Choosing Words with Weight

A workshop on mastering constructive feedback and leading students through meaningful critiques
OK, CHILDREN. TODAY WE ARE GOING TO BE DOING ART.

WRONG.
Giving feedback to students about their artwork
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Do</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don’t</strong></th>
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| **Ask the student to tell you about their art**  
“This is interesting. Will you tell me a little about your drawing?” | **Make assumptions**  
“I like your drawing of a dog.” |
| **Give specific feedback to reinforce behavior, vocabulary, and skills**  
“Your use of complimentary colors makes your painting very bold and noticeable.” | **Give generic feedback**  
“That’s beautiful.”  
“Nice job.”  
“Great.”  
“Good work.” |
| **Allow students to make their own decisions while working**  
“I see all this white space here and I’m curious what you are planning for it.” | **Limit a student’s creativity by dictating specific details in their work**  
“You need to add a sky.”  
“Draw a nose on your person.” |
| **Give constructive & honest feedback**  
“The contour drawing is strong and really fills the space on your paper. I think the whole drawing will have a more finished look if you go back and spend more time on adding the color.” | **Give false praise**  
“Your finished? I love it!” |
Admirable!  
Amazing!  
Arresting!  
Astonishing!  
Astounding!  
Awesome!  
Awe-inspiring!  
Beautiful!  
Breathtaking!  
Brilliant!  
Capital!  
Captivating!  
Clever!  
Commendable!  
Delightful!  
Distinguished!  
Distinctive!  
Engaging!  
Enjoyable!  
Estimable!  
Excellent!  
Exceptional!  
Exemplary!  
Exquisite!  
Extraordinary!  
Fabulous!  
Fantastic!  
Fascinating!  
Finest!  
First-rate!  
Flawless!  
Four-star!  
Glorious!  
Grand!  
Impressive!  
Incomparable!  
Incredible!  
Inestimable!  
Invaluable!  
Laudable!  
Lovely!  
Magnificent!  
Marvelous!  
Masterful!  
Mind-blowing!  
Mind-boggling!  
Miraculous!  
Monumental!  
Notable!  
Noteworthy!  
Out of sight!  
Out of this world!  
Outstanding!  
Overwhelming!  
Peerless!  
Perfect!  
Phenomenal!  
Praiseworthy!  
Priceless!  
Rapturous!  
Rare!  
Refreshing!  
Remarkable!  
Sensational!  
Singular!  
Skillful!  
Smashing!  
Solid!  
Special!  
Spectacular!  
Splendid!  
Splendiferous!  
Splendorous!  
Staggering!  
Sterling!  
Striking!  
Stunning!  
Stupendous!  
Super!  
Superb!  
Super-duper!  
Superior!  
Superlative!  
Supreme!  
Surprising!  
Terrific!  
Thumbs up!  
Thrilling!  
Tiptop!  
Top-notch!  
Transcendent!  
Tremendous!  
Unbelievable!  
Uncommon!  
Unique!  
Unparalleled!  
Unprecedented!  
Wonderful!  
Wondrous!  
World-class!
Give students a voice...
Allow them to share their opinion about the artwork rather than waiting to hear yours.

Try making more observational comments...

• “Your pencil moves fast, round and round”
• “You have pink at the top and blue at the bottom”
• “You put red squares on top of a green shape”
• “That’s one of the brownest picture I’ve ever seen.”
• “Look how you filled the whole page with color – was that fun?”
• “Look how you put all those small circles around that big shape.”
• “The blue shape is next to the red shape. None of your pieces touch.”
• “You have lines and shapes together, here and here.”
What can you say to the student who...

Rushes through their work and finishes too fast

Is never happy with their work

Is always your star student

Is really proud and always wants to show you their work

Doesn’t put in enough effort

Is always your star student
Leading students through giving feedback about each other’s artwork
VISUAL ARTS CRITIQUE

Look
Describe the Artwork.

Think
Find the Story in the Artwork.

Apply
Predict What Will Happen Next.

Engage
Get Into The Artist’s Head.

Reflect
What Would You Change?

Evaluate
What Do You Think?
GIVE A LITTLE feedback

Continue to ___.

I liked it when you ___.

You did a great job at ___.

Can you tell me how you ___?

Next time, you should try ___.

Be ARTiculate! Use these art-smart words:

Interesting
Clever
Unusual
Surprising
Impressive
Powerful
Lovely
Confusing
Emotional
Mysterious
Exciting
Comforting
ART CRITIQUE CARDS

Describe what you see in the work.

What emotion does this artwork make you feel? Why?

How did the artist use the materials?

What do you think is particularly clever or creative about this piece?
The Artist’s Sandwich

Something I like about your art is:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

A suggestion I have for your art is:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Something else I like about your art is:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Artist’s Name: ___________________________ Critic’s Name: ___________________________