



# Communication & Public Speaking Guide

For VTCL Teachers and Administrators

## OVERVIEW

This brief workshop is designed to help teachers achieve the most confident and vocal versions of themselves, in hopes that they will carry these lessons on to their students. To show how easy it is to not only teach public speaking, confidence, and communication but also learn public speaking, each lesson was made to be easily understood by both teachers and students, in any language. It is important to always keep in mind that public speaking is a skill, not a talent. You are born with talents, but skills require practice, dedication, and time to grow. Everyone is capable of learning how to become an amazing public speaker.

## LESSONS

Each lesson described throughout this guide should take no longer than 30 minutes. The lessons consist of quick and easy-to-follow games, songs, and lectures that make sure this workshop is efficient. Lessons also require minimal materials so they can be completed by anyone, anywhere, at any time.

## Public Speaking Basics

The goal of this lesson is to introduce a basic understanding of public speaking. We will cover the four main concepts of public speaking that can be applied to any situation. These concepts heavily focus on speaking presentation style.

The four concepts are:

1. Clear Message
2. Clear Voice
3. Posture
4. Hand Motions

Multiple parts must be fulfilled to satisfy each concept. Within this lesson, there are helpful tips and games that can be used to reinforce the importance and benefits of learning each of these concepts.

## **CLEAR MESSAGE**

Having a clear message is important to the foundation of any speech. Whether you are speaking Kannada or English, whatever you say must be easily understood by your audience. If your audience cannot understand what you are saying they will lose interest in your speech. To convey your message properly it must be easy to follow and get your audience's attention. One of the most helpful speaking tools to use when you want to be understood is called signposting. Signposting means that throughout your speech you present your main topics by directly stating them either at the beginning of your speech or throughout it. One game that can be played to promote the use of signposts is called "3 points or less".

### **ACTIVITY: 3 POINTS OR LESS**

**OBJECTIVE:** Learn to signpost and cover each part of your speech or information in 3 sentences or less.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** To play 3 points or less you need to start with a question. Easy questions can be "What is your favorite movie?" or "What is your favorite

book/story?” Questions need to be story-based for this exercise to work. After the students have their favorite story in mind, tell them to tell you the story. However, the trick is they have to tell you the full entire story in 3 points. The entire story, from beginning to middle to end, should be summarized in 3 points that the student chooses.

## **CLEAR VOICE**

When speaking, a clear voice is one of the only things that can overcome language barriers. Even if different languages are spoken between the speaker and the audience, the audience can still feel some sort of connection to the speaker when they speak clearly.

The main components that go into speaking include:

1. Volume
  - a. Loud
  - b. Quiet
  - c. Medium
2. Speed
  - a. Fast
  - b. Slow
  - c. Normal

The most important thing to remember is that your voice must stay at a medium volume and a normal speed. Sometimes it's easy to start talking too fast and loud, especially if you are passionate about what you are saying. It is also easy to start talking

slowly and quietly if you are nervous or maybe unsure of what you should say next. When you feel yourself talking too fast, loud, quiet, or slow it is helpful to take a deep breath and relax. Relaxing allows you a chance to organize your thoughts and begin again.

ACTIVITY: Boogie Boogie

OBJECTIVE: Learn the benefits of speaking normally and clearly by demonstrating each different tone.

INSTRUCTIONS: On the board clearly write 'LOUD', 'quiet', 'FAST', and 'slow'. After writing these, you can choose a song to sing with the class. Action songs work best for this activity (i.e. The Boogie Boogie, Baby Shark) because if instructions are given too loud or too quiet then the students will be lost. This activity helps them understand the importance of speaking clearly through practice. Throughout the song change your tone to be fast, quiet, slow, or loud for each action.

LYRICS:

You put your right hand in (put right hand in front of you)

You put your right hand out (put your right hand above you)

You put your right hand in

And you shake it all about

You do the boogie boogie (spin in a circle)

That's what (clap twice)

It's all (clap twice)

A–Bout (clap twice)

You put your left hand in (put left hand in front of you)

You put your left hand out (put your left hand above you)

You put your left hand in

And you shake it all about

You do the boogie boogie (spin in a circle)

That’s what (clap twice)

It’s all (clap twice)

A–Bout (clap twice)

(Repeat with different body parts: Right Foot, Left Foot, Body)

#### ACTIVITY: The ABCs of Pronunciation

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage students to clearly speak and enunciate their letters by physically working through the alphabet.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Write out the ABCs on the board and ask students to help you while you write out the alphabet. Go through each letter of the alphabet and heavily enunciate them to make sure that students hear the difference between normal pronunciations. (e.g. A a A A, BUH buh buh BUH, Ca CA Ca ca). Encourage

students to move their faces and put as much effort into these letters as possible so that they can physically feel the pronunciation. Go through the alphabet multiple times changing your pronunciations and adding movements.

