

Just Say It!

6 Fun & Innovative
Lessons Designed
To Teach Students
In Grades 2-5
Communication Skills
To Use In
Everyday Interactions.



Written By Kathie Guild

Just Say It!

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Just Say It! Overview

The *Just Say It!* curriculum is designed to teach basic communication skills to use in everyday interactions. The six lessons contain science experiments, role-plays, worksheets, group activities, and discussions and are best completed in sequential order. The expansion activity may be inserted at any point in the fourth, fifth, and sixth lessons.

Lesson One:

Students identify the different types of communication, recognize communication problems they may have, and distinguish between one-way and two-way communication.

Lesson Two:

Listening is introduced as an integral component of effective communication. Students participate in a variety of activities for each of three listening types:

1. Listening for feelings
2. Listening with direct attention
3. Listening for body language

Lesson Three:

Communication blockers are described and the negative effects of *blockers* on communication are addressed. A role-play, science experiment, and group activity illustrate the long-term consequences put-downs have on communication.

Lesson Four:

Communication enhancers are highlighted and *enhancers'* positive effects on communication are described. Each student completes a self-assessment on how well he/she gives and accepts compliments. An arts-and-crafts activity gives students an opportunity to create a communication mascot.

Lesson Five:

Students are taught the importance of thinking before communicating, learn the difference between *rough* and *soft* words, and take a short quiz on how well they think things through.

Lesson Six:

Some key conversation topics are introduced and students practice having conversations. The included bingo activity uses all the vocabulary words in the unit.

Optional Expansion Activity:

The *Secret Pals* activity may be used once or several times in a variety of ways, depending on the ages and skills of the students. The activity may be inserted at any point in the fourth, fifth, and sixth lessons or presented as a follow-up activity.

LESSON 1

JUST SAY IT! Communication Skills



Purpose:

To introduce students to the definition of *communication*, discuss types of communication commonly used, and pinpoint basic communication problems

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ Board to write on
- ☐ Pingpong ball
- ☐ Small funnel
- ☐ Copy of *Communication Drawing Activity Samples* (page 17)

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *Types of Communication* (page 18)
- ☐ Copy of *Communication Styles* (page 19)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Blank paper

Group Activities:

Stand For Communication Problems

- ▷ **Purpose:** To have students become aware of communication breakdown statements and identify those they have used.

One- & Two-Way Communication

- ▷ **Purpose:** To have students participate in one- and two-way communication exercises, then evaluate each style's effectiveness

Communication Styles

- ▷ **Purpose:** To have students observe how others communicate and note the general effectiveness of the group's methods of communication

Science Experiment:

Pingpong Ball

- ▷ **Purpose:** To illustrate how seemingly simple things, like communication, can prove difficult
-

Worksheets:

Types of Communication

- ▷ **Purpose:** To have students identify various forms of communication and specify the ones they favor

Communication Styles

- ▷ **Purpose:** To have students observe how others communicate and note the general effectiveness of the group's methods of communication
-

Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

During the next few weeks, I will teach you communication skills. Raise your hand if you can tell me what the word communication means. (Pause for students to raise their hands.) Communication is the way we share information.

Worksheet: Types of Communication

Distribute *Types of Communication* and a pencil to each student. After students list the different ways people communicate, say:

There are many different ways to communicate. Raise your hand if you would like to share some forms of communication you listed on your worksheet. (Summarize students' answers and list them on the board.) We will be performing an activity in which you pick a method of communicating with one another. You may need to refer to this list for help.

Some people prefer one type of communication over another. Some people find it difficult to talk face to face. What might be a reason for this? (Wait for students to answer.) Let's read and discuss the types of communication listed. If you currently use a type that we mention, raise your hand.

Being a good communicator is a great skill that anyone can develop and take wherever they go.

LESSON 3

JUST SAY IT! Put-Downs

Purpose:

To teach students the significant impact put-downs have on communication and that put-downs are not always verbal and can be communicated a variety of ways.

