

Communication

getting
Connected

BUILDING RESILIENT YOUTH | GROWING STRONG COMMUNITIES



An Introduction

Welcome to Getting Connected. Within this resource you will find seven topics, each with a number of learning Units.

Each Unit has the following components:

1. Points to Remember

These are the core teaching outcomes for the work unit. They are designed to be simple so that each child will have the opportunity to internalise the content.

2. Summary

An explanation of the core points for teacher information.

3. Activities

Each work unit will have some form of activities divided into the categories (borrowed from multiple intelligences theory) listed below:

Visual/Spatial

These activities will be based on making pictures or artistic images relating to the topic. They may also relate to visual puzzles or problem solving activities.

Dramatic/Interpersonal

These activities will challenge students to explore a topic through roleplay or another form of character identification or interaction. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Kinesthetic

These activities will ask students to physically manipulate or interact with their environment as part of the learning process. They may involve creating or manipulating a substance or object; or they may involve a game or physical challenge.

There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Linguistic/Intrapersonal

These activities will usually be completed individually by students. They will be predominantly work-sheet or journal based activities that encourage the student to reflect and learn.

Topic: **Communication**

Units:

1. Types of Communication
2. Communication in Relationships
3. Communication Problems

Theory Component

Communication is deeply rooted in human behaviours and social events. Communication involves the transmission of information from one person to another.

It has several characteristics and it is utilized for many purposes. Communication allows people to accommodate and adjust their style of speaking to others. This is done through using divergence to highlight group identity (e.g., using slang that is associated with a particular group) and convergence, which involves communicating in a way to fulfil a strong desire for social approval.

Communication also involves storytelling through the use of verbal, non-verbal and written means. People listen to and interpret conveyed messages by judging the credibility of the speakers' stories in terms of coherence and truth. Doing so allows for a more objective judgement of speakers and the intention of their messages.

Communication and interpersonal relationships are intertwined. People often experience conflict when starting and maintaining relationships. They communicate in relationships to gain autonomy, connection, openness, safety, novelty and predictability. They also communicate to mediate or dissolve relationships.

Communication in groups creates structures, norms and cohesion (a sense of group identity). Group communication encourages shared goals and objectives. When members cease to be committed to their group's norms, communication dissolves and it is reconstituted with new members.

Communication break downs occur when the listener misinterprets the message the speaker is conveying. Cultural differences, stereotyping, perception of the world and individual background all play a major role in message interpretation.

Communication

Unit 1: Types of Communication

Learning Focus Points

- There is power in words; choose them wisely
- Non-verbal communication is vital. Up to 90% of communication is body language
- Be careful what you write, because written messages can last forever- sms, msn, notes and letters can be positive and encouraging or negative and destructive.

Summary

Verbal communication serves various purposes: it is used to learn, relate, influence, play and help others. Words convey information about you, your feelings, thoughts and behaviours. Through talking you can make judgement about who likes you, who dislikes you and why. It also helps you to express your needs and maintain close relationships. Your words are powerful; they can uplift and encourage, or if words are not chosen carefully, they can have a negative effect on other people.

While verbal communication is important, the body is the most important of all the communication systems. Up to 90% of communication is body language. We mostly communicate with body movements called kinesics. These movements involve facial expressions that convey emotional meaning, (e.g. nodding to alert the speaker that you are listening), and body illustrators (e.g. saying, "Let's go up" while moving your head in an upward direction) to communicate your message more vividly.

Writing is also a powerful way of expressing our emotions. Although written messages can help us express our feelings in a clear and well articulated way, such as writing to apologize to a friend, they can also lead to conflict and misunderstanding. Often we write something when we are quite emotional, angry or hurt; and we might later regret our actions. For example, disrespectful sms and other forms of quick messaging can be stored and create great tension between the messenger and the receiver. In case of conflict, it is best to resolve differences verbally rather than in writing.

Types of Communication Classroom Activities

Visual/Spatial

Do as I Say (Simon Says)

Brief: *Students are challenged with copying words rather than actions*

Ask your class to carefully follow your instructions. Demonstrate your instructions as you call them:

“Put your hands on your head”. “Make a circle with your pointer finger.” (Use other warm up actions, but say only the words, do not demonstrate)

“Now bring your hand to your chin.” (Now demonstrate a wrong action. ie... as you demonstrate this move, bring your hand to your nose, rather than your chin.)

