



## What is Strength Based Reporting?

A strength-based reporting approach will emphasize a student's capabilities and aptitudes. Comments regarding a student's progress will be individualized, specific and may include the student's own voice.

This approach will define what works for the student and will build upon that student's individualized strengths.

### Basic Requirements/Tenets

- a shift in thinking about a student and the way in which we approach teaching and assessing the curricular and core competencies in our classrooms.
- looking at students with a focus on the future outcomes and how to best use their strengths and abilities to promote progress. Teachers can use the student's strengths to make a plan for supporting the areas for growth and ways to support learning.
- having a belief that all students have strengths and abilities and a use of consistent and regular feedback to both student and parent will make a difference for the learner.

## Why Strength Based Reporting?

Kral (1989) "If we ask people to look for deficits, they will usually find them, and their view of the situation will be colored by this. If we ask people to look for successes, they will usually find it, and their view of the situation will be colored by this."

If teachers start by looking at the deficits of students, they may begin to only see the problems and not the possible skill building solutions.

Once a negative label has been given to the student, it will often limit the potential options for both teacher and student.

However, if a teacher begins to focus on what strengths a student possesses then they are more likely to see the possibilities for holistically helping each student to reach their potential.

**"The problem is the problem-the child is not the problem".**

**Wayne Hammond**

## What does it look like? Sound like?

### Examples of Strength Based Reporting Language

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-is learning to</li><li>-seeks opportunities to</li><li>-can continue to start</li><li>-practice, review, read and improve</li><li>-will continue to develop</li><li>-works on developing</li><li>-will be reminded to</li><li>-is beginning to demonstrate</li><li>-use strategies for</li><li>-extend NAME'S participation by</li><li>-can re-examine</li><li>-evaluate</li><li>-utilize supports or resources</li><li>-can participate</li><li>- applies....to....</li><li>-is clearly committed to</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-completely</li><li>-consistently</li><li>-effectively</li><li>-masterfully</li><li>-meticulously</li><li>-precisely</li><li>-thoroughly</li><li>-successfully</li><li>-models collaboration by</li><li>-thoroughly understands</li><li>-has developed</li><li>- demonstrates</li><li>-continues to</li><li>-uniquely</li></ul>
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### Behaviours for Success (Previously called Work Habits, Effort, Attitude)

Teachers can include comments about a student's work habits and effort. These comments should go into the Descriptive written comments section and can be embedded into the learner's strengths and areas for growth. These comments should be focused on how the learner's actions impact the learning process and development of skills.

The Core Competencies and Career Education competencies have behaviours for success that can be useful to take note of when writing descriptive comments. There are four behaviours for success, and these include: self-awareness, working with others, career knowledge and awareness, and career planning.

When addressing a learner's strength or area for growth be sure to write a statement that does not include the words "however", "while" or "but". These words often lessen the impact of the words before them and essentially de-value the strength just listed.

For example, Johnny has great ideas and has developed some friendships **but** sometimes interrupts ongoing conversations.

Instead separate the comments. State the strength and put the "but" part in the areas for growth. Strength - Johnny has great ideas and enjoys sharing them with his new friends.

Area for Growth – Johnny is beginning to develop whole body listening skills when speaking with his friends.

## Examples of comments on a learner's strengths...

- Recognizes the importance of positive peer relationships and is beginning to contribute their ideas during our ongoing class discussions.
- Has recently demonstrated an awareness of her peers and the impact of sharing ideas in a positive and collaborative manner.
- NAME looks around at others to know what to do next in the classroom and is beginning to follow one step oral directions.
- NAME consistently uses his peer model and modelled language cards when discussing emotional topics or concerns.
- Applies previously developed mental math strategies to new math problems and situations.

## Examples of comments on a learner's areas for growth ...

- Is learning to demonstrate safe behaviours (following game boundaries) during our PE class
- Is developing the awareness of others and importance of teamwork when working in a group
- Will continue to work on pre-writing strategies to support idea development in personal writing
- Will be reminded to start projects on their own and continue to use time management strategies that were demonstrated during individual work periods
- Is beginning to demonstrate respect for individual differences and opinions by using his journal and writing down his questions and concerns before orally commenting

## Tips for Writing a Strength Based Report

A student's report should be personalized and based on clear BC learning standards and expectations. The intention of this report is to make learning visible. Please be sure that the sliding bars match the comments about strengths and areas for growth. When looking at the sliding bars which are based on curricular competencies, ensure that any bars in the extending or beginning sections have been identified. These comments would naturally occur in the strengths and areas for growth. Finally, identify the gains the student has made, supports that have helped them with that progress and ways in which they can continue developing and learning. These are all crucial steps when creating a written report that is a strength-based integrated learning story.

## References and Great Articles for Further Reading

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/childhood/professionals/learning/strengthbappr.pdf>  
<https://jtl.uwindsor.ca/index.php/jtl/article/download/3069/pdf/>

[https://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/SB\\_for\\_Schools\\_and\\_Classrooms.pdf](https://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/SB_for_Schools_and_Classrooms.pdf)

[https://www.esd.ca/Programs/Resiliency/Documents/RSL\\_STRENGTH\\_BASED\\_PERSPECTIVE.pdf](https://www.esd.ca/Programs/Resiliency/Documents/RSL_STRENGTH_BASED_PERSPECTIVE.pdf)

Please go to the i3.vsb.bc.ca <http://go.vsb.bc.ca/schools/ltn/Pages/default.aspx> for more information/report samples and examples.

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