

**Title:** Communicate — Without Talking?

**Grade Ranges:**

  X   K-4

       5-8

       9-12

**Subject Tag:**

Family and Consumer Sciences

**Synopsis:**

In this activity students will learn the value of verbal communication and the value of working together. In groups of four, students will have to assemble a puzzle without communicating verbally. After this activity, you will lead students through a discussion to help them understand the importance of communication and cooperation.

**Keywords:**

communication, communicate, team, cooperation, teambuilding

**Body:**

1. Before class, select a variety of pictures that show people working together in various environments. Examples are: scenes involving a construction site, restaurant scene, athletic event, and an accident scene. You need one picture for every four students in the class. Cut each picture into at least eight pieces (two per student) so that the picture becomes like a puzzle. Depending on the level of the class, you could have more or fewer pieces of a single picture and can also vary the size of the individual puzzle pieces.
2. Establish focus for the lesson by writing the word “Communicate” on the board.
3. Build an awareness of the concept by asking the following questions:
  - What does this word mean?
  - Do you think you can communicate well with other people?
  - How do you know that you communicate well?
  - What are some of the ways in which you communicate with people?
4. Divide the class into teams of four students each. Have students move their chairs or desks so they are able to work together and create a surface on which they can put together their puzzle.
5. Once they have physically positioned themselves, ask the following questions.
  - What would you call your group of four people? (Team)
  - What does the word “team” mean?
  - What is the role or responsibility of each person on a team?
  - What happens when someone does not do his or her part for a team?
6. Have each team decide on a leader. They can use whatever method they would like to choose a leader. At the end of the activity, you can ask what methods they used to select their team leader.

7. Once the team leader has been selected, distribute to each team leader an envelope in which you have placed all pieces (at least two per student) of one of the pictures you cut up.
8. Tell each team that when you say “Go,” they will have five minutes to work as a team to put the picture together. This time period can be flexible based on the level of the class.
9. Ask if there are any questions. And then, as a last minute piece of instruction, tell the students, “Oh, I almost forgot to tell you, you have to complete the task by not talking.”
10. Ask if everyone understands what to do. Say “Go,” and let the teams begin to work.
11. As the teams work, move among them to observe how they act as a team. Caution a team or individual team members should they start to talk.
12. Call time.
13. Guide a discussion on communication by asking the following questions.
  - Did all of the teams put their puzzle together? (Show of hands)
  - First, involve the teams that completed the puzzle. Ask:
    - Do you think that you worked as a team to complete the puzzle?
    - How did you work together?
    - Did you have trouble not talking?
    - Did you want to talk?
    - What were other ways you found to communicate with one another?
    - What did the leader of your group do?
  - Second, (if applicable) move to the teams that did not complete the puzzle. Ask:
    - Why do you think your team did not complete the puzzle?
    - What do you think needed to happen for your team to be able to complete the puzzle?
    - What did the leader of your team do?
  - Third, work with the pictures involved in the puzzle by asking the following questions.
    - What did your picture show?
    - Were the people in the picture a team?
    - Why were they a team? What were they doing that made them a team?
    - Are the people in the pictures communicating?
    - Is their communication always verbal? If not, what are some examples of people doing their jobs without necessarily talking?
14. Return to your original questions at the beginning of the lesson.
  - What is a team?
  - What is the role or responsibility of each person on a team?
  - What happens when someone does not do his or her part for a team?
15. Bring closure by asking the students to think about what happened during their team activity. Ask the following questions:
  - Do you think you were a good team member?

- How could you have communicated better?

**Objectives:**

Students will:

- recognize the importance for communication skills.
- enhance team-building skills.
- learn the value of working together cooperatively.

**Standards:**

**NY: Language Arts 1** – Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding. **3** – Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation. **Family and Consumer Science 3.1** Resource Management.

Students will nurture and support positive relationships in their homes, workplaces, and communities.

**NYC: A5a** Work with others to complete a task.

**CT: Learning Resource and Information Technology 6.** Evaluation. Students will evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their own choices and use of information and technology for problem solving and communication.

**NJ: Cross-Content Workplace Readiness 3.** All students will use critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. **Language and Arts Literacy 3.2.** All students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources.

**Time Required:**

One Class Period

**Materials Needed:**

1. Chalkboard
2. Business size envelopes, one per team
3. Pictures taken from magazines or newspapers illustrating groups of people working together. Cut the pictures into individual pieces before beginning the lesson. Number and size of the pieces depend upon the level of the class.

**Recommended Lesson Plan Review Date:**

**Review Comments:**