

# 3.5 GIVING & RECEIVING FEEDBACK

This lesson is part of a Connect Science unit. For information about other Connect Science lessons and professional development opportunities,

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## Lesson Summary

Students will be able to give positive feedback and constructive criticism to other students in ways that show critical thinking, respect and caring for one another. Giving and receiving feedback is not always easy. Students will learn sentence stems to facilitate giving feedback and new skills to help them receive feedback. These skills will be useful when students listen to each other's presentations and work in small groups.

(Approx. total time: 35 minutes)



## Standards

### Social and Emotional Competencies

**Relationship Skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

**Self-management:** The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

*Excerpted text from CASEL (2017).*

## Objectives

### By the end of the lesson students will

#### Know (facts/information):

- Giving and receiving feedback is important for learning.

#### Understand (concepts, big ideas):

- The best solutions arise when people with different knowledge and perspectives listen to each other, communicate respectfully, and collaborate to solve problems.

### Be able to do (skills/behaviors):

- Give and receive positive feedback and constructive criticism in ways that show critical thinking, respect, and caring for one another.
- Foster social skills to develop and maintain strong positive relationships.

## Vocabulary

- **constructive criticism:** feedback on a person's performance or product designed to help them make their work better
- **feedback:** helpful information shared from one person to another to help them improve their performance or product
- **positive feedback:** compliments shared from one person to another about their performance or product

## Materials

- Teacher Materials:
  - Giving and Receiving Feedback Anchor Chart

## Instructional Strategies

### Link to Prior Knowledge (5 minutes)

**Share a time when you learned a new skill and describe how feedback was important for your improvement.**

*When I am learning a new skill, I've noticed that I want someone to tell me if I'm on the right track and if I'm learning what it is I need to learn. Sometimes I need feedback so I can get better at what I'm doing. When I started to play soccer, I wasn't very good at kicking. I had a teammate who helped me kick the ball better.*

*My friend's help was good for me but it was also really good for the whole team. We all did better because I was better at kicking the ball. My friend used respectful language to give me feedback and help me improve. **Feedback is helpful information shared from one person to another to help them improve their performance or product.***

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**Ask students to think of a time when they received feedback that helped them improve. Discuss one or two examples.**

*Think of a time when you received feedback. Can someone give me an example of a time when you received feedback from a coach, teacher or friend?*

*What was it you were trying to learn? Who gave you the feedback? What was the feedback? Did it help you perform better?*

### **Instruction (25 minutes)**

**Introduce and define two types of feedback: positive feedback and constructive criticism.**

*Receiving feedback helps us to grow our idea or make our product better. Now, sometimes feedback is easy to hear when someone says something nice about what I've done. That's positive feedback. **Positive feedback is compliments shared from one person to another about their performance or product.***

*At times, it can be hard to receive feedback, especially when we are really excited about an idea and someone is giving us feedback to make our idea better. I know when I have what I think is a great idea and I share it, I don't always get the response I wanted. Sometimes I hear, "no, let's not do that" or "that won't work." When I get feedback like that, it can hurt my feelings or make me feel like I don't want to share my ideas next time. So, if you want to give someone feedback in a way that helps them be productive in the future, you can use your respectful language and give them constructive criticism. **Constructive criticism is feedback on a person's performance or product designed to help them make their work better.** Constructive criticism needs to be very specific to help other people improve their work. Today we are going to learn how to give two kinds of feedback: positive feedback and constructive criticism.*

**Discuss positive feedback and the importance of being specific in giving positive feedback.**

*Many of you have received positive feedback. Positive feedback feels like a compliment and it can be easy to give and easy to hear.*

*We can give feedback to our friends when we are giving a presentation. I know when I am watching a presentation, I think about what the presenter is doing well. I might think, "Oh, I like that diagram because it helps me understand a complicated idea."*

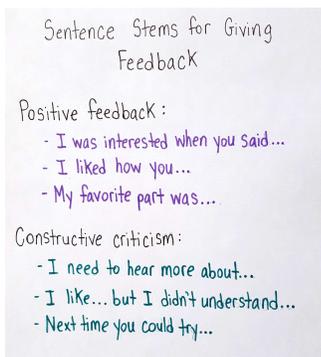
*Remember, we want our feedback to be useful. We don't just always want to say "I agree with Mary" or "let's do that." We want to be specific in our positive feedback so that the person knows what they are doing well. Turn to your neighbor and tell them one idea of something you can say to give someone positive feedback.*

## Discuss constructive criticism and explain how to communicate constructive criticism in ways that show respect.

When we give constructive criticism to someone we need to remember their feelings. If we don't agree with their idea, we need to tell them in a respectful way. Instead of just saying "I don't like that idea" or "that will never work" there is nicer language to use to show respect and caring. Remember when I showed a picture that showed how sometimes we might think one thing but need to pause and rephrase it in a respectful way before we talk.

