**8 Methods for Effectively Improving Your Child’s Communication Skills**

**Source: Wabisabi Learning, A Digital Guide**

Communication is an important skill for every child to master. When it comes to acquiring indispensable communication skills, there’s no time like the present. You can follow these 8 strategies to enhance your child’s speaking and writing abilities, no matter their age.

**The Path to Improving Children’s Communication Skills**

**These 8 tips can help you immensely to improve children’s communication skills. They can be adapted for most every kind of child from Kindergarten to High School.** Build better speakers and writers of tomorrow by challenging your children to think critically, listen actively, and work together.

**1. Watch Films That Model Conversation Skills**

Conversation is one of the most basic and essential communication skills. It enables people to share thoughts, opinions, and ideas, and receive them in turn. Although it may appear simple on the surface, effective conversations include a give-and-take exchange that consists of elements such as:

* **Body Language**
* **Eye Contact**
* **Summarizing**
* **Paraphrasing**
* **responding**

Your child can learn the foundational elements of conversation by watching films or videos of these interactions taking place. Pause the video and ask questions such as, “What message is the listener sending by crossing his arms? What else can you tell by observing the expressions and body language of both people in the conversation?”

**2. Use Technology**

From audio books to apps, there is a multitude of technological resources you can use for improving children’s communication skills. They can listen to or read along with audio books to hear how the speaker pronounces and enunciates different words or phrases. Some great free apps that improve student communication skills are Voice Thread (which is suitable for kindergartners through adults) and Paper Telephone.

**3. Reinforce Active Listening**

Communication isn’t just about speaking; it’s also about listening. Parents can help their children develop listening skills by reading a selection of text aloud, and then practicing discussion on the content. Active listening also means listening to understand rather than reply. Reinforce building good listening skills by encouraging your child to practice asking clarifying questions to fully understand the speaker’s intended message.

**4. Offer Group Presentations and Assignments**

Team-building exercises can also help children sharpen both oral and written communication skills. Not only does it offer the chance to work in small groups, thereby reducing some of the pressure, but it also gives them the opportunity to debate their opinions, take turns, and work together towards a common goal.

**5. Ask Open-Ended Questions**

Because they require more than a one- or two-word response, open-ended questions are vital for inspiring discussion and demonstrating that there are multiple ways to perceive and answer a question. You might set a timer for short informal conversations and challenge your child to use open-ended questions. For example, you might show children the difference in how much more information they can obtain by asking “what did you like best about the song?” rather than simply “did you like the song?”

**6. Use Tasks and Activities That Foster Critical Thinking**

Another task-based method for improving communication skills is through critical thinking exercises. These can be done verbally or through written assignments that give your child the chance to answer questions creatively using their own words and expressions. Get a head start with the communication-based critical thinking activities and games in our most popular resource, the Critical Thinking Companion.

**7. Offer Reflective Learning Opportunities**

Recording your child’s reading selected text or videotaping group presentations is an excellent method for assessing their communication strengths and weaknesses. Children can reflect on their oral performance in small groups. Then, ask each your child to critique others so that they can get used to receiving constructive criticism.

**8. Find Teachable Moments**

Whatever the age group you are dealing with, maximize on the everyday happenings in the study environment. For example, if a child answers a question in a complicated way, you might ask that they rephrase what they said, or ask clarifying questions. If an unfamiliar word pops up in a text or on a film, pause in order for the child to look up the word in the dictionary.