Communicating in the early years
Introduction to Module 3

Good communication is essential in Early years settings. Practitioners with good communication skills will work effectively and be able to develop good relationships with a wide range of people in the workplace.

In this module, learners will have the opportunity to explore and practise a range of communication skills they will need in an Early years setting. These include:

- adapting communication to a wide range of people and situations
- awareness of body language
- communicating using positive language
- asking for information
- active listening
- fact and opinion
- confidentiality.

This module is intended to reflect good practice in a variety of childcare settings such as pre-school playgroups, crèches, nurseries, child-minder provision and schools for a variety of age groups from birth to seven years.

Every workplace will be different and learners will need to apply the skills in this module to their own settings. Where possible, learners should be encouraged to identify similar sources of information at work. The Word version of these materials for Embedded Learning provides opportunities to adapt and customise materials where appropriate.

Early years – Module 3: Communicating in the early years					
Theme	**Page reference**	**NOS/NVQ**	**Literacy**	**Numeracy**	**Key Skills**
Communicating with others at work	Ey 3:1–3:3	CCLD 201 CCLD 207	SLlr/L1.4; SLc/L1.1; SLc/L1.2		
Giving positive messages	Ey 3:4–3:5	CCLD 201 CCLD 203	SLc/L2.3; SLd/L2.5		
Asking for information	Ey 3:6–3:8	CCLD 201	SLlr/L1.6; SLc/L1.1; SLc/L1.2		
Active listening	Ey 3:9–3:11	CCLD 201	SLlr/L1.1; SLlr/L1.4		
Fact and opinion	Ey 3:12–3:13	CCLD 201	SLc/L2.3		
Confidentiality	Ey 3:14–3:16	CCLD 201	SLlr/L1.1; SLlr/L1.4; SLc/L1.1; SLc/L1.2; SLc/L2.3; SLd/L2.5		

Skills checklist

Communicating well with the children you care for and the people you work with is essential in Early years work. You need to develop good speaking and listening skills for the job in order to respond to a wide range of children and also behave in a professional way towards parents, visitors and colleagues.

The table below will help you think about the skills you already have as well as those you need to develop. Tick the skills you feel confident about now. Complete the activities in this module to help you improve on the skills you have not ticked. Return to the list later to check any areas where you still need some practice.

Skills for communicating in the early years	Now	Later
Adapting what you say according to who you are talking to		
Body language		
Speaking in a positive way		
Asking for information		
Active listening		
Fact and opinion		
Confidentiality		

PAGES 3:1–3:3

Communicating with others at work

Occupational setting

Early years practitioners need to be effective communicators as their job relies on day-to-day contact with others including parents, children, other professionals and colleagues. This theme acts as a general introduction to the module and contributes to the first area of expertise – 'Effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers' from the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document).

Materials

Audio equipment

Internet access, if available

Any of the suggested items from the Internet (if learners do not have access to the Internet)

Photos from magazines showing examples of body language, with explanations

Source material pages:
- Body language examples (0:29)
- Body language table (0:30)
- Situation cards (0:31)

Learning outcomes

1 To consider how tone of voice and emphasis changes the meaning (focus page 3:2)

2 To recognise how language is adapted to suit different situations (focus page 3:1, Tasks 2 and 3)

3 To understand the messages given by different forms of non-verbal communication (focus page 3:2, Task 1)

4 To discuss examples of 'positive' (encouraging) and 'negative' (off-putting) body language when talking to others (focus page 3:2)

5 To recognise barriers to understanding and find solutions (focus page 3:2)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Ask learners about occasions when something they said or did was misinterpreted by someone else (this does not have to be in the workplace).
- Ask what they think caused the misunderstanding and how it was resolved.
- Ask learners to think about an embarrassing moment (they do not have to share this unless they want to). Explain that embarrassment is usually caused by doing or saying something that is inappropriate to that particular situation. Learners might take a few moments to relate this to their own experience.
- Link the discussion to the theme of communication by explaining that good communication skills involve adapting language and behaviour to the person and situation in order to avoid misunderstandings or embarrassment.

Focus page 3:1

- Read through the introduction on the page, including the bullet points.
- Go through the list of people and ask learners to tick the people they speak to at work on a daily or weekly basis.
- Discuss and add any more examples that learners can think of.
- Go through the bullet points on working relationships and ask learners to consider these points in relation to the people they have ticked or added. Use this as a basis for discussion. Ensure learners recognise the difference between being 'responsible to' and 'responsible for'.
- Talk through the bullet points on reasons for speaking and ask learners to give example scenarios for each.
- Introduce the idea of formal and informal language by giving examples of a greeting said in both ways (e.g. 'Good evening' and 'Hiya'). Discuss the language that might be used for greeting the people learners ticked on their list,

and why it varies. Make sure this includes a discussion of the situation, for example meeting someone for the first time, greeting a well-known colleague during a coffee break, etc.

- Explain that it is appropriate to use technical terms with another colleague or professional, but people outside the workplace may not understand such terms and therefore they need simplifying or explaining. Write some examples on the board that are typical of the workplace.
- In groups, ask learners to consider the points in the 'Discuss' box and then report back to the rest of the group.
- Discuss the 'Record' activity and devise a way of recording the information as a whole group. Ask learners to identify a day for doing this. Make sure that learners get feedback on the results of this research.

Focus page 3:2 11

- Read the introduction to the page and the bullet points on tone and body language.
- Ask learners in pairs or groups to experiment with:
  - stressing different words in a sentence in order to hear the difference
  - saying the same sentence with a different emotion (e.g. bored, angry, etc.) and noticing the change in intonation.
- Divide learners into pairs. Give one person a piece of paper with an emotion written on it and ask them to say 'Good morning' in that tone. Their partner has to respond in any way they like. The first speaker analyses the effect on them as a listener – how it made them feel or react.
- Read out the phrase in the speech-bubble in a natural way. Listen to the audio clip of the phrase repeated but with the emphasis on a different word each time. Discuss which word is emphasised and how the meaning of the phrase changes. Practise saying the phrase in different ways.
- Discuss the meaning of 'open', 'closed', 'positive' and 'negative' body language, giving examples and asking learners what they interpret from them.
- Ask learners how they feel if someone they are talking to looks away, folds their arms, yawns, and so on.
- Give learners the Body language examples from the Source material to discuss the messages given by the body language. For example:
  - what mood the facial expressions show
  - what the gestures are saying
  - what you can 'read' from the postures about the way the person is feeling.
- Use any differences of opinion to illustrate the point that body language can be interpreted in different ways, and may also have different meanings in different cultures.
- Make a list of positive and negative body language, using the Body language table from the Source material. This can be done as a whole group using an overhead projector.
- Further information and a fun quiz activity on body language can be found at these websites: http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/interviews/nvc.htm and http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A427277.
- Look at the section on Communication barriers. If any learners don't understand, explain using the Situation cards from the Source material as examples if necessary.
- Ask learners to discuss the situations on the Situation cards in small groups and to come up with possible solutions.
- Discuss learners' conclusions as a whole group.
- Point out that card 7 points out the potential difficulty caused by cultural variation. In some cultures, it is considered rude to look people directly in the eye; in others it may be seen as a sign of being under-confident or of lying. If you have students whose native language is not English or who come from a different cultural group, ask them to contribute to this discussion and share their knowledge of cultural variations.
- Explain that it is always a good idea to double-check that the other person understands what is being said. Discuss useful phrases or ways of checking the other person has understood. For example:
  - Did you follow that?
  - Am I making sense?
  - What was I saying? (not said sarcastically or accusingly!)
  - Is there anything you want me to repeat or explain?
  - You look a bit confused. Would it help if I repeated it?

- Reflect on differences between adult–child, adult–adult and child–child communication in the light of earlier discussions.

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLlr/L1.4 SLc/L1.1 SLc/L1.2	CCLD 201 CCLD 207	N/A

Task 1

Complete a table of body language messages
SLlr/L1.4

- Make sure learners understand how the bullet-points in each column relate to the headings.
- Make sure learners understand the words in the headings.
- If necessary, go through a couple of examples, illustrating the body language.

If the learner has difficulty

- Go through the examples of body language listed in the bullet-points, relating them to the attitude they illustrate. Make sure learners understand what they mean – show this to learners (e.g. use hand gestures to emphasise words).
- Ask learners to think about tone of voice, what people are doing with their eyes, their hands and their whole body. They need to consider how each of these will vary according to the type of communicator and the cultural background of the speaker. The rows in the table can be labelled as follows to show the differences: 'Eyes', 'Hands', 'Voice', 'Body'. Learners can then tackle one aspect of the table at a time. Demonstrate differences to learners.

Extension

- Learners can decide on another mood or state of mind and make a list of aspects of non-verbal communication that show this mood.
- They could share this with the rest of the group to see if others agree.

