

# WHAT MIGHT THE CONTENT OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK LOOK LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM?

Effective feedback should focus on moving *learning* forward, targeting the task, subject, and self-regulation strategies. The examples given here also demonstrate that pupils need to be given opportunities to act on feedback; further guidance on this is given in **Recommendation 3**. These messages may be delivered via written or verbal feedback (and the method of delivery is likely to be less important than the content).

	Feedback more likely to move learning forward			Less likely
	Task	Subject	Self-regulation strategies	Personal
	 <p>Feedback focused on improving a specific piece of work or specific type of task. It can comment on whether an answer is correct or incorrect, can give a grade, and will offer specific advice on how to improve learning.</p>	 <p>Feedback targets the underlying processes in a task, which are used across a subject. The feedback can, therefore, be applied in other subject tasks.</p>	 <p>Feedback is focused on the learner's own self-regulation. It is usually provided as prompts and cues—and aims to improve the learner's own ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.</p>	 <p>About the person. It may imply that pupils have an innate ability (or lack of) and is often very general and lacking in information.</p>
<b>KS1 examples</b>	In maths, pupils have been asked to order objects from lightest to heaviest. The teacher explains to one child: 'You're nearly there, but two of these are the wrong way around. Can you use the balance scales again and see which object is really the heaviest?'	In English, a pupil is struggling with letter formation. The teacher discusses this with them: 'Let's just look at how you are writing your 'd's. Can you see you have started at the top and gone down and done a loop? Remember we start writing a 'd' by doing a letter 'c' shape. Let's try that again.'	In art, pupils are painting self-portraits. The teacher is helping children to practice completing activities in a given time. He explains: 'At the end of today I'm going to put the portraits up for our exhibition, so we need to think about finishing in the next 15 minutes—do you think you'll be able to finish? If you haven't started on your eyes, make a start now.'	'Great work—you're brilliant at maths!'
<b>KS2 examples</b>	In science, a class is identifying the components of a circuit. The teacher notes that they are missing some key features.  'Many of you are identifying the bulbs and wires in this circuit. Can you also label the switches and cells?'	In history, pupils are having a class debate on whether Boudica was a hero. The teacher notes that not enough historical terminology is being used and explains: 'Historians use appropriate historical terminology. In every point you each make, I want you to use a specialist term we've learned, such as "rebellion" or "Iceni tribe".'	In maths, pupils have been set a problem to solve. One child does not know where to start. The teacher prompts them to review and plan: 'Look at our display of strategies that we've use to solve problems we've tackled in the past. I think one of those could help you to solve this problem.'	'This is ok, but you are better than this!'
<b>KS3 examples</b>	In computing, pupils have been asked to complete a series of sums where they add together two binary numbers. The teacher reviews the work and informs each pupil how many they have got correct. She asks them to revisit the questions, work out which are incorrect, and correct them.	A maths teacher notes that many pupils are not ordering their operations correctly, which they need to do across the subject. She selects an example problem to complete as a whole class before asking pupils: 'Find the problems from the last lesson where you incorrectly ordered your operations and correct them.'	Pupils in PE are trying a shot put. One throws a personal best but her following effort only reaches half the distance. The teacher asks her: 'Why do you think that attempt was less successful? What should you do differently next time?' The pupil identifies that she was holding the shot put in the base of her middle fingers for her better attempt, rather than her palm. She is asked to try again and monitor the difference.	'You're a gifted historian—superb effort as always!'
<b>KS4 examples</b>	In English literature, a teacher has read pupil essays on <i>An Inspector Calls</i> and reflected that many pupils are not including enough evidence to support their points. She shows pupils an example of a former pupil's work featuring a paragraph lacking in evidence, and another paragraph with sufficient evidence. She feeds back: 'Review these paragraphs. Can you notice the difference? Now, revisit your work, and add in evidence where you think it is necessary.'	A German teacher is reflecting on the oral mock exam that pupils have just undertaken. Some pupils failed to use the correct grammatical gender when speaking, which is required across the subject. He feeds back to some pupils:  'You need to use <i>der</i> , <i>die</i> , or <i>das</i> in the correct places. For the first ten minutes of this lesson, practice speaking about your part time job with your partner and correct each other when you use the incorrect <i>der</i> , <i>die</i> or <i>das</i> .'	A geography class are approaching their exams. They created individual revision plans at the start of term but, having just marked pupil mock papers, the teacher suspects that some pupils may only be revising the topics they are already strong in. She feeds back to one pupil who is struggling: 'Review which questions you struggled on in the mock exam. Amend your revision plan to give more priority to your areas of weakness.'	'This is poor work—I expect better from a student of your standard'
<b>KS5 examples</b>	A health and social care class are discussing the factors that contribute to disease. The teacher notes that only genetic factors are being identified and feeds back: 'The discussion is showing a rich understanding of the genetic factors, but what about environmental factors? Can you name some environmental causes of disease?'	A politics teacher is giving feedback on pupil essays on the strength of select committees in U.K. politics. Pupils were asked to include 'well-substantiated conclusions', a key skill in politics, but one pupil's essay featured a conclusion that did not match the argument in the rest of their essay. The teacher feeds back: 'Your conclusion is unsubstantiated and does not match the rest of your essay. Re-examine your argument and redraft your conclusion.'	A psychology student has submitted an essay which is of a much poorer quality than their previous attempt. The teacher asks them to consider: 'Thinking about your preparation, and with reference to the assessment objectives, what three things did you do differently this time which has resulted in a poorer outcome?' Once these are identified, the pupil will be asked to remedy these shortcomings in a redrafted essay.	'Fantastic work—you're a born Chemist'

As some of these examples demonstrate, it can often be challenging to clearly demarcate the difference between feedback at the task, subject, and self-regulation level. However, teachers and leaders do not need to be overly concerned by this. These types illustrate the sort of feedback that may be effective, and the lines between them may be blurred. The key distinction to make is to ensure that feedback is directed towards the task, subject, and/or self-regulation—it is less likely to be effective if it provides a general comment about the pupil's characteristics.

This table is reproduced from Recommendation 2 in the guidance report: *Teacher Feedback To Improve Pupil Learning*

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