



Communication Skills

Ideas for Teachers, Catechists, and Families

OVERVIEW

During the three-day World of Communications Jubilee event on January 24-26, professionals in journalism, broadcasting, and digital media are gathering to discuss the role of communication in spreading the Gospel and promoting unity.

Effective communication is essential for building relationships, fostering community, and sharing the Gospel. As adults we have the vital responsibility to equip our children with the skills they need to express themselves clearly and listen empathetically. Good communication goes beyond merely exchanging words; it encompasses verbal and nonverbal skills, written expression, visual storytelling, and active listening. As we encourage our children to engage in meaningful conversations, we can instill in them the importance of empathy and understanding that Jesus exemplified in his ministry.

Try these fun and engaging activities designed to build essential communication skills in children:

EMOTION CHARADES

Skills Developed: Nonverbal communication, empathy

Instructions

- Prepare a set of cards with different emotions (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger, surprise). A sample set of emotion cards (from RCL Benziger's *Stories of God's Love* Kindergarten program) is included on page 3.
- Divide the children into teams. Have one child from each team pick a card and act out the emotion without speaking.
- The other team members must guess the emotion. Discuss how each emotion feels and the importance of recognizing feelings in others.

STORY CIRCLE

Skills Developed: Verbal skills, listening

Instructions

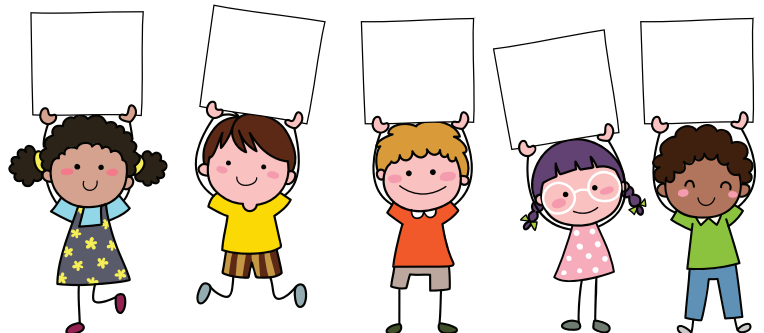
- Gather the children in a circle.
- Start a story with one sentence (e.g., "Once upon a time, in a small village, there was a kind knight").
- Invite each child to take a turn adding a sentence to the story. Encourage the children to listen to each other to maintain coherence.
- Reflect on the final story, discussing how listening shapes narratives and relationships.

PICTURE THIS

Skills Developed: Visual skills, verbal expression

Instructions

- Provide each child with a blank sheet of paper and colored pencils.
- Ask the children to draw a scene from their favorite Bible story or parable.
- After they finish, have the children share their drawings with the group, explaining why they chose that moment and what it means to them.
- This activity enhances visual storytelling and encourages expressive language.



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LISTENING PAIRS

Skills Developed: Active listening, empathy

Instructions

- Prepare several simple drawings for the children to use (see sample set on page 4). Pair up the children and have them sit back-to-back. Give one of the pictures to one child and have him or her describe the drawing while the other tries to draw it based on the description alone.
- Afterward, invite them to compare the drawings. Discuss the importance of clear communication and how it can lead to understanding.

ACTS OF KINDNESS BINGO

Skills Developed: Nonverbal communication, empathy

Instructions

- Create Bingo cards with acts of kindness (e.g., "Help someone with homework," "Give a compliment," "Share a toy").
- Ask the children to complete the squares by performing the acts of kindness during the week.
- Gather afterward to share their experiences, focusing on how kindness communicates love and understanding, much like Jesus taught.

CIRCLE OF COMPLIMENTS

Skills Developed: Positive communication, seeing and articulating the good in others

Instructions

- Arrange for the children to sit in a circle.
- Explain that each person will give a genuine compliment to the person on his or her right. It could be about something he or she admires, a positive trait, or something nice the person has done.
- Start with one child and move around the circle until everyone has received and given a compliment.
- Discuss how giving and receiving compliments made the children feel, reinforcing the value of positive feedback.

WRITE A LETTER

Skills Developed: Expressing thoughts and feelings through the written word

Instructions

- Provide children with paper, envelopes, and writing materials.
- Discuss the importance of sharing news, asking questions about the recipient's life, and expressing feelings in a letter.
- Guide them on how to start and end a letter, and encourage them to decorate their letters or envelopes to add a personal touch.
- For younger children, this can be a drawing or a few sentences, while older children can write more detailed letters.

Generative AI was utilized in the composition of these activities with ChatGPT, October 18, 2024, OpenAI.

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EMOTION CARDS (for Emotion Charades game)

Cut out and use these sample emotion cards, or create similar ones of your own.



excited



scared



angry



sad



love



happy

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DRAWING CARDS (for Listening Pairs game)

Cut out and use these sample cards, or create similar ones of your own.