Task 2

Recognise formal, informal and appropriate language
SLc/L1.2

- Explain to learners that they should write the letter of the speech-bubble next to each question.
- Remind learners of the meaning of formal and informal language.
- Point out the tip.

If the learner has difficulty

- Say each phrase aloud using appropriate intonation, giving learners time to discuss each one in relation to the three questions.
- Let learners answer the question they find easiest first so that if necessary they can answer the question they find hardest by a process of elimination.
- Check that learners are happy with their answers by saying the phrases aloud again in support of their answers. If necessary, do this with a slightly exaggerated tone.

Extension

- Learners can decide on the situation in which the other two phrases not chosen for question 3 might be used.
- They should decide on who they would be speaking to and in what sort of situations.

Task 3 12

Recognise choice of language to suit the situation
SLc/L1.1

- Explain to learners that they are going to listen to an Early years practitioner. Read through the questions first so they know what to listen for.
- Play the audio clip through once for gist and discuss anything learners found difficult in the language.
- Play the audio clip through several times in order for learners to address the questions one at a time.
- When ready, play the audio clip a final time for learners to check their answers.

If the learner has difficulty

- Remind learners of the differences between formal and informal language.
- Read the audio script one sentence at a time, pausing to give learners time to discuss the type of language used.
- Go over anything learners don't understand in terms of the spoken idiom by asking them to explain the meaning in their own words if necessary.

- Make sure learners understand the topic being discussed.

Extension

Ask learners to discuss how the language would differ if the assistant was giving the same information to a parent or to a supervisor.

Theme assessment

- Ask learners to choose two children and observe their body language over the course of a day while speaking to them or watching them play with other children.
- They should write a short report about what they noticed of the children's changing feelings, emotions or understanding from their body language.

Communicating with others at work

Focus

You will speak to lots of different people at work. Your relationship with each person will be different.

Three main things affect the way you speak to people at work:

- your working relationship with them
- your reason for speaking to them
- the type of situation you are in.

People you might speak to regularly:

- manager
- colleague
- children
- parent or carer
- medical staff/health visitor
- other professionals
- delivery workers
- _____
- _____
- _____

Can you think of any more?

Working relationships are affected by:

- how well you know the other person
- whether the other person is doing the same job as you or a different job
- whether the other person is on a different job level
- whether you are providing a service for the other person
- whether you have responsibility for the other person or are responsible to the other person.

Your reason for speaking might be:

- to share information
- to request information
- to give information.

The situation might be:

- formal
- informal (chat).

Your language will change to suit the level of formality or informality.

Discuss

- What is the most formal situation you have been involved in at work?
- What informal situations occur every day in your place of work?

Record

Make a diary or keep a log to record the people you speak to over the course of the day.

Include how informal or formal the situation is and your purpose for talking.

Communicating with others at work

Focus

Whether we mean to or not, we give 'messages' to others not just by what we say but by how we say it.

I didn't meet the parent at the child centre.

11 Listen to the audio clips. Discuss how the meaning changes by saying the sentence in different ways.

Tone of voice

- how you **say** something – including the emphasis you put on certain words.

Body language

- how you stand, sit, move or position the body
- what gestures you use
- facial expression
- whether or not you look people in the eyes.

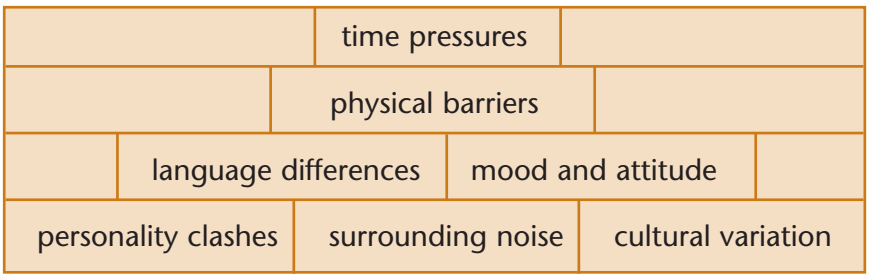
Body language can be **closed**, **open**, **positive**, **negative** or a mixture of these.

Discuss

Use the Body language examples from the Source material to see what 'messages' you can read from body language.

Communication barriers

Certain situations like those shown on the 'wall' can get in the way of effective communication.



Discuss

Use the Situation cards in the Source material to think about how you might overcome these barriers in given situations.

Communicating with others at work

Task

Task 1

The table shows the general 'message' given to others by different body language. Write in the missing examples from the boxes below to complete the table.

Confident	Aggressive	Nervous
•	• Glaring	•
• Hand gestures emphasise words	•	• Fidgeting with hair, jewellery, etc.
• Voice warm and firm	• Sarcastic tone	• Whining voice or difficult to hear
• Shoulders straight and posture upright	• Loud or too soft voice	• Shoulders slumped and bad posture
• Open body	• Body closed off	•
•	• Invading personal space by standing too close	
	•	

Looking away	Pointing finger	Looking at people
Hands on hips	Body still and relaxed	Smiling inappropriately

Remember!
Body language may give different messages in different cultures.

Task 2

a *May I be of assistance?*

b *Can I help you?*

c *What d'you want?*

1 Which of these phrases is the most informal?
2 Which one is the most formal?
3 Which one would you say to a visitor?

Tip
Try saying them aloud.

Task 3

12

Listen to the nursery assistant. Discuss these questions about the situation.

1 Is her speech formal or informal?
2 Who do you think she is speaking to?
3 Is her main purpose to share, request or give information?

Tip
Listen to the conversation as many times as you like.

Recognise body language and appropriate language to suit the situation.

SLIr/L1.4; SLc/L1.1; SLc/L1.2

PAGES 3:4–3:5

Giving positive messages

Occupational setting

Early years practitioners will inevitably come across positive behaviour policies and will be expected to promote a positive attitude at work in dealings with other people. This theme supports learning for 'Build rapport and develop relationships using the appropriate form of communication' and 'Hold conversations at the appropriate time and place, understanding the value of day-to-day contact' from *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document).

Materials

Audio equipment

Board or flipchart and coloured pens

Positive message role-play cards from the Source material (0:32)

Video recording equipment, if available (Task 4 Extension activity)

Learning outcomes

1 To recognise the difference between positive and negative language (focus page, Tasks 1 and 2)

2 To use positive language to encourage and reassure (focus page, Tasks 3 and 4)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Ask learners to think about their own learning at school and about any teachers who encouraged them or any that made them feel useless at the subjects.
- Write the word 'positive' (in green) and the word 'negative' (in red) on the board or flipchart. Write down examples of positive and negative comments, for example 'well done' and 'no, that's wrong'. Ask learners for other phrases that they remember teachers using and add them to the lists.
- Explain that using positive language is often more productive than being negative, whether talking to children or adults. Ask learners to think about why this is the case. Lead into the introductory statement on the focus page.

Focus page

- Read the information in each pair of speech bubbles to compare positive and negative language.
- Ask learners to underline the negative words in red.
- Ask learners to find the corresponding positive versions of the same phrases and to underline them in green.
- Discuss the difference in the language used and whether the versions in green are more persuasive or reassuring, or simply more polite.
- Decide on who is being spoken to in each case and the possible scenarios (e.g. stopping a child in the hallway; interviewing a parent, etc.). Discuss the use of language or topic that gives this clue.
- Go through the pairs of speech-bubbles, ticking the positive version and putting a cross by the negative one in each pair.
- Discuss the positive examples one by one, asking learners why they are better than the corresponding negative example (e.g. telling someone what you want them to do is better than telling them what not to do; giving explanations about the consequences of actions makes more sense than just 'because I told you to'; modelling positive grammar, by repeating it in the correct way, is better than correcting speech directly, as the latter could put children off talking).
- As a whole group, discuss how the positive versions are improvements on the corresponding negative version. Discuss the intonation used to convey the messages to both adults and children.
- Choose one of the positive phrases to lead into a whole group discussion on the positive body language and tone of voice that might help to reinforce the message.

- Put learners into groups and ask them to discuss body language and tone in a similar way to suit the remaining phrases. (Learners can look back at 'Communicating with others at work' for further ideas.) Remind learners to take into account who is being spoken to and in what sort of setting.
- Ask each group to feed back their ideas to the whole group.
- Remind learners that positive language is often more polite, reassuring and persuasive. Refer again to the examples shown on the board/flipchart.
- Remind learners that different cultures may use and interpret body language in different ways, as covered in 'Communicating with others at work'.

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLc/L2.3	CCLD 201	N/A
SLd/L2.5	CCLD 203	

Task 1

Turn negative instructions into positive ones
SLc/L2.3

- Get learners into pairs (or groups of three if necessary).
- Make sure learners understand that they are being asked to rewrite the instructions to make them more positive.
- Point out the tip and indicate the positive examples on the focus page.
- If necessary, go through the first one as a group, asking for ideas from learners.

