Acknowledgement with Behavior-Specific Praise

What is it?

A behavior specific praise statement is verbal/written feedback that is descriptive, specific, sincere, and delivered contingent upon demonstration of expected behavior; it works best when considering student preference.

Steps:

- define behavioral and academic lesson objectives
- script specific statements linked to those objectives
- public or private
- verbal or written
- group or individual
- 5:1 ratio (positive vs. corrective) 3 or 4 per minute during key times
- higher rates for new content
- equitable delivery

Things to Remember:

- ☐ Be specific!
- ☐ Be quick!
- ☐ Be considerate!
- ☐ Be positive!

Ratio 5:1

Effective Praise

- "Wow! I noticed how you kindly reminded Holly where we are in the book. How do you think that made her feel?"
- "You all have improved your ability to switch from group to activity time."
- "Keeping your temper is difficult. I can see you are making a real effort to control it."

Less Effective Non-Examples

- "Thank you for that."
- "Excellent."
- "Alright, well that's better."
- "Almost, but not quite."

3 Key Considerations

Be Specific and Sincere
- clear statement of approval or compliment that names behavior, academic accomplishment, strengths, or interests

Needs to be Contingent
- directly connected to observed behaviors - not randomly or falsely

Timely
- as soon as behavior is observed

Check Yourself: Acknowledgement: BSPS
Focus on Positive:Corrective

Components	Tally Count (10 minutes)
Tally of positive interactions/behavior specific praise statements	
Tally of corrective comments/actions	
Ratio of Positive/Corrective statements/actions	

Research

VTSS Videos

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(VTSS, Revised June 2024)

Procedures and Routines

What is it?

These are proactive functional routines and procedures we put in place to increase the probability of students demonstrating the expectations, rules, and behaviors we define and teach throughout the year, especially at the beginning of the year.

Steps:

- Involve students in the development of procedures and routines
- Directly teach and model each procedure frequently
- Provide guided opportunities for practice
- Provide frequent acknowledgement
- Slowly fade support
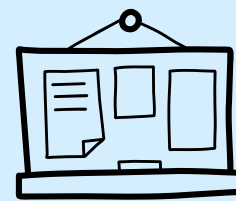- Monitor and evaluate
- Seek feedback
- Maintain and modify

Check Yourself:

Plan what you want your procedures and routines to look like, how you want them to look. Observe other teachers for ideas.

Components	Y/N	Comments
Aligned with school-wide expectations		
Succinct and positively stated		
Completed with little or no teacher assistance		

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Things to Remember:

- ☐ Observable
- ☐ Positively stated
- ☐ Easily understandable
- ☐ Always applicable

Elementary Example	Secondary Example
Learning Position	Class Discussion
-sit with your bottom on your chair, legs under desk -look at teacher when he/she is talking -materials on top of desk	-prepare for class by reading in advance -wait until the other person is finished -respect others' opinions and contributions -appropriate language

3 Key Considerations

Arrival and Dismissal
- initial and final greetings
- storing and retrieving belongings
- accessing and returning needed materials
- process for late or missed assignments

Transitions
- between instructional activities
- from individual to group work

Academic Supports
- how to ask for help
- how to make up missed work
- activities for after work is completed or alternate activity is needed

Research	VTSS Videos

Aligns with High Leverage Practices 7 & 17

Active Supervision

What is it?

Active Supervision allows teachers to monitor student learning and identify students needing additional support; when used with other practices, it can support increased on-task student behavior.

Things to Remember:

☐ **Move!**

☐ **Scan!**

☐ **Interact!**

Proximity Control!

Check Yourself : Observe and monitor the three components during a 10 minute period or during predictable problematic times.

Components	No	Sometimes	Frequently
The teacher **moves and circulates** through all parts of the classroom using close proximity to students needing additional support.			
The teacher visually **scans** all parts of the classroom looking for engagement and students needing additional support.			
The teacher **interacts** frequently providing positive feedback, pre-correction, and correction. The teacher monitors and provides additional support to students needing help with academic and/or social behavior.			