Your students will invariably follow your actions, not your instruction. Eliminate students, but keep it as a fun and light (and short!) activity.

Debrief:

- *Why was it more difficult to do the correct action when I demonstrated the wrong one? Wasn't I saying the right words?*
- *Can you relate this to everyday communication between people?*
- *How much of our communication comes only from the words we say?*
- *What is something you could learn from this activity?*

Back to Back Pictures

Brief: *Draw a picture sight unseen, following verbal instructions*

Ask students to get into pairs, each with a piece of paper. Then send one of the students from each pair outside of the classroom for a few minutes.

Draw a few simple shapes on the board with an outline of a piece of paper, (so the students will know the correct proportions), and ask the students still in the room to very carefully copy what is on the board onto their paper. (Copy a 'master' onto a piece of paper for judging at the end) Erase the board and bring the others in; have them sit back to back with their partners. The student with the drawing will describe with words what the drawing is, and the other will draw it onto to their paper.

Have a quick judging session to see which pair got the second drawing closest to the original.

Visual/Spatial

These activities will be based on making pictures or artistic images relating to the topic. They may also include visual puzzles or problem solving activities.

Debrief:

- *What was easy about this activity?*
- *What was difficult about this activity?*
- *Do you ever get frustrated when you are instructing someone, telling a story or describing something that the other person doesn't get?*
- *Do you think that your partner listened carefully enough?*
- *What if your life counted on how well you did this drawing? Would you have been more careful about how well you listened?*
- *Do you find that sometimes people get lazy about listening? When?*
- *What is something you could learn from this activity?*

Writing Notes

Brief: Reflecting on written notes from others

Introduction (class discussion):

We often write notes to each other. There are several ways of writing notes. What are they? (letters, little notes in class, sms, chat rooms, etc...)

Has anyone received a personal note from someone today? In the last week? How many? Of those you have received, how many have been positive and encouraging? How many have been critical (either of you or another person) and negative? Which of those types of notes do you tend to remember better?

Activity:

Ask students to get out a piece of paper and draw two columns entitled 'positive' and 'negative'. Now ask them to write down as many notes as they can remember receiving – trying to quote as exactly as possible what the note said. Ask them NOT to include names.

Next, divide the white board into a positive and negative side and ask them to go to the white board and copy down the notes off their paper that they would be comfortable sharing. (Remember, no names).

Debrief:

- *Were there more positive or negative notes?*
- *Did the boys remember very many notes?*
- *Why do you think girls write more notes than boys (if they do!)?*
- *Once you write down words on a note, how easy is it to take those words back?*
- *Have you tried to? How?*
- *Which words do you remember longer: spoken words or written words? With that in mind, do you think notes are good things? When?*
- *What is one thing you learned about written words today that will make a difference to you?*

Dramatic/Interpersonal

Pantomime

Brief: Acting to show the power of non-verbal communication

Divide your class into two teams. Each team is to pantomime various activities as a means of showing the power of non-verbal communication. Select two to four judges and position them opposite the 'acting' group. Give each judge a black artline marker and enough pieces of paper as you have rounds of the competition. Introduce your judges as the experts who will award scores for the group performances (a la Olympic Gymnastic Judges). Judges' scores will be out of 10. The decision of the judges is final.

The teams will be given topics to pantomime. When the topic is announced, the team will have 15 seconds to complete it. When you drop a handkerchief to the floor, the teams are to stop the impression.

Judges will score on:

- Creativity
- The extent of team participation

Sample Impressions:

- You're presenting a speech at a mime convention
- You're a proud parent who's child is coming first in a race
- You're can of Fanta has been shaken so hard it's exploding.
- You have just looked in the mirror and discovered you're a mosquito
- You're dying of food poisoning
- You're trying to get the attention of the waiter at a restaurant
- You're being chased by a swarm of bees
- You're watching the saddest movie you've ever seen
- You're sitting through the most boring speech you have ever heard.
- You're being chased by a crazed elephant
- You're watching paint dry

Play as many rounds as you like then total the scores. Announce the winning team. Talk about the power and expressiveness possible with non-verbal communication.

