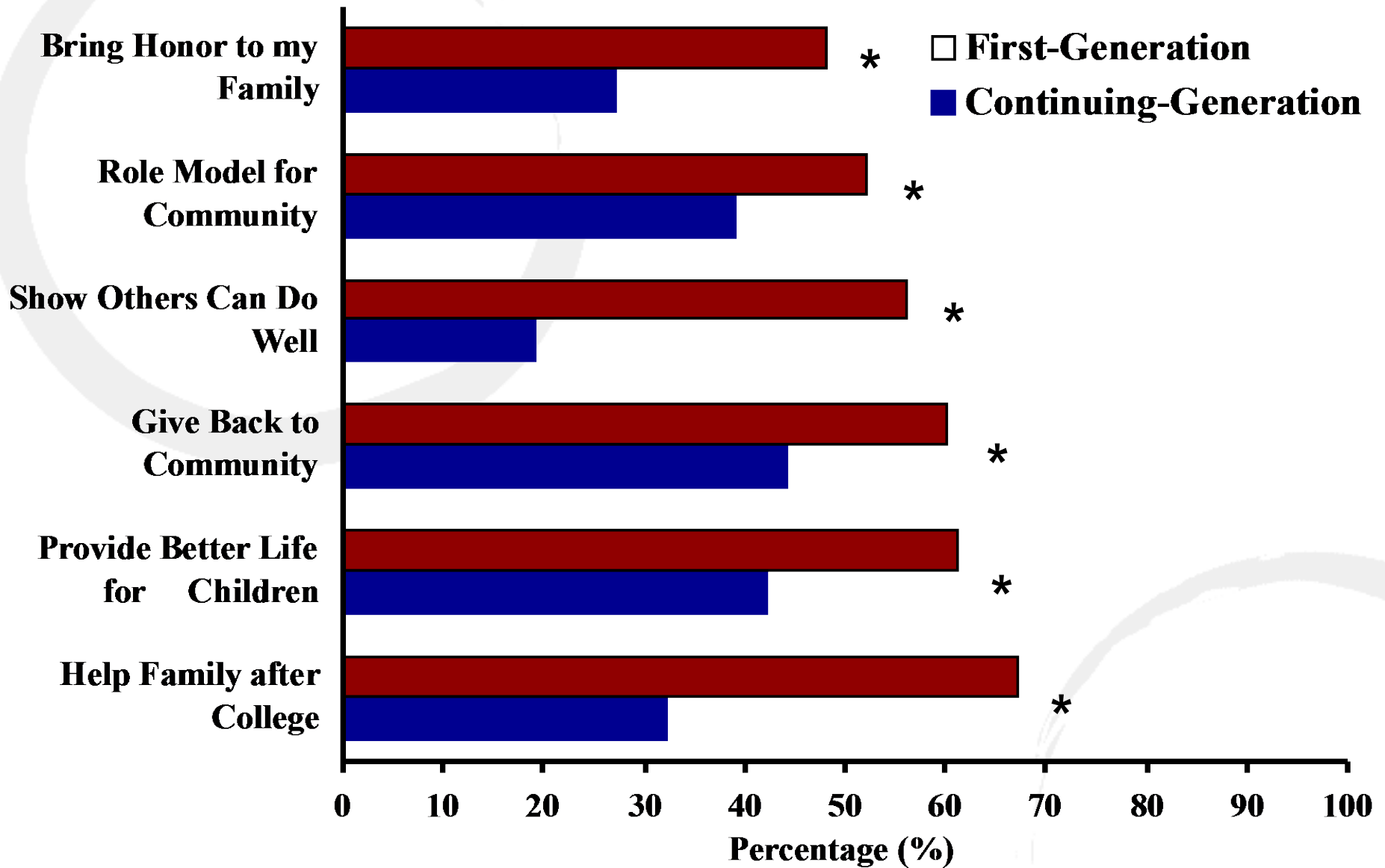
- *Participants*: Survey of the entire incoming Freshman class at Stanford (Fall 2008).
  1. *First-generation*:  $n = 262$
  2. *Continuing-generation*:  $n = 1268$
- *Survey*: “There are many reasons why people CHOOSE to go to college. Read the following list and **mark each item** that is a very important reason for you in attending college.”
- *Academic Performance*: Collected Freshman year grades.

# Self Development



*n* = 1530; all *ps* < .05

# Help Others



*n* = 1530; all *ps* < .05



# Motives Predict Students' GPAs

	$\beta$
Independent motives	0.06*
Interdependent motives	-0.16***
Social Class	.004 <sup>ns</sup>
Race	.06*
SAT Math	.22***
SAT Verbal	.31***

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$



# **REFRAMING CULTURAL MODELS**

Getting an education will benefit **you** in the future.



Independent Frame (You)

Outgroup Role Model (EA)

Getting an education will benefit **you** in the future.



Independent Frame (You)

Ingroup Role Model (AI)

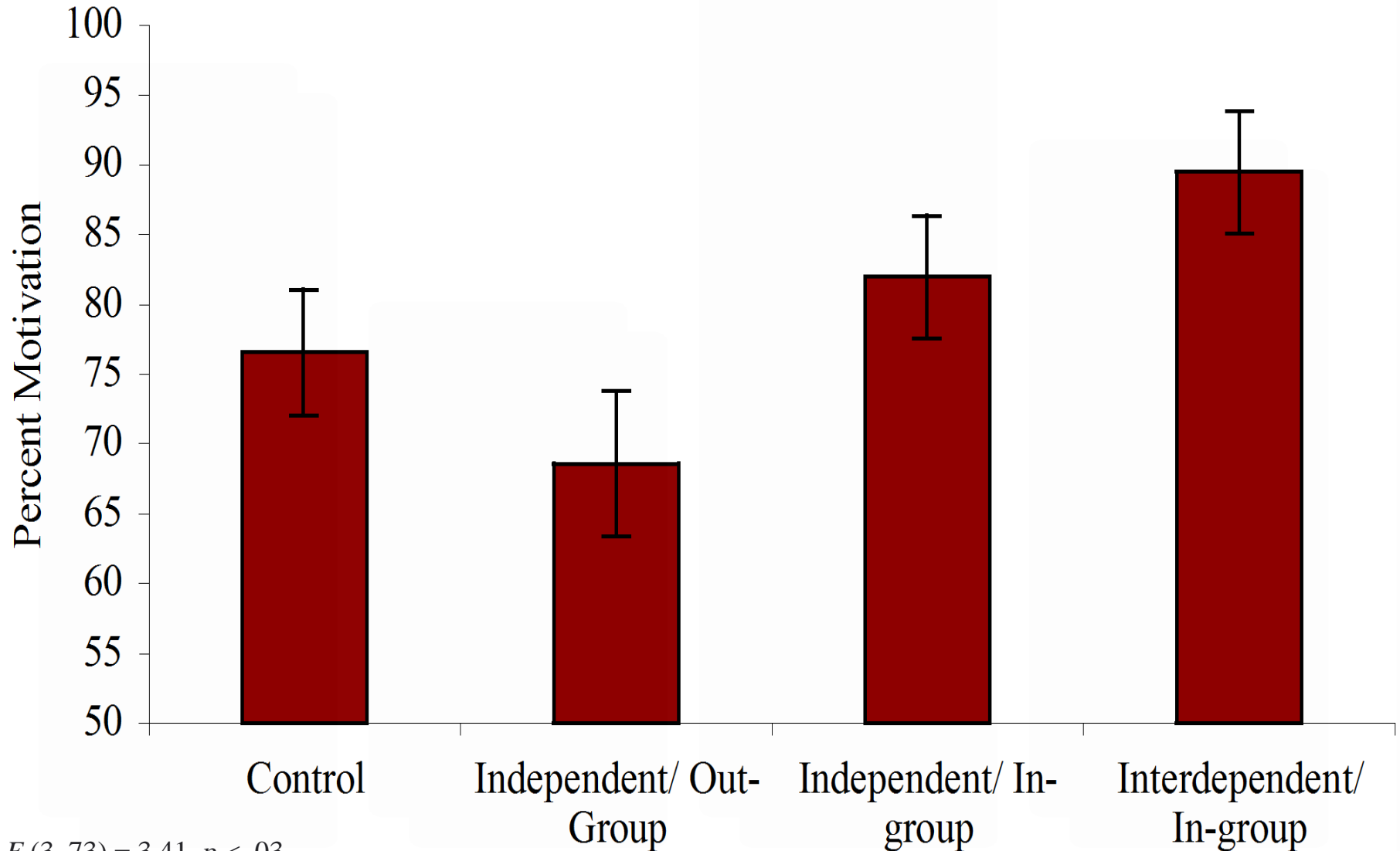
Getting an education will benefit **your tribe** in the future.



Interdependent Frame (Tribe)

**Ingroup Role Model (AI)**

# Effects of Condition on Academic Motivation



$F(3, 73) = 3.41, p < .03$

From Stanford's President



## Welcome to Stanford University

I am delighted that you have decided to attend Stanford University. For the next few years, you will have many opportunities to explore new areas and to learn from our superb faculty and your fellow students.

As Stanford's 10th president and a faculty member for 27 years, I encourage you to make the most of your time here, and I offer you a few suggestions to get you started.

Stanford has one of the most accomplished faculties in the nation, and these teachers and researchers are here in large part because of you—the extraordinary students that Stanford attracts. From your first days on campus, I urge you to get to know our faculty. Stop by during office hours to continue a class discussion or to ask about research possibilities.

Stanford undergraduates have many opportunities not available at other institutions. The University's breadth—from the arts to the environment to athletics to the sciences—provides students with unparalleled freedom to cross departmental boundaries and discover intellectual and personal passions. You will have the chance to work with distinguished faculty members in small classes from your first days on campus. If you are interested in research, Stanford University offers undergraduates numerous avenues for pursuing student-initiated research or working on faculty projects.

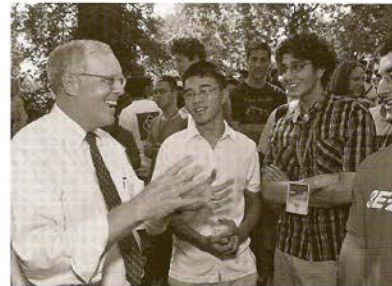
Stanford is an intellectually vibrant place, and your fellow students are a critical part of the community. Some of your most valuable experiences will be shared with your peers, whether you are working together to understand a difficult concept or getting to know more about another's background or culture. I often hear alumni say that they made lifelong friends while attending Stanford.

