

How to encourage chessplayers (Or 'Why feedback trumps praise and reward')

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What Praise Does (Hattie & Yates, 2014):

1. Makes people happier (sometimes, in some places)
2. Steers you towards things (sometimes, in someplaces)
3. Induce you to stay in the game



Two educational fallacies (Hattie & Yates, 2014):

1. People learn more when they receive praise.
2. People need continual praise to establish and maintain feelings of self-worth.



"[Praise] ... does not assist you to learn. We know of no research finding suggesting that receiving praise itself can assist a person to learn or to increase their knowledge and understanding."

(Hattie & Yates, 2014, p67):



Praise

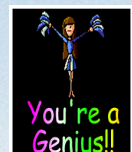
Definition by Merriam Webster online dictionary
(retrieved 13 January 2016):

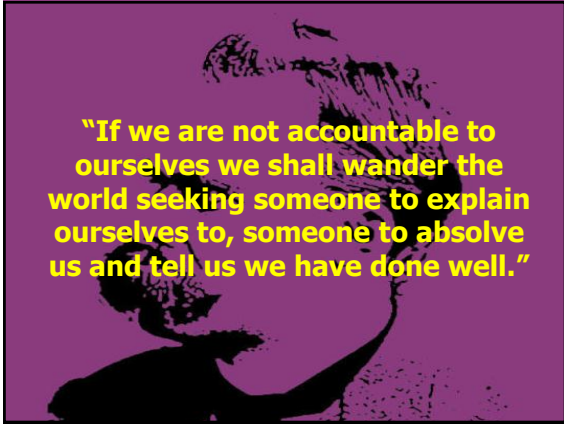
- 1:** to express a favorable judgment of : [COMMEND](#)
- 2:** to glorify (a god or saint) especially by the attribution of perfections



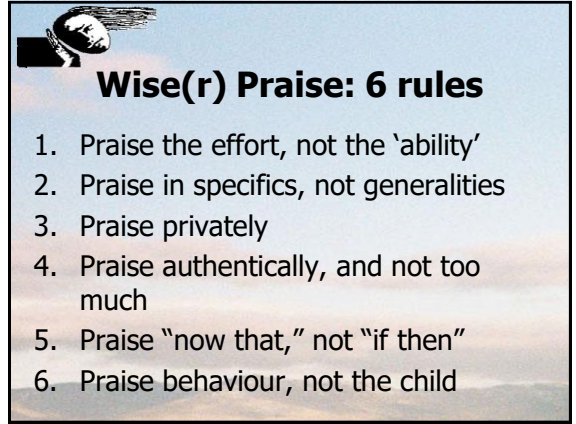
Avoid:

- Setting yourself up as a judge of anyone's intelligence
- Orienting students towards gaining our favourable judgments of their intelligence
- Intelligence and 'goodness' praise ("You're brilliant!", "What a clever girl", "Good boy" ... etc.)



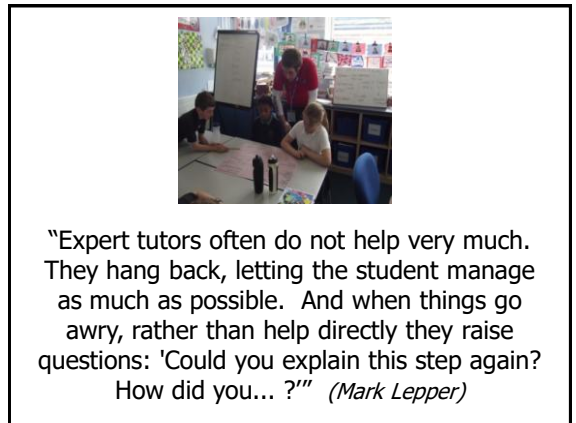


"If we are not accountable to ourselves we shall wander the world seeking someone to explain ourselves to, someone to absolve us and tell us we have done well."

