

# Asset-Based Student Work Analysis

## Framing conversations in productive language

When launching or continuing the practice of student work analysis in your school, it is important to ensure that all participants speak about students in a way that is asset based and growth oriented: “Because data doesn’t frame itself, the hard work is unpacking the narrative in a way that allows those closest to students to make real change. By weeding out the harmful narratives and approaching challenges with an acknowledgment of students’ assets, perspectives can shift.” ([Data Quality Campaign.org](https://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/)—Ddamulira, 2019).

This resource is intended to support conversations about student work that highlight strengths and reinforce an asset-based mindset. Below you will find guidance for leaders and teachers about:

1. speaking about student performance in a way that honors their strengths
2. reframing common labels in a more productive light
3. considering instructional next steps that center teacher actions
4. speaking about colleagues and families as partners in this work
5. supporting students in speaking about themselves in an asset based and productive way

It is leaders’ responsibility to ensure that all staff speak about students, colleagues, and families through a strengths-based lens. In the subsections below, you’ll find common deficit-based statements that you may hear and some examples of how you can reframe those statements to be asset based.

## Student work/performance/skill sets

Does <u>not</u> honor strengths	<u>Honors</u> strengths
Student doesn’t know/can’t _____.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student knows/can _____.</li><li>• Student has not yet mastered _____.</li><li>• Student may not have shown proficiency with _____ yet, but they can _____.</li></ul>



Student got problem # wrong.	Student got problem #s correct and was able to ____. Student got problem # incorrect but was able to ____.
Student doesn't have experience with/background knowledge about ____.	Student is coming with a unique set of skills and experiences that I can leverage and draw connections to in order to support new learning.

## Labels

Does <u>not</u> honor strengths	<u>Honors</u> strengths
Low/no literacy Illiterate	Early/emerging literacy
At-risk or low socio-economic status	Students who are systematically under-resourced (i.e., students who lack access to important resources due to experiences in poverty)
Intervening/remediating	Accelerating/enhancing/expediting learning

## Instructional steps

Does <u>not</u> honor strengths	<u>Honors</u> strengths
I taught it, and I don't know why they didn't get it.	This lesson helped build background. Next, I can ____ to move students closer to mastery.  Is someone willing to review my lesson preparation with me to see what I could maybe try differently next time?
I can't meet this student's needs because of time, support, resources, etc.	I can use the resources I have and my collaborators to find creative ways to support each student in the class.  Is someone willing to help me problem solve around ____?



## Colleagues and families

Does <u>not</u> honor strengths	<u>Honors</u> strengths
These teachers/my collaborative partner/students' families can't/don't...	These teachers/my collaborative partner/students' families can ..., and I can build on that to...

## Student support

A building that truly honors students' assets will encourage students to see their own strengths and build positive identities as members of the learning community, as growing scholars, as readers and writers, mathematicians, scientists, historians, and so on. One of the ways to affirm students' identities is by modeling and reinforcing asset-based language as they discuss their own learning and performance using phrases like those below:

- There is a lot that I know and can do that can help me learn new skills and information.
- I will persevere through challenges and become stronger and even smarter.
- My mind is a muscle, and I am working on its growth. I will embrace my mistakes as part of the learning process.
- I've made progress in understanding \_\_\_\_\_. I am really good at \_\_\_\_\_ and can use that to learn \_\_\_\_\_.