If the learner has difficulty

- Learners might need more guidance in rewording the instructions. Start by asking them to pick out the negative words (e.g. 'don't'). Explain that they should leave this word out of the positive instruction.
- Guide learners to find the pairs of positive and negative instructions in the speech-bubbles on the focus page. Talk about the differences in the language.
- Work through each instruction separately, using the example from the focus page as a guide.

Extension

Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to identify other situations in which positive instructions could be used in preference to negative ones and to practise using them.

Task 2

Identify the most appropriate instruction
SLc/L2.3

- Make sure learners are working with at least one other person.
- Read the instructions in the speech-bubbles aloud.
- Explain to learners that they should discuss each phrase and decide what is and what is not appropriate about the way the instruction is worded.
- Learners can then tick their choice of the most appropriate instruction.
- Point out the tip.

If the learner has difficulty

- Read the instructions again, using a suitable tone of voice – the first two instructions should be said in a tone indicating superiority. Give an opportunity for learners to practise saying the instructions.
- Guide learners to discuss which instruction they think is too rude, which uses language that is difficult to understand and which gives the clearest instruction in the most polite way.

Extension

Ask learners to discuss why the other instructions are or could be considered negative, concentrating on the language used. Try other expressions that could be used to a colleague such as 'Would you mind … ?'.

Task 3 13

Judge how positively a situation is handled
SLc/L2.3

- Explain to learners that they will be listening to an Early years practitioner talking to the parents of a child.
- Read through the things they are to listen out for and go over anything they do not understand.
- Play the audio clip through once for gist.

- Play the audio clip as many times as learners require – for example, to listen for each discussion point separately.
- Remind learners that they should discuss how the practitioner's approach could be improved.

If the learner has difficulty

- Read the audio script through, sentence by sentence, asking questions after each part relating to the bullet-points.
- Make sure learners understand the spoken idiom and key words in the discussion points, such as 'solution' and 'negotiates'.
- Where possible, approach the points as questions. For example, *Does she say she's going to do something about it?*, followed by, *OK, so she's going to do something about it. That means she's taking it seriously and offering a solution.*
- Use the conclusions from the discussion to guide learners about how the Early years practitioner could have been more positive.

Extension

- Ask learners to discuss how the Early years practitioner could have approached this in a more positive way and then rewrite the speech to reflect this.
- Learners could share these scripts with the rest of the group for feedback.

Task 4

Discuss and role-play a situation to show how it might be handled in a positive way
SLc/L2.3
SLd/L2.5

- This task is conducted in pairs. Ensure learners have the Positive message role-play cards from the Source material.
- Read through one of the cards together to give learners an example of the information given on the cards.
- Relate this to what they might discuss in part 2.
- Explain that the object of the role-play is to speak as positively as possible using the appropriate intonation and stress.
- Remind learners to avoid negative words such as 'no' and 'don't' and to be reassuring or persuasive.
- Point out the tip.

If the learner has difficulty

- Learners may need more guidance on interpreting the scenario given on the card.
- Make sure learners choose a card that is quite straightforward – perhaps the Positive instruction, as they will have done this in the first task.
- Guide them through the discussion in part 2 on how the situation might be approached in a positive way.
- Point out any similar examples from the focus page and remind learners about how the language changed to make the positive version.
- Model a role-play for the learners.
- Encourage the more confident partner to take the main role in order to lead the role-play.

Extension

- If possible, video the role-plays and play these back to learners for discussion.
- Ask learners to make a note of the body language used by both people in the role-play and whether it was positive or negative and what effect it had.
- If you don't have access to video equipment, ask learners to work in groups of three so that one person can be an observer. Choose a different card to role-play or do the same role-play but concentrating on body language.

Theme assessment

Ask learners to observe and make a list of the ways in which positive behaviour management for children is practised in their workplaces. If a policy is available, they can use this as a guide.

Giving positive messages

Focus

Positive language promotes positive behaviour in other people. This is because positive language is more persuasive and reassuring than negative language.

Look at these examples. Tick (✓) the positive comments. Put a cross (✗) by the negative comments.

✓

Positive

Positive language is usually concerned with what you **can do** and tends to be **helpful, encouraging** and **reassuring**.

We walk in the hallway.

Don't run in the hallway.

I've told you before – stop throwing that ball indoors. It's naughty.

I know you like throwing the ball but you might hit someone in here.

That's wrong. You should say 'I went to the shops' not 'I wented'.

*You **went** to the shops did you?*

I would really like to discuss this properly with you. Can I make an appointment for you?

Unfortunately, I haven't got time to speak to you now. Can you make an appointment sometime?

✗

Negative

Negative language often includes words like **'don't'**, **'no'**, **'can't'**, **'not'**, **'naughty'**.

Don't worry about Rotimi, Mrs Jamodu. He can't be expected to do everything straight away. We hope he'll get there eventually.

I appreciate your concerns, Mrs Jamodu. Rotimi is progressing and perhaps we could work together to help him further.

Show me how you can share toys.

If you don't share the toys today, you'll be in trouble.

Yes. Have a go if you want to. Tell me if you need any help.

You won't be able to do it by yourself yet.

Discuss

- the difference in the choice of words between positive and negative instructions
- the body language you could use to reinforce the information in the positive messages.

Giving positive messages

Task

Do these tasks with a partner.

Task 1

Turn these negative instructions to a child into positive ones.

1

Don't leave your toys on the floor. Put them in the cupboard.

2

I've told you before – stop banging that drum. The babies are asleep.

3

*You don't say 'I putted it there'. It's 'I **put** it there'.*

Tip
Use the examples on the focus page to help you.

Task 2

Discuss which of these instructions is the most appropriate to use with a colleague.

1

Fetch me the register and be quick.

2

It's policy for someone to remain with the children and I've been elected to do so. Therefore, I'd like you to retrieve the register.

3

Could you fetch the register, please? I've been instructed to stay with the children.

Tip
Think about how you would expect to be given instructions by a colleague.

Task 3

13

Listen to the Early years practitioner talking to the parents of a child at the nursery. Tick the things she does and put a cross by the things she doesn't do.

- ☐ Takes the parents' concerns seriously.
- ☐ Reassures the parents about their daughter's eating problem.
- ☐ Offers a solution to the problem.
- ☐ Negotiates a solution with the parents.

Tip
Listen as many times as you like.

Task 4

1. Choose one card from the Positive message role-play cards from the Source material.
2. Discuss the situation on the card and how you might deal with it positively.
3. Role-play the scene, with one person playing the Early years practitioner and the other playing the colleague, child or parent.

Tip
Think about positive body language too!

Use positive language to give instructions and information to different people.

SLc/L2.3; SLd/L2.5

PAGES 3:6–3:8

Asking for information

Occupational setting

Asking questions is an obvious way of getting information from various sources at work; however, the quality of information obtained can vary according to the quality and type of questions asked. It is important that Early years practitioners gain the confidence to ask effective questions and to listen and respond appropriately to questions from others. This theme deals with open and closed questions and supports learning for 'Develop and use effective communication systems appropriate to the audience' and 'Communicate effectively with all children, young people, families and carers' from the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document).

Materials

Illustrations from children's story books used at work

Source material pages:
- Nursery rhyme picture (0:33)
- Storybook picture (0:34)
- Asking questions role-play cards (0:35)

Further role-play situations, if required

Learning outcomes

1 To recognise open and closed questions (focus pages 3:6 and 3:7, Task 1)

2 To ask appropriate questions (focus pages 3:6 and 3:7, Tasks 1 and 2)

3 To respond appropriately to questions (focus pages 3:6 and 3:7, Task 2)

4 To use suitable language (focus pages 3:6 and 3:7, Tasks 1 and 2)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Write a similar statement and question on the board without any end-of-sentence punctuation, for example 'You are coming to my party' and 'Are you coming to my party'. Say each sentence aloud, making sure the intonation is correct for each one. Ask learners to pick out the question.
- Discuss what helped learners to recognise the question. Make sure the discussion includes vocal clues such as the intonation.
- Discuss the purpose of questions – to gain information from others. Ask learners to think of situations in which they ask questions for information – at work or outside. Discuss the level of formality in these situations and how this affects language.
- Remind learners that the wording of questions and the type of thing we ask will be affected by the person we are speaking to, the situation and the information we require.

Focus page 3:6

- Look at the photos and read the questions in the speech-bubbles aloud. Ask learners to decide who the Early years practitioner is speaking to on each occasion. Discuss the verbal clues (language).
- Look at the answers to the questions. What do learners notice about them? Lead on to talking about the questions and the fact that they are only asking for short answers.
- Explain that these are examples of closed questions. Point out the explanation of these on the page, and the tip about when questions of this type are particularly useful.
- Ask learners in pairs to experiment asking and answering the closed questions at the bottom of the page.
- Discuss learners' answers as a whole group to see if they were generally short.
- Ask learners to write two more closed questions they use at work and to add these to the list on the page, then to ask their partner the questions to check they only receive short answers. Reassure learners that it is more important to frame the question correctly than to spell every word accurately.

