

Lesson 3

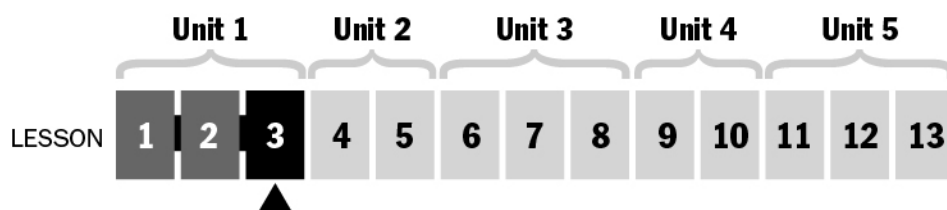
Effective Communication

In this lesson, students consider three components of communication: nonverbal communication, active listening, and verbal communication. They discover how adept they already are at reading cues and body language. They learn about code-switching and about appropriate behavior with people they don't know and in public, and why it is important to effectively code-switch in these situations.

Advance Preparation

- Class Period 3 focuses on an interactive PowerPoint presentation. Prepare the notes you will use during this presentation using Teacher Resource 3.2, Interactive Presentation Notes and Instructions: Communication Tips.

This lesson is expected to take 4 class periods.



Lesson Framework

Learning Objectives

Each student will:

- Evaluate whether personal verbal and nonverbal communication skills are proficient for college and career
- Interpret nonverbal communication in a range of situations
- Monitor how well he or she uses active listening skills in preparation for college and career
- Compare and contrast ways of behaving and communicating depending upon the situation and people involved
- Decide how best to respond in formal versus informal situations

Academic Standards

- Identify attitudes and behaviors that lead to successful learning (ASCA National Standards, A:A1.5)
- Demonstrate the ability to work independently, as well as the ability to work cooperatively with other students (ASCA National Standards, A:A3.2)
- Seek information and support from faculty, staff, family and peers (ASCA National Standards, A:B1.4)
- Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior (ASCA National Standards, PS:A1.6)

21st Century Skills

This lesson focuses on the following 21st century skills:

- Communication skills: Students demonstrate listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and non-verbal communication that clearly demonstrates their skills and knowledge
- Strength of character: Students demonstrate responsibility for themselves and others, mutual respect, empathy, listening skills, conflict resolution, problem-solving within a group, and a connection to the broader community

Assessment

ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	MEANS OF ASSESSMENT
Writing the conversation and narrative to accompany three scenarios	Assessment Criteria: Communication Comics (Teacher Resource 3.3)

Prerequisites

- Solid understanding of the class ground rules
- Familiarity with prioritization and basic planning
- Basic understanding of social norms and appropriate forms of communication

Instructional Materials

Teacher Resources

- Teacher Resource 3.1, Presentation: Active Listening (separate PowerPoint file)
- Teacher Resource 3.2, Interactive Presentation Notes and Instructions: Communication Tips (includes separate PowerPoint file)
- Teacher Resource 3.3, Assessment Criteria: Communication Comics
- Teacher Resource 3.4, Key Vocabulary: Effective Communication
- Teacher Resource 3.5, Bibliography: Effective Communication

Student Resources

- Student Resource 3.1, Reading: The Ride Home
- Student Resource 3.2, Worksheet: Nonverbal Communication Cues
- Student Resource 3.3, Worksheet: Being a Good Listener
- Student Resource 3.4, Reading: Active Listening
- Student Resource 3.5, Reading: Communication Tips
- Student Resource 3.6, Assignment: Communication Comics

Equipment and Supplies

- LCD projector and computer for PowerPoint presentation
- Whiteboard or blackboard

Lesson Steps

CLASS PERIOD 1

STEP 1, DISCUSSION

THE RIDE HOME

20 minutes

SET-UP

Make sure to have sufficient copies of Student Resources 3.1, Reading: The Ride Home, for all students.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The purpose of this activity is to get students thinking about how nonverbal communication plays an important role in everyday choices.

INSTRUCTION

- When class begins, distribute copies of Student Resource 3.1, Reading: The Ride Home. Explain that students need to imagine that they have to take the bus to get home after school today and the bus is crowded, so they'll have to sit next to a stranger. Ask them to read the descriptions of the people on the bus and determine who they would want to sit next to.
- Have students pair with a neighbor. Give students approximately 5–10 minutes to read the descriptions and make their selection; they don't have to make the same choice as their partner. Explain that there is no "right" or "wrong" answers to this exercise—different people will make different choices based on their own ideas, opinions, and experiences. Invite students to demonstrate by a show of hands which passenger they would choose to sit next to. Call on a few volunteers to share why they chose the person they did.
- Then ask students: what if an older person, like one of your grandparents, got on the bus? Where do you think he or she would sit? Invite a few volunteers to make suggestions and to explain why they made the suggestions they did.
- Point out to students that we frequently form opinions about people based on their nonverbal communication—the things they "say" through their clothes, their behaviors, and their body language. Everyone draws conclusions from nonverbal communication, but we may draw different conclusions based on our age, our culture, and our personal experience. This lesson is on effective communication, so understanding nonverbal communication is the first step to developing good communication skills.

