



Meeting Communication Survival Guide

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- B. Relationships
 - B2. Interact and work with others
 - B5. Participate effectively as a team member
- H. Social Growth
 - H2. Present self appropriately in various settings
- M. Communications
 - M4. Communicates appropriately with co-workers and supervisors
 - M5. Operates effectively in the workplace

National Standards

- CS.01.01.01.a. Work productively with a group or independently.
- CS.01.02.02.b. Utilize communication skills to collaborate in a group setting.
- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the student will...
- Apply foundational and life skills learned through agriculture in the school and community setting.
- As a result of this **lesson**, the student will ...
- Utilize communication skills to collaborate in a group setting.

Content Outline

Objective 1. Demonstrate compromise, consensus, and community building concepts for carrying out different tasks, assignments, and projects.

I. What is Group Communication?

- A. Group Communication is defined as a message sent by a group member to one or more **receivers** with the intent to change other members' behaviors.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 45 minutes.

Resources

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, F.P. (2006). *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills – Ninth Edition*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
Covey, S. (1998). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. New York, NY: Fireside.

Tools, Equipment and Supplies

Transparencies/Projector
Writing Surface
11 x 17 in. paper and markers – enough for six groups.
Magnets or tape to put icons on the board or other surface.
MS.IAS.3.1.TM.A – one per teacher
MS.IAS.3.1.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.IAS.3.1.TM.C – one per teacher
MS.IAS.3.1.AS.A – as many as needed to cut up one role for each student.
MS.IAS.3.1.AS.B – one per student
MS.IAS.3.1.ASSESS.A – one per student

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Sender

Receiver

Verbal

Nonverbal

Active Listener

1. Effective Communication Involves:
 - a. **Sending** the Message
 - b. Interpreting the Message
 - c. **Receiving** the Message
- B. Meeting Survival Guide
 1. Be an **active listener**.
 2. Make sure your **verbal** and **nonverbal** messages are the same.
 3. Use "I" statements.
 4. Be engaged in the meeting.
 5. Seek first to understand and then be understood.
 6. Respect what others have to say and their opinions.



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Interest Approach

This lesson will begin with a modified Party Host e-Moment®. As students come into the classroom greet them at the door and give each student a role card (The cards are found on **MS.IAS.3.1.AS.A**). The card explains that the students are very important class representatives who must decide upon the theme of the big school dance. It also lets each student know what role they will play during the meeting. Make sure students are not sharing their cards with other students.

Greet students as they arrive and hand them their cards.

Welcome to the Annual School Dance Committee Meeting. Here is a card that explains your important role. Read it and have a seat.

Once all of the students have received a card and taken a seat, get their attention. Assume the role of adult sponsor of the committee meeting.

Hello everyone and welcome to this very important meeting to decide the theme of the annual school dance. Each of you plays an important part in making this decision. Let's get started by first asking the class president to get the meeting started. Please come forward.

As this meeting begins, you will play the role of an advisor at the meeting. The idea is to facilitate a meeting that is frustrating and where nothing can be achieved because of conflicting personalities. Play the role. Step in when necessary to make the experience the best. Have fun with it.

Mr./Madam President, the floor is yours.

The president will begin the meeting and the roles will begin to play out. Let the meeting go until you feel the roles have played out. This should be after five to eight minutes. Jump back into the meeting and draw it to a close. Applaud the effort of each of the members of the meeting.

Let's draw this meeting to a close. Great acting! Meetings like this will be or are a big part of your life. Let's discuss the meeting we just had.

What went well and what was tough?

How would you describe the effectiveness of this meeting?

Did everyone at the meeting get to share their opinion or were they heard? Why or why not?

Elicit responses from the students.

Communication is what makes or breaks any meeting. By the end of our time together, you will better understand what group communication is and have six strategies you can use to communicate effectively in any meeting.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Utilize communication skills to collaborate in a group setting.

I. What is Group Communication?

Utilize **MS.IAS.3.1.TM.A**

It is somewhat obvious that all of us now know what group communication is NOT. But what is group communication supposed to be?

Who will take a stab at defining group communication?

Elicit responses from students. You can put together their definitions to create the class definition or use the one given below

Great! What all of you said matches very closely to the definition I have for group communication. Everyone take out your Meeting Survival Guide and capture the definition of group communication.

Give students **MS.IAS.3.1.AS.B**.

Group Communication is defined as a message sent by a group member to one or more **receivers** with the intent to change other members' behaviors.