## **POSTURE**

A speaker's posture is important to the tone of their voice. Imagine your voice coming from deep inside your stomach. If you are hunched over looking at the ground, you are blocking the airflow from your stomach and losing your powerful voice. If you are standing too tall and you are looking up your voice is projecting upwards and you are losing more airflow than necessary. It's important to stay relaxed and tall to efficiently utilize your airflow.

ACTIVITY: The String Theory

OBJECTIVE: Teach students how to envision standing tall and relaxed and allow them to stand up during class.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask all the children to stand up, and ask them to imagine a string that goes from the tip of their toes to the top of their heads. Visually act out pulling a string through your body and have the students mimic. Pull the 'string' to different heights and show how that affects your body. Ultimately you should end by pulling your string tall and standing relaxed yet straight, showing the best posture for speaking.

## **HAND MOTIONS**

When talking about hand motions, the crucial thing to remember is that your hands can either help you tell a story or hurt your speaking. Finding a balance is key to delivering a good speech with the use of your hands.

#### ACTIVITY: The Box

OBJECTIVE: Introduce students to using their hands while they speak while also controlling how and when their hands move.

INSTRUCTIONS: On the board draw a stick figure with a box that covers the top half of the figure. This will be known as 'the box'. 'The box' is where your hands and hand motions should stay when you are speaking. Hands shouldn't leave 'the box' because once they do, they begin to draw attention away from what you are saying and the audience begins to focus on your crazy hands.

If a speaker starts to use their hands too much, the message of their speech gets lost. The audience begins to try to focus on the speaker's hands instead of the words and message that the speaker is trying to convey. However, if a speaker chooses not to use their hands and they stay stuck to their sides, sometimes a speech will get a little boring. Hand motions help draw an audience in and make them interested in a speech with visual interest.

### Quick Thinking

Quick thinking is very important to any speech, whether it's a prepared speech or a simple lesson, because it allows your words to flow smoothly. Instead of trying to recite a speech or stick to a script, learning how to come up with words quickly, off the top of your head, gives you the ability to speak on more content.

#### ACTIVITY: Mystery Topics

OBJECTIVE: Get students to talk about their favorite things randomly.



INSTRUCTIONS: Write random topics down on a piece of paper. These topics can be relevant to school, life, or fun. (e.g. sports, favorite food, friends, family). Cut out each topic individually and place them into a bag. Have each student come up to the front to pick a topic out of the bag. After they get a topic, have the students speak on it to the class for at least one minute. The broader the topics are the easier it is for students to speak about them. For example, the topic 'animals' can be elaborated on more than just 'my favorite animal is...'

With quick thinking exercises like this students are forced to elaborate on random topics to fill their time, but they will find that it's actually easy to fill one small minute talking about things they love. Soon after that, the students will find that talking without a script from their minds is much easier than they thought as well.

## The Power of Why

The word 'Why' is so powerful when it comes to creating a speech and speaking. Most students fear this word because it forces them to speak in more depth. There is so much more power and passion in a well-thought-out speech compared to a small sentence. Many students forget to elaborate because they are shy or unsure about their speaking abilities, but it is important to always encourage every student and approach speaking in a way that shows it isn't as scary as it seems.

ACTIVITY: The 'Why' Hat

OBJECTIVE: Get students comfortable with speaking for long periods in front of a crowd.

INSTRUCTIONS: For this game, you will need a 'topi' or a hat for the students to wear: in this case, the bigger and funnier the better. Once you have

chosen a hat, write a question on the board that each student can answer. (e.g. What is your favorite thing to do for fun?). Randomly choose students to come up to the front, wear the hat, and spend at least one minute answering the question. If you do not have a hat, you can also make the students hold something large like a funny picture or object. When students hold or wear these objects while speaking it lowers their stress. If they mess up or if the class laughs, they can hide behind the object, and in most cases the class is focusing on the object, not the minor mistake.

Challenging students to step out of their comfort zone is never easy; however, if it is approached in a silly way then students are more likely to become less afraid of such a scary task. Placing students at the front of the class to speak in front of their peers puts students in an uncomfortable situation but giving students an object to use while speaking makes an uncomfortable situation a lot more comfortable.

## Communicating

Communication is obvious when it comes to public speaking. As a speaker, you need to be able to communicate with each member of the audience, but, to learn proper communication you need to start small. Learning how to communicate with another person helps your public speaking abilities because eventually, your small skill grows to become a big skill.

ACTIVITY: Drawing Through Words

OBJECTIVE: Teach students that communication is important especially when trying to convey a message or picture to someone else.

