

1. How to start with a positive



Suppose a child has a tendency to speak a lot in class. Rather than criticize this, what might you say?

“When you talk, you’re so lively and full of energy. Let’s see if we can get that into your writing. Now, how could we say this...?”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

2. Commenting on studying



2A. Suppose you have a child that has improved their results and has studied well. What might you say?

“You really studied for your English test and your improvement shows it.”

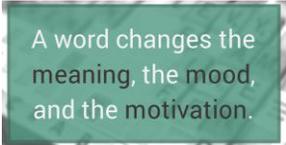
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2. Commenting on studying



2B. You have a child who has done a good piece of work in class. What might you say?

“You read the material over several times, you picked out the main points, and you tested yourself on them. It really worked!”

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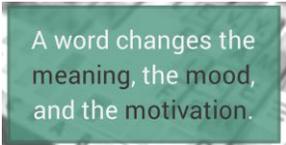
3. Encouraging trying many strategies



You want to give positive feedback on the way a child has used a range of strategies to complete a piece of work. What would you say?

“I like the way you tried all kinds of strategies on that math problem until you finally got it.”

“You thought of a lot of different ways to do this problem and found the one that worked!”

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3. Encouraging trying many strategies



You want to give positive feedback on the way a child has used a range of strategies to complete a piece of work. What would you say?

“It was a long and hard assignment, but you stuck to it until you got it done. You stayed at your desk, you kept your concentration, and you kept on working. That’s great!”

“That didn’t work. Can you think of another way to do it? Great”

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4. Stretching students



You want to encourage a child to stretch themselves. What might you say?

“I liked the effort you put in, and now let’s work together to find out some things you might not understand.”

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5. Encouraging self-reflection and grit



5A. You want to encourage a child to not give up. What might you say?

“Everyone learns in a different way. Let’s keep trying to find the way that works for you.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

5. Encouraging self-reflection and grit



5B. A child has not done well in a test. What might you say?

“I know you’re disappointed in your test grade. Let’s talk about how you studied and maybe we can figure out what went wrong.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

6. Encouraging the enjoyment of challenges



6A. You want to encourage a child to try new things. What might you say?

“Let’s work on something hard that you can learn from, not something that you already know how to do.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

6. Encouraging the enjoyment of challenges



6B. You want to associate difficult work with being fun. What might you say?

“You know, this is really hard. This is what I call fun.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

7. Praise for seeking challenges



You want to praise a child for taking on a challenge. What might you say?

“I like that you took on that challenging project for your science class.”

“Great choice. That project will take a lot of work—but you’re really going to learn a lot of wonderful things.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

7. Praise for seeking challenges



You want to praise a child for taking on a challenge. What might you say?

“I like that you took on that challenging project for your science class. It will take a lot of work—doing the research, designing the machine, finding the parts, and building it. You’re going to learn a lot of great things.”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

8. Responding to low effort success



A child is successful at a piece of work without apparently needing to try. What might you say?

“You got an A without working. You must not be learning much.”

“You did that so quickly and easily. I’m sorry I wasted your time. Let’s do something you can learn from.”

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9. Emphasising that struggling with work is good



You want to give the message that struggling with work is part of learning. What might you say?

“Who had a good struggle? Let’s share what we struggled with today”

“Now that’s what I call a terrific struggle! Great!”

A word changes the meaning, the mood, and the motivation.

10. Emphasising persistence



10A. You want to encourage persistence. How might you give feedback on tasks to emphasise this?

“It was a long and hard assignment, but you stuck to it until you got it done.”

“That was really hard, but you never gave up! That’s impressive!”

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10. Emphasising persistence



10B. A child used to find certain work somewhat easy but now they are struggling. How can you turn this into a positive?

“I know school used to be easy for you and you used to feel like the smart kid all the time. But the truth is that you weren’t using your brain to the fullest. I’m really excited about how you’re stretching yourself now and working to learn hard things.”

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11. Emphasising that mistakes are our friends



You want to give the message to a class that making mistakes can be helpful. What might you say?

“Who thinks they made a really interesting mistake?”

“Who else made a terrific mistake that will help us learn?”

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12. Talking about learning, improvement and growing connections



As a part of your lessons you want to talk about the connections made in their brains when they learn. What might you say?

“Let’s go around and have each of you share something you learned today that you didn’t know before.”

“That was a lot of hard work. Can you just imagine all the connections you grew today?”

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