Key Considerations:

- Maintain eye contact, with students and students' screens
- Employ close proximity
- Engage during transitions
- Use constant and unpredictable movement
- Increase during less structured activities
- Utilize school-wide computer monitoring software
- Provide students with non-verbal signal tools

Research

VTSS Videos

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Error Correction

⚠️

What is it?

An Informative statement provided by a teacher or other adult following the occurrence of an undesired behavior. It is contingent, specific, and brief.

Check Yourself:	Observe and monitor your own continuum of response during a 30-minute period or during predictable problematic times:			
Components		**Y/N**	**Not observed**	**Comments**
Corrections are provided immediately after undesired behavior/incorrect answer.				
Documentation system for dealing with specific behavioral violations is present.				
Students are able to show/articulate desired behavior/answer.				
Teacher appears to be calm, consistent, and brief in delivering corrections				

Continuum of Responses:

Redirect: Restate the desired behavior as described on the teaching matrix.

Reteach: State and demonstrate the matrix behavior. Have students demonstrate. Provide immediate feedback.

Contingent Instructions: Specific directions that prompt or alert the student to stop the undesired behavior and to engage in the desired behavior.

Private Conference: Describe the problem and the alternative behavior. Explain why the alternative is better. Practice. Provide feedback.

Provide Choice: Give choice to accomplish task in another location, about the order of task completion, using alternate supplies to complete the task, or for a different type of activity that accomplishes the same objective. Choices should lead to the same outcome.

Key Considerations:

Validate students. Ask them to share their perspective and listen without judgment.

Affirm the positive intent of students' behaviors when teaching situational appropriateness.

Build understanding of why certain behaviors are necessary in given settings.

Bridge by giving students opportunities to practice and gain fluency, with non-judgmental feedback/correction when needed.

Research

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Defining Classroom Expectations

What is it?
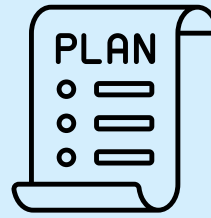Classroom expectations are defined, posted, taught, and aligned with school-wide expectations.

Check Yourself: (4-6 daily classroom settings or routines; 2-3 positively stated examples of each broad expectation for that setting or routine)

Expectations are:	Y/N	In Progress
aligned with school-wide expectations		
observable and clearly defined		
measurable		
positively and broadly stated		
prominently posted		
always applicable, and to everyone		
taught using lessons and a teaching schedule for each setting/routine		

Practice:

-Develop classroom expectations aligned with school-wide expectations
-Involve students in formulation of class expectations
-Post and teach classroom expectations explicitly
-Teach the words by demonstrating the actions, using examples and non-examples, only practicing perfect examples
-Display them prominently so they are easily seen and referred to by teacher and students
-The teacher models and reinforces expectations consistently
-Classroom expectations should be easily monitored

Key Considerations:
- Use data to inform best practice
- Reteach as needed
- Increase acknowledgement as needed
- Check to make sure common behavior errors are addressed in matrix
- Differentiate between school, home, and community settings

Research   **VTSS Videos**

Aligns with High Leverage Practices 7, 8, & 9

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Opportunities to Respond

What is it?

A proactive teacher behavior that prompts a student response, or is an instructional question, statement, prompt, or gesture made by the teacher seeking an academic response from students.

Things to Remember:

- ☐ **Vary response types**
- ☐ **Use wait time**
- ☐ **Give cues**
- ☐ **Expect 100% participation**
- ☐ **Limit the number of questions**

Check Yourself: Observe and monitor your practice. These can be used as formative assessments.

