

Tips for Leading Activities with Your Children

Prepare, Praise & Prompt

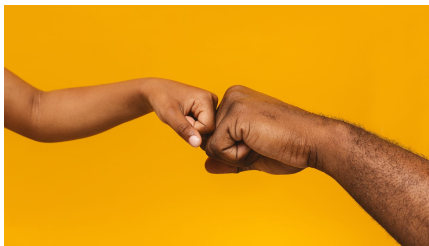
Prepare – The success of your instruction time with your child is not only determined by what you do when you are working with your child – it is also determined by what you do before instruction begins. Preparing and planning is important to ensuring the overall instructional effectiveness of your instructional time. Some things to consider:



Before Your Instruction/Activity Starts....

- Communicate with your school and teacher regarding any specific guidance and/or material they have available.
- Coordinate with your school/teacher so that lessons needed can be accessed, equipment needed can be used with readily available materials at home or modifications are provided/suggested.
- Read through the lesson/activity thoroughly and plan ahead of time. If you don't know what you are going to do, how can you expect the kids to know what to do?
- It is just as essential to plan for what students will be doing during each phase of your lesson as it is to plan for what you will be doing and saying.
- Double check your needs, e.g., do you have enough material/equipment, are any materials/websites/etc. up and ready to go....you get the idea.

Praise – CATCH them being good! Praise is simply providing positive feedback and acknowledgement when your child is doing what you want them to do. Praising the desired behavior paints a picture of what you expect. Be specific with praise whether directing it to an individual child or to the whole family. In other words, echo the behavior you want to see and expect. For example:



1. Individual Praise – *“Nice job, Mariana! I just saw you work really hard to keep your body under control and not bump into anything!”*

2. Family Praise – *“Fantastic! “I noticed that nobody went out of bounds during our tag game. Way to stay safe and play fair!”*

Prompt – A prompt is nothing more than using a child’s name in a sentence and should become a natural part of instructional dialogue. Prompts can head off a potential problem before it escalates. Prompts are not intended to call out a student for improper behavior, but rather redirect off task behavior back to the desired behavior. A prompt intended specifically for one child serves the additional purpose of reminding everyone what is expected. Prompts also let a child know you have noticed them and are keeping tabs on what they are doing.



Prompts are used in different ways:

1. Redirect Prompts – These are used to redirect a child’s attention back to you. A redirect is used when you are giving directions and have noticed that a child is not focused on you. For example, you are giving instructions regarding tasks at different stations and notice Paul staring out the window. You might say, *“And Joey, when you get to your station, remember to look at the task card for instructions before beginning the challenges.”*
2. Specific Prompts – these clearly outline the behavior you desire. For example, you are giving directions about what to do when the children get a ball. You remember from last class that Elizabeth had difficulty controlling her body when it came time to get equipment. So you might say, *“And remember Elizabeth, that you must always walk with control when you go and get your ball.”*
3. Open Ended Prompts – these require the child to think critically. For example, you notice Shana is getting a bit animated with her ball/racket/etc. You might stop the class and say, *“When I say ‘Go’ you will have 30 seconds to talk to your neighbor about how to use/hold the equipment safely. Shana, you are going to report back to me about what you and your neighbor talked about.”*