In order for a group to communicate, a message must be **sent**, interpreted, and **received**. Look at your meeting survival guide. In the box labeled communication diagram, create your own diagram that explains how a group communicates. Each of you can create your own based on what you think. Be ready to share your diagrams with the group. Words you should include are **sender**, **receiver**, and interpreting. Here is an example I found.



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Use **MS.IAS.3.1.TM.B** or create a model of your own to show-share your model as an example

Add whatever else you want to if it adds to your model.

Monitor students' progress and let them know they have 30 seconds to wrap up their diagram. This should be a quick five-minute process.

Who will share your diagram first? Feel free to add to your diagram as you see other students' diagrams.

Elicit student examples. Applaud each student's efforts. Feel free to challenge and question the models as you see fit to bring out concepts of **senders**, interpreting a message, and receiving the correct message.

You all obviously know a lot about group communication. What might be some barriers that would mess up the message as it is being sent during a meeting?

Elicit responses. Answers could include the message not being clear, too many people talking, people get mad and don't listen, members aren't paying attention or being good listeners, the person isn't talking loud enough, etc.

It is important that both the **sender** and **receiver** practice good group communication skills so the message gets sent correctly. Now that you know what group communication is, it is time to create your Meeting Survival Guide. These six tips will help you get your message across, not make people mad, and allow your team to reach a quality decision. Plus people will think you are a really great team leader!

II. Meeting Survival Guide

Utilize **MS.IAS.3.1.TM.C**

The next section teaches students the key elements of the communication survival guide through jigsaw groups. Basically, students first learn the content given to them to become "experts." Next, students change groups so that there is an expert from each content area in the group. Students then teach each other all of the survival guide tips. When the jigsaw is complete, students should have a grasp of all the content.

Modified Hieroglyphics e-Moment

Since you all seem to have a great deal of knowledge on this subject, we are going to all help each other create this survival guide. When I say **EXPERT** you will find the expert sheet that has your name on it.

(If you do not pre-plan the groups, you could count off by sixes, have students form their own groups or utilize birthdays to group the students.)

Your job is to become an expert on the strategy, create an icon for the strategy, and be ready to share your ideas with all of your peers within five minutes. You will have to work fast to get the task completed. The expert sheets are set out around the room (or you can just hand them out to one of the students on the task card). What questions are there? **EXPERT!**

Monitor students as they work. Provide any guidance if needed. If students need more time extend it by small increments as needed.

That was some intense learning! Turn to someone near you and tell him or her, "I'm glad we have an expert around here!" Like we said earlier, the goal of our time together is to leave here with a meeting survival guide that you can use in any meeting. So everyone get out your survival sheet so you can write down all the knowledge the experts share.

MS.IAS.3.1.AS.B once again.

Who will share their knowledge with us first? Start by sharing and explaining your icon. You have two minutes to share all of your knowledge, so be efficient.

Have the first group stand and place their icon on the board or other surface. Make sure students are capturing the icon and the information on their survival guides.

Look for the following information in the presentations:

- **Be an active listener.**
 - Listen with your eyes, heart, and ears.
 - Ask questions about what people say to make sure you understand.
 - Don't be thinking about what you want to say.



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- **Make sure your verbal and nonverbal messages are the same.**
 - Be aware of what your face and body are doing.
 - Every message includes much more than what you say.
 - Be careful of your **nonverbal** cues when others are speaking.
- **Use "I" statements.**
 - Avoid talking about other people and their ideas.
 - Also frame things as you see them or feel about them.
 - Never attack a person or judge their ideas.
- **Be engaged in the meeting.**
 - Don't talk to your friends during the meeting.
 - Don't "play" which includes drawing, texting, or spacing out.
 - You should always know what is being discussed.
- **Seek first to understand and then be understood.**
 - Always think about where the other person is coming from.
 - Don't talk first all the time. Take the time to listen first.
 - Think about what you are going to say before you say it.
- **Respect what others have to say and their opinions.**
 - It is OK for people to disagree.
 - Your way is not always the only way.
 - As stated in strategy five, try to understand where others are coming from.
 - Don't interrupt others.

Have all the icons posted on the board or other surface.

Great job, experts! These six meeting survival tips can really help you in any meeting. The next time you are in a meeting, you should have this sheet with you to remind you how to communicate effectively in a group.

We have learned a lot today about how to communicate in a group. Let's make sure we have it all logged in our brains.

