What is Teacher Praise?
Teacher praise is a form of social attention typically communicated through positive verbal feedback. When implemented correctly, contingent, behavior-specific praise is a research-based strategy to increase appropriate behaviors and decrease inappropriate behaviors. In other words, increasing the positive attention you provide for behaviors you want, and decreasing the negative attention you provide for behaviors you do not want, leads students to have more appropriate behavior and less inappropriate behavior. Teacher praise is particularly effective for students with attention-seeking problem behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Non-Example</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Positive verbal feedback:</strong></td>
<td>Great job waiting for me to come help you! You raised your hand then waited quietly and patiently until I could come to your desk.</td>
<td>Please try raising your hand again. Yes, you raised it, but you were already talking by the time I could come to your desk.</td>
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<td>Describe to the child what he/she is doing well in a positive way. Use an encouraging tone &amp; constructive words.</td>
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<td><strong>Behavior specific:</strong></td>
<td>Nice work getting to your seat and preparing materials before the bell rang! You heard the warning bell, went to your seat and got your folder before the final bell.</td>
<td>Nice work following the classroom rules. You aced this rule and I am so proud of your efforts with the bell.</td>
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<td>Specify exactly which desired behavior you are recognizing. Praise the behaviors you want to see more often!</td>
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<td><strong>Contingent on expected behavior:</strong></td>
<td>You’re a rock star at putting away materials. I noticed that you collected all the papers at your group table and put them back in the materials bin.</td>
<td>If you want to earn a star for materials, please gather all the papers at your group table and put them back in the materials bin.</td>
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<td>Praise occurs automatically and immediately based on the child performing the desired behavior.</td>
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<td><strong>Growth-minded:</strong></td>
<td>You did an excellent job completing the first 3 problems on your work sheet. Now, show me what a great job you can do on the next 3, and I will come back to check your progress in 5 minutes.</td>
<td>You completed the first 3 problems, but then started talking to your neighbor. The assignment is to complete the whole worksheet.</td>
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<td>Support individual growth by praising an approximation or near-example of the desired behavior. Follow by specifying to the child what the behavior looks and sounds like.</td>
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RTI²-B and Teacher Praise
Teacher praise is an easy and effective positive practice that should be used in all levels of RTI²-B. At the Tier I level of prevention, all students are provided with contingent, behavior-specific praise to reinforce behavioral expectations, promote appropriate behaviors, prevent problem behaviors, and foster a positive classroom environment. At the Tier II and III levels, teacher praise is used to increase attention for the behaviors we want to see and decrease attention for the behaviors we want to decrease.

Mastering Teacher Praise
- Clearly communicate the behaviors you expect students to demonstrate by explicitly teaching and practicing behavioral expectations and replacement behaviors.
- Provide immediate, contingent, positive verbal feedback frequently to create momentum for good behaviors.
- Use specific feedback so students know what they are doing right.
- Set students up for success by providing opportunities for them to demonstrate appropriate behavior. Purposefully attend to appropriate behavior.
- Provide more positive than negative feedback to all students.
- Implementing contingent, behavior-specific praise effectively requires practice. Practice praise statements to make sure they seem genuine and natural. Incorporate procedures to remind you to provide praise (e.g., timed audio, tactile prompting devices).

Evaluate Your Praise!
- Self-monitor your use of praise by recording the number of praise statements you provide to your class or to specific students. You can use tally marks or counters to record praise as you go, or review recordings of your instruction to evaluate your performance. Set goals for improvement and monitor your continued use of praise over time.
- Ask others (peers or instructional leaders/coaches) to observe you and provide feedback on your use of effective praise.
Teacher Praise Strategy Sheet

Online Resources

Select Research and Resources

For Further Reading