

Non-Food Prizes/Rewards in the Classroom (Elementary)

Rewarding students helps them internalize desirable behaviors and creates motivation for learning that comes from within.

Providing food rewards based on performance or behavior connects food to mood. This practice can encourage children to eat treats even when they are not hungry and can instill lifetime habits of rewarding or comforting themselves with food. Awarding children food outside of meal or snack times adds calories to kids' diets and can contribute to increased risk for obesity and related chronic diseases.

Non-material rewards involving recognition, privileges and opportunities for physical activity or other types of enrichment are powerful ways to help meet these goals. Material rewards such as school supplies, trinkets, toys, and gift certificates can be used on a more limited basis.

Non-Material Rewards (No cost!)

Individual Student

- Allowing a student to go first
- Choosing a classroom activity
- Gets to help the teacher for the day
- Making deliveries to the office
- Design a class or hallway bulletin board
- Take home the classroom stuffed animal for the night
- Write or draw on the blackboard/whiteboard

Class

- Extra recess or a walk outside as a class
- Eating lunch or class snack outdoors
- Holding class outdoors
- Listen to music while working
- Play a game
- Watch classroom fitness video

Material Rewards

Classroom supplies: Pencils, pens, erasers, notebook/notepad, crayons/markers, stencils, bookmarks, coloring book, pencil sharpener

Fitness: Jump rope, Frisbee, water bottle, ball

Toys/Trinkets/Misc: Stickers, temporary tattoos, a packet of seeds to plant, bracelets, yo-yos, rubber balls, spinning tops, marbles, jacks, silly putty, bubbles, balloons, inflatable toys, figurines, puzzles, shoe laces, key chains, magnets, crazy straws, books

Point System

A point system allows a child to earn points that accumulate towards a bigger prize. Points could be handed out in paper form or put on a bulletin board to show the class progress. You could also take away to promote positive classroom behavior. Prizes for points could be:

- Gift certificate
- Book/board game/puzzle
- Frisbees for Middle School students
- If the classroom gets a certain amount of points as a whole, reward with a classroom activity (see class rewards)
- Tickets to a school event
- Basketball, volleyball, tetherball, baseball

