



Figure 8.2 **Using Descriptive Feedback to Increase Intrinsic Motivation**

1. Give ongoing, timely descriptive feedback during instruction to inform students about what they are doing well and on what they need to focus their attention. If the feedback comes too long after the work has been completed, the students may not remember what they had done, and their potential for learning is lessened.
2. Direct descriptive feedback toward the learning objectives, strategy development, or standards. When giving the feedback, keep the criteria limited so both the comments and students' awareness is focused.
3. Use the "sandwich" model for providing feedback: the first comment is positive, the second comment tells where the student needs to apply effort, and the third comment tells what the student is doing well overall. For example: *You are using the correct method to solve this problem. You may want to consider using your graphing calculator to check your answer. I am impressed by how much you have progressed this semester.*
4. Make sure your comments are specific and focused on what students are currently working on. Avoid comingling too many different ideas into one set of comments.
5. Give an example of how to correct the work.
6. Make brief comments. Too much information is just as confusing as too little information. Focus on the quality of the remarks, not the quantity.
7. Use affirmative language when constructing your remarks. Positive remarks are more helpful to students, even when you point out mistakes. For example: *I can see how you may have gotten confused reading the story. It will be best for you to reread the passage to find the author's point of view.*
8. Do not compare one student's work to another's. This only sets up an adversarial learning environment.
9. Give students examples of quality work (with the student names blocked out). Consider keeping student work from year to year as examples. Make a PDF of the original, make an iMovie of the performance, or take electronic pictures of the project. Make the exemplars anonymous so you are not inadvertently sending the message of comparison.
10. Eliminate the fear that some students have of assessments and evaluations by making your comments to students as conversational as possible. Keep the focus on the work rather than the person.
11. Make comments referring to a growth mindset. The focus of your comments should be on the application of effort versus the student's abilities or capacity. For example, *I was impressed by how hard you worked on this essay.*