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ Tube of toothpaste
- ☐ Paper plate
- ☐ Aluminum foil
- ☐ Large, clear, shallow container
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Pepper
- ☐ Sugar
- ☐ Ivory® Soap
- ☐ Plastic Spoon (optional)
- ☐ Marker (optional)
- ☐ Piece of wool cloth (optional)
- ☐ 2 copies of *Role-Play: The Project* (pages 36-37)
- ☐ Copy of *Heart Tear Story* (pages 38-39)

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *Heart Tear Story* Worksheet (page 40)
- ☐ Pencil



Demonstrations:

Toothpaste

- ▷ **Purpose:** To teach students that you cannot take a put-down back

Aluminum Foil

- ▷ **Purpose:** To illustrate how put-downs leave marks and scars

Role-Play:

The Project

- ▷ **Purpose:** To demonstrate how put-downs can hamper communication
-

Science Experiment:

Water, Pepper, Sugar, Soap

- ▷ **Purpose:** For students to see how communicating positive things (sugar) draws others near, while communicating put-downs (soap) will repel others. An optional experiment is included for those who may have used the *Water, Pepper, Sugar, Soap Science Experiment*.
-

Story & Worksheet:

Heart Tear Story & Worksheet

- ▷ **Purpose:** To show students that negative communication can damage self-esteem
-

Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

Today's conversation on communication will focus on put-ups and put-downs. One improves communication. The other destroys communication.

Ask:

1. *How many of you know what a put-down is?*
2. *How many of you have experienced a put-down? How did it make you feel?*
3. *Where do you believe people learn put-downs?*
4. *How do put-downs affect our feelings?*
5. *What reactions to put-downs have you seen?*
6. *What are good ways to handle a put-down?*
7. *Is it easier to give a put-down than a put-up (compliment)? Why?*
8. *How many of you are embarrassed when you get a compliment?*

Toothpaste Demonstration

Directions: Select a student to squeeze toothpaste onto a paper plate. Then ask the student to put the toothpaste back into the tube.

Introduce the demonstration by saying:

I am going to select one of you to do an experiment for me. (NAME OF STUDENT), please squeeze this tube of toothpaste onto the paper plate.

The Project



Scene 1:

- A: Hey, I've been waiting for you. Did you get the stuff we need to finish our project?
- B: Oh... no... I didn't.
- A: WHAT? You know it's due today! I told you at the beginning of the week to bring the stuff in so we could finish on time.
- B: I can't remember everything! I just forgot. No big deal!
- A: How can you say that? It *is* a big deal! We'll get a failing grade!
- B: Gee, you are uptight about this. You need to chill.
- A: I just don't see how you could have forgotten!
- B: It's really my mom's fault. I told her to remind me to bring the stuff in this morning, but she didn't.
- A: Why did I ever agree to do this project with you? You're such a slacker. You were just like this in kindergarten. You haven't changed a bit!
- B: Who do you think you are, calling me names? You're a nag and a worrywart. You drive everyone nuts with your moaning and groaning. Nobody else wanted to do a project with you. I felt sorry for you.
- A: That's not true! I have lots of friends. *I'm* the one who took pity on *you*.
- B: I'm going to tell the teacher I couldn't get this project done because you are IMPOSSIBLE to work with!
- A: Oh, no you don't! I'm going to tell her my side of the story and she'll believe me over a liar like you!
- B: You better not be calling me a liar! (starts to push A)
- A: Get your hands off me! (starts to push B)

LESSON 5

JUST SAY IT! Stop & Think



Purpose:

For students to understand the need to think before communicating and to recognize common communication pitfalls

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ 5 copies of *Role-Play: Cold Shoulder* (pages 57-59)
- ☐ Copy of *Stop & Think Quiz* (page 60)
- ☐ 4 x 8 Index card and *Index Card Pattern* (page 61)
- ☐ Scissors

