

Failure Résumés Students write a short "résumé" of a time something didn't work and what they learned. Share in pairs, not whole-class (lower stakes). Sets the norm that struggle is expected and productive before the academic stakes rise.

Failure Résumé

Name: Jordan M.

Grade: 7

My Biggest Learning Failure

What happened?

I wanted to get an A on my science bridge project. I built my bridge the night before it was due without testing it.

What went wrong?

When we put weights on it, my bridge broke after only 8 pounds. Some other bridges held more than 40 pounds.

How did I feel? (Choose three emojis to help)

😞 Embarrassed

😡 Frustrated

😰 Nervous that everyone was watching

What mistakes did I make?

- Waited until the last minute.
- Didn't read all the directions carefully.
- Never tested my design before class.
- Gave up after my first idea instead of trying a different one.

What did I learn?

- Planning ahead gives me time to fix problems.

- Testing is part of learning—not a sign that I failed.
- Engineers don't expect their first design to be perfect.
- It's okay if something doesn't work the first time.

What will I do differently next time?

Start earlier, not the night before.

Draw two versions and compare them.

Ask someone to look over my plan before I start building.

Remember that mistakes help me improve.

One thing I'm proud of

Even though my bridge broke, I stayed positive, observed, and asked people why their bridges were stronger. I learned that by asking and getting help, I could make it better.

My Growth Statement

"Failing once doesn't mean I'm bad at science—it means I found one way that didn't work."

Teacher Discussion Prompts (Partner Share)

- What surprised your partner about their experience?
- What is one lesson both of you have in common?
- Which strategy will you both try next time?