



Classroom Practices for Building Confidence

Adapted from the book, *Creating Confident Children in the Classroom: The Use of Positive Restructuring*.

Pierangelo/Giuliani: Research Press

Introduction

A major factor in creating confidence is allowing repeated successful experiences. Positive Restructuring assumes that tangible successful experiences are crucial in the development of confidence. Further the use of verbal praise or encouragement alone will never be enough to fully develop a sense of confidence. In order to have children realize how successful they have been we suggest you develop Success Bank Accounts for each child.

Success Bank Account

Success Bank Accounts are a way to give students a series of realistic, successful experiences that strengthen the foundation of confidence. Success Bank Accounts can be developed in any or all of the following areas:

- Math Success Bank Account
- Spelling Success Bank Account
- Writing Success Bank Account
- Reading Success Bank Account
- Social Studies Success Bank Account
- Science Success Bank Account
- Creative Success Bank Account (music, art, drama, and so on)
- Jobs and Responsibilities Success Bank Account
- Recreational Success Bank Account (sports, hobbies, and the like)
- Home Experiences Success Bank Account

Each student starts a folder, with each account kept on a separate Success Bank Account sheet. (See the sample sheet, for math success, on the next page.) Whenever the student experiences success, the student writes the date and type of success on the appropriate sheet. (You can prompt the student to jot down the experience or write it for the child if necessary.)

Math Success Bank Account

Student	<u>ANNA</u>
Date	Type of Success
2/3	Completed Homework
2/4	Got 8 out of 10 on quiz
2/5	Paid attention during math lesson
2/6	Started difficult math project
2/7	Got a 90 percent on math test after rechecking

Success Bank Accounts are not meant to be time consuming. You may use the sample blank form at the bottom of this publication as you need. A few entries a day on these forms are sufficient. Remember, every successful experience is one more brick in the foundation of success. If you choose, you might want students to decorate their Success Bank Account folders. After they do this task, it can become the first entry in their Creative Success Bank Account.

At the end of 4 weeks, the Success Bank Account sheets should include at least 35 to 50 successful experiences in each area. Having this written record will enable students to see and feel success; if students doubt their abilities, you can show them their bank accounts of success to help reshape their thinking. Students' successes grow like a real bank account, and their experiences offer them a real basis for self-confidence.

Here are some entries we have seen students make in areas other than math:

Spelling Success

- Studied for the test
- Corrected misspelled words
- Learned 'i' before "e" rule
- Entered spelling bee

Writing Success

- I wrote a great essay today
- Started to write a short story
- My handwriting is improving
- I was able to write two paragraphs today without help

Reading Success

- I read two books this week
- I read an article from the newspaper last night
- I read three comic books at home from cover to cover
- My parents took me to the bookstore, and I bought two great books to read on vacation
- I read a whole page without making a mistake
- I was able to read in from of my reading group today

Social Studies Success

- I finished my part of the group project
- I got a grade on the social studies quiz
- I studied last night for an hour for my test
- I read the social studies chapter to my parents

Science Success

- My parents bought me a chemistry set
- I did a science experiment with my dad yesterday
- I finished my science lab early
- I understood the science homework without having to ask for help
- I covered my science book with neat cover I picked out myself

Social Success

- Asked Billy over after school
- Spoke with Tara today
- Played with Robert at recess
- Sat with John at lunch
- Asked two boys to my party

Creative Success

- I started piano lessons today
- I have now been taking guitar lessons for 1 year
- I tried out for the play
- I signed up for dance lessons after school today
- Today the art teacher said she loved my project

Jobs and Responsibilities Success

- Today I cleaned out my desk and organized my locker
- Today was my day to collect the milk money, and I did it without having to be told
- This morning I sharpened all the pencils
- Last night I got all my things ready for school so I would not have to rush in the morning

Recreational Success

- Today I started a baseball card collection
- Today I walked with my mom
- Yesterday after school, I jogged 1 mile
- I signed up for the girls' soccer team
- I started collecting coins
- I am now able to walk to school everyday

Home Experiences Success

- Yesterday my mom and I baked a cake
- Last night I helped my sister do her homework
- Today we are going to the wallpaper store, and I am going to pick out new paper for my room
- Last night I washed the dishes without being told
- I got 2 dollars allowance for doing my jobs and put the money in my piggy bank

Parent News Notes include a special Success Bank Account sheet for at-home use, along with suggestions for using it. The combination of parent and teacher confidence building through this technique can be very powerful.

Both teachers and parents will want to help children integrate their confidence experiences by giving lots of praise. For example, a math teacher might say to a student who completed a long homework assignment, "Wow. You must feel very proud finishing all that homework. Nice job." To a child who has successfully negotiated a compromise with a sibling, a parent might say, "I really like it when you two take turns. Good effort!"

In conclusion, this *Classroom Management Series* has attempted to outline the very important process of building confidence in children. Confidence as we have seen is the foundation for learning and needs to be present before attempts are made to feed in information. Creating confident children should be the number one priority for all educators. However, how you go about it will determine whether it has a short life or a long life in a child's future.

Success Bank Account

Student: _____

<u>Date</u>	<u>Type of success</u>
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