



Wellbeing

Communication skills

This topic will develop students' skills in communicating in a classroom and work context.

This topic is made up of five parts. You can present them one at a time or follow on depending on the needs of your students and the time you have available.

Learning Intentions

When students have finished this topic, they will be able to:

- Identify lines of communication
- Use active listening techniques
- Seek and act on feedback on the way they communicate
- Build and sustain positive relationships

They will learn these skills by:

- Participating in group discussions
- Watching a video

	What the students will do	What you will need before you start
Part 1 <i>'What is communication?'</i>	Watch video and class discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard • Computer with internet connection
Part 2 <i>'How do I change my communication style to suit who I'm talking to?'</i>	Watch video and class discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard • Computer with internet connection or DVD player and TV to watch film • Copies of worksheet (optional: see step 4) • Copy of graphic organiser for each student • Satellite Boy video • Talking Language Episode 1 video
Part 3 <i>'What is shame job and how do I deal with it?'</i>	Class discussion and digital activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard • Computer with internet connection • Shame job digital scenarios • Shame job presentation
Part 4 <i>'How do I actively listen?'</i>	Group activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard • Computer with internet connection • 'Active listening skills' presentation from website
Part 5 <i>'How do I get feedback?'</i>	Group activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard

Word list

communication = to give or receive information to or from another by listening, speaking, reading, writing or another means.

styles of communication (or ways to communicate) = people can communicate with their words (verbal) as well as through their actions (non-verbal). This can include the expression on their face, the tone of their voice, the way they use or hold their body and the way they use their hands.

lines of communication = sometimes people talk about ‘opening a line of communication’ – this means they want to communicate with you. People can then choose to be open to what has been said (and communicate back) or they might shut down the line of communication if they don’t want to talk to them.

Part 1: What is communication?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

The purpose of this lesson is develop student’s awareness of the forms of communication

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will examine the ways Jubi communicates with Pete in Satellite Boy.

Resources – What will I need?

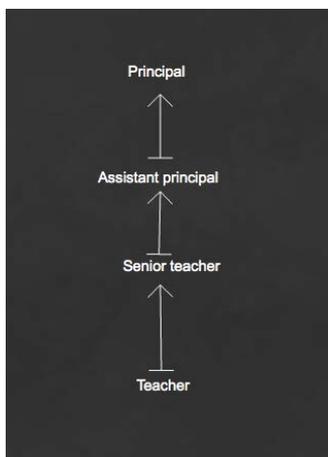
- Butcher’s paper, whiteboard or Smartboard
- Computer with internet connection to watch video ‘Satellite Boy’

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

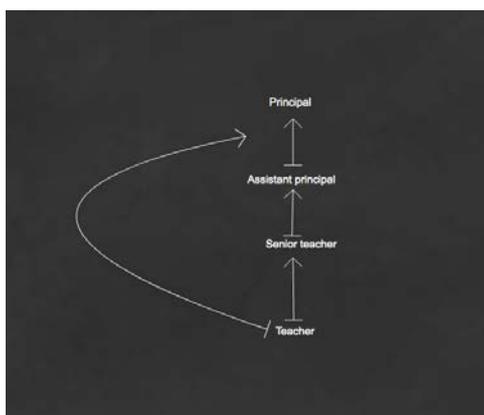
1. Introduce students to today’s lesson:
What: about the different ways that people communicate
How: watch a clip from video Satellite Boy, then identify the kinds of communication in the scene
Why: being aware of the ways we and other people communicate makes it easier to understand each other
2. Show the first part of Satellite Boy (0:00-06:55 mins).
3. Ask students to tell you what they noticed about how Jubi communicates with Pete. Write their ideas on the board.
4. Ask them to also think about the less obvious and non-spoken forms of communication (hand gestures, Jubi tilting his head, drawing diagrams in the sand)
5. Explain that communication happens in many different ways including:
 - spoken
 - listening
 - talking
 - tone of voice
 - loud
 - soft

- angry
 - caring
 - etc.
 - facial expressions
 - eye contact
 - smiling
 - frowning
 - using eyes/eyebrows
 - using mouth/lips
 - etc.
 - hand gestures
 - pointing
 - flicking hand
 - thumbs up
 - showing (e.g. drawing in sand)
 - etc.
 - body language
 - pointing with chin
 - tilting head
 - folding arms
 - jiggling legs
 - biting nails
 - looking down
 - etc.
 - body position
 - standing over someone or being too close
 - facing away
 - etc.
6. Introduce the concept of lines of communication. Explain that when you communicate, you open a line of communication. The person you are communicating with can choose to be open to what you have said (and communicate back) or they can be closed (and shut down the line of communication) if they don't want to talk to you.

