



# LESSON 4

## Learning to Listen Unit Grade 1 • Ages 5-7

### TIME FRAME

Preparation: 30 minutes  
Instruction: 30 minutes  
(time may vary depending on time given to make talking sticks)

### MATERIALS

Talking Stick images (included)

Teacher's talking stick, made before class

Materials for each student to make a talking stick, including: a large wide tongue depressor or paint stirrer, yarn, paint brushes and paint or markers that won't rub off when handled, feathers, stickers or other decorative items. Be creative!

[Kindness Concept Posters](#): Respect, Responsibility

### LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.1.1, 4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1, 1a-c, 2, 3, 4, 6 Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.1, EO.c; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a,c,d; S.1, GLE.2, EO.a,b,c; S.2, GLE.2, EO.e; Social Studies S.1, GLE.2, EO.a,b

[Learning standards key](#)

## Talking Sticks

Students will learn how Native American tribes have used talking sticks to listen to others and will practice their listening skills with talking sticks they make.

### Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on [previous lessons in this unit](#).

Talking sticks can also be used for classroom meetings or forms of restorative justice to resolve conflict in the classroom. Learn more here: <http://www.tolerance.org/blog/talking-circles-restorative-justice-and-beyond>.

### Key Terms for Students

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

**LISTEN** To hear someone or something on purpose.

**TRIBE** A group of people that includes many families that have the same language and beliefs.

**COMPLIMENT** Saying something good about someone or something.

**RESPECT** Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

**RESPONSIBILITY** Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment.

### TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Practicing using the talking sticks with additional prompts like: "What is your favourite color? Who are the people in your family? Or what did you use to decorate the talking stick?"
- Working with another student to design their talking stick.
- Having additional time at recess or at home to finish creating their talking stick.

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

However, each lesson starts with the **Share** step to reinforce learning from previous lessons.



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



## Resources

Research what Native American tribes are from to your area.

Bring in books from the library about Native American Peoples to read to the students or have students read the books out loud in groups.

After reading about Native Americans from the Northwest Coast, use one of the students talking sticks and ask questions about what they have learned from the books, such as:

- How did people in those tribes used to live?
- How do they live now?
- Are their lives similar or different to life in our community?

Students could also do Internet research in groups on websites such as:

<http://www.firstpeople.us>

<http://warpaths2peacepipes.com/native-american-culture/talking-sticks.htm>

## Share (3 mins)

Read your responses to your activity from the **Act it Out** lesson or answer the questions, "What are some ways that we can **listen** carefully to others at home?" and "Are there ways that we can become better **listeners**?"

## Inspire

### Discussion (5 mins)

We have been learning a lot the last few days about **listening**. **Native American tribes** from the Northwest Coast of the United States and Canada think that **listening** to others is so important that they use a talking stick when they talk to each other. Does anyone know what a talking stick is? Does anyone know where the Northwest Coast of North America is? Allow students to respond. Point out British Columbia, Alaska, Washington, and Oregon on a map.

Show images of talking sticks.

In Native American **tribes**, it is a very old custom to use the talking stick when people are meeting together. The stick is passed from person to person. Whoever has the talking stick can talk and everyone else **listens** carefully to what that person is saying.



## Empower

### Passing the Talking Stick (5 mins)

Show the students your stick. *Let's practice with my stick. I will start by saying one food that I like and then pass it around the classroom. When you have the stick, you can say one food you like and everyone else has to **listen**.* Allow all the students to have a turn and **compliment** them for doing such a good job listening.

### Design Your Stick (10 mins)

*Now we are going to make our own talking sticks and we will use these sticks during our discussions throughout the year.*

Give every student a paper towel tube or a piece of wood and allow students to create their own talking sticks. This could be a multi-day activity depending on how much time you want the students to spend creating their talking sticks.

Use the talking stick when you want to have a group discussion and have the students practice listening and talking. Make sure to take turns using different students' talking sticks.

### Wrap Up (10 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

- How does a talking stick help everyone get a chance to share his or her opinion?
- Why is it important to be **responsible** and **respectful listeners** in the classroom?

