



Activity 2.2.1 See No Evil, Speak No Evil

Purpose

Working in groups is a common occurrence. You may have been involved in a 4-H club, played on a sports team, or just been assigned a school project where you had to rely on others. When a team works together, the team accomplishes many goals and can achieve great things. When teammates disagree and are confrontational with one another, little is accomplished. What kind of teammate are you?

As you learned in *Lesson 2.1 Listen to Me*, people communicate verbally and nonverbally. Are you a master of communication yet? Put your communication skills to the test as you complete this activity.

Materials

Per group of four students:

- 25 feet of rope

Per student:

- Blindfold
- Pencil
- *Agriscience Notebook*

Procedure

In this activity, you will demonstrate team building, decision-making, and communication skills. You will work with your group to make different shapes using the rope provided to you. Each person in the group must actively participate in the making of each shape. In Part One you will be blindfolded and in Part Two you will not be able to speak. You will need to communicate and work with your group to form the shape as quickly as possible.

Part One – The Sounds of Communication

1. Your teacher will assign you to a group of four. Designate a group member to collect the necessary materials.
2. Find an area in the classroom where you have room to work.
3. Place a blindfold snugly over your eyes.
4. Follow the verbal instructions provided by your teacher. You are allowed to talk and move, but not take your blindfold off.
5. Once you have what you all believe to be the best shape you are capable of making, ask your teacher for approval to remove your blindfold and to see how your team did in making the shape.

Part Two – The Sight of Communication

1. Remain in your group.
6. In this round, you will be able to see, but no talking is allowed. You may use gestures and movement but no voices.
7. Follow the verbal instructions of your teacher to build a new shape.
8. Once you have completed your shape to your group's satisfaction, signal your teacher. If your teacher approves, you may discuss the challenges you faced. If your teacher asks you to try again, remain silent and try to improve the shape you have made.

Part Three – Sights and Sounds

1. In this round, you may talk and see in order to monitor your progress.
9. Work together to create a star shape.
10. Once you have completed your shape to your group’s satisfaction, signal your teacher to observe your shape.
11. With your group, discuss the challenges of each shape you made, the importance of good communication, and the roles played by various group members in working together. Record your observations in Table 1.

Table 1. Observations

Trial	Observations
Part One – Sounds of Communication	We made a rectangle shape. It was difficult because we had no clue where we were. It was also difficult because we keep hitting each other. Without being able to see, you were unable to know what direction you were going in.
Part Two – Sights of Communication	We were able to make the diamond. It was really easy compared to not being able to see. When not being able to talk you can use hand gestures and motion to show what to do. Although it was easier, that didn’t mean that it was easy not being able to talk. Without being able to talk, it was very unclear who needed to do something and who didn’t. It was difficult to know who was going to move, or if I needed to move.
Part Three – Sights and Sounds	Sights and sounds are very important because without them you are clueless on what you are supposed to do.

Conclusion

1. What role does communication play in working with others?

Communication plays a large role in working with others because it allows you to communicate with others on what to do. If you weren’t allowed to communicate in anyway it would cause no work to be done because no one would know what to do.

12. Why are both verbal and nonverbal skills important when communicating?

Verbal skills are important because you are able to say what needs accomplishing. Without verbal communication you don’t know what you are supposed to be doing. Nonverbal skills are important because they allow you to know what someone is talking about. Without the nonverbal skill of sight, it was difficult to know what was trying to be explained or what needed to be done.

13. How does this activity relate to real life group decision making?

This activity relates to decision making because communication is an extremely important role in decisions. Without communication decision are unable to be discussed, which makes it impossible to know what decision people want.

14. What challenge did your group face when building the star as compared with the other shapes?

We faced not being able to figure out what kind of star we wanted to make, and so we compromised on a shape that relatively looked like a star.