Let's say I am watching a friend's presentation and notice things that I think need to be improved. I might think, "Wow, if they put a label on that diagram, I would understand it so much better." Or, what if you notice that your friend made an important mistake in the work that needs to be fixed. If I want to tell my friend, I need to say that in a way that is respectful. Turn to your neighbor and tell them one idea of something you can say to give constructive criticism.

## Share an anchor chart with sentence stems for students to use while giving positive feedback and constructive criticism to their peers.



You may want to start with some of your own and add some of their ideas to save time.

Here are some examples of sentence stems for giving positive feedback. "I was interested when you said...", "I liked how you...", "My favorite part was ..." What other sentence stems would you like to add to give positive feedback?

Here are a few sentence stems for giving constructive criticism. "I need to hear more about .... because...." "I like... but I didn't understand..." "Next time you could try..."

## Provide a scenario where students can use sentence stems to provide positive feedback.

Explain to your students that you want to learn how to be better at telling jokes or stories. Describe that when you tell a joke or story, people look bored or uninterested, but you want them to be happy and entertained.

Tell a joke or story in a way that is not entertaining or is missing information (e.g. do not give enough time for the punchline, say the joke with a facial expression or tone that makes the joke not funny, or tell a joke that's boring because everyone knows it). Ask them to use the sentence stems to give you positive feedback.

Here are some sample jokes:

- Q: What did the left eye say to the right eye? A: Between us, something smells!
- Q: Why did the student eat his homework? A: Because the teacher told him it was a piece of cake!
- Q: Why was 6 afraid of 7? A: Because 7, 8, 9



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- Q: Why does a seagull fly over the sea? A: Because if it flew over the bay, it would be a bay-gull.
- Q: What animal is always at a baseball game? A: A bat.
- Q: What's worse than finding a worm in your apple? A: Finding half a worm in your apple.

*I want to learn how to be better at telling jokes. Usually when I tell jokes, my friends look bored or don't laugh, and I need your help to tell me how I can improve. After I tell my joke, it would be helpful to get some encouragement from you all. Please use the sentence stems to give me positive feedback about my joke. Remember, it is important to be specific because I want to improve my ability to tell funny jokes.*

**Listen to the positive feedback. Smile, nod, and receive the feedback gracefully. Ask the students to notice how you are receiving feedback.**

*Nice job using the sentence stems to give me positive feedback. Now, what do you notice about how I am receiving the positive feedback?*

Target student responses: "You're smiling." "You're nodding." "You are saying 'thank you'."

*That's right. I am receiving the positive feedback in a way that shows that I am grateful for the feedback. I am smiling, nodding, and saying "thank you." I'm not saying, "Oh, it's not that good" or "This isn't very good work." I am accepting the compliment and enjoying hearing positive words about my work.*

**Retell the story or joke using their comments and mention that you are trying to improve. Invite students' constructive criticism.**

*Well, I am going to try to do better this time. In fact, some of you noticed that I told the joke too fast and so my joke wasn't very entertaining. Listen carefully one more time. I'd like you to use the sentence stems to give me some constructive criticism. Remember to be specific because the constructive criticism won't help me improve if it isn't specific.*

**Listen to the constructive criticism. Smile or keep a neutral face. Nod and receive the constructive criticism well. Ask the students to notice how you are receiving feedback.**

*Great job using the sentence stems to give me constructive criticism. Now, what do you notice about how I am receiving the constructive criticism?*

Target student responses: "You're nodding." "You are saying 'thank you, that's helpful.'" "You're saying, 'Thank you, I will consider your suggestion.'"

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*That's right. I am receiving the constructive criticism in a way that shows that I am grateful for the feedback. I am smiling, nodding, and saying "that's a helpful idea." I'm not saying, "oh, you're wrong, my joke is really good." And, I'm not getting really sad about the critique. I am accepting the critique and considering if and how the ideas might help me improve. There are certain words that you can say when someone is giving you constructive criticism. For example, you can say, "Thank you, that will help my project," or, "That's really helpful."*

### **Give your students an opportunity to practice giving and receiving feedback.**

Generate a topic or activity that relates to your classroom. Using sentence stems for the first time takes concentration so choose a simple topic or activity in which students do not feel highly invested. (For instance, have them each describe the process of a simple task like making a bed or tying shoelaces, as opposed to solving a math problem.)

