Show Respect Online

LESSON PLAN grades 2-3

Essential Question: How can I make sure my emails are clear and respectful?

Learning Overview and Objectives

Overview: Students explore the similarities and differences between in-person and online communications, and then learn how to write clear and respectful emails.

Students begin by discussing how to be clear and respectful when they talk with people, face to face or on the telephone. They explore the concept of tone, then compare and contrast what it is like to communicate face to face versus online. Students learn some rules that can help them express themselves clearly and respectfully when they write email messages. They then apply what they have learned by editing an email message.

objectives

Students will:

• Understand how to show respect in social situations

• Recognize the importance of tone in both face-to-face and online communications

• Learn rules for writing clear and respectful emails by editing an email message

Materials and Preparation

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Materials

• **Email Edit Student Handout**

Preparation

• Copy the **Email Edit Student Handout**, one for every student

• Review the **Email Edit Student Handout** and be prepared to guide students through the corrections

Parent Resources

• Send parents the **Effective Email Communication for Elementary Students Parent Tip Sheet**

Key Vocabulary

• **Respectful:** In a way that shows you care about another person's feelings

• **Tone:** The way something sounds and the feelings it expresses

• **Edit (verb):** To change something that is written to make it better

Introduce

TEACH the Key Vocabulary word **respectful**.

ASK *What are some examples of how to be clear to and* **respectful** *of others when you are talking in school?*

Sample responses:

- *Try to talk clearly, and explain what you mean if someone doesn't understand*
- *Listen to what other people have to say*
- *Take turns talking*
- *Speak instead of shouting*
- *Don't make fun of people*
- *Say "please" and "thank you"*
- *Say nice things to people*

Record student responses, so that you may return to them later in the lesson.

INVITE students to discuss what might happen if people did not try to be clear and respectful in the way they talked at school.

ASK *What would happen if it was okay to say mean things to other people?* (Students should understand that people's feeling would get hurt and everyone would be upset and angry.)

ASK *What would happen if we didn't take turns talking, or if we were allowed to shout in class?* (Students should conclude that without rules everyone might be talking or shouting at once, and no one could learn anything.)

Teach 1: Say It or See It

TEACH the Key Vocabulary word **tone**.

WRITE the following sentences on the board or on chart paper.

> *Don't you know how to play checkers?*
> *I didn't know you were going to the circus.*
> *Why are you eating those carrots?*

MODEL for students how it is possible to say the first sentence aloud in different ways, changing the **tone** each time. First, say it softly and in an interested, inquisitive tone; then repeat it louder, in an accusatory or condescending tone. Emphasize different words in the sentence in a way that conveys your desired tone. Then ask students to describe how the sentence sounds, depending on your tone.

INVITE students to take turns saying the second and third sentences aloud. Have them say each sentence in a friendly way, as if they are providing or asking for clarification. Then have them change their tone so that they sound annoyed, angry, or upset.

ENCOURAGE students to think about the differences between hearing a sentence said aloud and seeing it written down. Students should understand that when a sentence is written down, the tone isn't always obvious. Tell students there are things they can do to make sure they are being clear and respectful when they write.

EXPLAIN to students that more and more, people are connecting online, through things like email, rather than in person. That's why tone is important when it comes to email too.

ASK *Can you think of some things you can do to make sure your emails are clear and respectful?* (Revisit the rules students came up with in the introduction to the lesson, and ask students how those rules might or might not apply to email.)

WRITE the following rules on the board or chart paper, and discuss them with students.

- Say only what you would say to a person's face
- Do not use rude words
- Do not hurt other people's feelings
- Be clear in your subject line
- Check your spelling
- Don't type in UPPERCASE letters. It is like SHOUTING
- Use smileys sometimes so that people will understand you better
    - » :-) means you are smiling
    - » ;-) means you are making a joke
    - » :-(means you are sad

Teach 2: Email Edit

DISTRIBUTE the **Email Edit Student Handout**, one for each student.

TEACH the Key Vocabulary word **edit**.

EXPLAIN to students that they will **edit** an email message to make sure it is clear and polite.

INVITE students to complete the editing exercise, following the rules they learned in Teach 1. They should make the following changes:

- Change the subject line so that Uncle Joe will know the message is from his nephew and not a stranger
- Change the uppercase sentence to standard upper- and lowercase
- Correct the spelling of "rite"
- Rewrite the last sentence to make it more polite
- Change the ending "Guess Who" to a real name

Wrap Up and Assess

You can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives.

ASK *What are some ways you can be clear and respectful in the way you talk to others in school?* (Students should name and explain some of the rules discussed in the introduction to the lesson. They should be aware that it is important to be respectful to their classmates as well as to adults.)

ASK *What are some differences between saying something aloud to someone, and writing it in an email?* (When you write something, people may not always understand your tone.)

ASK *What are some ways to be respectful when sending an email?* (Students should be able to name and explain most of the rules they learned in Teach 1.)

ASK *What should you do before you send an email?* (Students should understand that it is important to read and edit their emails before sending them.)

Extension Activity

Have students compose an email message to you. They can pretend that they are at home and need to know the homework assignment, or that they have a question about the lesson. First, have them write a message that contains errors and does not follow the rules they learned in Teach 1. Then have them edit their message. You may then invite students to send their emails from a classroom computer.

Homework

Have students share with a parent or other adult family member the rules for writing clear and respectful emails. Students can then compose an email to a relative, edit it, and send it with the adult's help. If students do not have a computer at home, invite them to bring their emails to school to send from a computer in the classroom or school library.

Alignment with Standards – National Educational Technology Standards for Students© 2007
(Source: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007)

5. Digital Citizenship
   a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology
   d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship