

Communication: what communication?

Group activity worksheet



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Written by teachers for teachers

Communication: what communication?

The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness of the importance of true communication in education and in life.

You will need

- to sit with a partner
- pen and paper.

The disruptive behaviours below are sometimes experienced in classrooms. A 2009 Government survey was able to pin down which behaviours occur the most often in a week.

Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise
Getting out of their seat without permission
Talking out of turn
General verbal abuse towards other pupils
Hindering other pupils

Action

1. With a partner, try putting them in order. Put the most frequently experienced behaviours at the top with the least frequently experienced at the bottom.
2. As a class, discuss your answers. Be prepared to justify your choice.



Communication: what communication? *continued*

Here are the findings of the official survey. The numbers represent the percentage of teachers who experienced different types of behaviour at least once in their classrooms during the one week prior to the survey.

	Primary	Secondary
Talking out of turn	96	99
Hindering other pupils	85	90
Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noise	78	78
Getting out of their seat without permission	69	70
General verbal abuse towards other pupils	37	52

Are you surprised?

Talking out of turn is the leader. Why is it that we want to have **our** say but we are not prepared to consider or listen to each other?

What is the purpose of communication? Consider the following true story:

A mother and two daughters are standing at the top of a huge cliff waiting for the sons to make the steep climb up from the beach. The boys seem to be taking their time and the mother is beginning to worry. One of the daughters is getting fidgety. Anxiously, the mother says to the daughter, "Keep away from the edge of the cliff!" To her horror, the little girl goes as close to the edge of the rocky cliff as she can and waves violently. The mother shrieks for her daughter to get back and asks her what she was doing. The little girl is baffled by her mother's reaction. "I did what you told me to do; I waved from the edge of the cliff."

Here the little girl misheard her mother; there was no communication and the consequences could have been fatal.

Communication is a two-way process. When we talk we want or need someone to hear what we are saying.

In order for this to happen there needs to be a listener.



If nobody is listening there is no point in talking.

Action

In pairs, think of an example in school where a lack of communication could make things difficult. Be prepared to share and explain your answer.