Stanford University has a tradition of boldness, and I hope you will challenge yourself while you are here. This is your time to attempt something new—whether it is in the classroom, in a laboratory, in a theater, or on the athletic field.

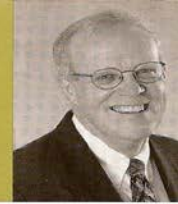
Above all, I urge you to enjoy the intellectual journey and pursue it with enthusiasm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John L. Hennessy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "H".

John L. Hennessy  
President



President Hennessy greets new freshmen at the President's Reception in 2003.



## Welcome to Stanford University

### **Independent** college frame:

“I am delighted that **you have decided** to attend Stanford university and that **you think** Stanford is the right place for you.”

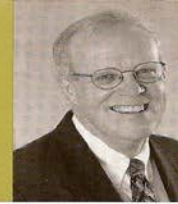
“For the next few years **you** will have many opportunities to explore new areas and to learn from our superb faculty and from your own **personal exploration** and **individual experiences** as a student.”

shared with your peers, whether you are working together to understand a difficult concept or getting to know more about another's background or culture. I often hear alumni say that they made lifelong friends while attending Stanford.



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## Welcome to Stanford University

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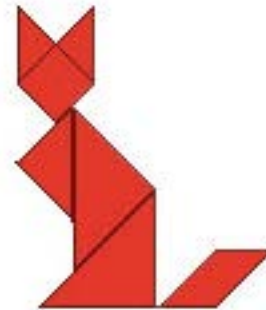
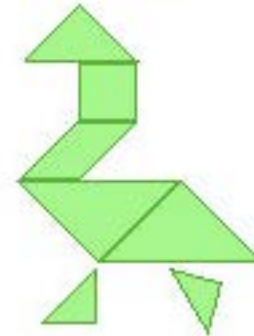
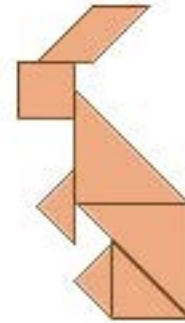
“I am delighted that **you and your family** have decided that you should attend Stanford University and that Stanford is the right place for you.”

“For the next few years, **together with the Stanford community**, you will have many opportunities to explore new areas and to learn from your experiences and interactions **with your peers.**”

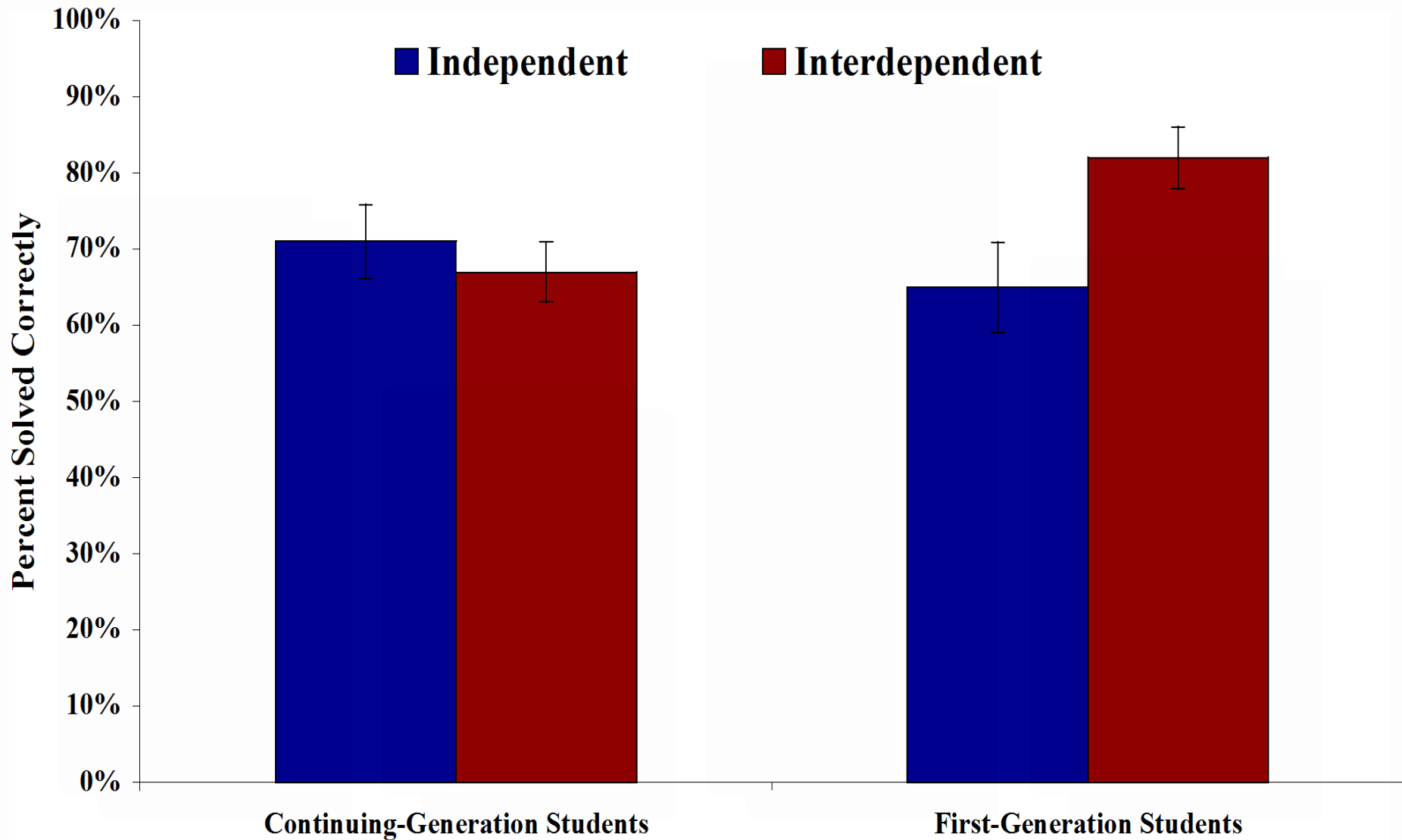
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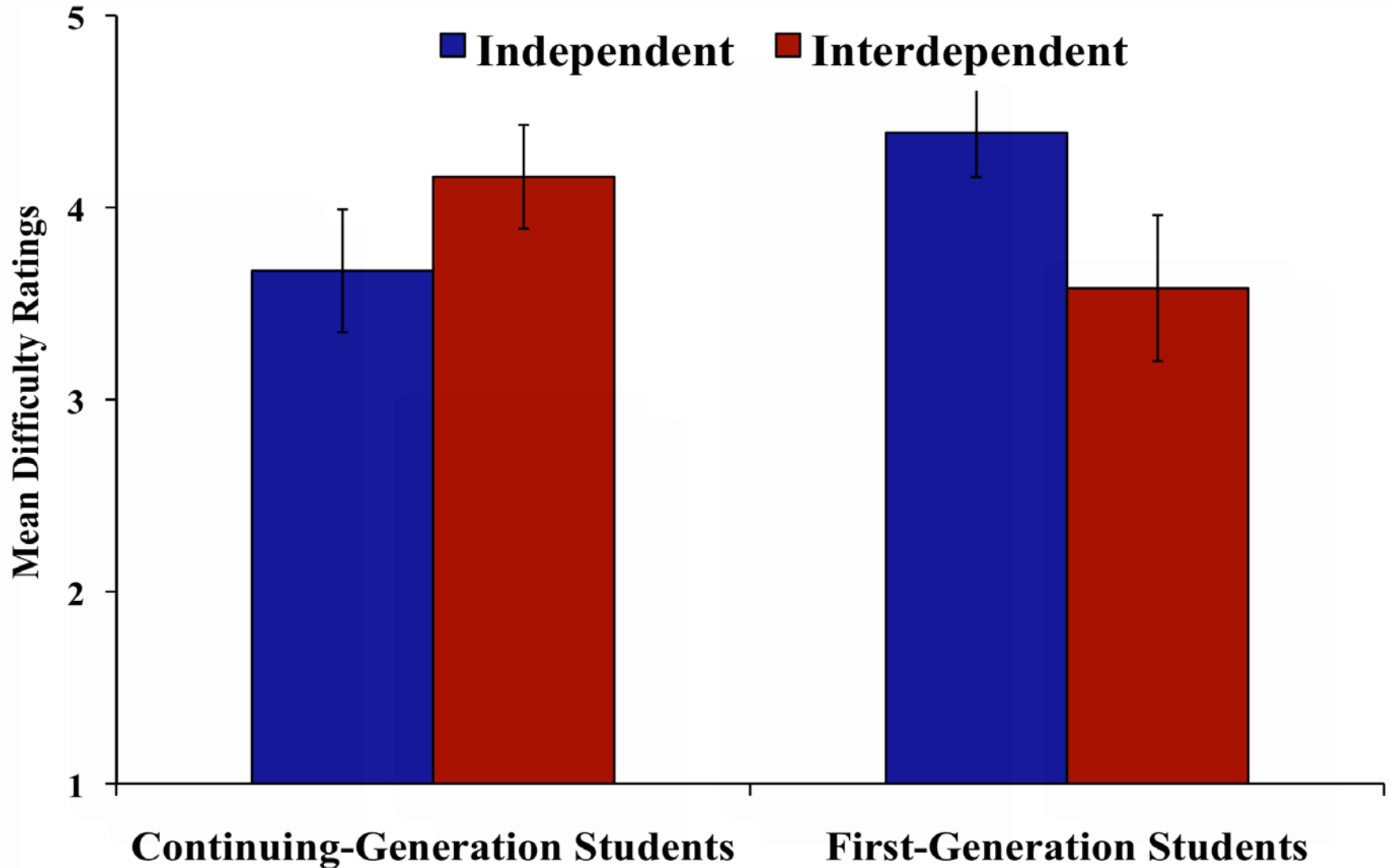
# Tangram Task



# Tangrams Solved Correctly



# Difficulty of Tangram Task?



From the University of Arizona's President



# Welcome to the University of Arizona

I am delighted that you have decided to attend the University of Arizona and that you think the University of Arizona is the right place for you. For the next few years, you will have many opportunities to explore new areas of interest, to learn from our superb faculty and from your own self-exploration and individual experiences.