Number of instructional questions, statements, or gestures made by the teacher seeking an academic response.	Tally count	___Individual ___Choral ___Mixed	Examples:
There is a responsive system to promote equitable opportunities such that all students formulate answers.	Yes	No	Comments:
Alternatively in a 10 minute observation of instruction, teacher talk time is 50% or less.	Teacher talk time:	Student talk time:	Comments:

Practice:

Identify opportunities within your lesson plans to increase opportunities for students to respond. Identify opportunities to replace single student responding through hand-raising with multiple students responding through the use of:

Physical Options:
- dry erase boards
- response cards
- hand signals
- choral response
- human graphs or physical movement
- response clickers

Electronic Options:
- Nearpod
- Canvas Discussion Boards
- Padlet, along with others

Critical Considerations:

- Students' developmental levels
- Cultural backgrounds
- Preferred response types
- Students' interests

Research

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Physical Environment

What is it?

The physical arrangement of the classroom is a preventative practice that positively impacts student performance in the classroom and creates a safe, supportive learning environment.
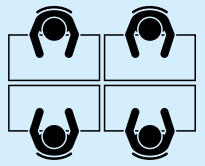
3 Key Considerations:

Arrangement of Furnishings - Position student seating to facilitate function of activity

Visual Access and Movement - Clearly label various areas, how to access materials, and how to submit assignments

Design and Display of Visual Materials - Use wall-space for reminders of expectations and academic content; remain mindful of representing student cultures

Check Yourself: Observe and Monitor

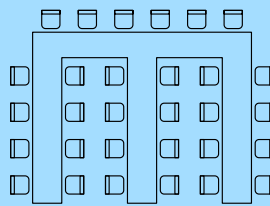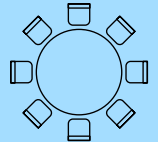| Components	N	Some what	Y
Traffic patterns are clearly defined and allow movement without disruption			
Desks and furniture are arranged so students can be seen and teacher has access to all areas			
Materials are clearly labeled, accessible, and organized			
Separate spaces are provided to promote self-regulation			

Practice: Some Examples

Traditional: minimizes student to student communication; often used at beginning of year and testing
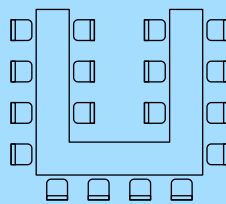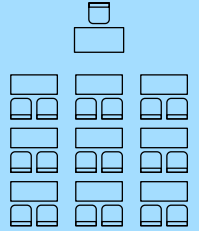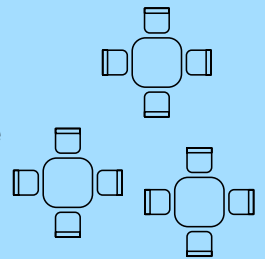
Horseshoe/Semi-Circle: encourages discussion between students and the instructor; especially effective when projection is needed

Roundtable: student and instructor face each other, which can support the whole-class, as well as partner dialogue

Double Horseshoe: encourages greater discussion; easily interact with those nearby

Pods (Groups, Pairs): advantageous when working in groups or with partners for a large portion of the class time; communicates a learning community

Research

VTSS Videos

Aligns with High Leverage Practices
7 & 17

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Group Contingencies

Building Community through Feedback

What is it?

Group Contingencies, like the Positive Behavior Game, are the dependent relationships between a given task or specified behavior and the ability of a whole group to access a specific reward.

Things to Remember:

- ☐ Look at your data!
- ☐ Be specific with feedback!
- ☐ Make it fun!
- ☐ Consider students' interests!
- ☐ Consider students' developmental levels!
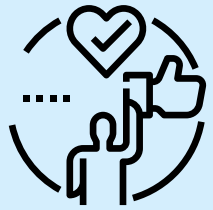
How to Play:

- Identify a target behavior
- Divide the class into teams
- Explain the rules of the game
- Decide on the time of day to play - choose a time of day when it's most likely for challenging behaviors to happen
- Set a time limit for the duration of the game
- Decide on the reward
- Develop a scoreboard
- Award points - avoid removing points
- Debrief when the game is over

Check Yourself:

Observe and monitor the Positive Behavior Game during a 10 minute period or during predictable problematic times:

Components	No	Somewhat	Yes
The target behavior/routine that the team/class will focus on is explicitly taught.			
There are opportunities for the team/class to display their knowledge of the desired behavior.			
Points are given to the team/class for engaging in the desired behavior (not dependent on one student).			