Focus page 3:7

- Point out that the photos show the same people and situations as before. Ask learners to listen and follow the questions as you read them out and then to say whether they think the answers to these questions will be short.
- Explain that these are examples of open questions. Point out the explanation of these on the page, and the tip about when questions of this type are particularly useful.
- Put learners into pairs to experiment asking and answering the open questions at the bottom of the page.
- Discuss learners' answers as a whole group to see if they generally gave explanations rather than short answers.
- Ask learners to write two more open questions and to add these to the list on the page and then to ask their partner the questions to check they receive explanations.
- Discuss use of questions to check information. Give some examples such as 'Did you say your name is …?' and ask learners to think of more. Write these on the board. Discuss whether they are generally open or closed questions. (They should mostly be closed.) Explain that this is because you are confirming information already given.
- Put learners into small groups and ask them to experiment with rewording a question to suit different people and situations. For example, asking the name of the following people:
  - a last-minute replacement learning assistant
  - a parent of a child who has come in to complain
  - a suspicious-looking visitor
  - a learner on her first day
  - an old school friend you haven't seen for years but whose name you have forgotten.
- As a whole group, listen to and discuss learners' ideas and whether they went for open or closed questions.

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLlr/L1.6 SLc/L1.1 SLc/L1.2	CCLD 201	N/A

Task 1

Recognise and ask open and closed questions
SLc/L1.1
SLc/L1.2

- Ensure learners have copies of the Nursery rhyme picture and Storybook picture from the Source material.
- **Part 1:** Remind learners to tick their answers.
- Suggest that learners use the examples on the focus pages as reminders.
- Suggest that learners answer the questions themselves to help.
- **Part 2:** Learners may like to do this in pairs. Remind learners to use suitable language and that they can point to things rather than trying to describe them.

If the learner has difficulty

- **Part 1:** Ask learners the questions one by one and discuss the answers they give. Are they short answers or did they need to give some explanation? (One or two people can record the short answer questions in order to eliminate these from the choices.)
- **Part 2:** Get learners to list questions relating to the picture, for example the colour of things, the characters, what they are doing, who they might be, what type of animals they are, etc.
- Go through the questions, asking for the answers to help learners check whether the questions are open or closed.
- If there are no open questions, choose one of the closed questions and discuss how it might be reworded to make it into an open question.
- Help learners to do the same with further questions.
- Ask learners to choose their favourite two of each type of question.

Extension

Ask learners to turn the closed questions into open questions and vice versa, to see how the language changes.

Task 2

Ask and answer questions through role-play
SLlr/L1.6
SLc/L1.1
SLc/L1.2

- In order for the role-play to work properly, learners should not see each other's cards.
- Divide the pairs into 'nursery assistants' and 'parents', letting each group sit together initially.
- Allow learners time to read the information on the cards.
- Both sets of learners can quietly prepare for their roles, discussing and asking questions.
- Remind learners to use suitable responses depending on whether an open or closed question is asked.
- Point out the tips for each group and check if there are any questions.
- Put learners into pairs for the role-play and remind them to swop round afterwards, using card 3 for the second role-play.
- ESOL learners may need to spend some time preparing for a role-play situation. If appropriate, give them appropriate phrases to practise for support.

If the learner has difficulty

- The whole class preparation will prove helpful, but some learners may still require further preparation.
- Go through the information on the card separately with the 'nursery assistant' and the 'parent' and ask direct questions to check their understanding of what is on the card.
- Give or share ideas or examples of the sort of things the 'nursery assistant' might ask. Encourage learners to write these down in any way that will help them.
- Encourage the person playing the 'parent' to highlight the separate pieces of information from the card that they may need to use (or they can make a separate note). Give an example of the sort of question where they can use their own personal details, for example: 'Can you give me your full name?'.
- Make sure learners feel prepared and confident before they start, and suggest they go through the same things when they swop round.

Extension

- Ask learners to think of day-to-day or regular work situations where they need to use open questions to get more detailed answers.
- They can explain their conclusions to the rest of the group.

Theme assessment

- Ask learners to choose an activity they do with children and to devise a set of questions they would use during that activity in order to check and enhance children's learning.
- Learners can present these to the whole group in a 'sharing of ideas' activity.

Asking for information

Focus

The best way to get information is to ask questions. The way you ask the question depends on who you are speaking to and what sort of information you need from them. There are two main types of question:

- open
- closed.

Closed questions
➡ short, definite answers

Work with a partner to ask and answer these **closed** questions to see how short the answers are.

- What is your favourite colour?
- How did you get to work this morning?
- When did you arrive at work?
- Who did you see first when you arrived at work?
- What's the time?
- Do you like swimming?
- Which do you prefer – tea or coffee?
- How old are you?
- _____
- _____

Tip

Closed questions are useful when you are asking for specific information such as someone's name or address.

Write two examples of closed questions you use regularly at work.

Asking for information

Focus

Open questions
➡ more detailed information

Work with a partner to ask and answer these **open** questions to see if the answers are longer than the closed questions were.

- Why did you want to work with children?
- What is your idea of a relaxing evening?
- What do you enjoy about your hobby or interest?
- How would you describe an ideal classroom for nursery children?
- Where do you see yourself in ten years' time?
- How would you deal with a child who refuses to join in with the clearing up?
- _____
- _____

Tip

Open questions can be used to encourage people to describe things or give explanations, ideas or opinions.

Write down two more examples of open questions.

Asking for information

Task

Task 1

1 Look at the Nursery rhyme picture from the Source material. These are questions young children were asked during a reading session. Tick the **open** questions.

- ☐ Do you like dogs?
- ☐ How does the waterwheel work?
- ☐ What do you think will happen to the boy?
- ☐ What colour is the fish?
- ☐ Do you think the water is hot or cold?
- ☐ Why is the boy running?
- ☐ How many sheep can you see?
- ☐ What noise does a sheep make?

Tip

Choose the ones that require some explanation.

2 Work with a partner.

Look at the Storybook picture from the Source material. Write down two closed and two open questions you could ask a child about the picture.

Tip

You can point to things rather than trying to describe them.

Task 2

You will need the Asking questions role-play cards from the Source material. Work in pairs. One of you is the nursery assistant registering a child for a day nursery. You will need card 1. The other person is the parent and uses card 2.

1 Role-play the situation where the nursery assistant has to find out information from the parent for the registration form.

2 Swop partners. Repeat the role-play with the parent using card 3.

Tips

Nursery assistant (Card 1)

- Use appropriate language for the situation.
- Jot down the information from the answers.
- Check details where necessary.

Parent (Card 2 and Card 3)

- Read the information on the card carefully first.
- Give suitable responses to questions.

SLlr/L1.6; SLc/L1.1; SLc/L1.2

PAGES 3:9–3:11

Active listening

Occupational setting

Listening to people is vital for Early years practitioners. It is also one of the main ways of gathering information about children's development and progression. This theme looks at strategies for active listening and contributes to the first area of expertise – 'Effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers' – from the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document). It applies particularly to the point 'Actively listen in a calm, open, non-threatening manner and use questions to check understanding and acknowledge that you have heard what is being said'.

Materials

Audio equipment

Active listening cards from the Source material (0:36)

Active listening skills table from the Source material (0:37) (one copy per learner and enlarged copy on overhead transparency or flipchart)

Learning outcomes

1 To understand the difference between a good and a bad listener (Introduction to focus page, Task 3)

2 To understand and use active listening skills, including verbal and non-verbal feedback (focus page, Task 1)

3 To recognise how tone of voice can affect meaning (focus page, Task 2)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Explain that the session will start with a role-play.
- Divide learners into three groups for the briefing.
  - Group 1 are the 'listeners' and each have an Active listening role-play card from the Source material to tell them what to do as they listen.
  - Group 2 are the 'interviewees' and have to 'sell' themselves to the listener by explaining their qualities, skills, interests and ambitions.
  - Group 3 are observers and have to watch how the behaviour of the listener affects the interviewee. (Less-confident learners and ESOL learners may prefer the observation role.)
- Now organise learners into groups of three: one listener, one interviewee and one observer. Ask them to do the role-play as instructed, without discussing it first. For learners to participate fully, read the instructions on the role-play card to any learner that requires it.
- Discuss any observations as a whole group, including how the interviewee felt.
- Use ideas from the role-play together with learners' own ideas to make a list of 'good' and 'bad' listening skills.
- Explain to learners that they are now going to practise showing good listening skills. Put learners into pairs and ask one person to tell the other one about a hobby or interest. The partner must report as much of the information back to the rest of the group as possible without writing it down. They might listen for key things such as:
  - what it is mostly about
  - when it is done
  - where it is done
  - if it is a solo or shared activity
  - what is so interesting about it.
- Ask the person speaking whether they felt the other person was listening properly.