As the University of Arizona's 109th president, I encourage you to make the most of your time here, and I offer you a few suggestions to get you started.

The University of Arizona has an accomplished faculty. These teachers and researchers are here because of you and your desire to develop your extraordinary talents and unique interests. From your first days on campus, I urge you to get to know our faculty. Stop by during office hours to continue a class discussion, to share your ideas, or to simply tell the professor what you think about the course. Your thoughts and opinions are important.

The University of Arizona presents you with many opportunities not available at other institutions. The university's breadth—from the arts to the environment to athletics to the sciences—provides you with individual freedom to cross departmental boundaries and to discover your intellectual passions.

From your first days on campus, you will have the chance to work with distinguished faculty in small classes. If you are interested in research, the University of Arizona offers you numerous avenues for pursuing student-initiated research or independent studies.

The University of Arizona is an intellectually vibrant place and you are a critical part of creating your own journey. Some of your most valuable experiences might involve working independently to understand a

difficult concept or influencing others by expressing your ideas and by sharing your intellectual passions.

The University of Arizona has a tradition of independence: of bold students who go against the grain and assert their own ideas, interests, and opinions. I hope you do the same while you are here. This is your time to become your own person and to explore your own personal interests—whether it is in the classroom, in a laboratory, in a theater, or on an athletic field.

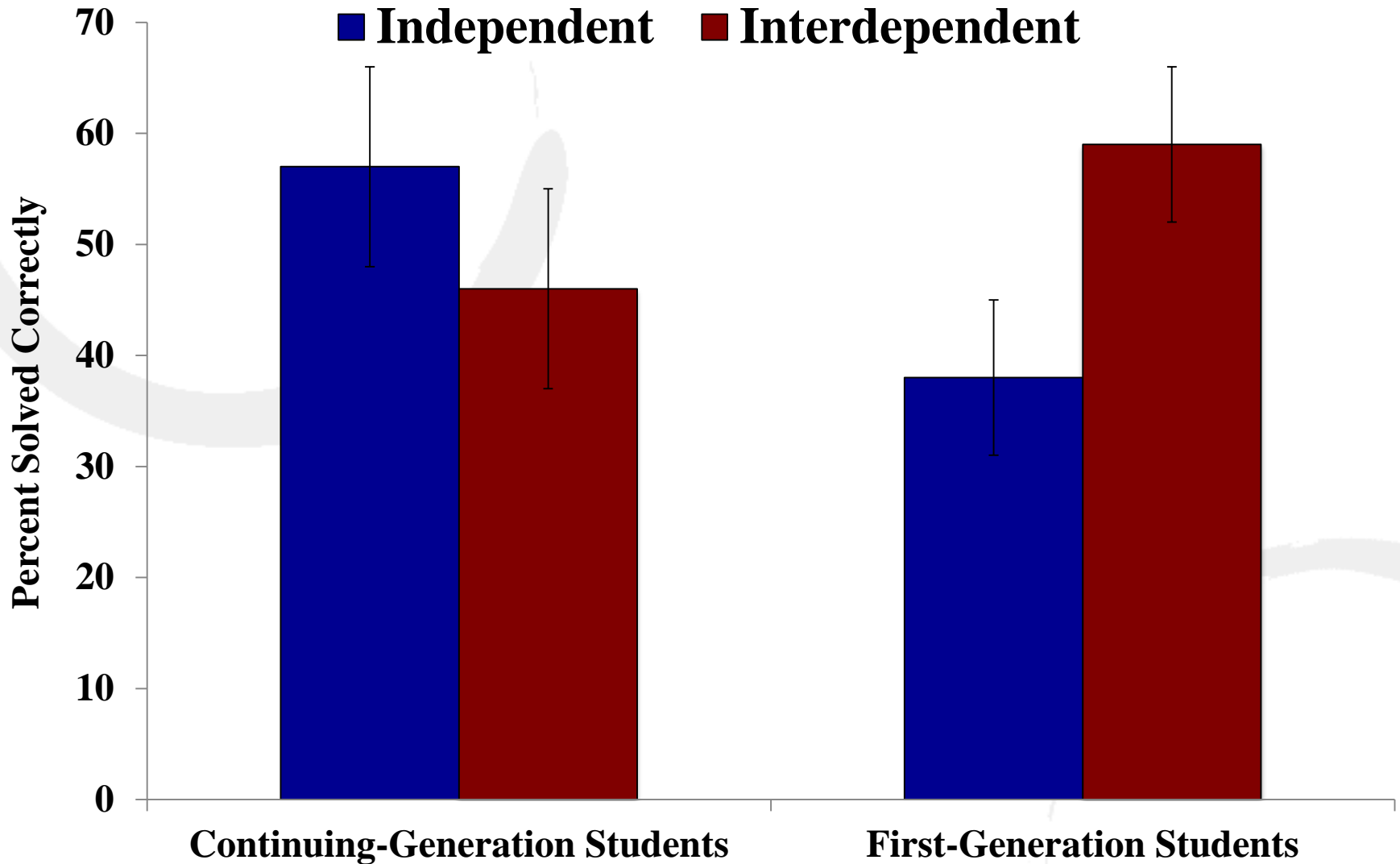
Above all, I urge you to be your own person, enjoy your intellectual journey, and to pursue it with enthusiasm.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert N. Shelton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

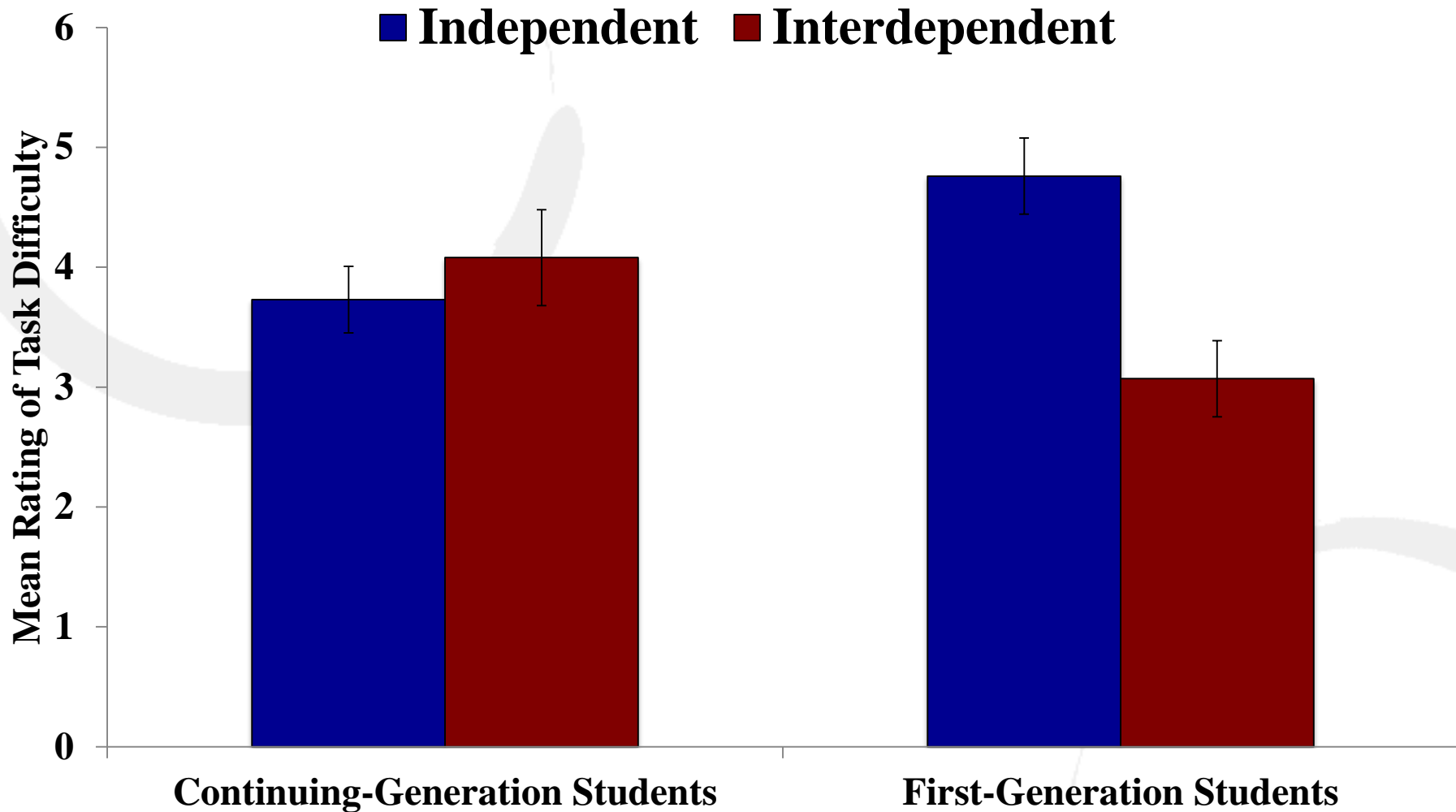
Robert N. Shelton  
President



# Tangrams Solved Correctly



# Difficulty of Tangram Task?



# Turn and Talk

What does this work mean for your work as a school board?