Role Play: Communicate without Words

Brief: Players guess mimed phrases

Divide the class into pairs and stand one partner on one side of the room, and the other half on the other side. Each person will need a piece of paper and a pen. Go to one side of the room and have one of the phrases below written on your

Dramatic / Interpersonal

These activities will challenge students to explore a topic through role play or another form of character identification or interaction. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

piece of paper. Walk in front of the group so that they can all read the phrase, but the students on the other side of the room can't see it. Then ask them all at one time to mime the phrase without saying words. Give them a short time limit (at your discretion) and then see which of those on the other side of the room have written down the correct answer. Repeat for the other side of the room. Keep score for a little fun competition.

Phrases (some to get you started – make up your own):

<i>I'm angry</i>	<i>I'm sad</i>
<i>You're a loser</i>	<i>Peace baby</i>
<i>I love you</i>	<i>It's a small world</i>
<i>Go away</i>	<i>I'm lonely</i>
<i>Come here</i>	<i>I'm happy</i>
<i>I hate war</i>	<i>Leave me alone</i>
<i>Let's go shopping</i>	<i>I play football</i>

Debrief:

- *When you are finished, discuss which were easy and were more difficult. Why were they?*
- *How much of our communication is done without words?*
- *Is there anything that you might learn from this activity?*

Kinaesthetic

Kinaesthetic

These activities will ask students to physically manipulate or interact with their environment as part of the learning process. They may involve creating or manipulating a substance or object; or they may involve a game or physical challenge. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Whispers

Brief: *Pass the message game. How much will the message change?*

Divide the class into 2 or 3 groups and give each the same phrase to pass down the line, whispering to each person. At the end, see which group got the phrase the most accurate. Listed below are some phrases to get you started:

"I know you can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk"

"Talking horses are more fun than singing birds"

"When you talk about people, you should wonder what they are saying about you"

"Magazines and newspapers and computer screens and talk shows"

"Single handed she took down the king with poisonous words and a nasty sting"

Debrief:

- *How do you know that the news you hear from someone is true?*
- *Can anyone tell a story of something they said that was repeated to someone else in the wrong way?*
- *Even if someone repeats the exact words a person has said, is it possible that the meaning could be different than the person meant? Can you give examples?*
- *What would be a good lesson to take away from this activity?*

Tear Down / Build Up

Brief: *An activity to see what put downs do to a person*

Materials: *Paper person shape cutout for each group of 4-6 students. Cellotape for each group.*

Divide your class into groups of 4 – 6. Give each group a ‘paper person’ shape. Ask them to focus on the person and go around the circle and say a put-down to the ‘person’ and at the same time, tear off part of the body. When you have gone around the circle, talk about what the person is now like. How is this activity like what we do to someone when we put them down?

Then using the cellotape, send the ‘person’ around the circle again, this time with each person saying something encouraging and trying to use the tape to patch one body part back together with each turn.

Debrief:

- *Which was easier, tearing the person apart, or putting them back together again?*
- *Which took more time?*
- *Was the end result successful - how is the person different from how they were at the beginning?*
- *What does this teach you about the power of your words?*

Linguistic/Intrapersonal

What Are They Really Saying?

(Worksheet No. 1. See Appendix)

To illustrate the power of body language, students read a scenario describing an interaction that includes more than words. They then try to guess what the person was really saying. They can compare answers with the whole class or small groups.

Let Me Count the Ways

(Worksheet No. 2. See Appendix)

Read through the first paragraph of the worksheet and ask the students to brainstorm as many different ways of communicating that they can think of. Then have students complete the worksheet noting the ways they have communicated in the last two days. Compare answers in small groups or class discussion.

Linguistic / Intrapersonal

These activities may be completed individually or in small groups by students. They will be predominantly worksheet based and will encourage students to reflect and learn.

Communication

Unit 2: Communication in Relationships

Learning Focus Points

- We communicate differently with different groups of people in our lives
- We communicate differently face to face, in groups, and via technology
- We each have favourite methods of communication

Summary

We communicate differently with different groups. Interpersonal communication serves different purposes, such as making contact, building intimacy, relationship deterioration, repair, and dissolution. For example if we want to make friends, communication will convey meaning that is based more on every day facts and general interests. On the other hand, when we share a problem with a close friend, we will communicate at a deeper and more intimate level.