Focus page 14

- Read through the introduction to the page and explain the term 'read between the lines' in more detail, using examples from work if possible.
- Read through the points in the 'listen' thought-bubble. Explain that if you bear in mind why you are listening to someone, it will help you to focus on the key details. For example, your purpose for listening in a safety training session might be to find out what safety checks you need to make. Whatever else the trainer says, the checks are the key thing to listen out for in this case.
- Discuss the non-verbal communication that helps to show you are listening. Ask learners to think of examples of body language, facial expression and gesture.
- Discuss what you can do to show you are listening on the telephone (verbal reactions, such as saying 'I see' now and then, etc.).
- Discuss what you can observe face to face that you cannot observe over the telephone. This should lead into the subject of body language.
- Read through the information in the 'observe' thought-bubble. Remind learners how body language gives positive or negative messages to others, as shown in the introductory exercises.
- To give examples of tones of voice, play the audio clip of the same phrase said in two different tones. Ask learners what mood or attitude is suggested in each one.
- Read through the information in the 'confirm' speech-bubble. Ask learners to think of phrases that they can use to confirm information by repeating it, such as, 'So, you'd like …', 'You've said that you want to …', etc.
- Read through the final speech-bubble about responding. Ask learners to think of work situations where some or all of these things are used.

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLlr/L1.1 SLlr/L1.4	CCLD 201	N/A

Task 1 15

Listen for meaning and relevant detail
SLlr/L1.1

Part 1

- Explain to learners that they will be listening to the first part of an extract from a team meeting and that they are to decide on the purpose of the discussion.
- Play the audio clip through for gist. Only the first part of this audio clip is associated with Part 1 of the task. Stop the audio when the team leader has finished speaking.
- Point out the three choices of answer.
- Point out the tip.
- Play the audio clip again and suggest that learners can listen to it more times if required.
- Make sure learners know to tick their answer.

Part 2

- Check that learners have the correct answer for part 1.
- Explain that learners will be listening to part of the same discussion.
- Play the audio clip through once for gist and ask questions to check understanding, such as, 'How many people joined in the discussion?' etc. Only the second part of this audio clip is associated with Part 2 of this task. Play the audio clip from when the team leader has finished speaking.
- Point out the tip.
- Play the audio as many times as required, including playing it at the end for learners to double-check their answers.

If the learner has difficulty

Part 1

- Read the audio script, sentence by sentence, pausing after each to check learners' understanding.
- Remind learners to listen for the question being asked and to say 'stop' when they hear it.
- Repeat the phrase/sentence where you stopped and ask the learners if they are happy that this is the question.
- Ask them to find the answer that links to the question (they might look for a key matching word).

Part 2

- Write down person 1–5 and team leader. Point to these as you read the audio script aloud so that learners know when a new person is speaking (or do different voices if this is more practical).

- Remind learners of what they are listening for.
- Read the audio script, sentence by sentence, pausing after each to check learners' understanding and to ask questions about what they heard.
- Read the audio clip again, telling learners to stop you when they hear something they wish to write down.
- At the end, read the audio script through again for learners to check their answers.

Extension

- Ask learners to discuss in groups a given topic appropriate to the work situation that requires a joint solution.
- Ask them to share ideas and choose the best solution.

Task 2 16

Interpret meaning from tone of voice
SLlr/L1

- Explain to learners that they will be listening to an audio clip of four people saying these phrases in different tones of voice.
- Play the audio clip through for gist and encourage learners to follow the phrases on the page.
- Make sure learners understand that they are to draw lines to match the speech-bubble to the meaning given by the tone.
- Play the audio clip again as many times as required. Suggest learners sort out the easiest first, thus working by a process of elimination.

If the learner has difficulty

- Read the audio script one phrase at a time. Remember that facial expression is likely to give learners a further clue to meaning so try to look as neutral as possible, or turn the other way. (They won't see facial expression on the telephone.)
- Ask what each person sounds like – what sort of mood is s/he in?
- Read the phrases out of order if required, doing the easiest first. Make sure learners know which one is being read out each time so that they can follow it.
- Make sure learners use pencil in case they change their minds, and encourage them to draw the lines one at a time, leaving anything they are not sure of until later, in order to work on a process of elimination.
- At the end, repeat the audio clips so that learners can check their choices.

Extension

- Ask learners to list emotions that affect tone of voice and to write these on cards and swop them with a partner.
- Ask them to use this list to experiment with tones of voice, using the same phrases from the speech-bubbles or their own if preferred.
- One person at a time should decide on their emotion and then say a phrase using a suitable tone to express the emotion. The other learners have to guess what sort of mood they are in.

Task 3

Make a checklist of good and bad listening skills
SLlr/L1.4

- Make sure each learner has a copy of the Active listening skills table and understands how to fill it in.
- Display the table on the overhead projector and fill in an example of each as a whole group.
- Urge learners to be honest but fair with themselves.
- Suggest that learners work with a partner if they can't think of things.
- Remind them of the 'good' and 'bad' lists made during the introductory exercise.
- Point out to learners that the table acts as a personal record to help them develop their communication skills in the workplace.

If the learner has difficulty

- Go through the 'good' and 'bad' lists made in the introductory session and ask learners whether they think they do the things on the list. If necessary, copy items from the list onto individual cards or sticky notes so that learners can move them around and order them as appropriate.
- Get learners to start by noting down things they do well in the left-hand column. Some learners may prefer to have a scribe for this part of the activity.
- Note that learners who are not confident may be over-critical of themselves and will need to be told that they do certain things well.
- Try to ensure the left-hand list ends up the same length or longer than the right-hand one, to avoid undermining confidence.

- Remind learners that the 'things to improve' list is a useful personal record to help them develop their skills further.

Extension

- Ask learners to describe something to each other in pairs, such as a hobby, an ambition, or their favourite book/film/music.
- The listener has to remember three key things in order to report this information back to the rest of the group.
- Note: listeners can ask questions for more information and for confirmation if required. They can also jot down the information.

Theme assessment

- Ask learners to set themselves a target for improving the skills listed in the 'Things I need to improve on' column of the table.
- Learners can devise a new table to use as a personal checklist and make comments on when, where and how they improve in these areas.

Active listening

Focus

Communication is a two-way process. So as well as talking, it is important to **listen** to what other people are saying. Sometimes you have to 'read between the lines'. The important parts of what they say may be hidden among lots of other chatter.

- Concentrate on the **purpose** for listening.
- **Show** you are listening.
- Use **positive** body language.
- Listen for **key points**.

listen

How can you use non-verbal communication to **show** you are listening when talking face to face?

How can you **indicate** that you are listening when using the telephone?

observe

Observe messages given by **body language** or **tone** of voice. 14

What can you **observe** face to face that you cannot observe during telephone conversations?

confirm

Repeat information to:

- show you have heard
- check that you have understood.

respond

You might:

- give your opinion
- give an answer
- explain what you will do
- ask for more details
- offer a solution.

Active listening

Task

Task 1

15

1 In team meetings or training sessions it is important to listen so that you can contribute to the discussion. Listen to the extract from the beginning of a team meeting. What is the purpose of the meeting? Tick your answer.

- ☐ to discuss a budget
- ☐ to give ideas for playhouse equipment
- ☐ to decide on what to do about nuisance telephone calls

Tip
Listen carefully for the key question that is asked.

2 Once you know your purpose for listening, you can listen out for the relevant details. Listen to a further extract from the team meeting. Write down the three **relevant** things suggested during the meeting.

Tip
Remember the purpose of the meeting.

a _____

b _____

c _____

Active listening

Task

Task 2

16

You can often tell what people really mean from their tone of voice. This is called 'reading between the lines'. It helps you to respond appropriately to the other person.

Listen to these four people speaking. Draw arrows to show their meaning.

Tip

Listen to one person at a time.

I've lost my day off.	I'm really glad about it.
I've lost some weight.	I'm really worried about it.
I've lost my car keys.	I'm really sad about it.
I've lost my rota for next week.	I'm really angry about it.

Task 3

Use the Active listening skills table from the Source material to list the active listening skills you think you have and those you think you need to improve on.

PAGES 3:12–3:13

Fact and opinion

Occupational setting

Early years practitioners have to assess children in their care and report both formally and informally on their progress and development. To do this, practitioners must be able to take an objective and non-judgemental view of the children in their care – which means dealing with facts rather than opinions. This theme helps learners to distinguish between facts and opinions and contributes to 'Be able to distinguish between fact and opinion' from the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document).