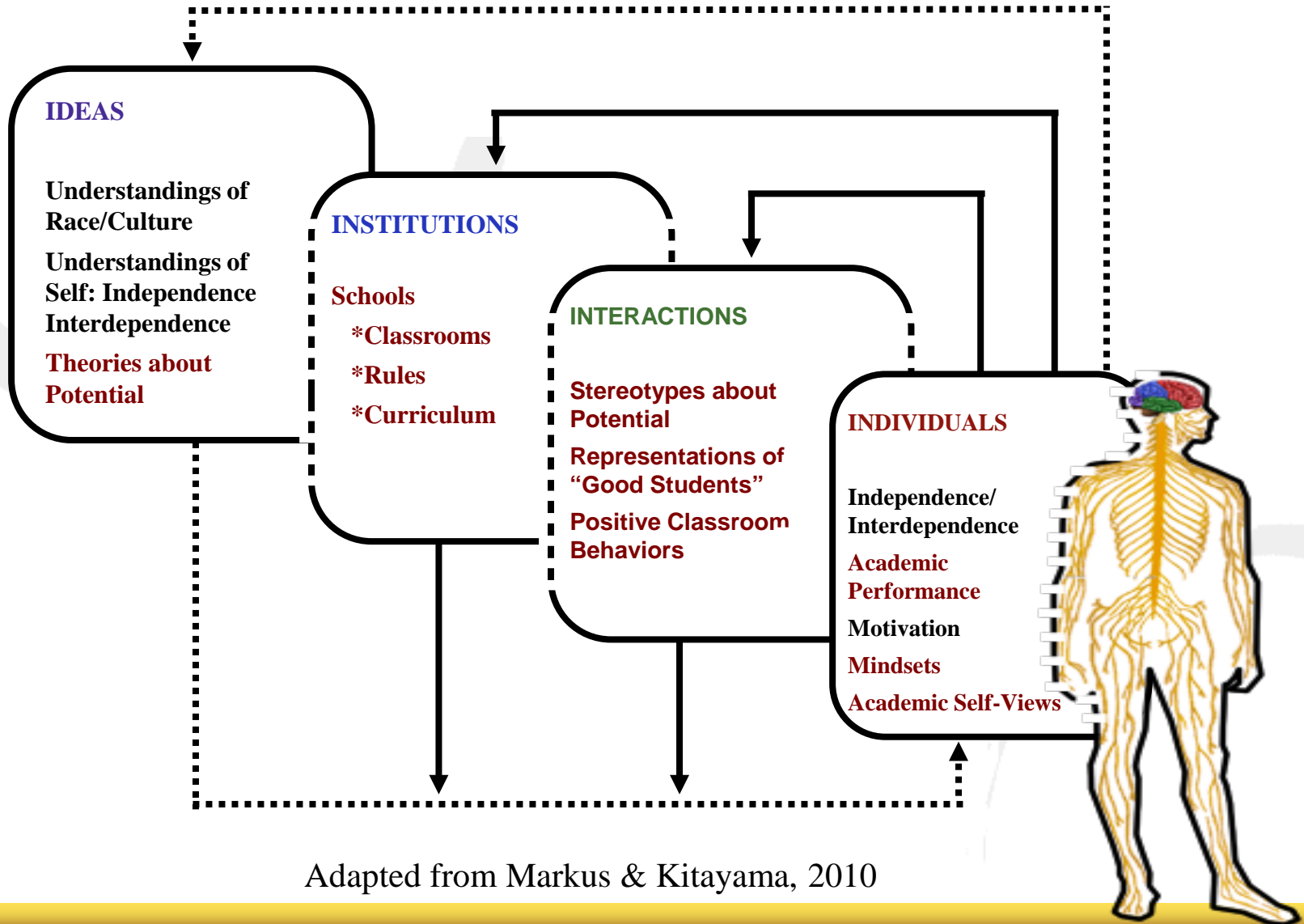
How can you legitimate multiple viable ways of being?





# **‘GROWing’ student mindsets**

# Using Culture Cycle to Promote Identity Safety



# Mindsets

Mindsets are people's personal beliefs about the malleability of human characteristics.

- Intelligence/Intellectual ability
- Personality
- Athletic ability
- Musical ability...

# 2 Types of Mindsets

## Fixed Mindset:

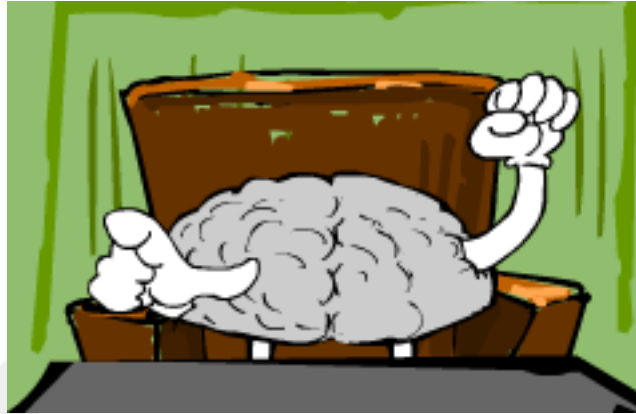
- Intelligence, athletic ability, and personality are fixed traits
- They can't be changed; either you have it or you don't
- E.g., “I'm just not a math person.”

# 2 Types of Mindsets

## Growth Mindset:

- Intelligence, athletic ability, and personality are malleable qualities
- A potential that can be developed; they can grow and improve by effort, applying the right strategies, and seeking help
- E.g., “I just haven’t mastered math *yet*”

# Growth Mindset Motto



Learn, learn, learn!

Work hard, effort is the key!

Embrace mistakes, confront  
deficiencies!

# “Little People”



Role play with “little people” to measure:

- Academic Self-View
- Growth Mindset





# Academic Self-Views

- Choose a little person to represent a “good student.”
  - ✓ “Is <name> smart or not smart?”
  - ✓ Attributes: smart, nice to the teacher, does what the teacher asks, gets most of the schoolwork right, nice to other students, and helps teacher/other students clean up classroom.
- Choose a little person to represent you
  - ✓ Answered same questions as above.

# Response to Failure: Example Situation

Imagine that you are playing with the blocks. There are blocks all over the floor. Teacher Debbie asks you to put them neatly on the shelf. A little while later, Teacher Debbie comes back and says, “There are still blocks on the floor, and the ones on the shelf are messy. That’s not cleaning up the right way.”

Next time, would you want to clean up the blocks, or would you let someone else do it?

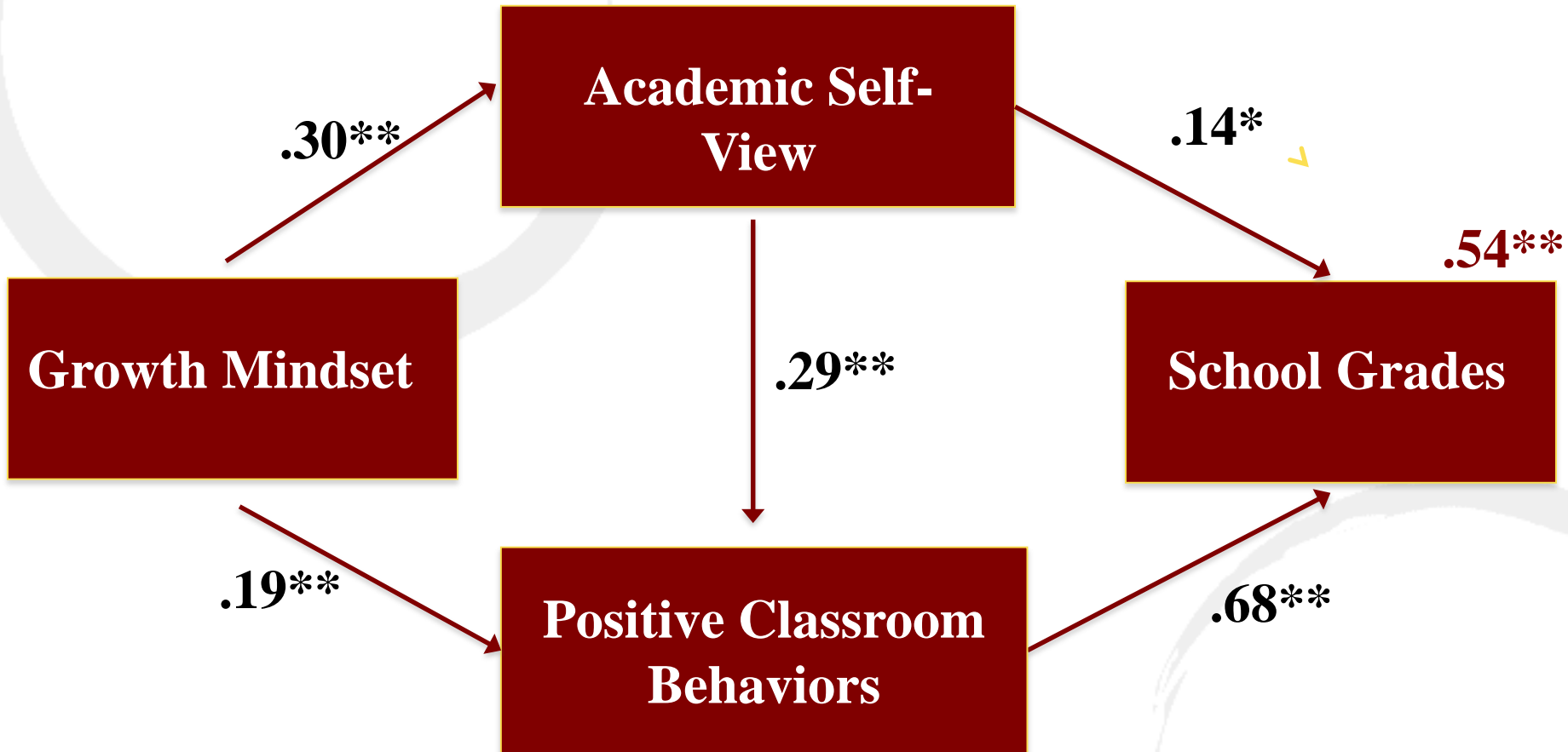


**Teacher Debbie**

# Native Mindsets

- Overall, growth mindset predicts motivation and academic performance for all students.
- We find ethnic differences on growth mindset responses, with Native students endorsing growth mindset less than European American students.
- What this tells us is that even as early as elementary school Native students are receiving different messages about their potential as students.
  - They are more likely to be exposed to negative ability stereotypes (Fryberg, Markus, et al., 2008)
  - They are less likely to see positive examples of their group as “good students” or to be exposed to curriculum that is decidedly Native American (Bang, Warren, Rosebery, & Medin, 2012; Covarrubias & Fryberg, 2015; Covarrubias, Herrmann, & Fryberg, 2016; Fryberg, Covarrubias, & Burack, 2013)

# Study 2: Mindset and Performance (Grades 3-5)



\* Denotes  $p < .05$

\*\* Denotes  $p < .01$

# Mindset-Performance Link

Offers two directions for enhancing school contexts:

- We can reframe ideas about potential (mindsets) and integrate these ideas into the culture of the classroom
- We can build greater identification with school by attending to the social representations that foster negative ability stereotypes.