Sometimes, relationships with family and friends may deteriorate over time due to different interests and conflicting values. When this happens, we can tend to avoid talking to the other person and our body language will reflect disinterest in what the other person is saying (e.g., lessened amount of eye contact). Communication patterns also change drastically during the deterioration of a relationship because you are experiencing doubts about whether your relationship is worth all the hassle.

You can experience repair in your relationships. This takes place when you discuss with the other person your feelings about the relationship and try to find a mutual solution to make it work. When negotiation does not occur, relationships can dissolve and communication can convey guilt, anxiety, resentment or even be non-existent.

We communicate differently face to face, in groups, and via technology. When expressing our feelings face to face, we utilize many communication tools such as listening, appropriate use of body language and exchange of ideas. Face to face communication provides us with direct and reciprocal conversations.

When we are in groups, we tend to communicate in ways that are less personal and more group oriented. For example, we will consider shared values, norms and

rules of conduct to achieve a goal. Communication in groups also fosters cohesion (a sense of collective identity) which motivates us to communicate in ways that express respect, affection and inclusion for other members of the group.

We also communicate through technology. The use of text messaging and emails has become part of every day life. Using technology to communicate allows us to have quick access to other people, even if they are on the other side of the world. The downside to technology is that information can be misinterpreted as the recipient and the receiver are not using communication cues such as tone of voice and body language to articulate their message.

We all have favourite ways of communicating. This depends on how easily we can express our feelings and ideas through different modes of communication. Some of us express ourselves better in written words, others communicate better verbally, and others can speak through body language or even art forms such as music or dance. All communication modes have the power to enhance our lives if used well.

Communication in Relationships Classroom Activities

Visual/Spatial

Group Spell

Brief: *Students use their whole group to spell words*

Divide your class into groups of six or more. Explain that you will call out a letter of the alphabet or a symbol that their whole team will form as quickly as possible. (Your position as the 'caller' will provide the base line of the letter/shape formation). If possible, view their letters and shapes from a high position so as to check for accuracy of formation. You may like to award points for team precision and speed. Keep moving from letters to shapes to numbers to keep them alert. Award points generously to keep the momentum of the game. Offer an extra challenge of more complex shapes and symbols – or ask them to make the shape silently – or blindfolded!

Debrief:

- *How effective was your effort as a group to communicate just one letter or shape?*
- *Are some methods of communication more efficient or quick than others? Which ones?*
- *What kind of communication did your group need in order to form the shape or letter? Did you always use words?*
- *Are there some forms of communication that may take longer than speaking words face to face, but that convey a deeper sense of meaning? What might those be?*

Visual/Spatial

These activities will be based on making pictures or artistic images relating to the topic. They may also include visual puzzles or problem solving activities.

Methods-of-Communication Collage

Brief: Create an artwork on communication methods

People have many different ways of communicating within a relationship. Ask students to produce an artwork displaying as many different methods of relationship communication as possible. They may cut out photos, magazine or newspaper pictures or even draw their own.

Dramatic / Interpersonal

These activities will challenge students to explore a topic through role play or another form of character identification or interaction. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Dramatic/Interpersonal

Solutions Vs Sharing

Brief: An activity to show gender differences in communication

Test out gender differences in communication style. Without sharing the intent of this activity, divide your class into groups of three: Person A, B and C. Ask each person A to be the first 'Problem poser'. This person will mingle in the class and talk to one female and one male (separately) about the same problem. (See sample problems below). Persons B and C will wander around the class and be available to talk. Instruct person A to not specifically ask for advice on what to do; just say the problem and make note of the differences in what each person tells you as you talk about this dilemma.

Sample Problems:

'I really want to go to the Movies on Sunday, but I promised my parents I would help around home.'

'I got picked to be on the school team for two different sports and I don't know which one to pick.'

'I saw someone cheating on an exam. But they saw me looking at them, so if I tell the teacher, they'll know it was me.'

'The boys from grade 10 have been picking on me at lunchtime and I want it to stop. But if I tell someone, that will just make it worse.'

Debrief:

- Did you notice a difference in the way that the boys and girls approached your problems? Were the boys more focussed on finding solutions to fix the problem than the girls?
- Tell us what you noticed about the people you told your problem to.
- What lessons can you learn from this activity?