7. Review the scene. How does Pete respond to Jubi's attempts to communicate with him, particularly about Pete's mum? How does Pete shut down the line of communication?
8. Draw the following diagram on the board



9. Explain that in many places (especially workplaces) there can often be rules about lines of communication. For example it is really important to make sure that you speak to the 'right person' – the one with the right authority to help you. In a very large school, a teacher usually talks to their senior teacher first and then the senior teacher talks to the assistant principal or principal.



In large schools, it would be quite unusual for a teacher to go straight to the principal to discuss a problem. It would not be

showing the proper respect for that person and their time.

Explain that it can be difficult sometimes to know when it's ok to open a line of communication. If you are not sure, ask someone for advice.

10. **Summary:** Make clear that we communicate in many different ways, such as talking (what we say), tone of voice (how we say it), body language (how and where we move), facial expression and hand gestures.

Part 2: How do I change my communication style to suit who I'm talking to?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

Students will look at how they alter their communication style when talking to different people.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will describe the ways Pete communicates with key characters from the film, *Satellite Boy*. They will then identify the ways relationships alter communication styles and reflect on the way they alter their own communication styles when talking to different people.

Resources – What will I need?

- Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard
- Computer with internet connection or DVD player and TV to watch film
- Copies of worksheet (optional: see step 4)
- Copy of graphic organiser for each student
- *Satellite Boy* video
- Talking Language Episode 1 video

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: about how we adapt the way we communicate depending on who we are talking to. Sometimes, we can even change the way we communicate with the same person depending on where we are.
How: identify the way Pete communicates with other important characters and how he changes the way he communicates depending on his relationship with them
Why: being aware of your relationships and the way you communicate helps you to make sure your communication style is the right one to use

2. Draw up the following table on the board:

	How does Pete communicate with ...?	What are some of the differences?	Why do think this changed?
Jubi			
Kalmain			
The lady at the shop			
The old man at the stockyard			
The stockmen at Kununurra			
The man at the mining company gate			

3. Explain the task: students will describe the different ways Pete communicates, then look at why he changes his communication style.
4. This exercise can be done in several ways:
- Watch the movie again and have students fill out this worksheet
OR
 - Have students move into small groups, with each group looking at one of the characters. Then each group could share their ideas as a class to answer the same questions on the board.
OR
 - As a class, watch the video again, stopping the video after key scenes where Pete communicates with each characters. Ask students to describe the way Pete communicates while you record their ideas. (You will need to draw up the table on the board.)

5. Once the table has been completed, ask students to identify the differences in Pete's communications styles. Add this to the third column
6. Ask students to consider why Pete changes his communication style. Suggest that Pete's relationship affects how he communicates a lot. You can use an example: Kalmain is Pete's friend so his communication style is casual and friendly.
7. Ask students to reflect on their own communication styles. How does their relationships change the way they communicate?

Lesson Plan (optional):

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: looking at how some Aboriginal people change the way they communicate with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
Why: being aware of the way you alter your communication helps you to choose the style right for different situations (home, school, work etc)
2. Introduce students to the task: they will watch a video introducing the idea of code-switching or the ways some aboriginal people change the way they speak when talking to other aboriginal and to non-Aboriginal people.
3. Hand out copies of the graphic organiser to students. Identify the key points you want students to look out for before they watch the video
4. Play Code-switching video
5. Ask students: "What is Aboriginal English?"
6. Ask students: "What is code-switching?" Write responses on the board.
7. Watch Episode 1 of Talking Language with Ernie Dingo.
8. Ask students "Which languages and dialects does Banduk Marika switch between in the video?" Say: "Banduk says it is easier to talk in language (Yolngu Matha) when talking about heritage. Why does she find this easier?"

9. Ask students “How important is speaking language to Banduk? And why do you think so?”
10. Ask students “How does Ernie Dingo change the way he talks when talking directly to the camera, when narrating the video and when talking with Banduk?”
11. Ernie and Banduk live and work in indigenous and non-indigenous worlds. They spend time in Aboriginal communities and in big cities for work (Ernie: acting, Banduk: exhibiting artworks). How does their ability to code-switch help them to be successful in both worlds?
12. Summary: end the lesson summarising that code-switching gives Aboriginal people the ability to move through two worlds, maintaining their own culture and language and also be successful in the non-indigenous world.

Part 3: What is shame job and how do I deal with it?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

Students will learn about ways to cope with shame job

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will develop a class definition of the term ‘shame’ or ‘shame job’, then watch a presentation that looks at strategies for dealing with shame. Students will work through a series of scenarios, picking strategies for characters to use to overcome shame.

Resources – What will I need?

