

PAT ON THE BACK

Focus	To increase the understanding of the value of positive reinforcement.
Group Size	Entire class
Time Required	One, 15-minute session
Materials	Masking tape One per student: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ construction paper▪ scissors▪ non-permanent, fine-point, felt markers
Setting	Standard classroom
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. On the construction paper have students outline and cut out their right and left hands. (It works best to make the outline much larger than real life.)2. Tape these “hands” on the back of each student.3. With all the students standing, explain that each student is to write a put-up, compliment, or “thank you for…” on all of the “hands.” Use fine tipped felt markers for this as it shows up better than pencil. The teacher should participate in this activity, making sure that all students are getting positive “pats on the back”, and adding their own praises as needed.4. After time has been allowed for all students to write, have members remove their “hands” and read the “Pats on the Back” given by their classmates.5. Processing questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you feel about your “hands”?• What are the benefits of giving compliments?• How can we practice put-ups in our school?• The hands are nice to reflect on during times when you are feeling “put down”. Encourage students to write the date on the back and save their hands.

Variation: This activity can be done with very large groups but it takes more time. A large group may do it in the time frame suggested above by breaking the group in half or in thirds.