INSTRUCTIONS: Organize students into pairs of two. Tell them to sit back to back or face away from each other. Give one student a random object. This object

could be a pen, a piece of candy, or even a *'chatri'* or umbrella, but it can not be very simple. Tell the other student to take out a piece of paper and something to write with. The student holding the object has to describe what the object looks like in detail, without telling the student exactly what it is, while the other student draws what they are being told. At the end of the class you can view each pairings drawings, the pair with the most detailed drawing is awarded the winner. The most detailed drawing should be one that resembles the object the most, even down to tiny details like the wording.

ACTIVITY: Telephone

OBJECTIVE: To teach students the importance of communicating clearly and listening closely.

INSTRUCTIONS: The students will be quietly passing a message through the room so make sure that the students are arranged in a line shape that makes it easy for a message to travel through. Sometimes students are arranged in a straight line or they could snake the message through the classroom. Start with a silly message and whisper that message to the first student. Some messages could be:

1. Purple Parrots Eating Peas
2. Cute Cat Come
3. Hello Hello Hello Goodbye

The goal of these messages is to make them not too hard but also require students to listen closely to pass them on correctly. Once the message is whispered to the first student it should travel through the room. Wait at the very end of the

chain for the last child to get the message and ask them to repeat the final message to the class. If it is the same message that you gave to the first child then the class successfully communicated with each other, but if the message is completely different then they should communicate more efficiently next time.

Learning how to effectively communicate is always challenging at first but the most important thing to remember is that it takes practice. Students need to get all the practice they can to make all their mistakes and eventually learn from them. This method of learning, when it comes to communicating, is the most efficient.

## Projecting

Projecting your voice while speaking is a skill that every speaker should have. The concept of projecting your voice is easily understood when it's visualized. For example, to start speaking with power it helps to imagine your voice coming from deep inside your stomach and traveling up to your mouth. The idea is to create enough power to push your voice up from your stomach and out of your mouth. Projecting adds to this challenge by forcing you to not only push your voice out but also make your voice reach the opposite end of the room, to ensure that everyone in the room can hear you.

ACTIVITY: Projection Olympics

OBJECTIVE: Help students to visualize their voice traveling through a room.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask students to stand up and spread out around the room.

This activity is called the Olympics because the student's voices are trying to go the distance, not the students themselves. Ask the students to imagine they are throwing their voices as far as they can. The goal should be to reach the opposite end of the room from them. Common sports you could use as an example for the

students to envision include discus, shot put, or javelin. If students need to act out these actions while speaking that is okay too. The most important thing is that they can envision their voice traveling with their actions. As for words, start with single words and then work up to full sentences.

This activity is something super simple to have students do especially when they might be tired during the day. This sports-based activity makes public speaking a fun idea in the students' minds instead of some scary and boring topic. Projecting your voice is something that feels impossible for some students, especially if they are quieter, but giving constant practice and activities to the class makes students want to perfect their speaking skills.

## Audience

The last thing to cover, to complete the most effective communication and public speaking guide, is acknowledging the audience and how the audience interacts with the speaker. In any speech, there are always two parties: the speaker and the audience. While the speaker has the possibly scary task of presenting their information smoothly and interacting with their audience, the audience is also given a task to engage with the speaker.

There are three main attributes of a successful audience:

1. Eye Contact:

Just like it's important for a speaker to make eye contact with the audience, it's even more important for the audience to make eye contact back. This visual queue helps the speaker to understand that the audience cares about what they have to say.

## 2. Engagement

Engagement refers to the attention that the audience gives to the speaker. This includes no talking during the speech, visual queues of understanding the content (i.e. head nods), or even asking questions if possible. In addition to these, there should also be mostly silence amongst the audience because side conversations and whispering are distracting for the speaker and the rest of the audience.

## 3. Effort

Effort is one of the easiest things an audience can apply throughout a speech and can be interpreted simply as respect. There is respect between a speaker and the audience. The speaker does their part by curating a speech and presenting it, and the audience does their part by listening and being nice. Showing respect can be clapping after the speech, giving the speaker your undivided attention, or in this guide utilizing the '3 E's'.

### ACTIVITY: It's Your Turn

**OBJECTIVE:** Allow students to experience, firsthand, the effects of a bad audience on a speaker.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask a couple of students to go to the front of the room and begin speaking. While these students are speaking, take a seat within the classroom and start a conversation in the crowd. Instruct the students speaking at the front of the room to continue speaking while you distract the audience. Soon enough the slight disturbance created within the audience will grow and reach the

other students. After a couple of minutes of disruption, ask the students who are speaking to finish up and then ask them how the heavy disturbance made them feel. Then, ask the audience how much of the speeches they understood or heard.

When an audience isn't paying attention to the speaker, not only does the speaker struggle, but so does the rest of the audience. The audience must show respect and engagement to create the greatest environment for the speaker and their speech.

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