For each student:

- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Blank sheet of paper
- ☐ Small square of soft material such as velvet or fleece
- ☐ Small squares of sandpaper
- ☐ Copy of *Rough, Soft, or In-Between* (page 62)

Group Activities:

Soft & Rough Materials (includes worksheet):

- ▷ **Purpose:** For students to identify words as *rough*, *soft*, or *in-between* and to think about how their own communication styles are affected by their choice of words

Telephone or Operator

- ▷ **Purpose:** To demonstrate how communication can be distorted when passed from person to person

Role-Play:

Cold Shoulder

- ▷ **Purpose:** To demonstrate common non-productive communication styles

THE FOLLOWING SAMPLES
ARE REPRODUCIBLE/PRINTABLE PAGES
INCLUDED ON THE CD-ROM

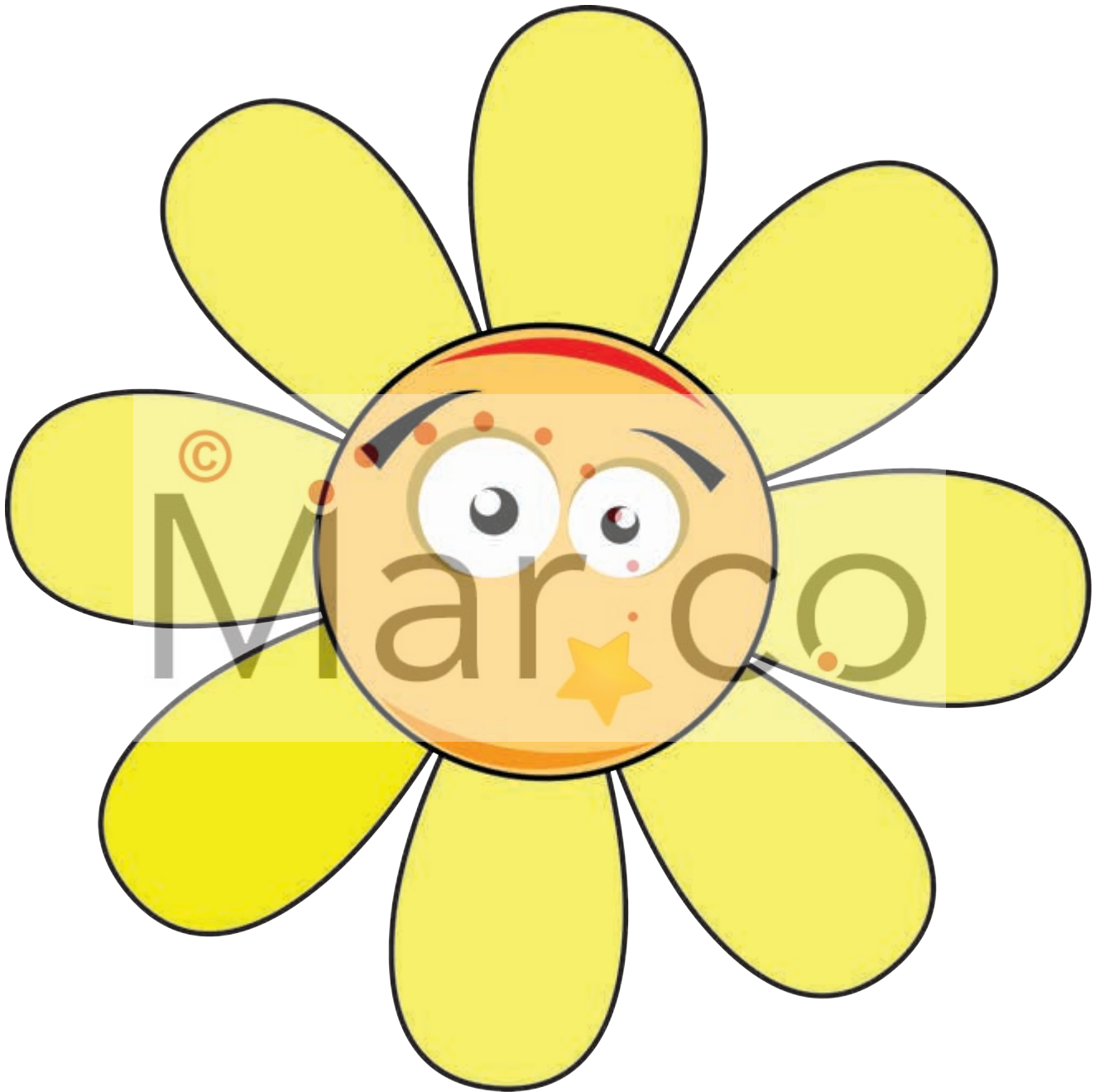


Too Much



Flower Pattern

Directions: Cut out the flower. Fold the petals in so they cover the flower face. Fill a clear, shallow container with water. Place the flower, petals folded, on top of the water. It will float. After a few minutes, the petals will unfold.



Who Compliments You?

Name _____