Materials

Examples of slogans from adverts that are opinions masquerading as facts

Fact or opinion quiz from the Source material (0:38)

Fact and opinion table from the Source material (0:39)

Thesauruses

Scissors and glue or tape

Learning outcome

To recognise the difference between fact and opinion and know when to use them constructively (focus page, Tasks 1 and 2)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Ask a learner a simple question that has only one possible answer (e.g. the number of days in the week). Ask the rest of the learners if they agree with the answer given.
- Ask another learner a question that requires an opinion in the answer, for example 'What is the best film this year?'. Ask other learners if they agree with the answer given.
- Use these examples to lead into a discussion about the difference between the first and second answers and thus the differences between fact and opinion.
- Ask learners to work in pairs and tell each other one fact and one opinion about themselves. The other person has to decide which is the fact and which is the opinion.
- As a whole group, discuss whether it was easy to separate fact from opinion, and whether learners spotted any key subjective words.
- Explain that advertising slogans often make opinions sound like facts to encourage people to buy products. Use examples of slogans to illustrate this. Learners might come up with their own ideas.
- Ask learners to complete the Fact or opinion quiz from the Source material. Depending on the composition of the group, it may be preferable to conduct the quiz verbally. Discuss the answers and go through the information at the bottom of the page that helps to explain why we sometimes mistake opinions for facts.
- Ask learners to describe a TV programme, singer, record or type of music they dislike and to explain why. Write any subjective words or phrases used on the board/flipchart. Explain that these are subjective words – they show a personal opinion. In this case, it is a negative opinion because it is describing a dislike. Point out any clearly negative words used.

Focus page 17

- Go through the information about facts first.
- Discuss the meaning of 'objective' and 'non-judgemental' – learners may come across these words so they are worth knowing. Write the definitions on the board.
- Read the example statement in the speech-bubble and discuss or explain why this is an objective and non-judgemental statement.
- To highlight this, add a word into the statement such as 'Jennie sometimes runs round the room **disruptively** during story time'. This now shows that the person has a negative opinion of Jennie's behaviour.

- Read through the arrow box to round off this section. Point out the 'Remember' box and ask learners how the factual statement in the speech-bubble and the arrow box could be proved to be true.
- Go through the information on opinions.
- Discuss the meaning of subjective and judgemental.
- Read the example statement in the speech-bubbles and discuss why these are subjective and judgemental. Write the definitions on the board.
- Look at the examples given in the arrow box about key phrases or words and refer to the examples in the two speech-bubbles where the phrase or subjective word has been used.
- Discuss whether the statement 'she can be dreadfully disorganised' shows a positive or negative opinion. Explain that your opinion or attitude towards a person or thing will affect the language you use.
- To illustrate this further, use the examples of opinions from the quiz and highlight any key opinion words or phrases. Discuss whether these show a positive or negative opinion.
- Play the three short audio clips through first for gist. Then play each one separately, pausing to ask learners if they heard a fact or an opinion.
- Listen again to the opinion and ask learners if it showed a positive or negative opinion of the child's behaviour.
- Discuss why negative opinions like this can affect the way you and others see the child, because it can lead to mistakes and incorrect assumptions. For example, you might assume a child is misbehaving when actually the child needs some sort of help.
- Ask learners to work in small groups to discuss the situations in the 'Discuss' box, bearing in mind the previous point made about negative opinions.
- Ask each small group to report back to the whole group on the conclusions they came to about the situations.
- Encourage learners to keep word definitions in a notebook or personal glossary.

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLc/L2.3	CCLD 201	N/A

Task 1

Identify subjective words and how they can be used to give opinions
SLc/L2.3

Part 1

- Allow learners to work in pairs.
- Read out the phrases and ask learners to follow them in the speech-bubbles.
- Point out the tip.
- Make sure learners are clear about underlining one subjective word.
- If necessary, do the first example as a whole group.

Part 2

- Ensure learners are aware that this refers to the five speech-bubbles in part 1.
- Remind learners that they can look up words in the glossary.

Part 3

- Ensure learners are aware that this refers to the five phrases and that they should change the word they underlined in part 1.
- Remind learners that they can look words up in the glossary. If it helps, allow learners to use a thesaurus.

If the learner has difficulty

Part 1

- Encourage learners to use pencil in case they change their minds.
- Learners may have difficulty recognising the subjective word. Guide them to dealing with the easiest first, working towards the hardest using a process of elimination.
- Make sure learners understand the words – help them with finding words in the glossary or interpreting the general meaning.
- Encourage the learner to say each sentence aloud without the underlined word to check it still makes sense. Or say the sentence yourself without the subjective word, then with the word. Put in other subjective words for the learner to practise with.

Part 2

This may have already been discussed during part 1 in order to help learners choose the subjective word. However, you can guide them to think about the effect the word has in more detail.

Part 3

- Make sure learners have underlined the subjective word for part 1.
- Very negative words are often easier to demonstrate, and learners can practise turning sentences around by turning positive statements into negative ones.
- Ask learners to think about words that have the opposite meaning to the underlined word. Help them to use the thesaurus if required.
- Read out the phrases again with the words learners have chosen and ask, *Does this still make sense? What opinion does it show?*

Extension

- Discuss with learners whether and in what circumstances they should/should not use subjective phrases. How could they make the five statements objective?
- Ask learners to practise describing two people they know in or out of the work situation without using any subjective words.
- They can discuss and share any difficulties they had.

Task 2

Sort phrases of fact and phrases of opinion
SLc/L2.3

- Make sure learners have scissors and glue and a copy of the Facts and opinions table from the Source material.
- Suggest that learners place the sentences onto the printed table before sticking them in place, to make sure they are happy with their answers.
- Point out the tip.

If the learner has difficulty

- Go through each sentence with learners, asking direct questions such as, *In this first one, can you spot any words that show what the person thinks about Marie?*
- Encourage learners to underline the subjective words to help them separate the opinions from the facts.
- To help learners with finding facts, ask them how they could prove that the statement is true.

Extension

Ask learners to discuss who they think is being spoken to in each case and in what sort of situation (remembering that there can be more than one answer).

Theme assessment

- Ask learners to work in pairs to write a fact sheet containing 6–8 facts about their place of work that might be useful for parents. They can get information from their induction materials, their own knowledge or by asking others.
- Learners can choose to present this in any way they wish – such as a poster, a worksheet or an information leaflet.

Fact and opinion

Focus

There are times at work when your opinion is required, but there are also times when it is important to just give facts. You should be able to recognise the difference between fact and opinion.

FACTS

true statements that can be proved

- true
- objective
- non-judgemental

Jennie sometimes runs round the room during story time.

Facts are direct statements. For example, 'This coat is blue.'

OPINIONS

people's personal points of view

- not necessarily true
- subjective
- judgemental

She can be dreadfully disorganised.

I think it's because she's hyperactive.

Is this a positive or negative opinion?

Opinions might include a personal phrase like 'I think' or use subjective describing words such as 'dreadfully'.

Remember!

If you can prove something, then it is a fact!

Try this

17

Listen to the Early years practitioner talking about a child's behaviour.

What is her opinion?

Discuss

In which of these situations are **facts** more important than opinions?

- reporting a child's behaviour to a child psychologist
- discussing favourite children's storybooks with a colleague in the staffroom
- talking to parents about their child's learning progress
- contributing to a team meeting about ideas for an educational trip
- telling a child about expected behaviour in class

Fact and opinion

Task

Task 1

1 The words you use to describe someone or something can reveal your opinion. In these phrases, underline the subjective word that shows the person's opinion.

a *Kattrin sometimes rudely interrupts in discussions.*

b *Our Finance Manager organises the budget well.*

c *I've been observing two of the naughty children.*

d *Raffi's mother is a hard-working local councillor.*

e *I work with Sam, who passed her course last year, amazingly.*

Tip

The sentence will read as a fact without the subjective word.

2 Discuss whether the opinions show a positive or negative opinion of the person or subject being talked about.

3 Rewrite the opinions to give the opposite meaning by changing the subjective word only.

Task 2

Cut out these statements and stick them under the correct headings in the Fact and opinion table from the Source material.

Remember!

A fact is a true statement that can be proved.

I think Marie is seeking attention. When she shouts and plays up it's just to get my attention away from other children.	I'm concerned about Sham's cough. He's had it for nearly a month. He's been given cough medicine from the doctor.
Steven has bruises on his upper arm. I don't know how he got them. He told me he can't remember.	Ali has settled in very well. In my view there are no problems at all. I don't know why his parents are worried.
Most childminders don't have time to teach anything to the children in their care if you ask me.	There are 15 Early years practitioners working in our nursery school. This includes part-time staff employed for the after-school club.

PAGES 3:14–3:16
Confidentiality

Occupational setting

Confidentiality is essential in Early years, and practitioners will be required to use all their communication skills to deal effectively with confidential situations and issues. This theme acts as a summary to the module and contributes to the first area of expertise – 'Effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers' from the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* published by the Government (non-statutory guidance document).

