

The Ripples of Respectful Communication

This lesson will provide students with the basic skills to communicate differences and disagreements.

Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-Care, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

35-45 minutes

Required Materials

Print and cut out copies of the following (one for each student). It is recommended you print the cards on different colored paper to help cue students to the cards statement.

- ☐ “Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns We Can All Get Along” by Howard Binkow
- ☐ Statement Card (white paper)
- ☐ Turn, Say, Right Cards
- ☐ Blue stones for the Kindness Pond. If stones are not available, use another colored item (Legos, balls, etc.)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



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See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Apply communication skills to conversations with disagreements.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Reach out to another teacher that you may struggle with- check in to see how they are doing this week. Respect starts with YOU.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- There is a lot of talking in this activity. A pre-made pasteboard with steps and pictures of what students do in the role play would be helpful for all learners but especially for those who struggle with multi-step instructions or students who have language limitations.
- Another idea is to assign groups based on verbal abilities. This will allow lower level speakers to participate through observation.
- You may also want to divide the group into four so that one can opt out if speaking is not possible, but no one will be left out of the question and answer session.



Share

5-7 minutes

Today's focus is on communication. Ask students what communication means.

Possible definition you could use: *Communication is about sending and receiving messages. We can communicate through our words, through our actions, through our writing, and through things like art or music.*

Ask students for an example of friendly communication (perhaps they are greeted when they walk in the school doors in the morning; maybe they say hello and thank you to the school lunch staff).

Ask: How does it feel when we have kind communication that goes well and where everyone understands what we are saying?



Inspire

12-15 minutes

Now take some time to explain how disagreements or conflict can still be done in a kind manner. **Ask:** *Did you know that communication, even if you are in a disagreement with someone, can still be kind? Disagreements do not have to be negative experiences. All communication can be positive if we want it to be.*

Explain: We can have communication where everyone gets these three things:

1. A chance to be right
2. A chance to have a say
3. A chance to have a turn

We also need to apologize, or say we are sorry, when we say or do something that is unkind. This helps us have respectful, kind communication, even when we disagree.

Read the story linked below. Invite students to listen for the three things we just talked about: Everyone gets a chance to be right, to have a say, and to have a turn. Also listen for the right time to say, "I am sorry".

Read Aloud: "Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns We Can All Get Along" by Howard Binkow

Read Aloud Link: [watch the read-aloud on YouTube](#) (6 min)

Ask:

- In what ways was Howard's communication with his friends unkind?
- How did he let others have a chance to be right?
- How did he give others a chance to have a say?
- How did he give others a chance to have a turn?
- Why did he apologize?



Empower

15-20 minutes

This activity will give students a chance to practice giving others a chance to be right, to have a say, and to take a turn.

The “statement cards” have a statement starter on them and students need to finish the statement. They may disagree about how they finish the statement, but that is okay. That is the point! After the student reads his/her statement card, he/she finishes the statement. Then the other two students have a chance to hold up one of their *Turn, Say, Right* cards to help them continue the conversation using guided prompts. Once each person has had a turn to respond, the next student can read his or her statement and so forth until everyone has read and finished their statement.

Put students in groups of three and give each group the following items (one per student):

- Statement Card and Thank You Card
- Turn, Say, Right Card: “That is nice, but I disagree! I think _____ because _____.”
- Turn, Say, Right Card: “I agree with _____ because _____.”
- Turn, Say, Right Card: “That is cool! Can you tell me more?”

Students read and finish (with their own opinion) the statement on their Statement Card and the group has a conversation about the statement. Students should use the Turn, Say, Right Cards to help them navigate the conversation. You may want to [model](#) this, which could go as follows:

Teacher: Reads statement card: “The best flavor of ice cream is _____.”
(example: chocolate)

Student (prepared) or Teacher Helper: Chooses and holds up a Turn, Say, Right Card and reads and finishes the statement.

Example: “That is cool! Can you tell me more?”

Teacher: Provides a brief explanation in response.

Student (prepared) or Teacher Helper: Holds up a Turn, Say, Right Card and reads and finishes the statement.

Example: “That is nice, but I disagree! I like strawberry ice cream because it tastes really good with cake!”

Teacher: “Thank you for sharing and taking a turn! I think we are all right!”

Once everyone has had a turn in that conversation, the next person reads his or her statement card, and another discussion happens.



Reflect

3-5 minutes

Invite students to share how it felt to have a conversation where everyone had a turn, had a say, and had a chance to be right, even if you didn't always agree with each other? How did it feel to use those questions to help guide their communication?

Remind students that having calm communication, even if we disagree, is important in our classroom! If we speak kindly to one another, it creates a ripple effect that causes others to speak kindly, too.

Ideas for reinforcement:

Whenever you see your students giving others a chance to have a turn, have a say, and be right, especially when they are disagreeing with each other, drop a stone into the Kindness Pond. You might designate blue stones as the representations for respectful, *calm* communication.



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Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

The best flavor of ice cream
is _____.

That's nice, but I disagree!
I think _____ because _____.

I agree with _____
because _____.

That's cool!
Can you tell me more?

...

Okay, thanks!

The best movie is _____.

The most exciting school
subject we have is _____.

Thank you for sharing
and taking a turn!
I think we are all right.