Date _____

1. **Who compliments you?** (Circle all that apply.)

Friend Pet Family

Coach Teacher Myself

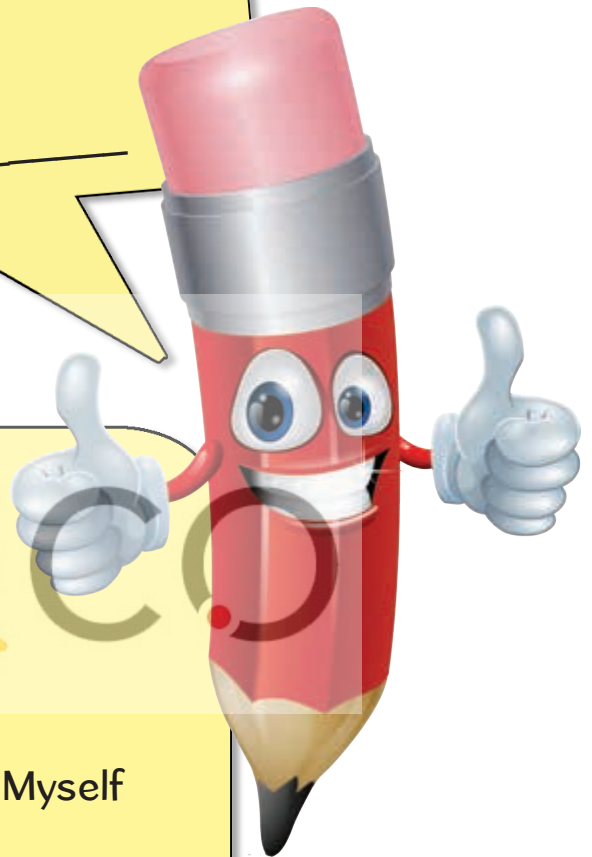
Other _____

2. **Whom do you compliment?**
(Circle all that apply.)

Friend Pet Family

Coach Teacher Myself

Other _____





PRE/POST TEST

Communication Skills

Name _____

Date _____

1. *Active listening* means *doing something active while you are listening*.
T **F**
2. Two-way communication is an effective communication style.
T **F**
3. When it comes to communication, talking is more important than listening.
T **F**
4. *Body language* is one way people can communicate.
T **F**
5. When communicating, it is not as important to recognize feelings as to listen to words.
T **F**
6. Communication can be improved by using funny put-downs.
T **F**
7. *Compliments* can be words or actions that enhance communication.
T **F**
8. Friends can avoid misunderstanding by communicating through messengers and secret codes.
T **F**
9. Many communication problems can be prevented if we stop and think.
T **F**
10. Communication that passes through several sources may become distorted.
T **F**