Materials

Newspaper articles about breaches of confidentiality (e.g. from the Standards Unit Learner Handbook *Health and Social Care* – Confidentiality)

Workplace scenarios of confidentiality

Workplace confidentiality policies and procedures

Learning outcomes

1 To understand the importance of confidentiality (Introduction, focus page 3:14, Task 1)

2 To judge good and bad practice (Introduction, focus page 3:15, Tasks 1 and 2)

Suggested teaching activities

Introduction

- Give learners some newspaper articles relating to breaches of confidentiality. Read the articles and discuss learners' ideas about what should and should not be confidential.
- Consider some workplace scenarios that occur regularly – such as filling in personal details on a form. Discuss good practice relating to these examples. You will also find a 'Good practice' card game on confidentiality in the Standards Unit pack.
- Look at policies and procedures on confidential information from learners' workplaces. Make sure learners understand what they are being asked to do in the procedures.
- The Standards Unit has a useful pack that includes teacher and learner handbooks and activities for teaching the sensitive subject of confidentiality. Learners will benefit from further or introductory work using this pack.

Focus page 3:14

- Read the introduction to the page and discuss with learners how they would feel if personal information about them was passed on to others.
- Go through the 'three Rs', discussing the bullet points related to each. Ask why learners think 'Reveal' has a question mark by it. Discuss what learners could do if they were not sure whether to divulge information.
- Go through the other bullet points on the page, relating them to work in the module. Where possible, ask learners to give examples, for example: *What sort of place would be 'appropriate' for confidential conversations or interviews? What would not be appropriate?*
- Read through the information in the 'Remember' box and ask learners to discuss an idea in small groups and then report back to the whole group.

Focus page 3:15 18–19

- Explain to learners that they are going to look at a specific situation told in pictures with an accompanying audio clip of the conversation between an Early years practitioner and a parent.
- Look at the first picture on the page and read out the speech-bubble. Explain to learners that they are going to listen to what the parent says.
- Play audio clip 18 through once for gist. Play it again and ask learners what the parent's problem is. Discuss why she might not want this passed on to other people (e.g. she is probably embarrassed by the situation she is suddenly in).

- Explain to learners that they will now hear the rest of the conversation between the parent and the Early years practitioner, which they can follow by reading the speech-bubbles.
- Play audio clip 19 and then discuss the responses of the Early years practitioner, using the points on the previous focus page as a guide. *Does she use suitable language, tone and reassurance? Is she positive?*
- Look at the photographs and discuss the use of environment and body language. Ask learners to pick out good or bad examples from the pictures.
- Discuss what is good practice, what is bad practice and what improvements could be made in this situation.
- For further discussion and problem solving, refer to situations given in the Standards Unit Learner Handbook (handouts 1–3 on pages 34–36).

Curric. refs	NOS/NVQ	Key Skills
SLlr/L1.1 SLlr/L1.4 SLc/L1.1 SLc/L1.2 SLc/L2.3 SLd/L2.5	CCLD 201	N/A

Task 1

Consider examples of good and bad practice relating to confidentiality
SLc/L1.1
SLc/L2.3

- Learners work in pairs.
- Read through the scenarios as a whole group and ask learners if there is anything they want to clarify or ask about.
- Explain to learners that they can deal with the situations in any order and can indicate the examples of good practice with ticks and bad practice with crosses.
- Point out the tip as a way into the discussion.
- Share learners' ideas as a whole group at the end.

If the learner has difficulty

- Go through the scenarios one by one, asking learners direct questions about the consequences of the actions. For example, talking on a bus – what might be the problem of confidentiality here?
- Ask whether Sally's responses made each situation worse or better.
- Learners might like to consider what they would do in these circumstances and what their work policy or procedure is.

Extension

- Ask learners to discuss the bad practice examples and say what action should have been taken instead.
- These ideas can be presented to the rest of the group.

Task 2

Consider the best way to deal with a given situation
SLc/L1.1
SLc/L2.3

- Put learners into small groups.
- Read through the case study and ask if there are any questions about the content.
- Read through the questions and explain to learners that they can discuss them in any order.
- Point out the tips.
- Share learners' ideas as a whole group at the end.

If the learner has difficulty

- Read through the case study again, sentence by sentence, checking that learners understand it. Explain any terms they don't understand, such as 'outgoing'.
- Lead learners through the questions, one by one, accepting their ideas but pointing out problems that could occur with suggestions that might breach confidentiality in a negative way.
- You might direct learners to work policies and procedures or induction materials if appropriate.

Extension

- Ask learners to devise a case study of their own that requires sensitive handling of confidential information.
- They can then write a list of bad and good practice for handling the information.

Theme assessment

Ask learners to devise a handout on the importance of confidentiality in their own workplace. They can use a 'dos and don'ts' style list or organise the information in another way. They can get information from policies, procedures and from talking to colleagues. The information should be totally applicable to the learners' own place of work.

Confidentiality

Focus

All staff who deal with personal information should be aware of the issues surrounding confidentiality and must be trained to deal with information in an appropriate manner. People might trust you with highly personal information. You have a duty to respect their right to privacy where it does not put them or others in danger.

Respect → Respect the person's wishes to keep personal information confidential where possible.

Reassure → Reassure the person that you can be trusted. Inform the person what you intend to do with the information.

Reveal? → Judge if it is appropriate to pass on information. When might it be helpful?

Confidential conversations

- Choose an appropriate place where you can't be overheard.
- Use appropriate formal or informal language.
- Use appropriate positive language and body language.
- Ask sensitive open and closed questions.
- Use appropriate active listening skills.
- Use facts and opinions appropriately.

Consider the situation with a parent described on the next focus page.

Discuss the Early years practitioner's handling of the situation.

Does she follow these guidelines?

Is there anything she could have done better?

Remember!

Occasionally you have to pass information on against someone's wishes.

Can you think of any examples?

How would you handle these situations?

Confidentiality

Focus

18 Listen to what this parent has to say.

1

19 Now listen again and follow the rest of the conversation.

2

3

4

Confidentiality

Task

Task 1

Work with a partner. Read about how Sally, an Early years practitioner, responded to different situations of confidentiality. Discuss whether her response is an example of good or bad practice.

1 Sally heard a colleague talking about a child's family to another colleague on a public bus. She warned him that she would report him if she heard it again.

2 Sally needed to update some personal information about a child. The school computer was being repaired, so she took the information home to do on her personal computer.

3 A parent of a child with bruises tells Sally that the child fell down the stairs and asks her not to tell anyone else as she's already had visits from Social Services. Sally reported what the parent said to her supervisor.

4 A new child psychologist rang Sally and asked for a child's personal details over the telephone. Sally's supervisor was not available, so Sally found the child's file and gave him the information. He thanked Sally and said he would tell her supervisor how efficient she had been.

Tip

Think about the consequences of Sally's actions – do they support or breach confidentiality?

Task 2

Work in small groups. Read the case study below and discuss the questions about it.

Josh is a boy in your care. He is usually friendly and outgoing. Recently he has become very withdrawn and keeps hiding when visiting adults such as the health visitor arrive. You have overheard your colleague telling the health visitor that Josh is being bullied by other children. However, you know that she has no proof of this. A parent of another child asks whether you think Josh is having trouble since his father left home a month ago.

Tips

- There may be more than one answer to the questions.
- Think of as many alternatives as you can.

1 What could be causing Josh's change in behaviour?

2 What could you do to find out?

3 What should you say to your colleague?

4 What would you say to the health visitor?

5 What would you say to the parent of the other child?

6 What might you report to your supervisor, now or in future?

Judge how to deal with situations of confidentiality.

SLc/L1.1; SLc/L2.3

Check it

1 Look at this picture of a nursery assistant and the father of a child in her care.
How do you think she is feeling?

A angry

B nervous

C happy

D confident

SLlr/L1.4

2 Which is the most positive way to speak to a child?

A *We always walk in the corridors.*

B *Stop running!*

C *I've told you before – don't run.*

D *You're going to knock somebody over if you run around like that.*

SLc/L2.3

3 Which of these would you use to persuade a child to share a toy?

A *Give Liam the ball now!*

B *Give Liam the ball and then you can play with the skipping rope until it's your turn with the ball again.*

C *You have had the required period with the ball. It is time you agreed to hand it on to Liam.*

D *You are so naughty. If you don't give Liam the ball, you will have to sit on the naughty step.*

SLc/L2.3

4 Which of these questions is likely to get you a longer, detailed answer?

A Is that your garden that you've painted?

B Have you painted the girl pink?

C What's going on in your painting?

D Do you like painting?

SLc/L1.2

5 Which of these questions will get you a short, definite answer?

A What kinds of food is Ben allergic to?

B Can you tell me more about what Kylie's allergies are?

C What kinds of things should we be looking out for?

D Is your child allergic to milk? **SLc/L1.2**

6 Which of these people is listening carefully to the child?

A

B

C

D

SLlr/L1.4

7 Which of these statements is a fact?

A I think his parents should spend more time with him.

B He got here at 8 o'clock this morning.

C Incredibly, he wasn't late today.

D He must be the worst behaved boy I've ever met. **SLc/L2.3**

8 Which of these statements is an opinion?

A Every child has a peg to hang spare clothes on.

B We timetable some outdoor activities every day.

C The after-school club is open from 3 o'clock until 7 o'clock.

