

HOW TO GIVE PRAISE THAT WORKS WORKSHEET

Below you will find a description of two hypothetical situations in which someone praised you. Please read each scenario and note down your reactions to the praise you received.

Situation One:

You have just left your Education Class. After a lively class discussion in which you participate, one of your classmates comes up to you and says, "You're so articulate and intelligent. You really have a brilliant mind."

Your inner reaction:

Situation Two:

You're learning to ski and so far you still get tangled up in your skis when you get off the chair lift. This morning you're on a lift with someone staying in your hotel that you met at breakfast. You manage to get off the chair lift in one piece. Your new acquaintance remarks "Wow, you're brilliant for a beginner."

Your inner reaction:

After completing the exercise, you've probably discovered that along with the good feelings that praise can lead to, there can also be other more problematical reactions.

- Praise can make you doubt the person doing the praising. ("Articulate and intelligent? She must be pretty inarticulate or else she's just lying to flatter me.")
- Praise can lead to immediate denial. ("I am not that intelligent and if he knew me better he'd know that.")
- Praise can be threatening. ("Oh no, what if the next thing I say isn't so articulate and intelligent?")
- Praise can lead you to focus on your weaknesses. ("Well I may be articulate on that subject but I'm not intelligent—I can't do math to save my life.")
- Praise can lead to anxiety and interfere with activity. ("I'll never make another point as well as that. I better stay quiet in the future.")
- Praise can be experienced as manipulative. ("What are they after?")

Adapted from: www.beyondsupernanny.com

EFFECTIVE PRAISE PRACTICE

Situation:

Your tutee improves a letter grade from one spelling quiz to the next.



Show approval:

I'm impressed that you improved this week on your spelling quiz!



Describe positive behavior:

You made flashcards, practiced writing the words in sentences, and studied them every night this week for 10 minutes.



Give a reason:

You studied your spelling words several different ways each night instead of trying to learn the words all at once. Your improvement reflects your hard work this week!

Situation:

Your tutee finishes a difficult math problem on the packet you are working on together and does not give up despite struggling with the material.



Show approval:



Describe positive behavior:



Give a reason:

Situation:

One of your tutees shares a pencil with another tutee in your group who forgot to bring theirs when you go to the library.



Show approval:



Describe positive behavior:



Give a reason:

THE BASICS OF EFFECTIVE PRAISE

Examples of Behaviors to Praise and Encourage

- Sharing
- Talking nicely
- Complying with requests
- Solving a problem
- Doing homework
- Being thoughtful
- Being patient
- Being kind to another child or adult

Examples of Ways to Give Praise and Encouragement

- You do a good job of...
- You have improved in...
- I like it when you...
- Good idea for...
- You've done a good job of...
- That's a perfect way of...
- Wow, what a wonderful job you've done of...
- That's correct, that's the perfect way to...
- It really pleases me when you...
- Thank you for...
- What a nice job of...
- How thoughtful of you to...
- That was a creative idea for...

Effective Praise 101

- Praise immediately
- Praise consistently
- Praise in front of other people (your host teacher)
- Praise for both effort and performance
- Praise little changes and success, not only perfect behavior
- Give labeled and specific praise
- Praise with smiles, eye contact and enthusiasm
- Praise process not product
- Give encouragement while students are working
- Praise six times for each criticism or correction you make
- Children of different ages need praise for different things
- Don't praise your tutee in relation to other students
- Provide many opportunities for students to respond so that they can receive praise
- Set achievable goals and challenges for your tutee

Components of Effective Praise

1. Describe the behavior you are praising.
 - a. Mix specific behavioral statements with general praise
 - b. This increases student understanding of your expectations
 - c. Allows students to focus on personal accomplishments and progress
2. Provide a rationale for why this behavior is positive
 - a. Allows students to learn from the consequences of their behavior
 - b. Emphasizes cause and effect of their actions
3. Request acknowledgment from your tutee.
 - a. Check for understanding
4. Provide a positive consequence for the behavior you wish to reward.
 - a. Should be individualized to fit the needs of each student
 - b. Size of reinforcement should be appropriate for behavior you are acknowledging

Sources:

www.BeyondSupernanny.com

Do's and Don'ts of Effective Praise for Children—education.com

Effective Praise—University of Idaho

Effective Praise and Encouragement—Carolyn Webster-Stratton

How and When to Praise—Scholastic.com

Parenting for Success—Utah Youth Village

Praise, Encouragement and Rewards—Raising Children's Network

Praising Students Improves Behavior, Academics—Inside the School

The Perils and Promises of Praise—Carol S. Dweck