

Standard Four – Lesson One: Communication – “I” Messages, Open-Ended Questions

Time: 30-minute class period

Materials:

Scripture Resource Guide

Communication Skills Worksheet

Objectives:

Students will be able to say an “I” message.

Students will be able to ask an open-ended question.

Introductory Activity

Make this statement to your students, “You are always behind on your work. You are lazy and will never learn if you don’t start getting serious about your studies.” Ask them to tell you what that statement was like for them. Next, make this statement, “ I feel worried about you when you are getting behind on your studies because I am afraid that you will not be a successful student. I need to know that you want to learn.” Ask your students how the second message was different and which one seemed better to them.

Activities

Tell students that they are going to learn some skills for good communication today. Tell them that what they just experienced was the same message twice. The first time, it was blaming because every line started with “You”. The second time, it was presented with “I”, or what we call an “I” message. Explain that “I” messages are much easier to hear because they give the feeling of the sender, and focus on what the sender is feeling and would like from the other person. After reviewing the parts of an “I” message, have students look at their Communication Skills Worksheet and write an “I” message about any troubling experience they are facing now or have experienced recently.

Have students fill out the “I” Message section of the “Communication Skills” Worksheet.” Ask a student to join you for a conversation. Question the student with “Yes” and “No” questions. Let the students see how difficult it is to carry on a conversation when only one-word answers are required. Next, question a student on the same topic with open-ended questions (“What,” “How,” etc.). Ask students what they notice (the conversation flows so much more smoothly, and so much more information is shared). Have students ask questions of one another using open-ended questions for a few minutes. Ask a couple of students to come up and demonstrate for the class.

Have students fill out the Open-Ended Questions section of the “Communication Skills Worksheet.”

Have students memorize the Scripture Memory Verses: **Proverbs 15:23** – A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word!

Proverbs 10:11 – The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

Communication Skills Worksheet

“I” Message Format

I feel _____ **when** _____
_____.

I need _____
_____.

Make the following situations into “I” statements:

Someone is saying something untrue about you.

I feel _____ **when** _____
_____.

I need _____
_____.

You are doing all of the work on a group project.

I feel _____ **when** _____
_____.

I need _____
_____.

A friend returned something they borrowed from you and it is damaged.

I feel _____ when _____

_____.

I need _____

_____.

Open-Ended Questions

Make these statements into open-ended questions. You might start a question with “What” or “How” to avoid simple “Yes” or “No” answers.

Do you feel sad about that?

Weren't you mad when that happened?

Do you want to talk about it now?

Are you worried about the test?

Do you need help?

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