



Communicating Effectively Unit

Grade 7 • Ages 12-14

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 10 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Speaking Observation Sheet, one for each pair of students

[Kindness Concept Posters:](#)

Assertiveness, Respect, Self-Discipline

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1 Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.1, EO.b; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.2, EO.a

SEL - Self-awareness, Social Awareness, Self-management, Relationship skills

[Learning standards key](#)

Speaking Skills

Students will learn effective communication skills and practice in pairs.

Lesson Background for Teachers

University of Kent – Communication Skills: Speaking and Listening web page
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/communicating.htm>

Key Terms for Students

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

ASSERTIVENESS	Standing up for yourself and what you believe in while being respectful of the rights and beliefs of others.
RESPECT	Treating people, places, and things with kindness.
SELF-DISCIPLINE	Controlling one's actions and words for the benefit of self and others.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Seeing recordings of themselves speaking so they can assess their presentations and see where they need to improve.
- Working in small groups with a resource or ELL teacher to help with speaking skills and how to give feedback.
- Circling or highlighting their strengths and areas where they need to improve their skills as a reference point during discussion and for self-knowledge



The RAK paradigm is the framework for teaching and building kindness skills.

RAK lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of **Inspire, Empower, Act** and **Share**.

The **Share** step in the first lesson of each unit is intended to set the tone for teaching kindness.



Resources

Article: Helping Teens Develop Healthy Social Skills and Relationships: What the Research Shows about Navigating Adolescence http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/ta/paf_training2_healthysocialskills.pdf

Article: Adolescence and Learning to Speak Up <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201406/adolescence-and-learning-speak>

Video: Good Communication Skills for Teens – Let’s Face it! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= UTx6iPLsH4>

Share (3 mins)

Think about what you did yesterday. Tell the person next to you, but don't use any words. Be sure to communicate how you felt. You can use hand gestures and sounds, but no words. Switch partners.

Inspire

Effective Communication (5 mins)

We are going to start by talking about effective ways to communicate. As you know, communication involves talking and listening. This goes hand in hand with active listening, from another unit. In this unit we will discuss how to communicate in a way that people know what we think and what we need, but also honors and is respectful to the person or people we are talking to. What do you think makes an effective speaker?

Some other ways to be an effective speaker are to:

- *make eye contact*
- *listen to what others are saying*
- *summarize information*
- *give concise details*
- *give examples to support what you're saying*
- *use humor when appropriate*
- *speak clearly*
- *check for understanding*
- *Remember to be **respectful, assertive** and use **self-discipline**.*

We are going to practice some of those communication skills now.

Empower

Clear Communication (15 mins)

Pair up students and hand one Speaking Observation Sheet to each pair.

For this activity, you are going to practice your speaking skills with a partner. You will take turns being the speaker and the observer. Choose one of the topics listed on the sheet and spend about two minutes planning what you will say. Then speak for two minutes about that topic while the other student listens. Then you will switch; the observer becomes the speaker for two minutes. The observer will check on the chart the skills he/she sees the speaker using. Then you will share with your partner their strengths and what needs to be improved.

Allow time for students to give speeches and observe each other.

Wrap Up (5 mins)

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from either the evaluation or reflection questions as discussion, writing or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- Why is it important to be an effective speaker?
- What are some things you can do to be an effective speaker?
- How does **respect** connect with communicating effectively?

Reflection

- Why do you think **respect**, **self-discipline** and **assertiveness** are so important when communicating?
- Can you think of a time when you almost had an argument with someone, but the other person spoke to you respectfully and changed the situation?
- What was the hardest part about communicating effectively with your partner? What was the easiest part?

Summary

*Today we learned some ways of being effective communicators. Communicating clearly limits misunderstandings and strengthens relationships with other people. Being able to say what you mean in a **respectful** way is kind. Sometimes this takes **self-discipline**.*



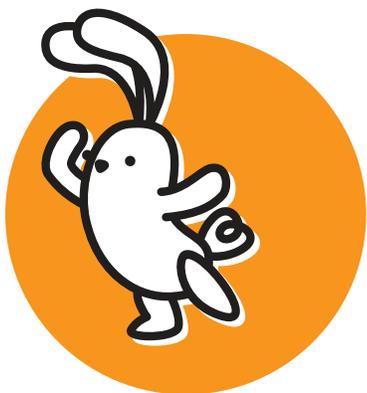
Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

Talking respectfully and kindly to ourselves is as important as talking speaking that way to others. Think about something you did that was difficult for you. In your head or out loud, congratulate yourself on your accomplishment.

Kindness in Action

Think of something you've been meaning to talk to someone about. Plan out what you will say using the approach you used today.



Speaking Observation Sheet

Directions

For this activity, you are going to practice your speaking skills with a partner. You will take turns being the speaker and the observer. Choose one of the topics listed on the sheet and spend about five minutes thinking about or taking notes about what you will say. Then speak for two minutes about that topic while your partner listens. Hand the observation sheet to your partner and switch roles, so that the other person is the speaker for two minutes. The observer will check in the table below the skills he/she sees the speaker using. Then share strengths and what needs to be improved.

Possible Topics:

- Describe a funny situation you have experienced.
- Tell about a proud moment or accomplishment.
- Talk about your favorite music group and what you like about them.
- Talk about someone you admire and why.
- Talk about your favorite actor or actress and why you like him or her.
- In your opinion, what was the greatest moment in sports?
- Describe one of the best vacations you have ever had.
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

Skill Demonstrated	Name of Speaker	Name of Speaker
Makes Eye Contact		
Uses Facial Expressions		
Shows Interest in Topic		
Summarizes Information		
Gives Concise Details		
Uses Humor		
Speaks Clearly		
Checks For Listener Understanding		