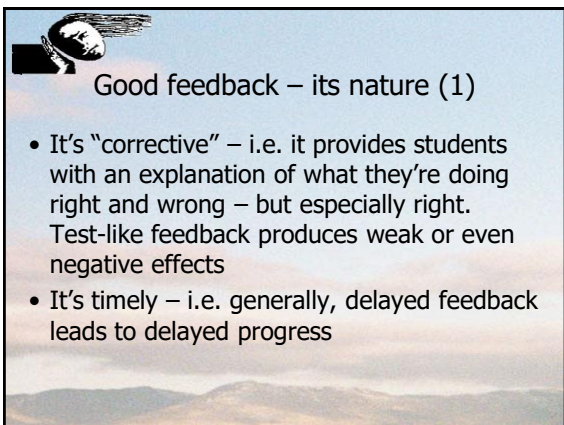


Wise(r) Praise: 6 rules

1. Praise the effort, not the 'ability'
2. Praise in specifics, not generalities
3. Praise privately
4. Praise authentically, and not too much
5. Praise "now that," not "if then"
6. Praise behaviour, not the child

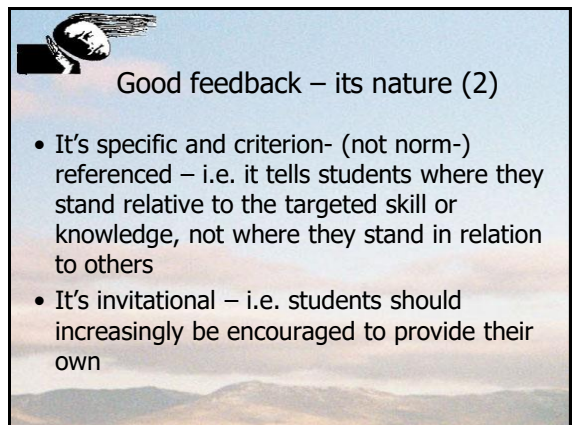


"Expert tutors often do not help very much. They hang back, letting the student manage as much as possible. And when things go awry, rather than help directly they raise questions: 'Could you explain this step again? How did you... ?'" *(Mark Lepper)*



Good feedback – its nature (1)

- It's "corrective" – i.e. it provides students with an explanation of what they're doing right and wrong – but especially right. Test-like feedback produces weak or even negative effects
- It's timely – i.e. generally, delayed feedback leads to delayed progress



Good feedback – its nature (2)

- It's specific and criterion- (not norm-) referenced – i.e. it tells students where they stand relative to the targeted skill or knowledge, not where they stand in relation to others
- It's invitational – i.e. students should increasingly be encouraged to provide their own

3 good feedback moves (Hattie, p.176)

- 1. Task Level** – How well tasks are understood/performed (“You need to decide on the best square for that knight.”)
- 2. Process Level** – The process needed to understand/perform tasks (“Try playing the opening a bit more slowly.”)
- 3. Self-regulation Level** – Self-monitoring, directing and regulating actions (“You know when you need to simplify and when to keep your pieces on the board – check to see what the position’s calling for here.”)

Aids to personalisation of targets – sentence stems

- “I want to know ...”
- “I’d like to find out more about ...”
- “An endgame technique I’d like to crack is ...”
- “A challenge I’m determined to overcome is ...”
- “The feature of this opening that I’d like to master is ...”
- “I’d like to achieve ... by ...”

1 bad feedback move (Hattie, p.177)

- Feedback at the **self or personal level** (usually praise) is rarely effective
- Praise is rarely directed at the three feedback Qs and so is ineffective in enhancing learning
- When feedback draws attention to the self, students try to avoid the risks involved in tackling a challenging assignment, they minimise effort and have a high fear of failure

“Children with low self-esteem could be harmed if they are lavished with too much praise by parents for doing things well. Inflated praise can lead to their worrying they will have to reach the same standard in future tasks. This may run counter to parents’ intuition. Inflated praise can backfire with those kids who seem to need it the most .”

(Brummelman et al, *Psychological Science*, 2014)

Hattie’s conclusion:

“For feedback to be effective in the act of learning, praise dissipates the message. Make your students feel welcomed to the [class] and worthwhile as learners, but if you wish to make a major difference to learning, leave praise out of feedback about learning.”

Recommended reading

- Boyd, P., Hymer, B. & Lockney, K. (2015); *Learning Teaching*
- Dweck, C. (2000); *Self Theories*
- Dweck, C. (2006); *Mindset*
- Hymer, B. (2009); *Gifted & Talented Pocketbook*
- Hymer, B. & Gershon, M. (2014); *Growth Mindset Pocketbook*