Tower Talk

Brief: *Build a tower without talking*

Give each group of five students a 'construction kit' of thirty soft lollies and thirty toothpicks in a bag. Each team is to construct a freestanding tower out of the materials WITHOUT TALKING. All team members must contribute to the construction process. All kits are to remain unopened until you give the signal to begin. Give five-minute, 3-minute and 1-minute warnings. After you stop construction, measure the towers and award a lollie prize.

Debrief:

- *How easy or difficult was it to construct this tower without talking?*
- *How was information shared? How effective was this type of communication?*
- *What problems did you meet because you couldn't speak with each other?*
- *How did you personally communicate to others around you?*

An Average Day Around Here

Brief: *Acting out every day situations*

Divide students into groups of 4 – 7 and ask each to come up with a series of 3 short skits that illustrate how they would communicate differently with parents, friends and teachers within a couple of hours of a normal day.

Debrief:

- *After looking at all the skits, what are some common ways that we communicate differently with friends, parents and teachers?*
- *Which group gets the most respect?*
- *Which group gets the most affection?*
- *What would happen if you treated one group the way you treated one of the others? Give examples.*

Kinaesthetic

Team Charades

Brief: *Act out objects and events*

Divide students into groups of 4-8 and separate them as far as possible from each other within the room. Call one person from each group to the front and show them a word or phrase written on a piece of paper. Have them walk back to their groups but remain still and silent until you say go. Then they will act out the phrase while the group tries to guess it. Have one member in the group act as a secretary and write down the answer that the group gets and bring it up to you as soon as they get it. (They must have the exact answer!) See which group gets the correct answer first.

Kinaesthetic

These activities will ask students to physically manipulate or interact with their environment as part of the learning process. They may involve creating or manipulating a substance or object; or they may involve a game or physical challenge. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Communication

Change the person acting out the charade with each clue.

Some sample clues are listed below:

The Melbourne Cup
Friendship
Australia's Next Top Model
Slam Dunk
Water Heater
Match Stick
Backhoe Driver
Newspaper

Debrief:

- *Did you notice that some students used different ways of acting out the phrase than others? What were the differences?*
- *Were some of you better at acting and some better at guessing the answers? What does that tell you about communication? Are some people better listeners and others better talkers?*
- *What other things about communication could you learn from this activity?*

Guide Dog

Brief: Lead a 'blind' person

Have students in pairs and send one student from at least 3 pairs out of the room. One student in each pair will be sighted and the other (who went out of the room) will be blind. Then set up a short maze of desks or chairs that the sighted person will have to guide the blind one through.

Give each sighted student a chair to stand on (all three next to each other) and use the other students in the room as judges. When the three blind students (have them blindfolded by other students while they are waiting) come into the room, they will race through the course. However, if they touch any of the obstacles (or force someone else to touch them), they are out of the race. Each of the three blind students will need to listen very carefully for the voice of their sighted person to get them around the course.

Have fun with this activity, adjust as needed and let as many students have a go as you have time for.

Debrief:

- *What did this activity teach you about listening?*
- *Did anyone feel frustrated? When? What about?*
- *Can you make any symbolic links with the sighted person – are they like a parent? A teacher? A friend? Explain.*

Linguistic/Intrapersonal

My Favourite Ways

(Worksheet No. 3. See Appendix)

Ask students to discuss the different ways that we can communicate with others who are close to us. Consider telephones, computers and other long distance methods as well as different methods of spoken communication. Ask them to fill in the worksheet and then discuss answers in class.

Linguistic / Intrapersonal

These activities may be completed individually or in small groups by students. They will be predominantly worksheet based and will encourage students to reflect and learn.

Communication

Unit 3: Communication Problems

Learning Focus Points

- Anger or extreme emotion can lead to communication problems
- Misinterpreting information can lead to communication problems
- Not listening for what the other is meaning can lead to communication problems
- We can build better relationships if we put effort into communication with those who are important to us

Summary

Effective communication between people or within a group requires that the message and meaning intended by the speaker is correctly received and interpreted by the listener. As error-free communication is almost impossible, there is in most interpersonal interactions some degree of miscommunication.

This miscommunication can cause anger and frustration to both the speaker and the listener. Even worse, the relationship may deteriorate and dissolve when people do not have the appropriate skills to resolve conflict.

