

Health
4.ICR.1.3
Interpret facial expressions and posture to emotions and empathy.

Materials Needed:

Appendix 1 – Emotion Cards

Picnic basket

Picnic blanket

Pretend pies

Fishing poles

Costumes (see skit)

The Zoomers, A Silent Movie Play (A Picnic in the Park) <http://r53-vip-soup.pbskids.org/zoom/activities/playhouse/asilentmovieplaypic.html>

Focus:

Ask for one or two student volunteers to participate in two role-plays.

Role-Play #1: You are at a sporting event, and the fan in front of you is smoking. The smoke is annoying you and causing respiratory problems. Without speaking to the person, let them know the smoke is bothering you.

Role-Play #2: You are in line at the grocery store. The person in front of you has 25 items in the 10-item express line. You are going to be late to practice. Without speaking, let the person know that you are annoyed because he is making you late.

After students have finished the role-plays, discuss how they knew what the person meant even though they were not talking.

Statement of Objectives:

Today we will learn about non-verbal communication. Your facial expressions and your body language or posture tell people how you are feeling without having to use words. It is important to your relationships that you learn to interpret non-verbal communication.

Teacher Input:

Sometimes it is not what we say, but rather how we say it that conveys what we truly mean. Our facial expressions and body language (called non-verbal communication) often speak more loudly than our words.

Ask these questions about non-verbal communication:

- What conclusions could you draw about the characters in the two role-plays?
- When your parents tell you something you don't want to hear, then you roll your eyes and stomp your feet, does that help your cause?

- If you saw a person who was grinning from ear to ear, would you approach that person the same way that you would if she were frowning?
- Why is it important to pay attention to the facial expressions and body language of others?

Teacher Information

Non-verbal communication (facial expressions, posture, body movements, and gestures) shows a person's mood and feelings. Other people are able to tell if someone is angry, excited, fearful, confused, happy, frustrated, proud, or embarrassed. At times, the person's body language matches his or her words; sometimes not. Many believe the non-verbal cues are more accurate than what is spoken. A friend may say, "I'm fine" when she is really feeling sad or discouraged. A perceptive friend can tell she's not okay.

Having the ability to interpret facial expressions and understand how that person is feeling is called empathy. Along with talking and listening, empathy is part of communication. Having empathy enables a person to see situations from another person's point of view. That skill helps young people have compassion and understanding and decreases the likelihood of conflict, bullying, and fighting. If the verbal and non-verbal messages do not match, one should ask questions to increase understanding of how the other person is feeling.

Now we will practice our ability to use non-verbal communication and interpret body language and facial expressions. This activity can be completed in teams, pairs or individually depending on the time you have or the personality of the class. Each team will get a word they are to act out without using words. If you think you know the answer, raise your hand. Each student or team will come to the front of the class and demonstrate their emotion to the whole class. The rest of the class will guess what feeling they are acting out.

Assessment:

Have you ever seen an old silent movie? Early movies had no sound, so actors had to tell the story with actions and facial expressions. This is a silent movie – no talking!

Give each student who will be acting the pantomime a script to read and act out according to the directions. Differentiation: Some students may write an original script to pantomime.

Emphasize that the students need to use facial expressions and their bodies to convey what is going on in the skit.

Explain that they will need to use their props in order to convey their ideas.

After the skit is acted, ask the remaining students these questions:

- How were the actors able to convey what was happening?
- How did you know how the actors were feeling?
- What were other ways you know what was happening in the skit?

Closure:

Today we illustrated the importance on non-verbal communication. One of the ways we show care and concern for others to have empathy for their feelings by being able to “read” their facial expressions and posture.

Emotion Cards

Happy	Sloppy
Sad	Insecure
Angry	Forgetful
Embarrassed	Confused
Dreamy	Lucky
Cheerful	Ashamed
Grumpy	Joyful
Sick	Sweet
Loud	Disorganized
Peaceful	Panicky
Enlightened	Silly