

HOW WE PRAISE SHAPES HOW CHILDREN LEARN

When praise is tied to traits, mistakes can feel personal.
When praise is tied to actions, mistakes become information.
Focusing on the process shows that learning is shaped by
effort, strategies, and choices.

Person Praise

Focuses on traits or ability.
Communicates success comes from
who you are, not how you learn.

*"You're so smart."
"You're a natural at this."
"You're a genius."*

Process Praise

Focuses on effort and strategies.
Communicates learning
improves through persistence,
methods, & reflection.

*"You tried a few different strategies there."
"I can see how much effort you put into that."
"That improvement came from practice."*

Phrase swaps for everyday

"You're a natural at maths"

*"The way you broke that problem
into steps really helped"*

"You're so talented at drawing"

*"Your drawing improved because
you kept refining the details"*

"You're a gifted writer"

*"Your planning and redrafting
made your writing clearer"*