Miscommunication is often the outcome of poor listening and interpretation skills. When listening to a message, the listener needs to interpret a wide array of features including words, grammar, and syntax and tone of voice in addition to body language, respect, beliefs, priorities, motivations and communication style. Further, the listener needs to evaluate whether the message conveyed is a question or a statement and to what extent such information matters to him or her.

To have successful communication, people should:

- Avoid using language that has double meaning or it is difficult to understand.
- Listen to the main points conveyed in the message and ask the speaker for clarification.
- Have a respectful attitude toward other points of view and acknowledge the other person's feelings rather than trying to change their views.
- Find a common ground to set out differences and create solutions.
- Put effort into building positive communication patterns with people who are important in our lives

Communication Problems Classroom Activities

Visual/Spatial

One-Way Communication

Brief: *Accurately draw following verbal instructions*

Problems can easily arise when feedback about what we communicate is not present. Ask for a student volunteer to help with this exercise. Give the volunteer a simple drawing (perhaps a cartoon or even a geometric shape) that they will describe to the class while each class member draws the picture.

The volunteer will turn his/her back to the class so that no eye contact is possible. They can only use words to explain the diagram, (no hand gestures or signals). No questions are allowed from the class members.

When finished, show the class the original drawing and see which student got the closest to it.

Debrief:

- *Why is one-way communication so hard to follow?*
- *How important is it to get feedback when we communicate?*

Who did What?

Brief: *Analysing a communication problem*

When communication breaks down and there is conflict, most often there is more than one person who has contributed to the problem. Give the students the situation described below (or make up another) and ask them to:

- Illustrate the problem and the characters involved.
- Label each character for what you consider their part of the problem.

Problem:

Brad is in Yr9 and has a close group of friends who do everything together. One of them is Charlotte who has been his friend for years and is a friend of his family. Charlotte has a new boyfriend named Ralph who was in yr11. One weekend Ralph asked Charlotte to go to a Yr11 party and stay out late with him. She asked her parents who said No. Ralph was upset and told his mates that she wasn't coming. So another Yr11 boy called Charlotte and told her that Ralph would dump her if she couldn't come to the party, so Charlotte called Brad and asked if she could come over to his place that night, and he said it

Visual/Spatial

These activities will be based on making pictures or artistic images relating to the topic. They may also include visual puzzles or problem solving activities.

was fine. But she didn't show up at Brad's house. Instead she called him and said she was going to the party. (She had told her parents that she was going to Brad's, but went to Ralph's party instead!)

As the night got late, Charlotte's parents called Brad's parents and wanted to know why she wasn't home already. Brad's parents told them that she was going to come, but didn't turn up. So Charlotte's parents got angry on the phone and accused them of lying and helping Charlotte to be a rebel. Then Brad's parents called Brad in and got mad at him for not telling them what was happening. They accused him of setting the whole thing up.

In the end, Charlotte was furious at Ralph for threatening to dump her. Brad was mad at Charlotte for getting him into trouble. Brad's parents were mad at him and Charlotte's parents were mad at everyone!

Debrief:

- How difficult is it to apologise when you know the other person has done something to hurt you as well?
- Often problems aren't just the fault of one person or one side of the story. Can you find something in the above story to illustrate that?
- Who is the main person at fault in this story? Does that mean the others are not at fault?
- Who needs to apologise first?

Dramatic / Interpersonal

These activities will challenge students to explore a topic through role play or another form of character identification or interaction. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Dramatic/Interpersonal

60 Second Drill

Brief: Fast-paced sharing with a partner

Divide students into two groups (A and B). Spread out students so that they can walk freely around the classroom. When you say 'Go', give group A exactly 60 seconds and find out as much as they can about someone in group B. (Ask them to be sure and get at least the information listed below. They may have no paper or anything to write with). When the 60 seconds is finished, ask everyone to change partners, and reverse their role (ie. listening to talking). When you've had at least four rounds, stop the game and have the students sit down.

Information to find out:

- Birth place
- Name and type of favourite childhood pet
- Favourite super hero

Debrief:

- *Who can remember all the facts that you were told? Can anyone remember just the three facts you were supposed to learn?*
- *What made it difficult to remember all those facts?*
- *What did you have to do in order to remember all that you did?*

How do you Say 'I'm Sorry'

Brief: *Acting out 'I'm Sorry'*

We've all had to apologise sometimes. Have a class discussion about saying sorry. Who has had to do it the most? Who has done it the least? What are some different ways you can say that you're sorry? (Write these on the board)

Divide students into groups of 3-5 and ask them to select at least one of the methods you have on the board (or have discussed) and present it as a skit to the class.

