Praise

Description. Teacher praise is performance feedback that includes verbal or non-verbal communication of teacher approval of student behavior. Praise is easy to implement and fits into the natural pattern of classroom communication (Hawkins & Heflin, 2011).

Procedure: Effective teacher praise consists of two parts:

1. a description of noteworthy student academic performance or general behavior, and
2. a signal of teacher approval (Brophy, 1981; Burnett, 2001).

The power of praise in changing student behavior is that it both indicates teacher approval and informs the student about how the praised academic performance or behavior conforms to teacher expectations (Burnett, 2001). As with any potential classroom reinforcer, praise has the ability to improve student academic or behavioral performance— but only if the *student* finds it reinforcing (Akin-Little et al., 2004).

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Pre-Correction

Description. The educator heads off a problem behavior by proactively prompting or reminding student(s) to show appropriate behaviors.

Procedure: Just before a time, situation or setting when problem behaviors are most likely to occur, the educator 'pre-corrects' by using any of several strategies to remind student(s) of appropriate behavioral expectations. Among strategies, the educator can:

- provide a verbal prompt (e.g., having the student restate a classroom rule or describe an appropriate behavior).

- provide a non-verbal prompt (e.g., silently pointing to posted classroom rule).

- give student(s) a chance to practice appropriate behaviors.

- remind student(s) of reinforcers that they can earn for engaging in appropriate behaviors.

Tips for Use. Pre-correction is most useful in preventing low-level, predictable misbehaviors or errors.

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Response Effort

Description. The educator increases student engagement through any method that reduces the apparent difficulty ('response effort') of an academic task - so long as that method does not hold the student to a lesser academic standard than classmates.

Procedure: Here are examples of strategies that lower response effort while maintaining grade-appropriate work expectations:

- **Start assigned readings in class.** Whenever a challenging text is assigned for independent reading (e.g., as homework), the educator (or perhaps a skilled student reader) reads the first few paragraphs of the assigned reading aloud while the class follows along silently in their own texts. Students are then directed to read the remainder of the text on their own.

- **Begin challenging homework in class.** When assigned challenging homework, students are paired off or divided into groups and given a brief amount of class time to begin the homework together, develop a plan for completing the homework, formulate questions about the homework, or engage in other activities that will create the necessary momentum to motivate students then to complete the work independently.

- **'Chunk' assignments.** The educator breaks a larger student assignment into smaller 'chunks'. The educator provides the student with performance feedback and praise for each completed 'chunk' of assigned work.

- **Select a peer or adult to start the student on assignments.** If a student finds it difficult to get organized and begin independent seatwork activities, a supportive peer or adult in the classroom can get the student organized and started on the assignment.

- **Provide a formal work plan.** In preparation for more complex assignments such as research papers, the educator gives the student an outline of a work plan for completing those assignments. The plan breaks a larger assignment into appropriate sub-steps (e.g., 'find five research articles for the paper', 'summarize key information from research articles into notes', etc.). For each sub-step, the plan provides (1) an estimate of the minimum amount of 'seat time' required to complete it and (2) sets a calendar-date deadline for completion. The educator then touches base with the student at least weekly to ensure that the student is staying current with the work plan. (TIP: Over time, the educator can transfer increasing responsibility for generating work plans to the student.)

Tips for Use. Before using response effort, the educator should always first verify that the student possesses the necessary academic skills to complete the assignment.

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Verbal Commands

Description. When the educator needs to have students follow a command in timely manner, that adult structures the directive as an effective 'alpha' command. The format of this command increases the probability of student compliance.

Procedure: Effective commands to groups or individual students:

- are brief.

- use simple, clear language.

- direct student(s) to perform a specific task.

- contain no more than one verb (e.g., "Clear your desks", "Underline two key details in the paragraph").

- are given one at a time, followed by a 5-second wait period.

- are stated in a positive or neutral tone of voice.

- use active phrasing (e.g."Clean up your work area") in place of passive phrasing (e.g., "The work area needs to be cleaned up") or LET'S statements (e.g., "Let's clean up the work area").

Tips for Use. Verbal commands are most effective when used sparingly. Educators can reduce reliance on commands by training students to automatically follow predictable classroom procedures and routines or by giving students self-monitoring checklists to guide them through all steps of a cognitive strategy or task.

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