

MAKING DESCRIPTIONS CLEAR

MARK IF THE PHRASE IS SPECIFIC (DESCRIPTIVE) OR VAGUE (LABEL).

SPECIFIC

VAGUE

	"Danny has such a lousy attitude about school."	
	"Manuel you didn't run off when we were at the store."	
	"Sarah you need to stop talking now."	
	"Ramon, why can't you act your age when we go out in public?"	
	"Steve, you played with your cars instead of getting dressed and now you're ten minutes late."	
	"Heather, you are a spoiled brat."	
	"Latisha, thanks for sitting still and not talking in church."	
	"Maria you shared your toys when your friend was here."	
	"Tasha, when I told you that you couldn't have ice cream, you looked at the floor and mumbled 'Why not?'"	
	"Tom, what got into you?"	
	"Cody, I want you to calm down now."	
	"Mark pushed Andy when they were playing outside."	

MAKING DESCRIPTIONS CLEAR ANSWER KEY

SPECIFIC

VAGUE

	"Danny has such a lousy attitude about school."	X
X	"Manuel you didn't run off when we were at the store."	
X	"Sarah you need to stop talking now."	
	"Ramon, why can't you act your age when we go out in public?"	X
X	"Steve, you played with your cars instead of getting dressed and now you're ten minutes late."	
	"Heather, you are a spoiled brat."	X
X	"Latisha, thanks for sitting still and not talking in church."	
X	"Maria you shared your toys when your friend was here."	
X	"Tasha, when I told you that you couldn't have ice cream, you looked at the floor and mumbled 'Why not?'"	
	"Tom, what got into you?"	X
	"Cody, I want you to calm down now."	X
X	"Mark pushed Andy when they were playing outside."	

MAKING DESCRIPTIONS CLEAR EXPLANATION

“Danny has such a lousy attitude about school” is vague because lousy isn’t specific.

“Manuel you didn’t run off when we were at the store” is specific because you told him what he did right.

“Sarah you need to stop talking now” is specific because you are focusing on what she needs to do.

“Ramon, why can’t you act your age when we go out in public” is vague because how is your child supposed to know what “act your age” means.

“Steve, you played with your cars instead of getting dressed and now you’re ten minutes late” is specific because it outlines the consequence of his actions.

“Heather, you are a spoiled brat” is vague because it’s a label.

“Latisha, thanks for sitting still and not talking in church” is specific because it told her you appreciated what she did.

“Maria you shared your toys when your friend was here” is specific because you focused on a specific action.

“Tasha, when I told you that you couldn’t have ice cream, you looked at the floor and mumbled

‘Why not?’” is specific because you described what was wrong without labeling or judgment.

“Tom, what got into you” is vague because your child may not understand why a behavior they’ve done a thousand times is now all of the sudden wrong.

“Cody, I want you to calm down now” is vague because what does calm down mean?

“Mark pushed Andy when they were playing outside” is specific because you described what happened without blame.