- Butcher’s paper, whiteboard or Smartboard
- Computer with internet connection
- Shame job digital scenarios
- Shame job presentation

Note:

This lesson is optional. It could be a really useful experience for students who use this term a lot to describe social situations they find difficult, but if this rarely affects your students, could easily be skipped.

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today’s lesson:
What: about feeling ‘too shame’ to do something and how to deal with it
How: watch or read a comic about shame job, create a class definition of shame job, then identify some strategies for dealing with it.
Why: feeling shame can stop us from doing what we want, finding a way to deal with it can help

2. Ask students “What is shame?” or “What is shame job?” Record their input on the board to create a class definition. This might be a difficult question for students to answer. If it is ask students about situations where they feel shame, or keep a note of all the times student’s use the term in the build up to this lesson and write and describe those situations on the board.
3. Watch Shame Job presentation
4. Ask students, “What are some of the strategies discussed in the video?” List on the board
5. Introduce the task: Either in small groups or individually, students will go to the computers and work through the Shame job scenarios provided, selecting strategies to help each character overcome feelings of shame
6. Students work through the scenarios on the computer
7. Summary: feeling ‘too shame’ is a natural way to feel, but it can stop us from doing things we want to do. Using helpful strategies can be a way to overcome this feeling.

Part 4: How do I actively listen?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

Students will learn active listening skills.

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will watch a short presentation about active listening, then practice these skills in small groups.

Resources – What will I need?

- Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard
- Computer with internet connection
- 'Active listening skills' presentation from website

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: how to actively listen
How: watch a presentation, then practise active listening techniques
Why: being able to actively listen helps us to pay better attention when people are talking to us
2. Watch the presentation
3. Ask students "What is the difference between hearing and actively listening?"
4. Ask students "How do we actively listen?" List the steps on the board.
5. Demonstrate how to actively listen with another teacher or a more outgoing student in front of the class. Ask them to tell you about one of their favourite things. Use open questions to prompt them. Regularly rephrase what has been said in pauses in the conversation (What I think you're saying is...). Draw attention to your body language and responses.
6. Ask students to break into pairs or small groups and take turns talking about their favourite things and actively listening.

7. Bring students back together as a whole class. Explain that whilst working on your team project, students will need to work out what jobs need to be done and who will do them. If you aren't actively listening when you are asked to do something you might not know what you need to do.
8. Explain that the same strategies students used when actively listening to each other can be used when given a task. Demonstrate this with a student or other teacher. Make sure you identify for students that you are paraphrasing the task, checking that this is what the delegator meant and asking clarifying questions.
9. Summary: End the lesson summarising that active listening means using different strategies to pay attention to what a person is saying and making sure you understand what they are saying.

Part 5: How do I get feedback?

Objective – What do we want the students to know?

Students will get feedback from peers or other trusted people about their communication styles

Overview – How will they learn this?

Students will find out about the feedback process, then practise getting feedback in small groups. Ideally they will then go and get some feedback on the appropriateness of their communication styles from teachers, employers, teachers, family or other person.

Resources – What will I need?

Butcher's paper, whiteboard or Smartboard

Lesson plan – What do I need to do?

1. Introduce students to today's lesson:
What: getting feedback on the way you communicate
How: find out how to get feedback, then practise getting feedback in groups
Why: getting feedback helps us to get better at communicating with a wide variety of people
2. Introduce the task: students will get feedback on the way they communicate (by talking, writing, body language, expression etc) from team members or teachers or members of the community.
3. Explain that it is easier to focus on specific kinds of communication (the way I talk to you when we are working, what do you think about this letter I've written, is my body language in class appropriate?) than just asking for general feedback about the way they communicate.
4. Talk students through the process of setting up a feedback session:
Who – will I ask for feedback from?
What – will I ask for feedback on?
When – will we sit down and talk about this?

5. Now discuss the process of getting feedback: asking open questions, funnelling down/getting more detail from the person giving feedback with micro questions, using active listening techniques such as paraphrasing what has been said in pauses and asking clarifying questions and finally, asking for suggestions to improve.
6. Model the process of setting up a time to get feedback with another teacher or student. Role play asking for feedback on a specific issue with the person. Try to incorporate as many of the above strategies as possible in the role play and mentioning that you are using them (Now I'm going to paraphrase what she just said. So I think you said_____, is that right?) is very helpful.
7. Ask students to break into pairs or small groups and ask them to practice the same process together. This may be all the feedback students can collect, but if possible, it is worth encouraging students to get feedback from the wider school and home community. This would depend on the confidence level of the student.
8. Ask students to write down the suggestions they get when seeking feedback. For the next week in class, ask students to think about ways they can incorporate that feedback in the way they communicate. Take time to praise small improvements in student's communication in each lesson.