



Frequently Asked Questions About Cultivate

What is Cultivate?

Cultivate is a survey and framework that illuminates how teaching practices—from how quickly assignments are graded and returned to how students are greeted—influence students' Academic Mindsets and Learning Strategies (Mindsets & Strategies), and, in turn, their grades. It provides educators with insight into 6th-12th grade students' self-reported Mindsets & Strategies—how they see themselves as learners and the way they approach their work.

Cultivate also provides actionable insight into students' perceptions of their learning environments—the [Classroom Conditions](#) that matter most for cultivating the strong Mindsets & Strategies that fuel strong academic performance.

How does Cultivate help improve student grades?

Cultivate is grounded in research from The University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that establishes a link between Classroom Conditions (certain aspects of students' learning environments), Mindsets & Strategies, and, in turn, academic performance.

Sometimes a student's Mindsets & Strategies can get in the way of their learning. Teachers can foster more positive Mindsets & Strategies in their students through the classroom environment they create, thus unleashing students' potential to learn. Students who report more positive learning environments are more likely to have stronger Mindsets & Strategies.

Educators can use the results Cultivate provides to help guide the creation of learning environments and experiences that will promote strong academic performance that is reflected in students' grades.

What are Academic Mindsets and Learning Strategies (Mindsets & Strategies)?

Mindsets & Strategies are aspects of students' social, emotional, and academic development that shape their performance in school—specifically, Academic Mindsets, Learning Strategies, and Motivation. Academic Mindsets are students' perceptions about themselves and the work they are doing, such as having a growth mindset or a sense of belonging. Learning Strategies are the tools and approaches students use to support their learning, such as their ability to monitor their own thinking and progress.

Who takes the Cultivate Survey?

The Cultivate Survey has been validated for students in grades 6-12.

How many times a year is the Cultivate Survey administered?

Cultivate is administered twice a year—once in the fall and once in the spring.

How are Cultivate Survey results disaggregated?

Cultivate survey results for schools can be disaggregated by grade level, subject area, or a combination of both. This allows educators to use this information to identify patterns and better understand how learning environments differ across different groups of classrooms.

What will Cultivate tell us about our students?

Students taking the Cultivate survey will report on their own Mindsets & Strategies—how they see themselves as learners and the way they approach their work. Students also report on how they perceive their Classroom Conditions. Much like how students with stronger Mindsets & Strategies are more likely to get better grades, students who report more positive Classroom Conditions are more likely to report strong Mindsets & Strategies. The seven Classroom Conditions that matter most for fostering strong Mindsets & Strategies are:

Teacher Support: The breadth and quality of a teacher’s support for student learning

Learning Goals: The clarity and accessibility of a teacher’s instructional goals

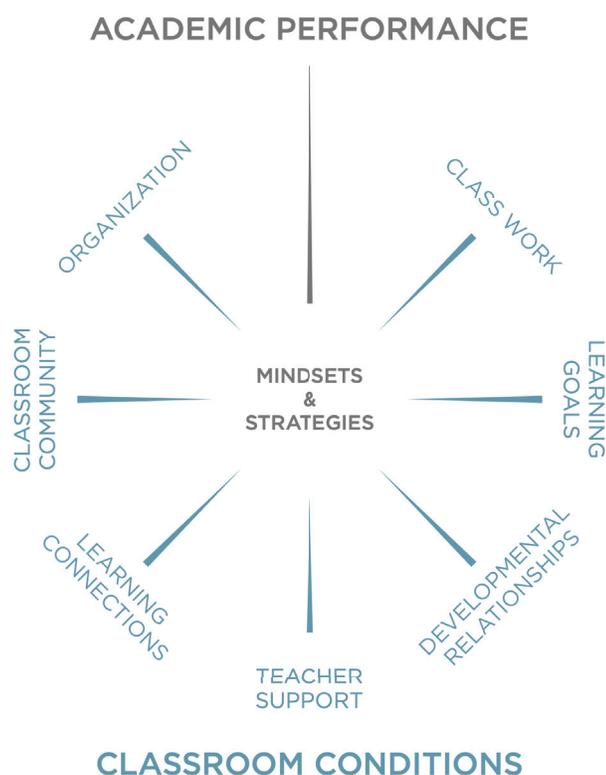
Class Work: The nature of the work a teacher asks students to do in class

Learning Connections: The level of interest in and relevance of classroom learning for students

Classroom Community: The sense of community and mutual support among classmates

Developmental Relationships: The strength and quality of a teacher’s one-on-one relationships with students

Organization: The clarity and helpfulness of classroom systems and routines



After each survey administration, Educators receive a comprehensive picture of students’ perceptions of their learning environments, Mindsets & Strategies, and a set of Prioritized

Classroom Conditions they can use to guide efforts to create learning environments that support all students.

Are Cultivate survey results designed to judge teacher practice?

Cultivate results are not designed to be a judgment of teacher practice. Cultivate is a measure of students' perceptions of what teachers do in their classrooms and the results are designed to help teachers adjust their practices in ways that foster strong Mindsets & Strategies.

How is this approach different from other approaches to improving students' grades?

A common approach to improving student grades is imparting more content knowledge or implementing entirely new curricula. Instead, Cultivate equips educators with the information they need to adjust their practice and the learning environments they create in ways that help students thrive in their learning through existing curricula.



Learn More:

To learn more about the Cultivate Survey, Framework, and Reporting Site, visit, uchicagoimpact.org/cultivate or contact us at cultivate@uchicago.edu.