**Shifting the Culture**

**WHERE DO MINDSETS COME  
FROM**



# OLD ways of thinking about Mindset

People either “have” a fixed mindset or they “have” a growth  
mindset

## What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?



I can learn anything I want to.  
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.  
I want to challenge myself.  
When I fail, I learn.  
Tell me I try hard.  
If you succeed, I'm inspired.  
My effort and attitude determine everything.



I'm either good at it, or I'm not.  
When I'm frustrated, I give up.  
I don't like to be challenged.  
When I fail, I'm no good.  
Tell me I'm smart.  
If you succeed, I feel threatened.  
My abilities determine everything.

# NEW way of thinking about Mindset

- People “have” both mindsets.
- We move between the mindsets based on “triggers”





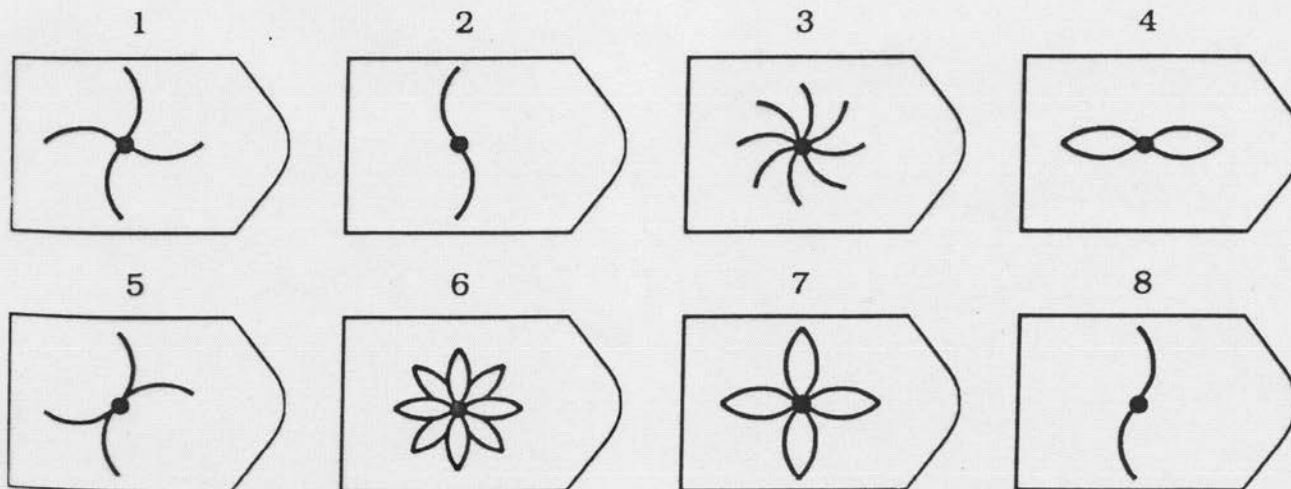
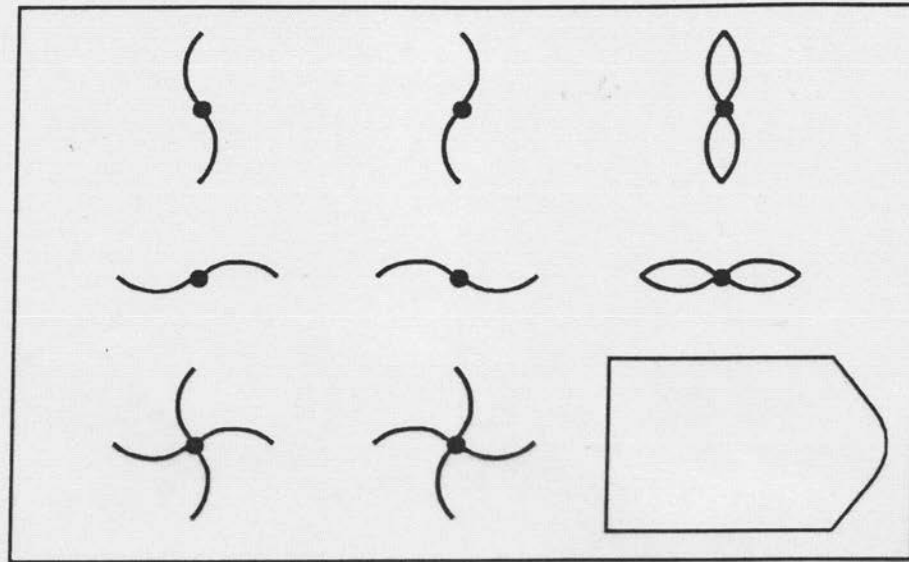
# Messages About What Is Valued

**Intelligence Praise:** “Wow, that’s a really good score. You must be smart at this.”

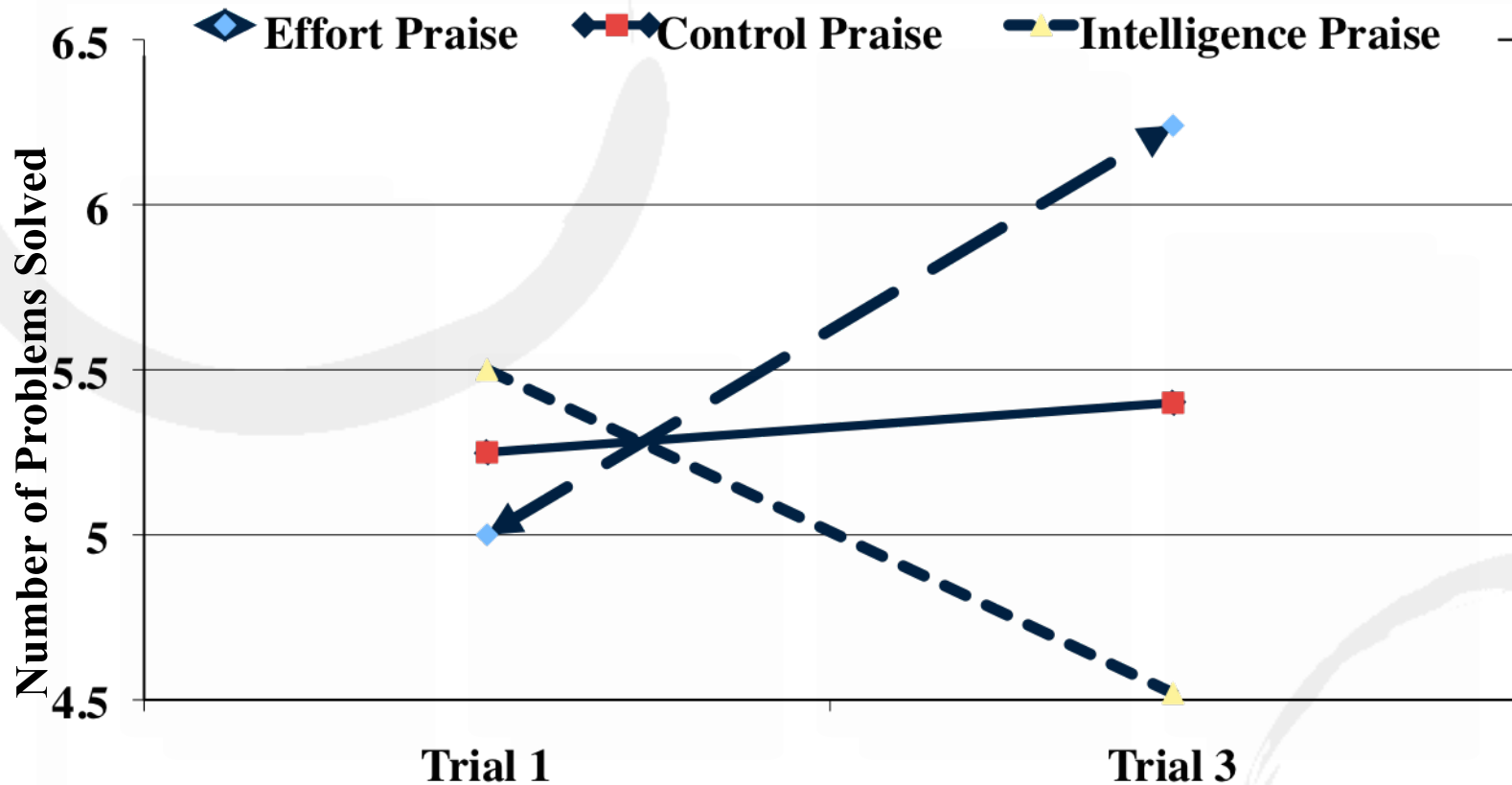
**Effort (Process) Praise:** “Wow, that’s a really good score. You must have tried really hard.”