Debrief:

- *Which of the ways of apologising you just saw are the most commonly used?*
- *Are some of the different ways of apologising too hard for a student to do? Which ones?*
- *Would any of the methods of saying sorry be better (or easier) for parents... or teachers? (rather than friends).*

Kinaesthetic

Copycat

Brief: *A drawing version of 'pass the message'!*

Divide your class into three (or four if necessary) equal teams. Set up a row of chairs for each team, starting from a desk (one for each team) in the centre of the room. The first chair will face the desk and all the other chairs will face the other way in a row out from the desk (like spokes of a wheel). Ensure that all other team members do not turn around during the game. Draw three identical simple geometric designs of overlapping circles, squares and triangles and place one on each desk. When you say 'Go', have the first student in each team draw the design and then leave their own drawing on top of the original one. Give them a short time (30sec?) to draw and then the team must rotate so that the next in line comes and sits in the drawing chair.

When all students have drawn, compare the end results to the original picture.

Kinaesthetic

These activities will ask students to physically manipulate or interact with their environment as part of the learning process. They may involve creating or manipulating a substance or object; or they may involve a game or physical challenge. There will usually be a follow-up process of de-briefing in order to process the learning activity.

Debrief:

- *How accurate was your team's picture?*
- *Did anyone stuff up the picture on purpose?*
- *Why didn't you create an exact copy every time?*
- *What does this game teach us about communication? Gossip?*

The 'Best Mate' Game

Brief: A How-Well-Do-You-Know-Me game

Ask students to get into pairs and pretend they are 'best mates'. Give them about 10 minutes to ask each other all the questions that best mates should know. Then sit them in the classroom back to back with each other so that they can't see what the other person will write.

Then ask them questions about each other. For each question, they will need to write down their answer for themselves and for their 'best mate'. When you have finished three questions, go around the room and see if anyone was able to match answers with each other.

Sample Questions for the 'Best Mate' game:

- What is your best mate's favourite sport to play?*
- What is the name of your best mate's pet? (and what kind of pet is it?)*
- Has your best mate had a first romantic kiss?*
- What is your best mate's favourite colour?*
- How many siblings does your best mate have?*
- If he/she had to pick, would your best mate choose a Holden or a Ford?*

Debrief:

- *How do you think you would do in this game with your real best mate?*
- *How important is it to listen as well as talk when you're in a relationship with a best mate... or any friend?*
- *Do guys know as much about their mates as girls do about theirs? Examples?*
- *What will you take from this activity to help you be a better mate to your friends?*

Linguistic/Intrapersonal

My Family and Best Friends Communication

(Worksheet No. 4. See Appendix)

This is a type of genogram where students plot themselves and the people closest to them in a diagram and then map lines between them and each person according to the strength of communication they have with that person.

Give each student this worksheet and read over the instructions together. It may be helpful for you to do a simple diagram on the board (If the worksheet makes sense to you!) Just to help them get started.

NOTE: *There is potential for this to be an emotional exercise. For some students, the good lines of communication may be few. Remind all students of where they can go in your school to find someone to talk to about communication problems. Be sensitive.*

Who Do I Need to Apologise To?

(Worksheet No. 5. See Appendix)

This is a very personal worksheet to help students think about people they may need to apologise to in their lives. Some students may not want to write down anything because it is a private matter. This is OK. The time of reflection itself will be helpful.

Read the instructions with the class and make sure they understand what you expect from them. It may be helpful to read through the headings for each of the categories on the worksheet and then give silent time for students to write or think about the apology or amends they would like to make.

Linguistic / Intrapersonal

These activities may be completed individually or in small groups by students. They will be predominantly worksheet based and will encourage students to reflect and learn.

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Appendix



What Are They Really Saying?

Often the words that we speak don't give the full meaning of our communication. It is our body language that often speaks louder than our words. Sometimes our body language can even be saying something quite different than our words.

Read each scenario below and then in the space, write down what you think the person is really saying. When you are finished, share your answers with your class or group and see if anyone else thought the same as you.