DIFFERENTIATION

You may wish to have the reading translated into students' primary languages. Also, make an effort to remind students that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to this exercise, as nonverbal cues can have very different meanings to people from another country or culture.

STEP 2, ROLE PLAY BODY LANGUAGE

30 minutes

SET-UP

Write the following words or phrases on slips of paper:

- Friendly
- In a hurry
- Disappointed
- Angry
- Nervous
- Tired
- Tough/Mean/Not to Be Messed with

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The purpose of this activity is to get students thinking about the unspoken messages, or body language, that makes up the majority of human communication; it helps make them become aware of others' body language as well as their own.

INSTRUCTION

- Ask a volunteer to come and stand in front of the class. Next, ask for seven more volunteers and give each of them one of the slips of paper you have prepared, first telling them not to let anyone see what is written on it. Tell them to think for a few moments about how to convey the term they have received without using words.
- Tell students that they're going to do a form of charades: the class has to guess what each of the volunteer actors is trying to convey using body language and no words. Position the volunteer who has no slip of paper some distance from the actors.
- On the board, write down the names of the seven "actors." Call on one of the actors to approach the isolated volunteer student and act out the feeling or attitude that was on his slip of paper. Remind

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students not to use words.

- Have members of the student “audience” describe what they think they’re seeing and why.
- Under the heading of that student’s name, start a list on the board of what students think he is portraying. Then ask them what clues he gives; write down these as well.
- Repeat charades with each additional cue until all cues have been performed and discussed. Thank the volunteers and ask them to sit down.
- Divide the class into pairs and distribute copies of Student Resource 3.2, Worksheet: Nonverbal Communication Cues. Explain that nonverbal cues can be divided up into the categories on this worksheet. Review the categories and the examples provided in each category. Then ask students to work together in pairs to add more cues to each section of this worksheet. Students can draw from the list of observed behaviors on the board. They can also refer back to Student Resource 3.1 and write down behaviors exhibited by the bus passengers, and they can also add to the list based on their own personal experiences.
- Give students 5–10 minutes to add to their lists; then call on volunteers to share one example they added to one category. Be encouraging of students’ ideas, but make sure to correct any examples that demonstrate a flawed understanding of the concept of nonverbal communication (for example, if students talk about the type of language someone uses).
- As the class period comes to an end, remind students that their understanding of nonverbal communication has been shaped by their cultural background. Some behaviors acceptable in America are not acceptable in other cultures or countries. So when dealing with people who are here from another country (or when visiting another country), it is important to show respect for these differences in culture and communication.

DIFFERENTIATION

If you have a large number of students from other countries, consider revising this activity so that students can learn about the different communication styles that are common in other parts of the world. For more information on this topic, Michael Powell’s book, *Behave Yourself! The Essential Guide to International Etiquette*, can be a valuable and age-appropriate source.

CLASS PERIOD 2

STEP 3, SIMULATION TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

20 minutes

SET-UP

Before class, determine the two truths and one lie you will share with students as an example. Good potential lies for a teacher to use in this activity:

- When I was your age, I went to this school.
- I was a nationally ranked athlete when I was in college.
- When I was a kid, I had a small part in a movie.
- My college roommate is now a member of Congress.
- I have an identical twin. We look so much alike, our parents still can't tell us apart.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Students apply what they've learned about nonverbal communication to a simulation activity that also segues into an exploration of effective verbal communication.

INSTRUCTION

- Begin class by asking each student to think of three things they could say about themselves. Two of the things should be true and the other thing should be false. Explain that they will be sharing these three statements with their classmates, and their goal is to fool their classmates about which statement is false.
- As a demonstration, tell them three things about you—two things which are true and one which is false. Ask students to guess which statement is false. Once students have guessed, tell them which was the false statement. Invite those students who guessed correctly to explain—how did they know?
- Divide the class into groups of three to five and have students share their statements with each other. Have the students in each group try to guess which statements are true and which are false.
- After students have shared, ask them: were you able to guess which statement was false? How could you tell?
- Guide students to recognize that they probably paid attention to people's body language, their tone of voice, etc. This is a real example of the nonverbal cues that they learned about in the last class period.