Review/Summary

Communicating in a group involves three different elements. One is the **sender**; what are the other two?

Elicit responses from students: interpretation and **receiver**.

What are the six survival tips? Raise your hand and I'll call on you popcorn style until all of the strategies are mentioned. Call on students as they raise their hands. Move quickly.

Look for:

Be an **active listener**.

Make sure your **verbal** and **nonverbal** messages are the same.

Use "I" statements.

Be engaged in the meeting.

Seek first to understand and then be understood.

Respect what others have to say and their opinions.

We really are experts now in communicating in groups. At the next meeting you attend, you will be able to operate like a pro.

Depending on the next lesson you will teach, preview what is coming. If following the sequence, it will be different ways to make decisions.

Next time, we will add to your meeting survival guide as we explore different ways to make a decision.



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Application

Extended classroom activity:

To extend this lesson, students could be given a task that requires a great deal of discussion. Ideas include the Winter Survival Activity, which asks students to decide which items would be needed if a group were stranded. Another option is any type of murder mystery with a list of clues. Following the lesson, students could practice the six strategies while accomplishing the task. Following the exercise, students would journal in regards to the effectiveness of the communication during the activity.

FFA activity:

The icons that were created during the lesson can be posted in the room at the next chapter meeting to remind the members of the survival guide to effective group communication. The students could briefly share what the icons mean.

SAE activity:

An important skill in any field of agriculture is working on a team to make a decision. Students could find an opportunity to be a part of a professional meeting that relates to their SAE and reflect on the experience. It may be a staff meeting at the grocery store, a Forestry Department board meeting, or a Farm Bureau committee meeting. Following the experience, students should collect their thoughts in their SAE journals or record books.

Evaluation

To evaluate students' understanding you have the option of collecting each student's Meeting Survival Guide, or you could utilize **MS.IAS.3.1.ASSESS.A**.

Answers to Evaluation

For the Meeting Survival Guide, refer to the content outline in the curriculum.

For **MS.IAS.3.1.ASSESS.A** use the following answers:

1. B – a message sent by a group member to one or more **receivers** with the intent to change other members' behaviors.
2. D – All of the above.
3. False – People can disagree in a meeting, but still respect their stance.
4. False – it is best to listen first, and think about what you want to say.

