

Reinforcement Systems

The third teacher commitment involves reinforcing positive behavior. This is the most effective way of getting students to replicate the things that you want them to do. There are more notes on effective praise on the next page.

Teachers will choose and report which of the following forms of reinforcement will be used in their classes.

The use of at least one “positive citation” each period

These will be provided to teachers. Make sure to note specifically what the student did to earn the praise. “You used all the time to work on your paper” is more effective than “Great effort!” though both of those are better than nothing.

The use of praise to criticism at a 3:1 ratio

Refer to the notes at the bottom of this paper for guidance on praise. If you choose this method, then at some point a faculty member will come in and help you count to see if you’ve reached the ratio.

By the way, giving praise to criticism at a 5:1 ratio has the biggest statistical impact on positively redirecting student misbehavior.

The use of a “reward” system that incorporates behavior specific praise

Many teachers do something like have students earn PRIDE points or name a PRIDE Student of the Day. Whatever the case, make sure that the praise given is as specific as possible.

Possible reward systems:

- Prize rewards: “Thanks for cleaning up, you’ve earned a cookie.”
- Token system rewards: “Thanks for cleaning up, you’ve earned a Busi Buck.”
- Contingent rewards: “If you are able to clean your entire area, I’ll knock one question off of your homework.”
- Award rewards: “David has earned Integrity student of the week by turning in homework every day.”

Notes on Praise:

The simplest form of reinforcement that teachers can use is praise.

Think of praise as happening on a sliding scale of 1-3, three being the best use of praise. Here are examples of praise on that scale, with explanations of the intended effect.

A student cleans up the materials from her group without being asked.

1. "Thank you."
 - a. This provides acknowledgement, though the connection to the behavior is not made explicit.
2. "Thank you for cleaning up after your group."
 - a. This provides acknowledgement and connection to the behavior, thus reinforcing it, though it does not reemphasize classroom expectations.
3. "Thank you for showing respect by cleaning up after your group."
 - a. This provides acknowledgement, connection to the behavior, and reemphasizes the behavioral expectations of class.

All of these are "good," in that they all have an effect that promotes positive behavior.