



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.53

BEGINNING CONVERSATIONS

Unit. Stage Two of Development—We

Problem Area. How Do I Build Relationships with Others?

Precepts. B2: Interact and work with others.

National Standards. NL-ENG.K-12.12 — Applying Language Skills — Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Identify components of beginning conversations.
- 2 Demonstrate strategies to maintain conversations with adults.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

National FFA Essential Learnings, 2003.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- Writing surface
- Three to five volunteers from the community to serve as your assessment group.
- One person for every four students would work well.
- Overhead projector
- Nametags—one per student
- Radio or CD player with music of the teacher's choice
- Copies of HS.AS.53.A—two per student: one for the evaluator and one for the student
- One copy of HS.53.TM.A
- One copy of HS.53.TM.B

Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

There are no key terms



Interest Approach

Before class, put the names of the students on the nametags. Put the name of the partner (you pair them up as you want) in the bottom corner of the nametag.

Students will enter the classroom and will see a mixer setting, as there would be at a party or a school dance. They will be required to wear a nametag and meet the person listed at the bottom of their name tag. On the overhead projector, have HS.53.TM.A on display. Tell the students as they are entering the room.



Okay, welcome to the *Made up name of event*. Please come in, get your nametag and put it on. As you will notice on the bottom of the cards is another name. When I say, "Go," you are to find that person today and have a conversation with them. Take a few moments and talk to each other. During that conversation, you are to ask your partner the following questions:

Where did you grow up?

Do you live in town or on a farm?

What activities are you involved in?



How many people are in your family?

What are your plans after high school?

Are you active in FFA? If so, what activities have you been involved in?

Do you have any pets?

What is your involvement in agriculture?

Don't worry about remembering the questions as they are on the overhead. Ready? Go.

Time them for three minutes.

Start the music at the beginning of the activity. Keep track of time. Begin to turn the music down to gather their attention when there is fifteen seconds left. Shut off the music at the end of the activity.



Everyone find a seat and sit down. Let's discuss meeting your partner. Did any of you have a difficult time learning more about this person? If so, why?



How many of you were excited to see a social setting when you walked in the room. What was so exciting about the "social" setting. *Possible answers include: I knew I was going to have fun;, I like socials*



You are about to be given the tools to talk to anyone in any setting. Just as you visited with your partner at today's social, you will be able to have meaningful conversations with people at FFA events, meetings, and even at ballgames.



We need to be curious to learn about others today. Believe it or not, you will be able to have a conversation with anyone by the end of class today. We need to be able to try new things and listen carefully to each other.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Identify components of beginning conversations.

Set up the following activity by asking students the following question:



 Take 10 seconds to think about what you have in your locker. You have 10 seconds.

Wait 10 seconds.

 When I say, "share," write a list in your notebook of at least five items that you have in your locker. Share.

Time students for 30 seconds.

 Share your answers by raising your hand. I will write them on the board. Add the ones that you did not think of to the list in your notebook. *Possible answers from the students may include: pictures; books; sweatshirt; keys; cards or notes from friends; CDs, and posters*

Use Hieroglyphics Moment to enhance their understanding of the items they have found in their lockers.

 We will be use the locker method when we meet new people. In order to have a meaningful conversation, simply think of the items that you may find in your locker. Please fill in the following information in your notes.

I. The Locker Method of Beginning Conversations

A. Pictures

1. Family, friends, travel, activities

B. Sweatshirt

1. Where do you go to school, or where did you graduate from.

C. Books

1. What are your hobbies and interests.

D. Cards

1. What has been your most meaningful moment, highest honor, or greatest achievement.

E. Keys

1. Where are you from. Where have you lived throughout your life.

Ask students the following questions.

 Do you feel this is a good method to reach many kinds of people. Why or why not. *Possible answers: yes, because it works for all ages; no, parts of it seem too personal*

 Let's look back at the person that you met during the social earlier. If you feel these questions would have worked in that situation, raise your right thumb. If you feel that they would not have worked, point your right thumb down. If you feel that some of them would have worked, but you are not sure about the rest, put your thumb in the middle.





As you can tell by the responses, we need to be conscious of whom we are talking to. We may not get to use all five steps when meeting someone for the first time. We can use a few of these steps as great conversation starters, and leave the rest for your next opportunity to meet that person again.



During the beginning of class, we worked in partners and answered the question “What do you have in your locker.” Remember drawing pictures to represent the items in your locker. Take a moment and use your pictures to represent these five rules. I’ll bet many of the answers were the same as the Locker Method we just discussed. If you need to create new ones, please do so. Capture all of your thoughts in your notebook. You need one picture for each step.



Tell me what five items in your locker can help you start conversations with others.



Now that we know how to start conversations, let’s look at ways to maintain those conversations!

Objective 2. Demonstrate strategies to maintain conversations with adults.



We have a few special guests with us today. Some of these individuals you may recognize, and some may be new to you. We may have farmers, community leaders, bankers, school board members, parents, or even other teachers in this very room. Your challenge is to use the locker room strategy to start a conversation with at least two individuals in this room. Are you ready to meet our guests.

Guests will enter the room. You will have given them their pre-assigned student before class starts. Have the students’ names on the evaluation rubrics and give the evaluation sheets to the corresponding judge. The judges will be evaluating how the student performs during the conversation.



