



4 WORKING IT OUT

Rationale

The purpose of section four is to provide members with plenty of opportunity to practice their skills in learning how to communicate effectively.

To review, in "Priming the Pump", the focus was on getting the attention of members (the first 'A' in the design plan). Short, involving, and interesting activities were provided to help develop a need in the minds of the members. That need is: "How do I develop more effective communicative skills?"

It is important to establish this need first. It is a basis upon which to build knowledge.

Section three, "Getting the Goods", represented the acquisition stage of learning (the second 'A'). The focus was on providing information in an interesting manner so that members would be receptive and retain as much as possible.

In total there were ten lessons. The lessons were planned, whole group learning activities. Each lesson followed the same format. Each lesson could be adapted to meet the needs of the members of your club.

Now with this knowledge in hand, it is important to provide the opportunity to use this information (the third A, application). Practicing speaking skills gives members the chance to test out what they have learned against their background of personal experience.

Will what I have learned in the lessons, actually work for me? Do I have to adapt the information to fit my style, needs, interests, and ambitions? All of these questions and more are explored, experimented with and validated by the member who is given an opportunity to practice.

On the following pages are 34 practice opportunities to help build upon the skill to communicate more effectively.



ACTIVITIES #1 TO #34

Using the Activities

Activities are intended to...

- Be approximately 10 - 20 minutes in duration.
- Focus on one topic or theme.
- Be independent and self-contained (I.e. No activity depends on another).
- Work on all aspects of effective communication including visual, vocal, verbal, writing and listening skills.
- Involve four or five members at a time.
- Be suitable for both the junior and senior members.

List of Activities

Titles and Skills Focus for each of the 34 Activities

Number	Activity Title	Skill(s) Focus
1	Best Teach	Visual, Vocal, Verbal and Listening
2	Crazy Sentences	Listening
3	Direction Direction	Verbal and Listening
4	Emoticons	Visual
5	Exaggerated Plus	Visual and Vocal
6	Famous Celebrity	Visual
7	Fill In The Blank Story	Listening
8	Four Why's Guys	Verbal and Listening
9	Getting Physical	Visual, Vocal and Verbal
10	Getting Real	Visual
11	Gesture Guess	Visual
12	Grokking	Visual, Vocal and Listening
13	Have You Ever?	Listening
14	Hidden Conversation	Verbal
14	Listen Up	Verbal and Listening
16	Musical Ride	Vocal
17	Nicking The Nonwords	Vocal
18	One Word Letter Writing	Writing
19	Paper Audience	Visual
20	Pitch In	Vocal
21	Press Conference	Verbal
22	Prop Talk	Visual, Vocal and Verbal
23	Sketch Talk	Verbal and Listening
24	Story Line	Verbal



Number	Activity Title	Skill(s) Focus
25	Speaking Non-Sense	Verbal
26	Tell Me About The Time	Verbal
27	The Winger	Verbal
28	To Tell The Truth	Verbal
29	Tongue Twist	Vocal
30	Touch Tone Talk	Vocal
31	Turnaround Routine	Visual, Vocal and Verbal
32	Two Lies and a Truth	Listening
33	Video Magic	Visual, Vocal and Verbal
34	Words Per Minute	Vocal



BEST TEACH

Purpose

See what a good communicator looks like and begin to adopt some of the qualities of a good communicator.

Materials

Felts and flip chart size paper for each group

Group Size

Whole club

Background

Who is the best teacher you have ever had? Was it someone at the school you go to now, was it someone at a church or was it someone in a club you attended like 4-H, Girl Guides or Boy Scouts?

What was it about your best teacher that made them so good? Was it the way they used their voice - full of energy, enthusiasm and excitement. Was it in their ability to explain things so you could understand? Did you enjoy the way the teacher looked right at you? Did they seem to speak with your interests at heart?

We tend to model who we see. If you can see the best teacher you have ever had, you can begin to model yourself after that person.

So let's find out about your best teacher!

Activity

1. Who is the best teacher you have ever had? Think by yourself on this question for about a minute. See if you can see your best teacher in your mind. What is that person doing to be a good communicator?
2. Now pair up with another member. Each of you shares some of the thoughts about your favourite teacher.
3. Put yourselves into groups of 3 to 4 people. Again share some things about your favourite teachers. Draft one list of six or more qualities that makes for a good teacher. Think particularly of the way they communicate.
4. In your groups, draw the best teacher. Use the felt pens and flip chart paper to make this drawing.
5. It is important to focus not on the drawing itself but on the qualities that make your favourite teacher a good communicator. This means you draw things that will represent the good communication qualities of your favourite teacher. For example, if one of the qualities of your favourite teacher is that she listens well, and then you might draw big ears - representing the ability to really listen to you. Or, if another quality is the ability to



think on their feet, then you may draw running shoes to represent the ability to think fast. And so on. Get the picture!!

6. Share your drawings and the qualities of your favourite teachers.

Debrief

- What are the ten most important characteristics of your favourite teacher? Post these in your club somewhere. This is something for all of you to aspire towards.
- Seeing your favourite teacher will help you to remember the qualities of what makes them so good. Now see it in yourself!



CRAZY SENTENCES

Purpose

To improve 4-H members ability to listen carefully.

Materials

Paper, pens or pencils, two chairs

Background

Listening to details can be very important when trying to solve a problem or attempting to follow complicated directions. Sometimes the details are not essential, but at other times these details are extremely important.

Being able to listen carefully isn't an easy task, and sometimes we must use our eyes and observe body language, facial expressions, and eye movement in order to get all the information needed. The better you listen, the more you will hear and the better you will understand what is being said.

Instructions

Prior to this activity, use your creativity to make up random and crazy sentences on small pieces of paper. Some examples of crazy sentences are: "Big Bird is my idol," or "It is not good to eat chocolate for breakfast." Also, prior to the game set up two chairs in the front of the room.

Ask for two volunteers of similar skill levels (two junior members etc.) to sit in the chairs that you have set up in the front of the room. Give each person a piece of paper with one of the crazy sentences on it.

The two players must read the sentence to themselves and then engage in conversation.

The object is to slip in the sentence without the other person guessing what it is. You may wish to give them a topic to start with such as fishing, country music, bowling, buying shoes, or anything else that has nothing to do with the sentences. Also give them a one or two minute time limit to slip their sentences in during the conversation. After the time limit, allow the people in the audience to guess what the crazy sentence is and whoever guesses correctly is given the opportunity to play the game for the next round.

- Each player may tell a story, instead of engaging in a conversation with one other player.
- This game can be done with three people engaging in conversation at the same time instead of just two.
- Play in teams and allow each team to make up sentences for the other team to use when telling a story to their own team.



DIRECTION DIRECTION

Purpose

To help 4-H members recognize the importance of using good verbal and listening skills.

Materials

Varies

Background

In our society there is a constant transfer of information from one person to another. You must be careful when you pass information on if you want it to stay accurate. In this activity someone gets a set of rules and the group gets to see how easy it can be to make mistakes in passing them on. This can be a fun way to see what can happen when information is not passed on correctly.

Instructions

Choose a game that has a few specific rules that must be followed in order to play the game (and enough rules to make it hard to remember them all). Prior to the activity select one person and give him/her the directions for the game without telling the rest of the group. Verbally explain the game and clearly state all of the rules.

At the time of the game, the person who has heard the rules will give the directions to the rest of the group without any help from you. Allow the group to play the game at least once through before having a group discussion or making any corrections or clarifications in the rules of the game.

- Select a game that requires two teams. Separate the two teams and select one member from each team to receive the directions for the game. Each person explains the rules to his/her team.
- Give each team a different set of directions, on purpose.



EMOTICONS

Purpose

Develop a wide range of emotions in your speaking, and realize how important your facial expressions are in communicating.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

Computer enthusiasts communicate with each other via computer billboards. Messages are posted and read by anyone with a computer and a modem. Interestingly, computer users know how important the visual factor is in communicating.

They know that words are often not enough for effective communication. To really make contact with your listeners, they have to be visual.

Computer users have invented emoticons. The word comes from emotion and icons. (Icons are little pictures or symbols used to convey a function on the computer.)

Emoticons are pictures of faces made out of keyboard characters. These pictures are used to convey emotion. They are an attempt to put the visual factor back into faceless, voiceless, keyboard-only conversation.

Activity

Note: In this activity you will be asked to give a brief (one minute) talk before a small group of 4-H members. What is important in your talk is the range of expressions you can convey to the group. Talk about something you have an interest in so you will be able to show a range of expressions.

1. Review the list of emoticons provided below. Emoticons lie on their sides. You have to tilt your head to the left in order to read them.
2. Someone volunteer to talk to the group for about one minute.
3. The audience is to match the expressions and visual clues of the speaker with the emoticons provided.
4. When the speaker finishes, the audience shares with the speaker the emoticons expressed during the speaker's talk.
5. Have another person in your group give a brief talk. Repeat steps 3 and 4 with the new speaker.



6. Continue for as long as there are volunteers and interest in this activity.

Emoticons

:-) feeling happy	I-) Hee hee!
:-(feeling sad	I-D Ha ha!
:-< feeling very sad	:-o Oh, I'm surprised!
:-⊕ feeling undecided	:-I Hmmmmmmmm
:-& feeling tongue-tied	:-c Bummer!
:-D enjoy talking	.-> Hey! All alright!
:-I blank expression	:-O I'm thinking
:-} I'm wearing lipstick	8-) I'm wearing glasses
{ :-) I part my hair in the middle	*:0) Just feeling good

Debrief

- Bringing expressions into your talk adds a great visual factor to your speaking. How expressive were you? Can you improve the range and variety of your expressions?
- Can you invent other emoticons on a computer?