**Control Group:** “Wow, that’s a really good score.”

# Standard Progressive Matrices (Raven, 1976)

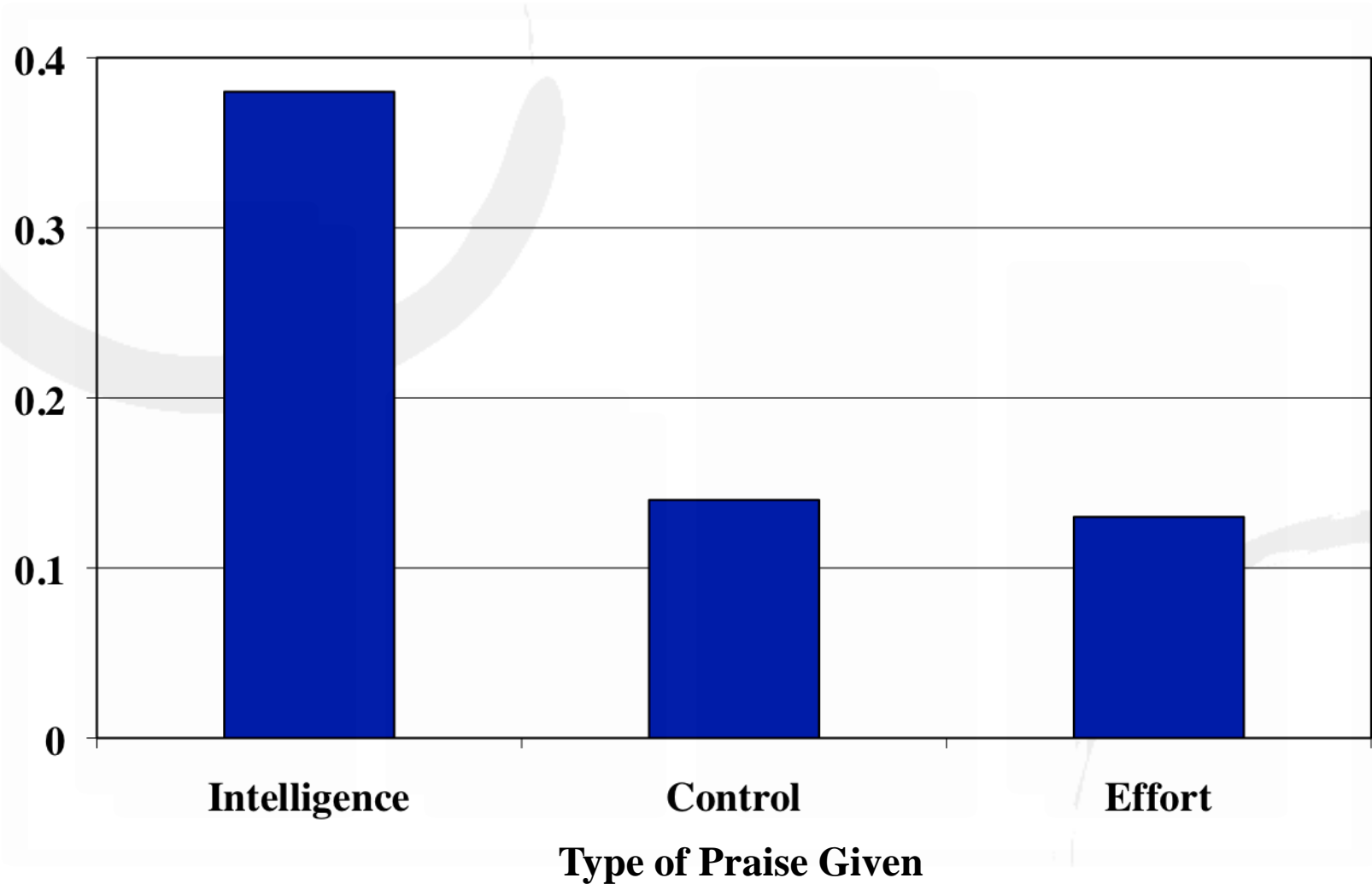


# Number of problems solved on Trial 1 (before failure) and Trial 3 (after failure)



# Lying

Students who misrepresented their scores





# **CHANGING STUDENTS MINDSETS**

# You Can Grow Your Intelligence

*New Research Shows the Brain  
Can Be Developed Like a Muscle*

---

Many people think of the brain as a mystery. They don't know much about intelligence and how it works. When they do think about what intelligence is, many people believe that a person is born either smart, average, or dumb—and stays that way for life.

But new research shows that the brain is more like a muscle—it changes and gets stronger when you use it. And scientists have been able to show just how the brain grows and gets stronger when you learn.

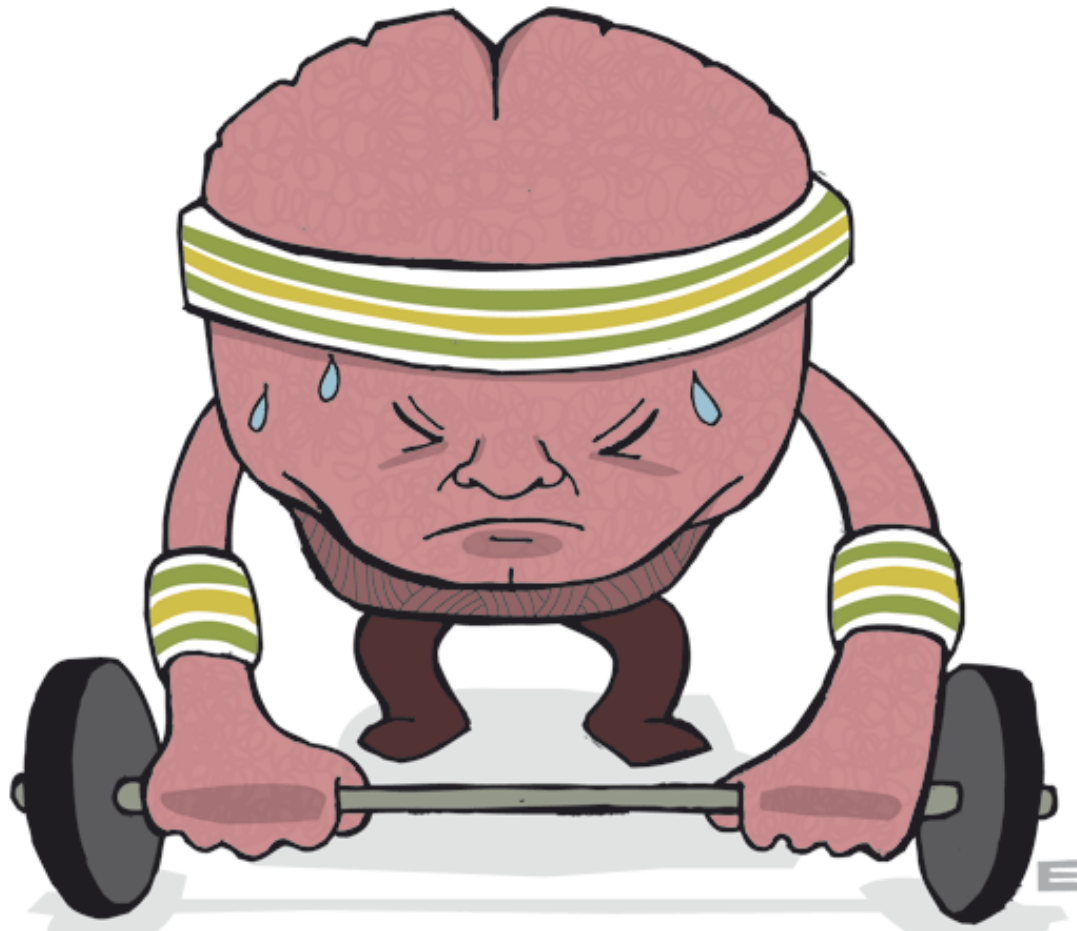
Everyone knows that when you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and you get stronger. A person who can't lift 20 pounds when they start exercising can get strong enough to lift 100 pounds after working out for a long time. That's because the muscles become larger and stronger with exercise. And when you stop exercising, the muscles shrink and you get weaker. That's why people say "Use it or lose it!"

But most people don't know that when they practice and learn new things, parts of their brain change and get larger a lot like muscles do when they exercise.



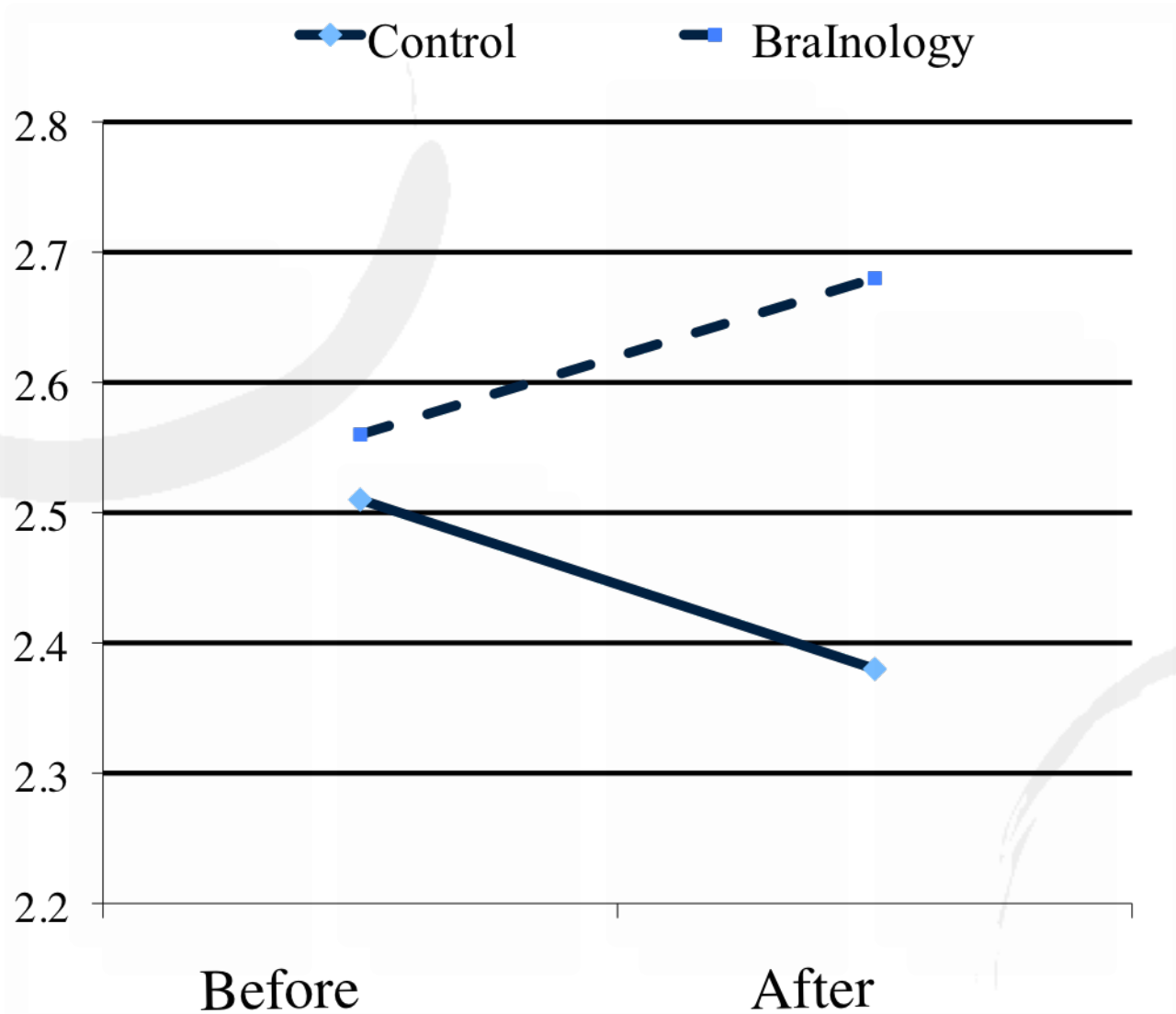
Inside the cortex of the brain are billions of tiny nerve cells, called neurons. The nerve cells have branches connecting them to other cells in a complicated network. Communication between these brain cells is what allows us to think and solve problems.