You will have two minutes to carry on your conversation with one guest. At the end of the two minutes I will say, “Switch,” and you will have a two-minute break for your guest to complete the evaluation. During this break, I want you to go to your seat. You will list the tasks that you did well during the first conversation in your notebook. I want you to also choose one thing to improve for the second conversation. After two minutes, I will say, “Continue,” and you will find your second person to meet.



Find your guest!
Count two minutes



Switch!
Count two minutes



Continue!
Count two minutes
Give judges some time to complete the evaluation of the second conversation.





Students, take your seats. We would like to thank our special guests for enhancing our learning today and taking time out of their busy schedules to be here. Let's thank them with one huge power clap on the count of three! Ready? Let's give our guests a big power clap on the count of three. One, two, three clap!

When planning this activity, ask one or two of the guests to share with the class the importance of beginning conversations correctly. Give them two minutes each, depending on time, to speak.

►Alternative Activity:

The alternative activity to scheduling guests to participate in your class would be to use students to evaluate one another. Before class begins, have the students paired up by writing their names on the evaluation sheets and their partner's name in the top right corner of the sheet. Explain to the students that they are meeting this person for the first time, and they need to evaluate how well the items on the sheet were performed by the other person. They would have two minutes to begin the conversations. Stop for another two minutes and allow the evaluating student to fill out the sheet. The students would then switch roles and perform the same activity.

Processing questions:



Was this activity easy or difficult. Why. Were you surprised at how the conversation went. Why or why not.



Tell me about your experience in having a conversation with someone you just met. Can you describe the process you used to keep the conversation going. *Possible answers include: the locker method; feeding off what the other person was saying; going with what the other person was asking me*



How challenging would it be to be in a situation where you knew very few people, if anyone, and you had to start a conversation. Explain your answer. *Possible answers include: not difficult because of what we learned in class today; could be difficult depending on the environment*



Great job today! Let's take a look at where we have been. We discussed the difficulty of meeting new people. Some of you feel that it is tough to meet new people, but we gave everyone an opportunity to try meeting someone new.



Review/Summary



When I say, "locker," everyone draw the five icons of the locker method in their notebook. When you are finished, hold up your notebook so we can check each other. Ready. Locker! Answers include: pictures; sweatshirt; books; cards; keys



Now look at the person beside you to make sure that they have the correct icons. Great job!



►Extended Classroom Activity:

Students will take a copy of the evaluation rubric that was used by the guests for the conversation activity and complete it as a self-evaluation of their experience meeting the two guests in class today. They will turn this in as a homework grade tomorrow.

►FFA Activity:

Students will attend one new FFA activity. At this activity, they will use the locker method to meet three new people. Ask your students on the way home to tell you about their new friends based on the locker method.

►SAE Activity:

Students will interact with others as a component of their SAE project, either through an application evaluation, interview, or an on-the-job experience. They will utilize the locker method to learn about the individuals that they come in contact with throughout their SAE experience.

✓ Evaluation

Handout HS.53.AS.A to be completed during the beginning conversation activity by the guests. This is the evaluation of the student's performance during the conversation.

Answers to Assessment:

1. Pictures (family, friends)
Sweatshirt (school)

Books (hobbies and interests)
Cards (significant experiences in their lives, achievements)
Keys (where they are from and where they live now)
2. FFA events
Mixers
Meetings

Banquets
Community activities



BEGINNING CONVERSATIONS

►Directions:

Complete the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. List the five items in the locker method for beginning conversations. Remember to explain each step!
2. List three opportunities to use the locker method in beginning conversations with new people.



DIRECTIONS FOR CLASS:

1. As you enter the room, find your nametag on the table. Place the nametag on the right side of your shoulder.

2. Look at the name printed on the bottom of your nametag. Find that person and shake hands.

3. Begin a conversation with the other person. Please ask the following questions to the other person:

➔Where did you grow up.

➔Do you live in town or on a farm.

➔What activities are you involved in.

➔How many people are in your family.

➔What are your plans after high school.

➔Are you active in FFA. If so, what activities have you been involved in.

➔Do you have any pets.

➔What is your involvement in agriculture.



THE LOCKER METHOD OF BEGINNING CONVERSATIONS

◆ Pictures

→ Family, friends, travel, activities

◆ Sweatshirt

→ Where do you go to school, or where did you graduate from.

◆ Books

→ What are your hobbies and interests.

◆ Cards

→ What has been your most meaningful moment, highest honor, or greatest achievement.

◆ Keys

→ Where are you from. Where have you lived throughout your life.



Evaluator Name: _____

► **Directions:**

Complete the following evaluation based on the conversation you have with the student. Please circle the number that applies to each category of performance standards.

Students have learned the locker method to starting conversations. This means thinking of five items you would find in a locker and asking the other person about those key ideas. The ideas include: pictures (family and friends), sweatshirt (school attended or currently attending), books (hobbies and interests), cards (significant experiences and achievements) and keys (where you live and where you are from).

5 Student shows knowledge of the locker method. The student was able to lead the conversation and was at ease in visiting with me.

4 Student used the locker method. The student was able to continue conversing, but needed a little encouragement from me, or may have had some quiet breaks in the conversation.

3 Student used the locker method, although they had trouble remembering all the components of the method. The student stumbled through parts of the conversation.

2 Student had difficulty using the locker method. The student was unable to carry the conversation and had difficulty asking appropriate questions.

1 Student did not use the locker method. The student was unable to ask questions, nor could the student carry the conversation by initiating questions.

My overall rating of this student's ability to begin conversations is:

Comments or suggestions:

