

SEL · GRADES 2–4

# Compliments, Not Comparisons

Lifting people up the right way

## What's the difference?

A COMPLIMENT lifts someone up by noticing something good about them. A COMPARISON lifts ONE person up by putting another DOWN — even if it sounds like a compliment. 'You're so smart, unlike Dan' is technically a compliment, but it's also unkind to Dan. Real compliments stand alone — no one else has to lose for someone else to win.

## Compliment vs comparison

Comparison (avoid)	Compliment (great)
You're nicer than Sarah.	You were really kind to me today, thank you.
You're the best in the class at math.	I really like how you explained that — it helped me get it.
You're not loud like the other kids.	I appreciate how calmly you spoke up.
At least you're not as messy as Tom.	Your work area is so organized — how do you do it?

## Receiving a compliment

Many people brush off compliments — 'oh, it was nothing'. That's not modest, it's actually rude (it tells the person their kindness was wasted). Better: just say 'thank you'. You can add 'that means a lot' or 'I appreciate you noticing'. That's it.



**Practice — write 5 compliments**

Write 5 specific, kind compliments you could give to people in your class this week. (Specific = name what you noticed. Avoid 'you're so cool'.)

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