Keep in Mind:
- Play for at least 10 minutes
- Display points in a prominent place
- Re-teach the target behavior, as needed

Effect:

Group Contingencies encourage appropriate behaviors by specifically acknowledging students engaged in desired behaviors. This is an opportunity for a win-win situation for teachers and students, which offers students the time for targeted practice and offers teachers the opportunity to provide increased reinforcement and build community.

Research

VTSS Videos

Aligns with High Leverage Practices 7, 8, 9, 16 & 22

(VTSS, Revised June 2024)

Formative Assessment

What is it?

Formative Assessment is the collection of information in real-time that allows you to adjust your instruction, which keeps students engaged and reduces inappropriate behavior. Opportunities to respond can also function as one type of formative assessment.

Check Yourself: Observe and Monitor

Components	Y/N	Comments
There is evidence of success criteria for the lesson.		
Teacher adjusts the lesson based on formative assessment.		
The teacher provides positive, motivating, and growth-oriented feedback with opportunities to revise and resubmit work.		
Students are provided opportunities to help each other learn.		
There is evidence of student self-assessment to monitor learning and identify needs.		

Things to Remember:

- ☐ Look at your data
- ☐ Be specific with objectives
- ☐ Prioritize assessments
- ☐ Provide consistent, meaningful feedback

3 Key Considerations:

Clarity of Instructional Objectives
- Students - What am I learning and why?
- Teachers - Model and provide examples

Information on Individual and Group Progress towards Objective
- Use high rates of Opportunities to Respond
- Prioritize non-verbal and individual or small group questioning
- Administer brief low-stakes quizzes, student polls, and exit tickets

Provide Feedback for Instructional Decisions
- Deliver targeted and specific feedback to encourage student progress and redirect as needed

Strategies for monitoring and modifying formative assessments:

Do your opportunities to respond provide sufficient real-time information about student learning?

Do you appropriately adjust lesson pace based on responses?

Research	VTSS Videos
[QR Code]	[QR Code]

Aligns with High Leverage Practices 4,5,6,9,12,16

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Scaffolding

What is it?

Scaffolding is when the teacher provides high levels of support, then systematically reduces support as students respond with greater accuracy.

3 Categories:

Content
- Involves the selection of content that is easy, familiar, or highly interesting in order to learn a new skill

Task
- Begin by specifying the steps in a task or instructional strategy and model step-by-step
- Simultaneously verbalize the thought process as they practice independently
- Gradually release responsibility using the I do, we do, you do model

Material
- Involves the use of written prompts, signals, cues, or hints to help the students perform a task or use a strategy
- May include rubric, cheat sheets, guided examples, and exemplars

Check Yourself: Observe and Monitor

Components	Y/N	Comments
Teachers scaffold instruction during whole and small group		
Opportunities to practice with teacher supports and guidance		
A variety of materials and supports reflect differing student needs and current ability levels		

Key Considerations:

Partnering
- Increase modeling
- Provide opportunities for clarification
- Increase feedback

Chunking
- Break down complex ideas or text
- Use graphic organizer to group ideas
- Support comprehension and retention

Demonstration/Modeling
- Complete the same assignment in real-time with the students
- Use a document camera, projector, or poster for easy viewing by all students
- Use a variety of modalities
  - especially with multi-step tasks
  - especially with written assignments

Prompting/Cueing
- Questions, cues, mnemonics, or hints
- Can be provided by a variety of learning aides, like rubrics, prompts, posters, checklists, word walls

Sequencing/Progress
- Progress from less to more complex
- Provide sentence stems or frames

Research

VTSS Videos

Aligns with High Level Practices 13,15, & 16

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