

Characteristics of reinforcing language

- Names concrete and specific behaviors
- Points out approximations toward mastery
- May be followed by a question to extend thinking
- Applies to all
- Emphasizes description over personal approval
- Reflects important goals and values

Examples of reinforcing language

Student Examples	Teacher Examples
“Some of you shared your thoughts today and many of you listened respectfully. What else did you do that helped us have a good discussion?”	“While observing the math lesson, I noticed students working together to solve a challenging problem. I noticed the way they were supporting each other while not giving each other the answer.”
“You’re really learning how to read large numbers. Last week we worked with numbers up to one thousand, and today you read numbers in the millions.”	“I noticed your students using careful listening skills and pausing to think before responding.”
“I see more and more students sitting quietly. I see others working on putting things away so they can be ready soon.”	“I can tell you and your students have done a lot of work around understanding the main idea of a text. Many students were able to share the main idea of the text and offer supporting details.”
“I see you’re using chapter headings in your writing. Did you notice that in the books you’re reading?”	“As a staff, we have been working on pausing before responding when students are struggling to engage in learning. I noticed when a student disengaged from the lesson, you took a moment before supporting that student to get back on track. You were calm and clear when talking to them.”

Student Examples	Teacher Examples
<p>“I heard several insightful ideas about why the main character is having such a moral dilemma.”</p>	<p>“I know you have been working on wait time when asking questions. I noticed many times when you paused before having students share their ideas. That is evidence of the work you have been doing around that skill.”</p>
<p>“You backed up your answers with evidence from the reading.”</p>	<p>“We know clear routines and procedures support all students. I can tell you have taken time to explicitly teach transitions in your classroom. When transitioning from math centers to partner work, your students were able to quickly put away materials and gather what they needed for partner work. This allowed for an effective use of instructional time.”</p>

Open-ended questions

- Have no single right or wrong answer
- Invite any reasoned, relevant response
- Draw on students' thoughts, experiences, and knowledge

Examples of open-ended questions

Student Examples	Teacher Examples
"What parts of this did you find most interesting?"	"What did you notice about . . . ?"
"What does this remind you of?"	"What are some ways . . . ?"
"How might you use ____ to help us learn about ____?"	"How might you compare . . . ?"
"What could you do if you forget the directions?"	"What do you think . . . ?"
"What might a student in that situation do differently next time?"	"What do you wonder about . . . ?"
"What helped you concentrate today?"	"How might an observer describe what happened?"
"What might be hard for some people?"	"What surprised you about . . . ?"
"How have you seen others use that skill?"	"What more would you like me to know about . . . ?"