



LESSON

3

Communicating Effectively Unit

Grade 7 • Ages 12-14

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 10 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Chart paper with "I" Messages written at the top

[Kindness Concept Posters:](#)

Assertiveness, Respect, Self-Discipline

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy. SL.7.1 Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.1, EO.b, c, d; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.2, EO.a

SEL - Self-awareness, Self-management, Relationship skills, Responsible decision making

[Learning standards key](#)

"I" Messages

Students will learn to use "I" messages when communicating with others.

Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on previous lessons in this unit.

Key Terms for Students

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

ASSERTIVENESS	Standing up for yourself and what you believe in while being respectful of the rights and beliefs of others.
RESPECT	Treating people, places, and things with kindness.
SELF-DISCIPLINE	Controlling one's actions and words for the benefit of self and others.
"I" MESSAGE	Self focused statements used when talking with someone that express how you feel, what you believe or what you experience.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Providing a sentence frame for constructing "I" messages, i.e. "I feel __ (insert feeling) __ when __ (describe behavior or situation) __ happens."
- Having their "I" messages reviewed before sharing to ensure they have constructed the sentence in the proper way.

Resources

Article: Utah State University (2012). Effective Communication Skills: "I" messages and Beyond http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/FC_Relationships_2012-01pr.pdf

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.



Share (3 mins)

As a class, share some of the positive feelings you may have when you're having a discussion or negotiation with someone else. (Examples: empowered, proud, respected, heard, etc.)

Inspire

Who's Responsible for Your Feelings? (5 mins)

Divide students into groups of three or four.

As we saw from the skits in Negotiating Skills, getting angry may not be the most effective way to communicate with others. Often people will say that someone made them angry. Do you think that is true? Why or why not?

If necessary, explain that someone else does not make you angry. You may FEEL mad when certain things happen, but you can choose how you feel and you have a choice to respond with kindness.

Empower

"I" Messages (15 mins)

*One positive way to communicate is using "I" messages. These messages are **respectful, assertive**, don't blame or judge the other person and allow you to state how you feel or what you need without attacking the other person. For example, if someone upsets you, you can say either "You make me mad." OR "I felt upset when you did that." Which response do you think is a more effective way to talk to people? Why?*

*Let's talk through some examples. I am going to write on the paper a phrase people might say when they are upset. I want you to talk in your small groups about what "I" message you could use instead. Remember they need to be **assertive and respectful**.*

Write one phrase at a time on an "I" Message sheet posted on the wall and allow the students to discuss. Then ask for a volunteer to suggest a different phrase, cross out the phrase and write the "I" Message that replaces it. Use as many of these as you have time for or write your own:

- You are so annoying!
- It's your fault I got into trouble.
- You always ignore me when your other friends are around.
- Your never listen to me!
- You never told us the assignment was due today.

After completing this activity, have students discuss in their groups whether they think "I" Messages could be an effective way for them to respond to a situation they are facing.

Wrap Up (5 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

- What is an "I" message?
- How are "I" messages **respectful and assertive**?
- Why do we use "I" messages?

Reflection Questions

- Do you think **"I" messages** can help you better communicate your needs and feelings to someone? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is easy to use **"I" messages**? Why or why not?
- Do you think it takes **self-discipline** to use **"I" messages**? Why or why not?

Summary

Using "I" messages is a powerful way to communicate how we feel while not placing blame on others. It is a productive way to communicate so we can resolve problems with others and is a kind way to talk.



Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

Make a "thank you" sign for someone who works in your school and have everyone in the class sign it.

Kindness in Action

Complete the Community Home Extension Activity.



Home Extension Activity

NAME

PLEASE RETURN BY

Background

As part of the Random Acts of Kindness program, we have been discussing how to communicate effectively, including making eye contact, listening to what others are saying, summarizing information, giving concise details, giving examples to support what you're saying, using humor when appropriate, speaking clearly, checking for understanding, and being grateful. Ask your student what he or she has learned about these communication techniques.

Vocabulary Words

ASSERTIVENESS	Standing up for yourself and what you believe in while being respectful of the rights and beliefs of others.
RESPECT	Treating people, places, and things with kindness.
SELF-DISCIPLINE	Controlling one's actions and words for the benefit of self and others.

Instructions

Review the vocabulary words listed above. Then discuss these questions and have your student write responses in the space provided or on the back and return to school by the date shown:

What are some ways that we communicate?

What are some new ways to communicate that might work even better?

What are some ways that we can show gratitude to each other?

