

General Guidelines for Growth Minded Feedback

Providing well-designed, constructive feedback is the most effective way to take advantage of the human brain's natural learning cycle.¹

Make the practice your own!

Below you'll find suggestions for how to best craft feedback that encourages a growth mindset. With practice, you'll find the ideas that best fit your students and style. Ultimately, it is most important to make it your own!

General Guidelines²

1. Shift from a summative approach to a **formative** one.
2. Comment on progress made toward a **goal**.
3. Provide specific and **useful** information.
4. Limit comments to one or two focus areas and use student friendly language to make feedback **accessible**.
5. Provide **timely** feedback.
6. **Praise the process, not the person.**

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"Great job! You must be smart at this" → "**Great job! You must have worked really hard on this**"

Example Language

"See, you are good at English. You got an A on your test." → "**You really studied for your English test, your improvement shows.**"

"You got it! I told you how smart you were!" → "**I like the way you tried all kinds of strategies on that math problem until you finally got it.**"

"You are such a good student!" → "**I love the way you kept concentrating and working. That's great!**"

Further Thoughts

- **Offer Praise** Don't forget the POSITIVE feedback. Even if the assignment didn't quite meet expectations; did the student pick a challenging topic? Did they carefully select sources of information? Praise the effort the student put forth.
- **Be sincere⁴** Students can tell when praise is undeserved and insincerity can cause students to question a teacher's credibility. Make sure the feedback is an accurate assessment of student achievement.
- **Product, Process, or Progress⁵** Inform students of the context in which they are receiving feedback.
 - Product feedback is a summative evaluation of a project, test, or essay.
 - Process feedback is an assessment of the steps a student took to arrive at the product.
 - Progress feedback is commentary on where the student began, where they are, and where they can go next.

¹ Tokuhama-Espinosa, Tracey. "Making Classrooms Better: 50 Practical Applications of Mind, Brain, and Education Science."

² Wiggins, Grant. "Seven Keys to Effective Feedback". *Educational Leadership*. Vol 70, No 1. September 2012.

³ www.mindsetkit.org/praise-the-process-not-the-person

⁴ Dweck, Carol. "Mindset". 2007.

⁵ Tokuhama-Espinosa, Tracey.

Tips for Audio Feedback

Below are general tips for providing audio feedback on student work. While the process may not be any less time consuming than providing written feedback, it gives students a novel, engaging way to interact with the feedback they receive.

Be sure you are familiar with your rubric or the focus areas you want to discuss in your commentary.

Read through the writing assignment. Mark areas where you see an opportunity to praise with a star. Mark areas where you see an opportunity for improvement with a question mark to remind you to make a suggestion.

If you don't have a default voice memo application on your smartphone or related device, download a Dictaphone application. Some voice recorders are meant for singers and are more complicated than you need them to be.

Smile! Consider audio feedback a one-way conference with students. Use a friendly, conversational tone that is pleasurable to listen to.

Once you've read through the assignment and made marks with your praise and suggestion symbols. Number the symbols and refer to the numbers as you leave your feedback. This will help you keep track of your comments and help students follow along.

Once you've recorded your feedback, don't forget to save the recording. Use the assignment title and the student's initials for a quick reference.

Once you've modeled how to give appropriate feedback and how to record it, give students an opportunity to try recording feedback during a peer editing session!

Written feedback? Verbal feedback? Audio recorded feedback? No matter how you decide to provide students with your comments, make sure to encourage a growth mindset.

Tell students to bring their headphones to class so they can listen to their feedback and work on improving their assignment based on what they heard.

Although we focused on writing assignments, audio feedback can be used for any assignment or task.