Phoebe and Olivia are in the playground Monday morning. Olivia told Phoebe she wanted to hear about Phoebe's weekend. As Phoebe is telling her, a group of boys walk by and Olivia follows them with her eyes. **What is Olivia really saying?**

Noah is sitting on a bench with Briah. He finally gets up the courage to ask her to go out with him. She is sitting with her arms crossed and legs folded and says, "*Oh Noah, I didn't expect this! Sure! Maybe. Can we talk about it at lunch? I've got to get to class early.*"

What was Briah really saying?

Roman is sitting next to Mia in class. Whenever she starts writing, he leans close and bumps her pencil. She gets aggravated and finally asks Roman what his problem is. Roman says, "*Oh, touchy! Nothing is a problem – I just accidentally bumped the desk.*" **What was Roman really saying?**

Sam and Jake are decorating a room for a party. Sam says, "Jake, can you just move those balloons over to the other side of the door". Jake turns to face Sam with hands on hips and says, "*Sure Sam... whatever you say.*" **What was Jake really saying?**

Now, can you write down or tell your group of another scenario where a person's body language might be saying something different than their words?

My Favourite Ways

We each have our favourite or most effective ways of communicating with those around us. Some of us talk a lot and others are quieter. Some of us use other ways of communicating besides just talking. Don't forget there are many different ways of spoken communication. You can argue, yell, cry, tease, annoy, beg, tell, debate, explain, etc...

Think about the people closest to you in each of the categories below and note which ways of communication you use with each.

Person	The way we communicate the best	The way we communicate the most	The way we communicate the worst	My favourite way to communicate
Parents				
Teachers (Which ones?)				
Friends (Pick one or two)				

My Family and Best Friends Communication

The back of this page is for you to draw a diagram of the people who are closest to you and mark the kind of communication you have with them in your relationship.

Start by putting yourself in the middle of the paper. Use a box if you're a boy and a circle if you're a girl. Above you, draw a box and a circle with a line connecting them to represent your parent. Somewhere near you, draw circles or boxes to represent your brothers and sisters. Then according to where you want them on the page, draw in boxes or circles for grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, boy or girlfriends, etc. . .

Try to keep your whole chart to 12 people or less, but put down whoever you think is important or close to you in your life.

Next draw different lines to represent the kind of communication you have with that person:

If you are really close and talk a lot:

Make a triple line

If you get along well when you see them occasionally:

Make a double line

If your communication is kind of distant:

Make a dotted line

If your communication is bad:

Make a zig zag line

If your communication is non-existent:

Draw slashes in the line

If you like, you could put colours to each of the types of lines listed above.

When you're finished (if you are comfortable) join with a friend and listen while your friend explains her/his chart. Then you can tell them about yours.

Oops. Who do I Need to Apologise To?

This is a private page that no friend or teacher needs to look at if you don't want them to. This is a time for you to consider the things that you may have done wrong to hurt or offend someone... and for you to think about how you might apologise to them.

Think back:

Is there anyone you have taken something from or someone you have hurt badly? Have you paid them back? Have you ever said anything to let them know that you realise you hurt them? What do you need to do to make that situation right? If there is something you should do, write it down here:

Is there someone who is really close to you that you love but don't treat very well? Maybe there is someone in your life who is important to you, but you take them for granted? Maybe you don't tell them how much they mean to you, or you don't show them that you appreciate them? Think of something you could do to let that person know that they are special to you and write it down here:

Is there someone who you come in contact with who you are mean to? Maybe it is someone who thinks you are cool, but you don't think much of them? Maybe it is someone who you just like to tease? Maybe it is someone who you don't even pay attention to, but would really like you to acknowledge them. If there is something you should stop doing... or maybe something you could start doing to help that person, write it down here:

Is there someone in your life who has helped you, but you've never said thanks to? Maybe it is a teacher or an older friend who has taken an interest in you? Maybe it is an extended family member like an aunt or uncle who has made an effort to pay attention to you. Think of a way to apologise and thank them for what they've done for you and write it down here:

Is there anyone you need to forgive? Forgiveness is powerful and unforgiveness can cause so much harm. Forgiving someone doesn't mean that what the other person has done is OK, it simply means that you are ready to move on and do not want this feeling to control your life. Write about who you'd like to forgive here:

Now maybe you could do these things?

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