D If you ask me, potty training is a waste of time. **SLc/L2.3**

9 A newspaper reporter phones to ask for information about the father of one of the children in your care. Which of these responses is appropriate?

A I always suspected he was doing something wrong.

B He's got quite a reputation around here.

C I'm sorry I can't give any information over the phone.

D I'm sure we can help. What's your phone number? **SLc/L2.3**

10 Which of these would be considered good non-verbal communication?

A yawning

B making eye contact

C folding your arms in front of you

D shrugging your shoulders **SLIr/L1.4**

Audio

Communicating with others at work

PAGE 3:2

Focus page 11

Listen to a person saying the same phrase but emphasising different words. Think about how it alters the meaning.

I didn't meet the parent at the child centre.

PAGE 3:3

Task 3 12

D'you know, I'd like to find out just what'll be going on over the next few months. I reckon it's going to change quite a bit. I know they're going to extend the, you know, they'll extend the classrooms and playground. I heard we're not moving to the other building like we thought, though. That's a relief.

Giving positive messages

PAGE 3:5

Task 3 13

Yes, I understand your worries, Mr and Mrs Ansel. Gina does seem to have a very small appetite. She's very thin, isn't she? But it's not your fault – she doesn't eat any more here than she does at home. I'll ask our nutritionist to observe her and make some recommendations about her diet.

Active listening

PAGE 3:9

Focus page 14

Yes, please. I do want an appointment with you.

PAGE 3:10

Task 1 15

Team leader: Right, it's a quick meeting today. We're a bit late starting. Sandra's given her apologies. She's a bit tied up with phone calls, which is a nuisance. OK, anyway, so what equipment do we want to put in the new playhouse? If you have a few ideas, I can pass them on to the finance department. For now don't worry about budget, just give me some suggestions.

Practitioner 1: I think the playhouse could do with a kitchen table. It'll be good for the children to learn about laying it. We've got some plates and cutlery already.

Practitioner 2: Yeah. Going along those lines, we could do with a cooker too. There's some really well-made ones in the catalogue at the moment. Lots of things the children can do with them too.

Practitioner 3: Actually I don't think the playhouse is our priority. I could do with some better books in the book corner.

Practitioner 4: A few posters would help to cheer up the main entrance too. It's a bit dull.

Team leader: OK. But perhaps we could talk about books and posters at the next meeting?

Practitioner 5: I wonder whether we could put a play telephone in the playhouse? It'd really help with language development.

Team leader: OK. Thanks for those few ideas. Has anyone got anything to add?

PAGE 3:11

Task 2 16

Audio 1
I've lost my day off.

Audio 2
I've lost some weight.

Audio 3
I've lost my car keys.

Audio 4
I've lost my rota for next week.

Fact and opinion

PAGE 3:12

Focus page 17

Sabrina was fidgeting and seemed restless during story time.
Sabrina is a very badly behaved child.
Sabrina has started biting other children lately.

Confidentiality

PAGE 3:15

Focus page 18

Parent: My husband's just lost his job and we're trying to sort the finances out. I don't want to go into any details just now, but basically we can't afford to pay this month. I just don't know what we can do.

19

Practitioner: Don't worry. I think there are several alternative payment methods. Would you like me to find out for you?

Parent: I don't want too many people to know about my situation.

Practitioner: Of course. I'd only need to speak to our finance officer. Or would you prefer to see her yourself?

Parent: No. I'd rather you did.

Practitioner: OK. I'll have a word with the finance officer and get back to you. Is that OK?

Parent: Yes. Thank you.

Practitioner: Mrs Zelinka is unable to meet the monthly payments at the moment. What are the alternative ways she can pay?

Answers

PAGES 3:1–3:3

Communicating with others at work

Focus page 3:2

Meanings could be interpreted in these ways (the word in **bold** is the word that is emphasised).
Audio 1: **I** didn't meet the parent at the child centre (but someone else did).
Audio 2: I **didn't** meet the parent at the child centre (I'm denying that I met the parent at all).
Audio 3: I didn't **meet** the parent at the child centre (but I did something else with the parent).
Audio 4: I didn't meet the **parent** at the child centre (I met someone else).
Audio 5: I didn't meet the parent at the **child centre** (I met the parent somewhere else).

Task 1

Confident
- Body still and relaxed
- Looking at people

Aggressive
- Hands on hips
- Pointing finger

Nervous
- Looking away
- Smiling inappropriately

Task 2

1 **c**
2 **a**
3 **b** (You could say **a** but **b** is clearer)

Task 3

1 informal
2 colleague
3 to give information

PAGES 3:4–3:5

Giving positive messages

Focus page

Task 1

You might have put something like this:
1 We put toys in the cupboard, don't we?
2 I know you like playing with the drum but you'll wake the babies up.
3 You put it there, did you? Well done.

Task 2

The most persuasive instruction is **3**.
- It is polite (uses please).
- The speaker says why she can't fetch the register herself.
- The speaker puts herself on the same level by showing that she also has instructions to follow.

Task 3

☑ Takes the parents' concerns seriously.
☒ Reassures the parents about their daughter's eating problem.
☑ Offers a solution to the problem.
☒ Negotiates a solution with the parents.

She could have been more positive by reassuring the parents that children are all shapes and sizes (rather than pointing out that Gina is thin) and saying that Gina seems happy and healthy at school. She could also have pointed out that children often go through phases of eating little, but it rarely does them any harm. Rather than giving the solution, she could have asked the parents if they would like the nutritionist to help. It can also be useful to suggest a source of expert advice to parents if they are still worried.

PAGES 3:6–3:8

Asking for information

Task 1

1 The open questions are:
- How does the waterwheel work?
- What do you think will happen to the boy?
- Why is the boy running?

2 Show your questions to your teacher.

PAGES 3:9–3:11

Active listening

Focus page

Green box

Non-verbal communication you can use to **show** you are listening when talking face to face includes:
- looking at the person speaking
- nodding
- smiling
- using open body language.

You **indicate** that you are listening when talking on the telephone by using verbal prompts such as 'yes, go on', 'I see', 'uh-huh'.

Blue box

You can **observe** body language (including facial expressions, gestures and posture) face to face but not during a telephone conversations.

Active listening

Task 1

1 to give ideas for playhouse equipment

2 **a** kitchen table
b cooker
c telephone

Task 2

Person 1: I've lost my day off – I'm really sad about it.
Person 2: I've lost some weight – I'm really glad about it.
Person 3: I've lost my car keys – I'm really angry about it.
Person 4: I've lost my rota for next week – I'm really worried about it.

PAGES 3:12–3:13

Fact and opinion

Fact or opinion quiz

1 Fact
2 Opinion
3 Opinion
4 Opinion
5 Fact
6 Fact
7 Opinion
8 Fact
9 Fact
10 Opinion

Green speech-bubble

She can be <u>dreadfully</u> disorganised is a negative opinion.

Try this

Her opinion is that Sabrina is a badly behaved child.

Situations in which facts are more important than opinions:
- reporting a child's behaviour to a child psychologist
- talking to parents about their child's learning progress
- telling a child about expected behaviour in class.

Task 1

1 **a** Kattrin sometimes <u>rudely</u> interrupts in discussions.
b Our Finance Manager organises the budget <u>well</u>.
c I've been observing two of the <u>naughty</u> children.
d Raffi's mother is a <u>hard-working</u> local councillor.
e I work with Sam, who passed her course last year, <u>amazingly</u>.

2 **a** negative opinion
b positive opinion
c negative opinion
d positive opinion
e negative opinion

3 Here are some examples:
a Kattrin sometimes politely interrupts in discussions.
b Our Finance Manager organises the budget badly.
c I've been observing two of the well-behaved children.
d Raffi's mother is a lazy local councillor.
e I work with Sam, who passed her course last year, not surprisingly.

Task 2

Facts

- I'm concerned about Sham's cough. He's had it for nearly a month. He's been given cough medicine from the doctor.
- Steven has bruises on his upper arm. I don't know how he got them. He told me he can't remember.
- There are 15 Early years practitioners working in our nursery school. This includes part-time staff employed for the after-school club.

Opinions

- I think Marie is seeking attention. When she shouts and plays up it's just to get my attention away from other children.
- Ali has settled in very well. In my view there are no problems at all. I don't know why his parents are worried.
- Most childminders don't have time to teach anything to the children in their care if you ask me.

PAGES 3:14–3:16

Confidentiality

Task 1

1 Good practice: personal information about anyone should never be shared in a public place as other people will be able to hear too, so Sally was right to point out her colleague's mistake.
2 Bad practice: personal information about children should not be kept on a home computer where others in the household or friends might accidentally come across it.
3 Good practice: the child might be at risk if the parent is not telling the truth, so it is important for this information to be passed on so that an eye can be kept on the child.
4 Bad practice: personal information should never be given over the telephone – the person calling might be lying about who they are.

Check it

1 B
2 A
3 B
4 C
5 D
6 B
7 B
8 D
9 C
10 B