DIFFERENTIATION

This activity will be difficult for students with limited English. If possible, group students together by their primary language and allow students to complete the activity in their primary language.

STEP 4, DISCUSSION

GOOD LISTENING

10 minutes

SET-UP

Draw two columns on the board:

- SIGNS OF LISTENING
- SIGNS OF NOT LISTENING

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Students consider how nonverbal communication can help indicate whether or not someone is listening. It also points out the qualities of a good listener.

INSTRUCTION

- Ask students to think about how people listened to them when they were speaking during the last activity. Could they tell which students were really paying attention and which ones weren't? How could they tell? Point out that nonverbal cues can also tell us something about how closely a person is listening.
- Ask students: imagine that the person sitting next to you has something to tell you that you're really interested in hearing—they know about somebody who has a crush on you, or they know about a secret party that's going to happen this weekend, or they know where you can get a great deal on something you really want to buy. Without saying anything, how can you indicate to this person that you really want to hear what they have to say?
- If students have a hard time imagining this, invite two students to come up to the front of the room and silently act out that situation. Guide students to recognize that this is another form of nonverbal communication—facial expressions, body language, etc.—that will demonstrate that someone is interested in listening. Once students understand the concept, invite students to make suggestions about what specific behaviors would indicate listening. Have them review the list of nonverbal cues (Student Resource 3.2) to think of other possibilities.
- Then, ask students to think about which nonverbal cues suggest that someone is not listening. You may wish to ask students to think about how they behave if their parents are telling them to do something they don't like (do their homework, clean their room). Again, students can refer to Student Resource 3.2 to help them think about nonverbal cues that indicate a lack of interest or listening. Write those suggestions on the board.
- Distribute copies of Student Resource 3.3, Worksheet: Being a Good Listener. Ask students to copy

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down the cues on the board into the appropriate column (so behaviors that suggest someone is listening would go in the “A Good Listener Does...” column and behaviors that suggest someone is not listening would go in the “A Good Listener Does Not...” column).

STEP 5, PRESENTATION

ACTIVE LISTENING

20 minutes

SET-UP

Prepare to project Teacher Resource 3.1, Presentation: Active Listening (separate PowerPoint file). Alternately, you may prepare copies of Student Resource 3.4, Reading: Active Listening, for students to read.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

This activity helps students recognize how to use nonverbal and verbal communication to improve their listening skills.

INSTRUCTION

- Point out that all of us can display good listening skills when we really want to hear something. In order to be successful in life, though, we need to learn how to “turn on” our listening skills at appropriate times, even if the subject isn’t as interesting. Ask students to imagine that they have a friend who’s always fighting with her boyfriend. After a while, they’ll probably get tired of hearing about their friend’s fights, right? But maybe their friend really needs some advice. In that case, students need to be able to listen carefully and pay attention, even if they’re really bored with all the fighting. In the same way, it’s good to be able to “turn on” your listening skills in an academic environment, because it helps you do better in school. Explain that “turning on” your listening skills is often called “active listening.”
- Tell students that you are going to show them a brief presentation (or give them a brief reading) on active listening skills. As they view (or read) it, instruct them to keep adding to Student Resource 3.3, Worksheet: Being a Good Listener.
- Show the presentation (or have students read Student Resource 3.4). After students see or read the first two slides (the introduction and the four steps to active listening), ask them to stop and add to their worksheets. They should have several things they can add to the “A Good Listener Does...” column.
- Then have students view (or read) the next slide (the pitfalls to active listening) and ask them to add to the “A Good Listener Doesn’t...” column on their worksheet.
- When students have finished viewing (or reading), divide the class into pairs or triads and ask them to compare their notes on the worksheet. Encourage students to add to their notes based on their classmates’ work.
- Explain that being a good communicator requires good listening skills and good talking skills. Encourage students to look for opportunities to practice active listening as they go through their day, and let them know that in the next class period they will start to consider how they can continue to improve their communication skills by focusing on how they talk.

CLASS PERIOD 3

STEP 6, PRESENTATION COMMUNICATION TIPS

50 minutes

SET-UP

- Before this class period begins, review Teacher Resource 3.2, Interactive Presentation Notes and Instructions: Communication Tips. It may be helpful to print the resource out; it contains suggestions for activities to accompany particular slides.
- Also, read over your notes and make sure you are prepared for the presentation.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Students learn about specific tips or guidelines to help them with effective verbal communication. They have an opportunity to discuss and practice what they're learning throughout the presentation.