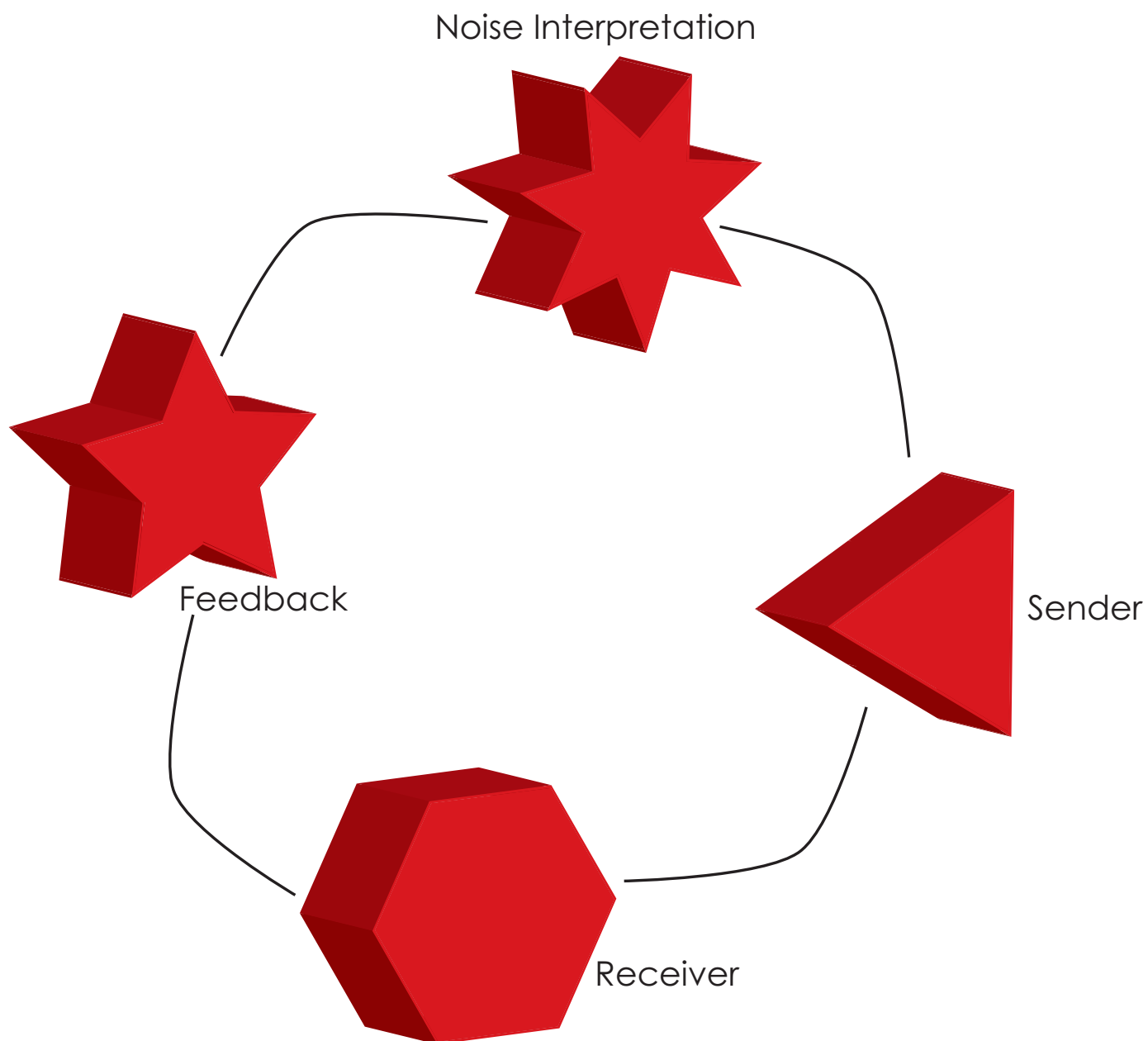


What is Group Communication?

- A message sent by a group member to one or more *receivers* with the intent to change other members' behaviors.

Effective Communication Involves:

- Sending the Message
- Interpreting the Message
- Receiving the Message





Meeting Survival Guide

- **Be an *active listener*.**
- **Make sure your *verbal* and *non-verbal* messages are the same.**
- **Use “I” statements.**
- **Be engaged in the meeting.**
- **Seek first to understand and then be understood.**
- **Respect what others have to say and their opinions.**



Instructions to Instructor: Cut out only one of the president roles, and then cut out as many of the other roles as needed for each student to participate. Distribute each non-president role evenly.

President:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

You will be the president. When the teacher gives you the floor, take control of the meeting and start seeing what people want. You really want the theme to be, "Once Upon a Time," but you don't really want people to know that. Run the meeting; make ugly faces when people give other ideas.

Interrupter:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

You really want the theme to be "A Night In Paris." You don't mean to, but you just can't help but interrupt people when they are talking to share more ideas of how cool your idea is.

The Quiet One:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

You have some really good ideas, but unless someone asks you to share, you just keep it to yourself. You are pretty shy in the meeting. You want the theme to be "Under the Sea."

The Listener:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

There are a lot of ideas flying around. Your job is to listen to the ideas and try to help everybody understand what people want. Try to put people's ideas together so that everyone is happy.

The Know It All:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

You want the theme to be "Hollywood" and that is the only good idea that has been brought up. Cut down other people's ideas and remind them how great yours is.

Super Communicator:

You have just walked into a very important meeting as a class representative. This meeting is to decide the theme of the annual school dance, which is a huge deal.

You think that "Life in the 60s" would be a great idea. You listen to everyone, try to make sure everyone has a chance to share and don't interrupt. When it is your turn you share your idea.



Meeting Communication Survival Guide

Group Communication is: _____

My Communication Diagram: _____

Meeting Communication Survival Strategies:

Icon	Strategy Information



Name: _____

Directions: Read each of the following questions and choose the best answer. Make sure to explain your answer on the true/false questions.

1. **According to the lesson, group communication is _____.**
 - a. A message that is sent to a group at a meeting.
 - b. A message sent by a group member to one or more **receivers** with the intent to change other members' behaviors.
 - c. A group of people talking at a function.
 - d. A president telling more than one person what to do.
2. **Active listening is _____.**
 - a. Asking questions to make sure you understand.
 - b. Looking like you are interested.
 - c. Thinking about the person and what they are trying to say.
 - d. All of the above.
3. **True or False. People disagreeing in a meeting means they are not communicating well.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

Explain your answer: _____

4. **True or False. If you have an idea, it is always best to speak up first and get everyone to pick your answer.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

Explain your answer: _____

