**Reinforcement**

All of the successful teachers surveyed and interviewed referred to the necessity of reinforcing their expectations and rules with rewards and punishments. Frequent use of verbal approval is the most common reward mentioned. A surprising number of successful teachers also mention their regular use of concrete reinforcements and privileges to motivate student effort. All of the teachers, however, stress the need to respond immediately to unsafe or disruptive student behavior with unpleasant negative consequences.

1. Review the following list of words and phrases successful teachers use to motivate academic effort and circle those you think would be most appreciated by students who have difficulty achieving at an average rate.

* You did that just right.
* You are such good listeners.
* That's well thought out.
* You have a good head on you today.
* Jolly good answer.
* You are showing improvement.
* That is certainly so.
* That's such a good paper.
* Well, I should say so.
* You can be proud of yourself.
* Right you are.
* Now you're cooking.
* Good progress.
* You're on the right track.
* I'm pleased.
* I like the way you're working.
* How about that!
* You are a careful thinker.
* Excellent answer.
* I knew you could do that well.
* That's right.
* That's what I call being observant.
* This is the greatest.
* Wow! Better than ever.
* You're working especially well.
* Very conscientious.
* You couldn't have said it better.
* Great!
* You've been listening with both ears.
* Beautiful!
* Please repeat. That's worth hearing twice.
* Stupendous!
* I'm glad to see you working in your seat here.
* Perfect!
* You're putting some good effort into this.
* Fantastic!
* Susie has her thinking cap on today.
* That answer has the rest of us thinking now.   
  Bravo!
* We accomplished a lot today.
* Wonderful!
* Say, you're on the ball.
* Splendid!
* It feels good to come into such a good class.
* Lovely!
* Everyone seems to like that answer.
* Superb!
* Cool!
* This is the result of hard work by every one of you.
* Much better!
* You're getting better at finishing the assignments.
* Marvelous!
* Your good study habits are helping you get a lot done.
* Good work!
* Anyone would love to work with this group.

2. Compliment student effort. Identify and memorize at least five new ways each month of the year. Sincere expressions of your approval can work wonders keeping students motivated.

3. Review a portfolio of each student's work once a month. Record and communicate their area of greatest improvement. Students thrive when they see concrete samples of their progress.

4. Review the following list of privileges and concrete reinforcements that successful teachers use to motivate the whole class's academic effort, and circle those you think would be most appropriate at your grade level.

* End-of-day socializing time (2-10 minutes depending on behavior)
* Class award posters
* Class sticker posters
* Extra videotape
* Free reading time
* Marbles in a jar for privilege time.

5. Review the following list of unpleasant consequences that successful teachers use to discourage the repetition of unsafe or disruptive student behavior after only one warning. Rank those you use or plan to use before referring an individual student to the school principal.

* 1-5 minute separation from a group within the classroom
* 1-5 minute isolation in a time-out station within the classroom
* 1-5 minutes subtracted from recess period
* 5-15 minutes subtracted from recess period
* 5-30 minutes in a quiet detention room within the school
* 5-30 minutes after-school detention
* loss of morning snack (if routinely offered)
* note or phone call to the parent

Be prepared to praise your students generously when they're doing well - it will encourage them to continue to excel. But also be prepared to stop your students when they're misbehaving. Taking away privileges, having them make up missed time after school or during recess, or contacting a parent all encourage students to behave well in class.

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