

*“We don’t learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.”
John Dewey*

Encouraging and empowering students throughout the reflective process can be facilitated through timely, positive and constructive feedback. Below are some helpful tips to consider when giving feedback.

These tips could be strategies that you already practice with your students! They can also be adapted and used in one-on-one feedback conversations with students.



1. **BE BRIEF.** The focus should always remain on what students share. Teacher feedback must therefore be **Meaningful, Clear, Concise** and have **Clarity**.



2. **BE TIMELY.** Feedback on reflections, where possible, should be given within 1-2 days. That’s when students’ reflective thoughts on a lesson/topic/assignment are likely to still be fresh in their minds. It may not always be possible to provide students with feedback within the recommended time frame, but the sooner is definitely better than later.



3. **BE APPRECIATIVE.** When students reflect on their learning and experiences they give teachers the opportunity to learn more about them. This is an opportunity that teachers can show gratitude for. Say for example:

- **“Thank you for sharing.....”**
- **“This was very insightful. Thank you...”**
- **“I am happy that you liked the (lesson, activity, video, etc.)”**



4. **BE POSITIVE (OFFER PRAISE).** Reflections should be **no pressure** tasks for students. It should be a judgement-free activity where teachers are reviewing and guiding student improvement and supporting ongoing learning. Your feedback must make students feel good about where they are, and excited about where they can go. Use feedback such as:

- **“Keep up the positive mindset.”**
- **“Love your thinking!”**
- **“Great ideas! I especially liked...”**
- **“This is wonderful progress - keep it up.”**
- **“These are helpful, I would love to hear more about...”**



5. **BE ENCOURAGING (GET STUDENTS TO ELABORATE)**. A simple feedback of “Tell me more!”/ “Explain a bit more”, “Can you tell me what you meant when you said.....?” shows your interest in what students shared, and further encourages them to share more and delve more deeply in their reflective thoughts. Asking students guiding questions can also help to encourage their problem solving and brainstorming skills and engage them in higher- level thinking.

- Ask guiding questions such as: “What's another way that you could have approached this (assignment etc.)?”
- “How will you build on this (skill, activity etc.) in the future?”



6. **BE HELPFUL**. Suggest useful tips and strategies where necessary. For example, if a student shared that they were experiencing difficulty with a lesson or assignment, you may say:

- “I will be happy to discuss/explain this with you in person.”
- “I like that you tried that , how about trying this strategy next time....”
- “It may be helpful to....”
- "I really like what you did here, and I think you're on the right track. Why not try adding/continuing with/trying this as well?"



7. **BE SUPPORTIVE and ACCESSIBLE**. Students need to be supported and made to feel safe throughout the reflective process. Use students' reflections as the opportunity to provide assurance and empowerment. Be available to students for continued reflective review and one-on-one discussions as often as needed.

- Support students’ reflective thoughts with [Reflection Prompts](#)
- Schedule one-on-one time with students to discuss their reflections
- Engage parents and families in the reflective process (e.g. through student-led conferences)



8. **BE REFLECTIVE TOO**. Learning is a give and take, and students also inspire and prompt reflective thinking in their teachers. Teachers should freely model this to their students.

- “This grew my thinking. I will also....”
- “That was a wonderful way of looking at...., I learnt so much from you.”
- “That was great feedback on the lesson/assignment. What would you like me to explore in the next lesson/assignment?”