Praise is one of the most powerful tools you have as a teacher. These seven tips can help you praise students in effective, meaningful, and empowering ways.

1. **Be precise about what you’re praising.**
   Specific praise allows students to identify exactly what they did well. It reinforces the positive behavior you want students to repeat.

2. **Praise the process and progress, not just the outcomes.**
   Praise successes along the way, like the strategies students use. Let students know that the process is important, too.

3. **Be clear about your standards and expectations.**
   Make sure students understand the behaviors you expect or the requirements of an assignment. Then give praise that matches those expectations.

4. **Be sincere.**
   Students know when you’re not being honest. Insincere praise can make students doubt you and wonder why you’re not telling the truth.

5. **Avoid comparisons to other students.**
   Praise students for mastering a skill they’re working on. Don’t compare their skills to other students’ skills or tell them they did better than someone else.

6. **Praise students for hard work.**
   Focus your comments on how much effort students put in or which techniques they use. This emphasizes things that students can control rather than skills that come naturally to them.

7. **Avoid overpraising.**
   The instinct to heap on the praise (especially for students who struggle) is well-intentioned. But it can backfire. Overpraising for small things can make students doubt they can do big things.