# Growing our Mindset!



# Math Grades

(Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck)

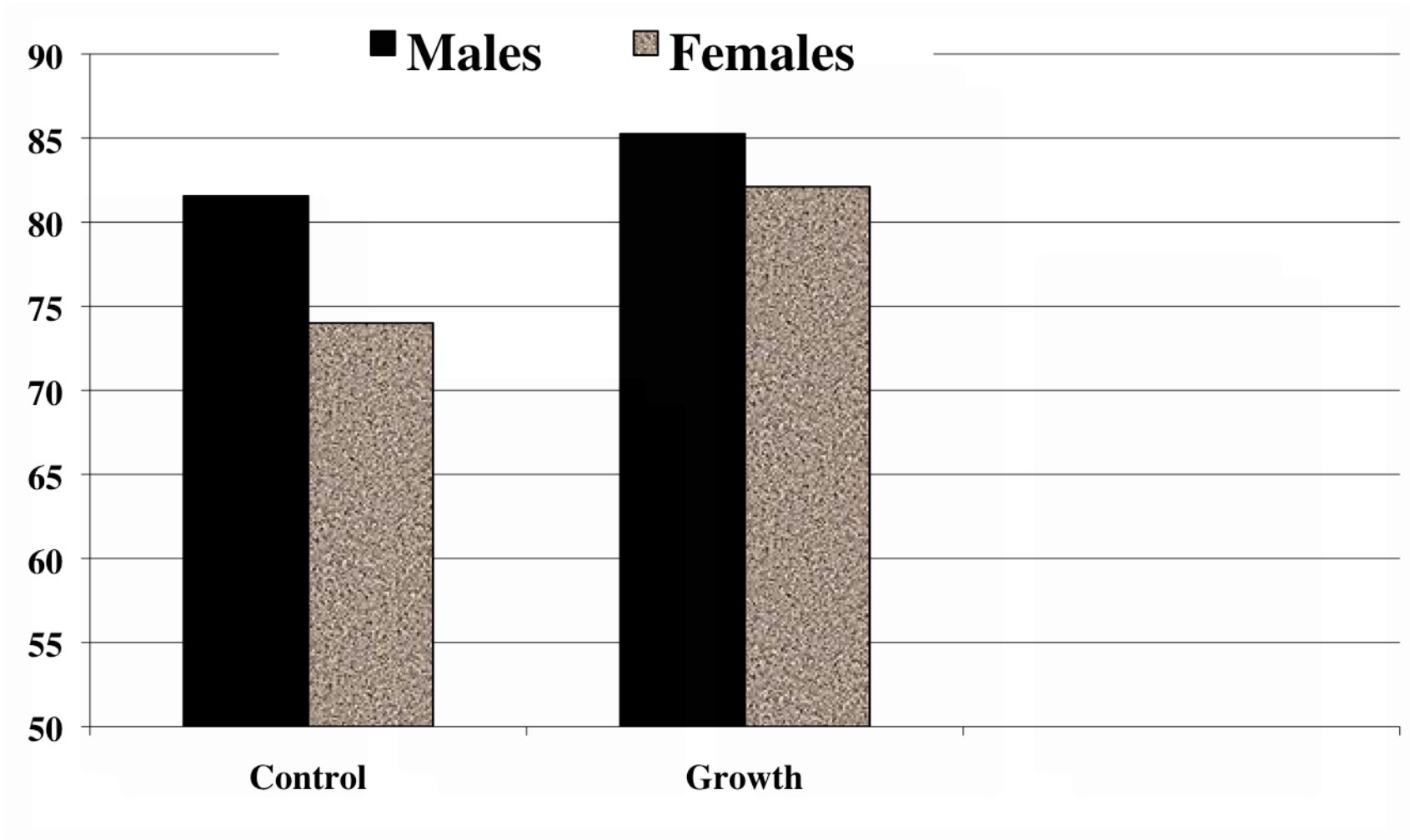




# Identity Threats

- 1) Stereotypes about intelligence treat intelligence as a fixed trait.
- 2) Stereotypes about intelligence lead to low expectations for stereotyped individuals.
- 3) Low expectations convey to individuals that they do not have the “ability” to be successful.
- 4) Ultimately, stereotypes undermine performance.

# Effects of Brainology on Math Standardized Test Scores (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003)





Enhancing Cultural Toolkits  
and Student Mindsets

2016

# Enhancing Cultural Toolkits and Student Mindsets Teacher Training Institute

# Problems with Existing Growth Mindset Interventions

- Growth Mindset (GM) interventions are not effective for all students or in all contexts<sup>5, 7</sup>
- No “best practices” in fostering GM
- Existing interventions take one-size-fits-all approach
  - Not culturally responsive
  - May not be effective for students from diverse backgrounds with different ways of being
- Lack of sustainability
  - Change individual students, but not learning contexts

***To create sustainable change and expand educational opportunities, need to alter the learning environment and classroom culture to meet the needs of diverse student populations***

<sup>5</sup>Paunesku et al. (2015), <sup>7</sup>Yeager & Walton (2011)



# Week-long Teacher Institutes

- Teach participants about GM and Culture Inclusion theories
- Provide relevant strategies for changing classroom cultures (e.g., framing feedback, assessment, student engagement, and teacher to student and parent interactions)
- Draw on teachers' expertise and individual differences to help them develop culturally inclusive, growth-minded classroom cultures

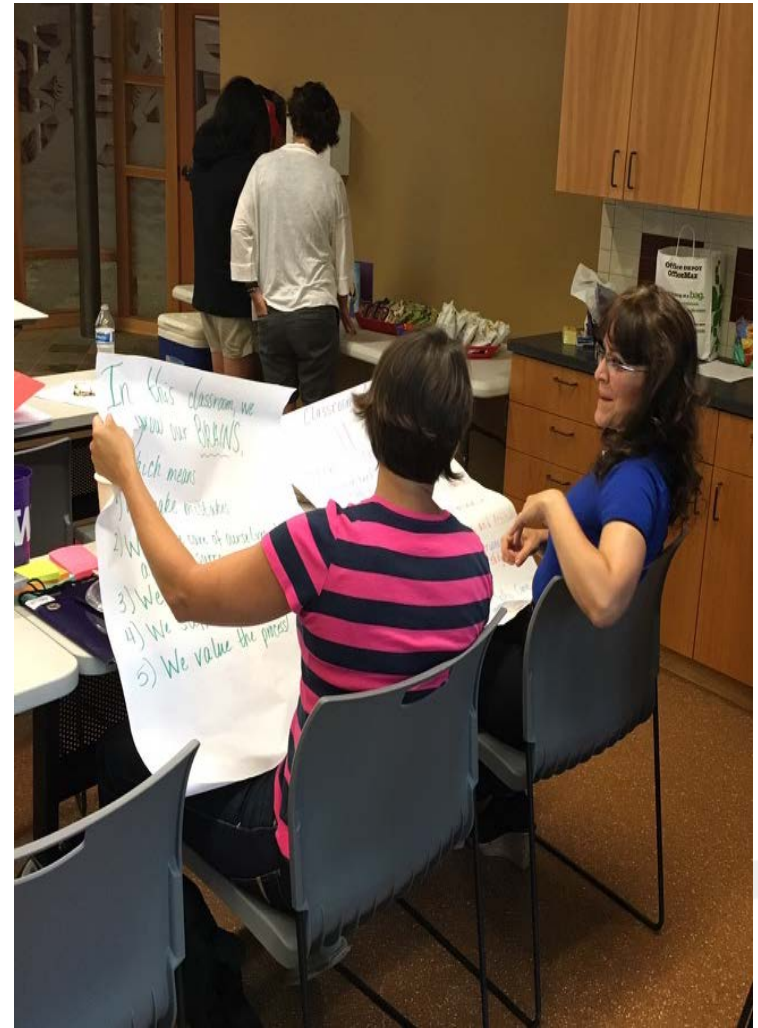


Enhancing Cultural Toolkits  
and Student Mindsets

2016







# Example 1: Community Agreements Activity

In this classroom :

We celebrate each other.

We respect ourselves, all  
people, and things.

We are open to challenges.

We make mistakes +  
Keep trying.

*From: Cultivating an Inclusive Mindset Through  
Classroom Agreements and Community Agreements  
by Dr. Loretta Stauder, Ed.D. and Dr. Loretta Stauder, Ed.D.  
© 2016*





# Classroom Community Agreements

In this learning community we will...

⑥ Support others with our best learning behaviors (grow your brain for 6 hours a day).

⑥ Make mistakes and grow from them.

⑥ Maintain a safe and respectful classroom environment.

⑥ Recognize and celebrate growth in each other and ourselves.

I am not sharing your secrets. I am not sharing your secrets. I am not sharing your secrets. I am not sharing your secrets.

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# Example 2: Mindset Triggers and Responses Activity

I already know... or I'm done (high achiever)	Establish a culture of "I'm not done with one"	Listen to peers share strategies	Culture of collaboration or norms	Teach/help a peer
	Request multiple strategies	Allowing students to generate question to solve/investigate		
Difficult text	"What strategies should we try..."	What do you need to be successful to read this text	Shared read prior to reading independently	Where did you run into roadblock? Where was it difficult?
Withdrawn student	Acknowledge their struggle - empathy	acknowledging they need a "break" moment	Strategy word wall	
I can't do it	YET	What did you try? What next?	Chart with phrases to use instead of "I can't"	name what "it" is
I'm not good at...	What are your strengths? Why do you feel that?			
Crumples up their test and hides it.	Celebrating growth instead of scale.	Pre-post test to look at comparison instead of score.	Data binders to collect growth data → reflect.	
	Modeling "my favorite no" before handing back papers.	Do a test-correction activity whole-class to reflect on progress.		



