

PRAISE, ENCOURAGEMENT or *DISCOURAGEMENT*?

Read the statement to the left. In the middle column, put the letter of the type of statement you think it is. (“P” = Praise, “E” = Encouragement, “D” = Discouragement). If it’s not already *descriptive* “encouragement,” rewrite it so it is.

Is this statement...	P/E/D	If not Encouragement, rewrite it:
1. “You make me happy when you get good grades.”	P	Focus on how the <i>child</i> feels.
2. “I love you both the same.”	D	<i>Describe</i> the qualities you love about <i>that</i> child.
3. “It was thoughtful of you to take turns.”	E	
4. “I spent the same amount on both of your birthday gifts.”	D	Treat children <i>individually</i> , not equally
5. “I know you can do better if you just try harder.”	D	Implies not trying hardest. Describe efforts.
6. “I’m proud of you!”	P	Focus on child, not parent’s pride. “You have good reason to feel proud of <i>yourself</i> .”
7. “I really appreciate your help.”	E	Like “Thank you.” Okay to say I because not approval. Add description to be even more encouraging.
8. “I like how you fixed your hair.”	P	What does the <i>child</i> think?
9. “I know you’ll learn something from this.”	E	Tone of voice important. Said if made mistake. Learn from mistakes.
10. “You did a good job, but you missed this.”	D	Describe what made it “good.” Pause for good feelings. Later, ask questions for child to find on own.
11. “Maybe when you are bigger you can help.”	D	Find a way for child to help <i>now</i> .
12. “Your room <i>finally</i> looks clean.”	D	Describe what the child did and effort he put in.
13. “I can tell you have improved.”	E	Focuses on improvement. Description would be even better.
14. “See what you can do if you try?”	D	Implies wasn’t trying already. Describe what child did.
15. “You are such a good singer, you should sing a solo at school.”	P	Describe “good.” “Should” adds pressure. Ask what child hopes/wants
16. “You kept working on that homework until you were done. That’s persistence!”	E	
17. “Keep it up!”	E	Tone of voice important. Happy, not pressured.
18. “Let’s race and see who can clean their room first!”	D	Unhealthy win/lose competition. Play non-competitive game.
19. “You cleaned your room even better than your brother.”	P	Avoid comparisons. Describe what <i>this</i> child did without any reference to another.
20. “I trust your judgment.”	E	If you believe it you’ll see it!