INSTRUCTION

- Explain that students have learned tips to help them be good listeners, and now they are going to learn more about how to be good communicators or “senders.”
- Show the presentation (or have students read Student Resource 3.5). Use the suggestions in Teacher Resource 3.2, Interactive Presentation Notes and Instructions, to stop at key points and conduct brief activities with the students. These will help students understand the content and help to keep them engaged with the material.
- After the presentation, have students write their answers to these prompts:
 - Think about people you admire. Who would you like to meet someday?
 - What would be the appropriate way to handle getting introduced to this person?
- Ask for several volunteers to share their responses. These prompts should help them further understand why it's important to feel comfortable handling a range of different situations in a socially acceptable manner.
- Tell students that they will be testing their new skills in their assignment during the next class period. They may want to review Student Resource 3.5, Reading: Communication Tips, for homework.

CLASS PERIOD 4

STEP 7, ASSIGNMENT COMMUNICATION COMICS

35 minutes

SET-UP

Prepare sets of Student Resource 3.6, Communication Comics, so that each student has a complete set.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Students assimilate what they have learned in this lesson by filling in the conversation and narrative accompanying three sets of scenarios that are depicted as comics.

INSTRUCTION

- Tell students that they now have an opportunity to pull together what they have learned about appropriate communication in different situations and apply it to three different scenarios.
- Give students time to look at the assignment and read the assessment criteria by which their work will be assessed. Answer the students' questions.
- If they seem confused, you may want to walk through various ways of completing the first scenario so that they get the idea. Include ways that wouldn't work, which will help them see how to use the cues from the characters to write a realistic conversation and narrative.
- Give students most of this period to work on their comics.

STEP 8, DISCUSSION COMMUNICATION COMICS

15 minutes

SET-UP

Optional: Prepare a space in the classroom to display student work.

Post the following questions on the board or a sheet of chart paper:

- How are your comics similar? How are they

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Students have an opportunity to view their classmates' work and discuss what they've learned in this lesson.

different?

- How did you determine what was the appropriate language to use for each scene?
- Which comic was the easiest one to write dialogue for? Why? Which was the hardest? Why?

INSTRUCTION

- When approximately 15 minutes remain in the class period, divide the class into groups of four.
- Ask students to share their comics with their group mates. Point out the questions posted on the board and ask students to use these questions to guide them as they discuss their work.
- Allow approximately 10 minutes for students to share in their groups; then invite a volunteer from each group to share their response to one of the questions. Point out that students could come up with different “stories” for the same comic, but that their stories should still reflect an understanding of the nonverbal communication. For example, if a character in the comic looks relaxed, it would be incorrect to write a story in which that character gets really excited.
- As time allows, give students an opportunity to express what they found most valuable about this lesson. Are they more aware of their own nonverbal communication? Do they feel more comfortable with the idea of introducing two adults to each other? Leave students with the thought that effective communication gets easier the more you practice, but it is a process and everyone always has room for improvement. Throughout the remainder of this course, they can consciously practice developing their active listening and communication skills to use in every other part of their lives.
- At the end of the class period, collect the comics from all students and assess using Teacher Resource 3.3, Assessment Criteria: Communication Comics.

Extensions

Enrichment

- Have students explore the differences in communication around the world. Divide the class into groups and have students visit “Around the World in Seven Gestures” at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/gallery/2010/feb/05/language-gestures-japanese-spanish-arabic> or “The Meanings of Gestures Around the World” at <http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Meanings-of-Gestures-Around-the-World&id=3139206>
- Have students write short skits that illustrate effective and not-so-effective communication to present to middle school students.

- Choose several sets of simple illustrations. Put students in pairs and have them sit back-to-back. One student has the illustration; the other has a pencil and a blank sheet of paper. The student with the illustration has to instruct the other student to draw the illustration without giving away what it is. This exercise gives students a vivid example of how important precise language and active listening can be in successfully executing a task.
- A number of reports on the rise of “student rudeness” in the face of increased technology over the past several years indicate that appropriate and effective communication is more important than ever for student success. Assign students one or more of the following suggested articles to read and to respond to in their notebooks:
 - “Tech Creates a Bubble for Kids,” *USA Today*, June 20, 2006 (http://www.usatoday.com/tech/2006-06-19-oblivious-kids_x.htm)
 - “Rude College Students Increasingly a Norm,” *UPI*, September 6, 2009 (http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2009/09/06/Rude-college-students-increasingly-a-norm/UPI-94211252276623/)
 - “To Professor@University.edu Subject: Why It’s All About Me,” *New York Times*, February 21, 2006 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/21/education/21professors.html>)

Cross-Curricular Integration

- English/Language Arts: Explore code-switching in fiction by examining excerpts written in non-standard English. Have students translate these texts into standard English. Discuss how the context makes one version or the other more appropriate or effective.