

Lesson three: My relationships



Lesson aim:

Pupils understand the importance of listening to other people, playing and working co-operatively, including strategies to resolve simple disagreements through negotiation.



Learning outcomes:

- I can actively listen to other people
- I have thought about ways of communicating effectively
- I have considered ways to resolve disagreements through negotiation



Resources required:

- Resource sheet: Characters
- Resource sheet: Scenarios

Key words: communication

Teacher notes:

When teaching about communication it is important to reinforce what constitutes positive and healthy communication. Pupils may need some support to identify unhealthy communication behaviours that have been normalised. These pupils will benefit from the opportunity to rehearse the skills of effective communication to address embedded behaviours. It will be helpful to discuss any arising strategies that pupils suggest throughout this lesson with midday supervisors and support staff, so that they can also encourage pupils to utilise the strategies they have identified throughout the school, including at different times of the school day.

Begin the lesson by...

Explaining that we will be learning about helpful ways to communicate with each other. We communicate in lots of different ways, including what we say and how we say it. For example, how fast/loud we talk and our body language. When we feel calm we can listen, behave and communicate at our best. However, things can sometimes happen that upset us or make us feel angry with ourselves or another person. When we are angry or upset we may be more likely to say and do things that we would not normally. This can lead to bigger problems and more upset. The aim is to calm down and think before we react, so we can communicate in helpful ways.



Activity one: Chinese whispers

Ask pupils to sit in a circle. Explain that they are going to play a game of Chinese whispers. Send two separate Chinese whispers around the circle simultaneously, in opposite directions.

Check with the pupils what the whisper ended up as, and then reveal what it started as.



Why do Chinese whispers often end up differently to how they started? What things are unhelpful when you are trying to talk to someone? What things are unhelpful when you are trying to listen to someone?

Suggested answers may include: *other noises, distractions, more than one person talking at the same time.*

Tell pupils that it is important to talk clearly and listen actively. This may mean listening with our eyes and ears, as we can learn a lot about how someone feels from their body language and facial expressions. Demonstrate some different facial expressions, and ask pupils to suggest how you might be feeling about what you are saying. Explain that we can learn a lot about how someone feels through the tone, volume and speed that they talk. Demonstrate opposite ways of saying 'I like apples'. Ask pupils to tell you which version they thought best matched what you were saying.

Next, ask pupils to sing a song silently in their heads while you say 'I am going to a party tonight at six o'clock, and I am going to wear a red top. I have made a chocolate cake to take'. Ask pupils to tell you:

- Where you are going?
- What time?
- What you will be wearing?
- What you are taking?

Now tell pupils to listen very carefully and repeat 'I am going to a party tonight at six o'clock and I am going to wear a red top. I have made a cake to take'. Ask them if it was easier to remember the information when they were actively listening, rather than thinking about something else at the same time.



Activity two: Communication conundrums

Display the two characters on chairs at the front of the class. Introduce the characters using names of your choice, but avoiding the name of any pupil within the class. Explain that they are best friends and have agreed to play together this break time. They always take it in turns to choose what they will play. Unfortunately today they both think it is their turn to choose and they both want to play different games.

Divide the class into two equal sized lines, facing each other. Each line represents one of the characters. Walk down the middle of the line, asking pupils to say:

- What is your character is feeling?

Feedback the words you heard and discuss with the class, highlighting how both characters felt similar feelings.

Repeat walking down the line asking for responses to each of the following:

- What will your character say to the other character?
- What could happen now?
- Is this misunderstanding worth falling out over?
- What could they say, do or agree to prevent falling out?

After each question, feedback the words you heard and briefly discuss the key points and issues with the class. Highlight effective responses to prevent a fall out with someone when you cannot agree.



Activity three: Communication situations

Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Provide each pair/group with a scenario card. Ask them to discuss:

- What has caused the situation?
- How is the character/s feeling?
- How can the situation be resolved?

Tell pupils to create a role-play that demonstrates a good way to resolve the situation without falling out or arguing. The role-plays can be shared with the class and the strategies discussed if time allows.



How easy is it to communicate constructively when we have strong feelings and different views to other people?



Extension:

Tell pupils that deep breathing can help us to slow down, take notice of how we are feeling and to calm down. Explain that they will now try different deep breathing exercises.

Bumblebee breathing: Sit comfortably on the floor. Gently place the tips of your pointer fingers into your ears and close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose and hum quietly as you breathe out. Repeat x5

Teddy breathing: Lie on the floor and place a small teddy or similar on your stomach. Breathe in deeply through your nose and watch the teddy rise up. Breathe gently and slowly out through your mouth and watch the teddy drop lower. Rock the teddy to sleep using the rise and fall of your stomach. Repeat x5

Bubble breathing: Sit comfortably on the floor. Imagine you are holding a bubble wand. Breathe in deeply through the nose. As you breathe out slowly through your mouth, imagine you are blowing bubbles into the room. Repeat this, imagining that you are filling the whole room with bubbles. Repeat x5

Elephant breathing: Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms held in front of you like an elephant's trunk. Breathe in deeply through your nose, raising your arms high above your head. As you breathe slowly out of your mouth, slowly swing your arms down by your side. Repeat x5.



How do you feel after the deep breathing? Is it different to how you felt before the deep breathing?

If time allows, pupils can vote for their favourite technique.

Finish the lesson by:

Providing pupils with an opportunity to ask questions. Ask pupils to share effective ways to negotiate with someone they disagree with. Remind pupils there are often things that happen which make us feel cross or upset. Taking a few deep breaths to calm down can help them to clearly explain what is happening and communicate more effectively so they can resolve a situation fairly, preventing the problem becoming bigger. Remind pupils that whilst it is good to try and resolve problems as much as possible themselves, if they are feeling very upset or angry, or someone is behaving unfairly towards them they can always ask any adult in the school to help them. Signpost pupils to who they can talk to in school if they have any worries or questions about what has been taught in the lesson.



Assessment:

Activity one: Pupils rehearsed the skills of active listening, and applied these to accurately obtain information.

Activity two: Pupils identified how two friends could negotiate over a disagreement to resolve a situation which both felt was unfair.

Activity three: Pupils considered effective conflict resolution strategies they can adopt within a range of scenarios.

Evidence of assessment: Video of role-plays that demonstrate effective conflict resolution in Activity three. These can be shared during an appropriate assembly.



