### Reflection Questions

- Is it difficult to wait for your turn for the talking stick?
- Do you think that the talking stick could help us be better **listeners**?

### Summary

*Talking sticks have been used by Native American tribes to help others listen to each person. Being patient and waiting for your turn to speak gives everyone a chance to speak. It is kind to be a good listener and a patient friend. It also helps you be a good listener while only one person is speaking at a time.*



## Act (2 mins)

### Kindness Minute

In groups of 3-4 ask the students to share what they are most proud of from their talking stick design. Ensure they take turns sharing and **listening**.

### Kindness in Action

Take your talking stick home and try using it with your family or friends. Write down when you used it and how it went.



## Images of Talking Sticks

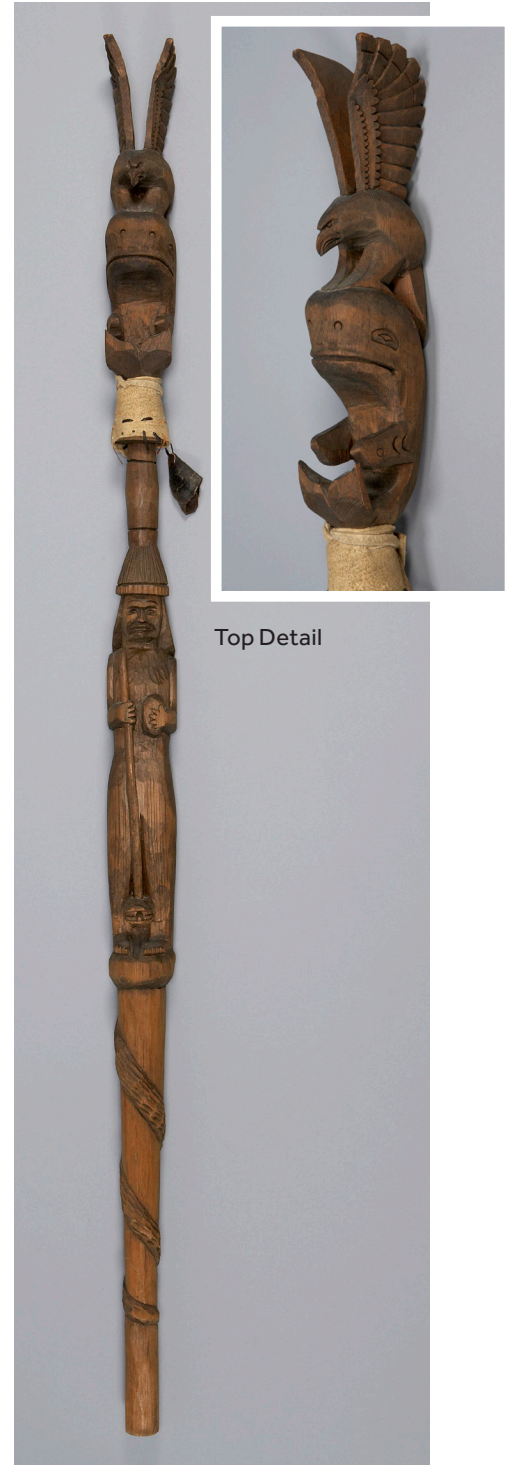
See other images at <http://www.walkingcroworiginals.com/TalkingStick.html>, <http://www.heardmuseumshop.com/browse.cfm/4,10050.html> and [http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/2015\\_australian\\_of\\_the\\_year\\_awards/hetty\\_johnston\\_am](http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/2015_australian_of_the_year_awards/hetty_johnston_am)



MOA ID# A8140  
Artist: Houstie, Kwakwaka'wakw nation  
Photograph by Derek Tan



MOA ID# A17155  
Kwakwaka'wakw nation  
Photograph by Derek Tan



MOA ID# 1601/1 a-h  
Artist: Cicero August, Coast Salish nation, Cowichan tribe  
Photographs by Kyla Bailey

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