Ask students to choose a partner. Have each student use the sentence stem to give positive feedback. Then, have each student use the sentence stem to give constructive feedback.

Sample topics/activities may include:

- Tell a short story or joke.
- Draw a picture using their non-dominant hand.
- Give instructions on how to explain a simple task (like feeding a dog or making a sandwich).

### **Ask students to use the sentence stems to practice giving feedback. Remind students to receive the positive feedback with a nod, smile or "Thank you."**

*Okay, now I'd like each of you to think about how you would tell a funny joke or story. Now, turn to your partner and try it out. Use the sentence stems and take turns giving each other positive feedback. Remember to receive the feedback well, too.*

### **Ask students to use the sentence stems to practice giving constructive criticism. Remind students to receive the constructive criticism with a nod or simple statement.**

*Again, when giving feedback, I'd like you to use the sentence stems and take turns giving each other constructive criticism. Be specific so that you can help your partner improve. Remember to receive the constructive criticism well, too. Use words like, "Thank you" and "I'll consider your suggestion."*

### Closing (5 minutes)

#### Compliment students' approach to giving feedback to their fellow students.

*As I was walking around, I heard positive feedback and constructive criticism -- the kind of feedback that improves each other's ideas. For example, the feedback you all were giving was respectful and helpful. When we work together, in any capacity, it is important for us to give feedback to each other so that we can grow. We want our feedback to be specific and respectful.*

#### Reflect on what it was like to give positive feedback and constructive criticism.

*Let's reflect. How did it feel when you received positive feedback? I notice that many of you felt proud and happy when you received positive feedback. Remember that it feels good to receive positive feedback. We also want our positive feedback to be useful. We need to be specific in our positive feedback so that the person knows what we think that they are doing well. Did you all remember to smile and nod when you received positive feedback?*

*How did it feel when you received constructive criticism? What feelings did you have? Notice that it is easier to give constructive criticism than it is to receive it. This is an important part of constructive criticism. When we give feedback to someone, we need to remember their feelings. If we don't think that they did a good job, we need to tell them in a respectful way and try to form it into a suggestion instead of just saying "I don't like how you drew that," or "Your work isn't good."*

*We will give feedback in some of our group work this year. We can also give feedback when our friends are giving a presentation. I know when I am watching a presentation, I think about what I like and I also think, "Wow, maybe they should have put a picture on that poster so we know what it looks like." Now I know that I could say, "Next time you could try using a picture on your poster to help me understand."*

*One way to remember how to give feedback is to think about a "feedback sandwich." That is, start with positive feedback, then, give constructive criticism, and then, end with positive feedback.*

## Assessment

Notice and record instances when you see students using sentence stems to give feedback.

### Optional Extensions

Assign a writing activity. Have students think of a time when they, a friend, or their teacher had a big decision to make. Ask them to write a letter to that person providing feedback on their decision. Remind them about the structure they practiced in their groups when providing feedback in their letter.

### References

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2017). *Core social and emotional learning competencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies/>

### Planning Page

**Students will be able to give positive feedback and constructive criticism to other students in ways that show critical thinking, respect and caring for one another.**

#### **Link to Prior Knowledge (5 minutes)**

*Share a time when you learned a new skill and describe how feedback was important for your improvement.*

*Ask students to think of a time when they received feedback that helped them improve. Discuss one or two examples.*

#### **Instruction (25 minutes)**

*Introduce and define two types of feedback: positive feedback and constructive criticism.*

*Discuss positive feedback and the importance of being specific in giving positive feedback.*

*Discuss constructive criticism and explain how to communicate constructive criticism in ways that show respect.*

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*Share an anchor chart with sentence stems for students to use while giving positive feedback and constructive criticism to their peers.*

*Provide a scenario where students can use sentence stems to provide positive feedback.*

*Listen to the positive feedback. Smile, nod, and receive the feedback gracefully. Ask the students to notice how you are receiving feedback.*

*Retell the story or joke using their comments and mention that you are trying to improve. Invite students' constructive criticism.*

*Listen to the constructive criticism. Smile or keep a neutral face. Nod and receive the constructive criticism well. Ask the students to notice how you are receiving feedback.*

*Give your students an opportunity to practice giving and receiving feedback.*

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*Ask students to use the sentence stems to practice giving feedback. Remind students to receive the positive feedback with a nod, smile or "Thank you."*

*Ask students to use the sentence stems to practice giving constructive criticism. Remind students to receive the constructive criticism with a nod or simple statement.*

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

*Compliment students' approach to giving feedback to their fellow students.*

*Reflect on what it was like to give positive feedback and constructive criticism.*