You haven't mastered it yet, but you could try...

Ask a peer... How would you do this?

I can't do this

Have you tried it this way?

I know you can do this yet, but we are just beginning to learn it.





# Example 3: Flagship Practices Setting



Please list the 3 Flagship Practices that you have chosen to implement this year to build a Culturally Inclusive Growth Mindset Classroom?

Flagship Practice 1: Framing

Flagship Practice 2: Culture Building

Flagship Practice 3: Inclusion Practices

## Flagship Practice 1:

In some detail (so that readers can envision it), can you describe how you will institute Practice 1 in your classroom this year? Please take some time here to tell us what that practice will look like and sound like?

- Transparency regarding lesson objectives - I always forget to start ~~the~~ the lesson by saying what students will be learning, so I want to work on making that explicit. I sometimes assume that they'll just know what a lesson is about. I want to make it routine to say, "we will be able to" and have students frame it as "I can". I also want to be explicit in my expectations and effectively communicate high standards.

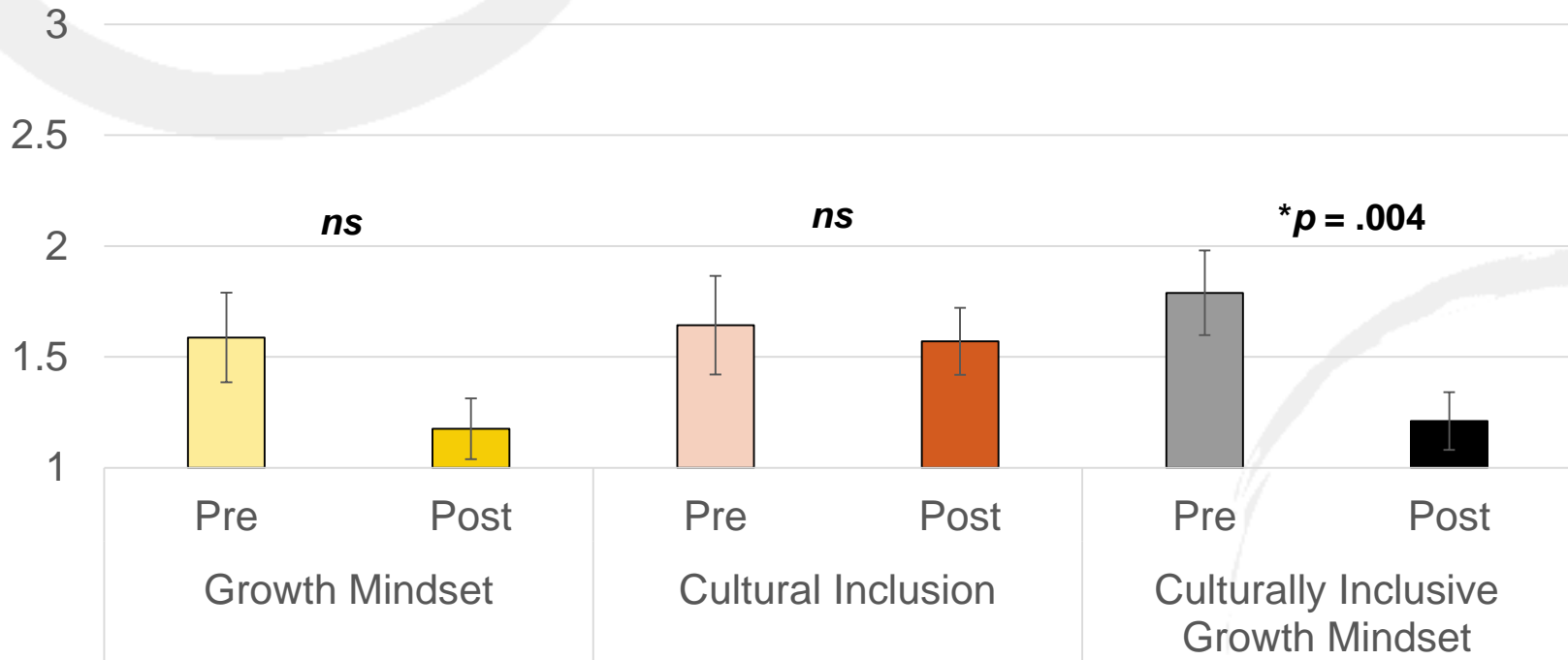
Please tell us how you will know whether Practice 1 is successful? What specific change(s) do you hope to bring about (in yourself and/or in your students and/or with their families) by instituting Practice 1 next year?

- Students being able to identify the core learning objective for any lesson ("I can solve problems with tens and ones").
- Students identifying their "aha!" moment
- Families being aware of learning objectives, either through newsletters, emails, student conversations or informal meetings (after/before school).



# Preliminary Outcomes: Less Fixed Views of Ability

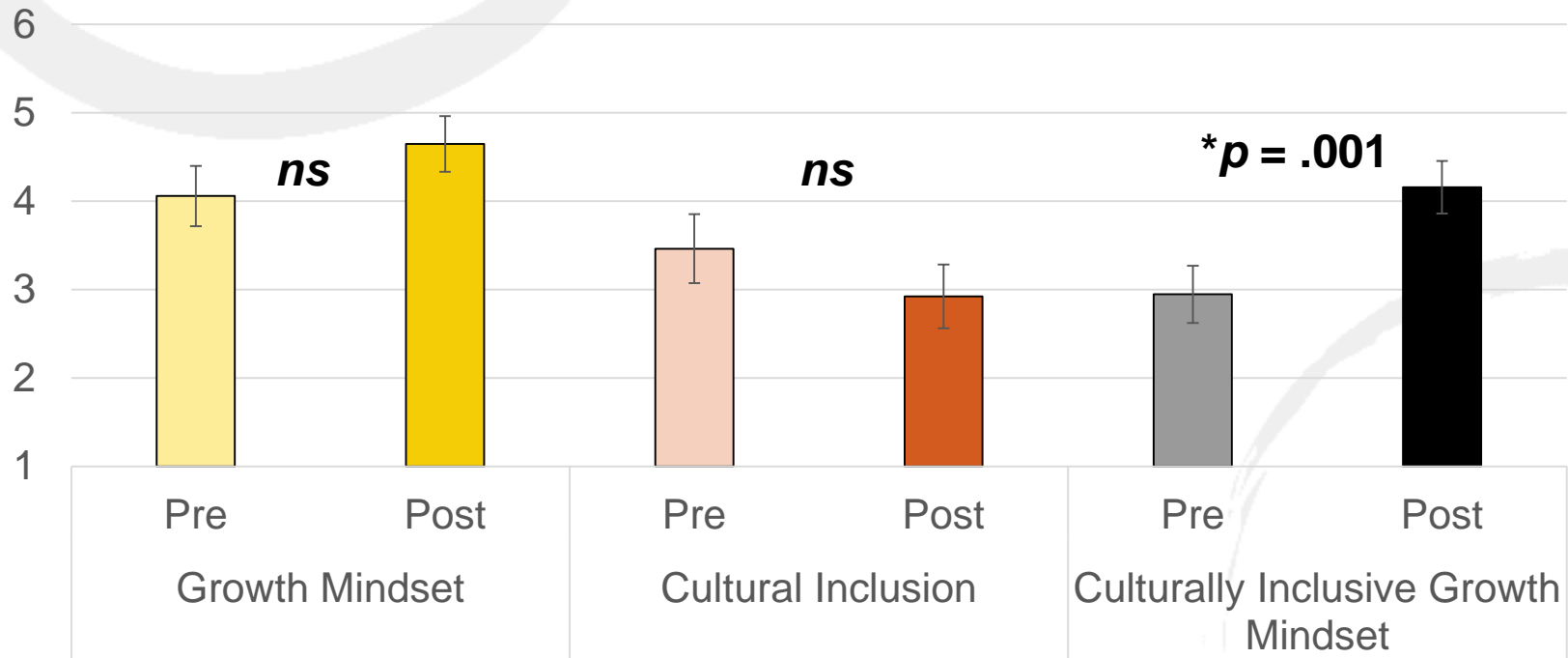
*“If a student is really struggling, sometimes it's best to say that this just isn't their area of strength.”*





# Preliminary Outcomes: More Effective Praise

*“I praise students for their effort only when I can tell that they really put in a lot of effort.”*



# Teacher Satisfaction ( $M = 6.9$ on 7pt scale)

*“This experience had a profound impact on my perception of how a classroom culture can be built for the success and benefit of all students. I am walking away with clear, intentional strategies to implement right away in my planning, thinking, and practices! I will recommend this class to all teachers I know! Please continue this work.”*

*“After 25 years of teaching, this week has given me a fresh lens and powerful tools to make my 5<sup>th</sup> grade class even better for every child.”*



# Teacher Satisfaction ( $M = 6.9$ on 7pt scale)

*“This institute has been one of the most eye-opening and useful professional development opportunities that I have ever participated in. It ... has left me feeling empowered and supported in incorporating culturally inclusive growth mindset flagship practices into my work with students this year and likely for many years in the future as well.”*

*“This is a powerful class that should be part of the new teacher certification programs.”*

*“The way I deliver instruction and interactions with my students will be forever changed!”*





# Community Building and Support



# Community Building and Support

- Building community among teachers who are working to close achievement gaps
  - Request to be “alumni” of institute
  - Request to meet next year’s cohort of teachers
  - Request for more time together
- Provide continued support and guidance via monthly check-ins with teachers
- Facilitate teacher-teacher support and guidance (Facebook groups)



# Turn and Talk

- Given what you've heard, what is new or challenging to your understanding of GM?
- Why might framing GM in a culturally inclusive way be important for diverse classrooms/schools and for helping to close racial and social class achievement gaps?