

## Talk to nudge feelings

### Turn pessimistic to optimistic student talk.

Words like '**never**' and '**always**' can be damaging to learners. When students say 'I can **never** understand what my teacher is going on about', or 'Maths is **always** too hard for me', it suggests a pessimistic view of learning that's unlikely to cultivate persistence, and if it goes on it assumes the status of something that is permanent and unalterable. If 'always' or 'never' become sentences to fail for ever they breed a kind of learned helplessness. **Keep a look out for such perceptions and help students to re-frame them.**

Dialogue in which learners explain things to each other enhances understanding. As learners become more adept in talking themselves through problems and contexts, their "outer speech" develops, and so does their "inner speech", giving greater power of self-direction.

For example, aim to move thinking from:

'I can **never** understand what my teacher is going on about', or 'Maths is **always** too hard for me'

To:

'I am finding it really hard to understand this today; maybe I should look back at what I did last time.'

Or:

'I know I can get stressed when I have to calculate angles, so I'll look at my checklist to remind me how I get started.'