Teacher Praise

Presented by:
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Teacher praise did not have significant impact on student conduct, academic performance and other classroom processes

Jere Brophy, Michigan State University
It does not function as a reinforcer for students like rewards because it lacks critical qualities.
How teachers use praise:

- To reward good student conduct or academic performance
- To express approval, admiration, delight, or enthusiasm
- To support positive learning behavior
- As an icebreaker to establish communication or peace offering
- To provide encouragement given for effort rather than accomplishment
Effective Teacher Praise Is:

- Contingent
  - Specific
  - Credible
Effective Praise Is ...

**Contingent** – delivered in an appropriate and timely manner upon a student’s performance of a desired or noteworthy behavior.
Effective Praise Is…

**Specific** – focuses on specific aspects of a student’s performance and recognizes genuine accomplishments
Effective Praise Is…

**Credible** - is sincere and leaves the student convinced that the teacher has considered the performance carefully.
**Differences Between Effective and Ineffective Praise**

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<th>Effective Praise:</th>
<th>Ineffective Praise:</th>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Is delivered selectively for behavior or accomplishment;</td>
<td>✓ Given randomly and indiscriminately</td>
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<td>✓ Specifies the praiseworthy aspects;</td>
<td>✓ General or global;</td>
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<td>✓ Is expressed sincerely;</td>
<td>✓ Expressed without feeling or animation</td>
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<td>✓ Encourages students to succeed for personal gratification</td>
<td>✓ Encourages to succeed for external factors</td>
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“He who praises everybody, praises nobody.”

Samuel Johnson, 1787
English Author, Lexicographer
Research Says--

Praise is much more effective when teachers use it selectively...If teachers overuse praise or use it indiscriminately, the praise becomes ambiguous and meaningless to students.
“A heap of epithets is poor praise; the praise lies in the facts, and in the way of telling them.”

Jean de la Bruyere, 1688
French Writer, Moralist
More effective teachers… concentrate their praise on genuine student accomplishments and comment meaningfully on their work.
“Praise out of season, or tactlessly bestowed, can freeze the heart as much as blame.”

Pearl Buck, 1967
U.S. Author
Some praise is misused as…vicarious reinforcement. The intent is not so much to praise the desired behavior…but rather to send a message to other students to change their behavior….It’s true intent is manipulative rather than sincere.
Resources:


AFT’s Educational Research and Dissemination Program

http://wik.ed.uiuedu/index.php/Praise