Watch what you are saying!

Choose your words carefully.



EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn the difference between say and tell.
Learn and practice new techniques for adding sincerity and impact to what you are saying.
Learn new polite expressions.



Activity One - ***Ask and answer with your partner or teacher.***

1. Do you general think before you **speak** or you tend to **say** things without thinking?
2. Do you choose words carefully?
3. Do you look for the **hidden meaning** in what people are saying?
4. Do you notice that people sometimes try to disguise what they really think but then **give away** their true meaning in the words they choose?
5. When you **talk** to people you don't know do you try to use neutral and diplomatic words?
6. When you talk to your family or close friends are you careful about the words you choose?
7. Do you ever use swear words?
8. Would you like to swear less?
9. What do you think these expressions mean?: *"Do as I say not as I do" , "Say it like it is", "Say what you mean", "familiarity breads contempt", "Watch your mouth!", 'Mind your language!".*
10. Do you find words and their origins interesting?
11. Are you a lover of language?

To mean - *(to signify) What does it mean? What do you mean? The real meaning, the meaning of life, I didn't mean to hurt you, I mean to say that….*

To give away (*the meaning of something) - to give yourself away, "He pretended not to know where last piece of chocolate cake had gone, but the chocolate around his mouth gave him away!"*
"The hidden meaning of the song can only be understood when you play the record backwards!".

Activity Two - ***What's the difference? Fill the gaps.***

Speak - Say - Tell -Talk- Chat

You say something
You tell someone something
You speak to someone

You talk to someone or about something
To chat to someone
To have a chat about something

A. I was ……. to you, why did you turn your back on me?
B. Who were you……. to just then? I heard voices.
C. I don't want to …….. about it, it's a painful memory, I just want to forget about it.
D. Guess what Dave…….me? He has been chosen to star in a movie in Hollywood!
E. I ……. to him that we should go out for a drink before he leaves.
F. I…… to my parents about once a week by phone.
G. I am always …….. her not to bite her nails.
H. I never……. that I could come to the party. I ……. you that I was busy that night.
I. They didn't sleep very much because they shared a room and they were……. all night.
J. I had a long……. with him about it and he really sounded quite positive.
K. I really have to …….. you something.
L. I must…….. that I am very impressed by your English level.
M. I had a little…….. with him and I found him very interesting.
N. I was ……. to someone in the store the other day and I didn't notice that it was my turn at the cash till.

To speak - To make a speech

Activity Three - *What do they really mean?*

What the British say	What the British mean	What others understand
I hear what you say	I disagree and do not want to discuss it further	He accepts my point of view
With the greatest respect…	I think you are an idiot	He is listening to me
That's not bad	That's good	That's poor
That is a very brave proposal	You are insane	He thinks I have courage
Quite good	A bit disappointing	Quite good
I would suggest…	Do it or be prepared to justify yourself	Think about the idea, but do what you like
Oh, incidentally/ by the way	The primary purpose of our discussion is…	That is not very important
I was a bit disappointed that	I am annoyed that	It doesn't really matter
Very interesting	That is clearly nonsense	They are impressed
I'll bear it in mind	I've forgotten it already	They will probably do it
I'm sure it's my fault	It's your fault	Why do they think it was their fault?
You must come for dinner	It's not an invitation, I'm just being polite	I will get an invitation soon
I almost agree	I don't agree at all	He's not far from agreement
I only have a few minor comments	Please re-write completely	He has found a few typos
Could we consider some other options	I don't like your idea	They have not yet decided

Activity Four - *Say what you mean!*

*React to the following situations in a **direct** and then again in an **indirect** manner using some of the expressions and techniques from above.*

1. Someone comes round to your house, you haven't seen them for ages, but it's really not a convenient time now.
2. A friend tells you all about an amazing adventure they had on holiday.
3. A colleague tells you about a project she would like to launch.
4. You want to invite someone out for a drink because you quite like them.
5. You run into a colleague you have not seen for a long time.
6. Someone makes a suggestion for weekend plans.
7. You talk to a friend who did not come to your birthday party.
8. You tell someone that you think they are wrong about something.
9. Someone recommended a film, you didn't like it and you tell them what you thought of it.
10. A friend is talking about politics and does not hold the same opinions as you. You want the conversation to end quickly.



Activity Five - *Mean what you say!*

Choosing the 'right' words can really help you to sound as if you 'mean' what you are saying, to sound sincere. Words that sound as if you have 'hand picked' them, unusual words or evocative words, which personalise and illustrate your point, make you sound sincere. Too many set phrases and 'clichéd' expressions will make you sound insincere.

If you find words which carry a certain emotion or which are clearly carefully chosen then you are more likely to make your mark on people. On the other hand if your speech is too 'polished' or 'ornate' then you could end up sounding insincere.

So, it's best to use simple words and down to earth images and comparisons that everyone can identify with. You can think carefully about what to say in order to sound sincere and in order to get an emotional response from people, but this does not mean that you have to use complicated words or phrases.

If you make an effort to get people to understand, with comparisons and images, then you will really get through to them. For example use expressions like: "it's like…" or "it would be like..;", "this is because…","it could be compared to", "it would be the equivalent of", "this means that" etc..

Use short sentences and pause for effect. Use linking words to help you to break things down into small sections. (However, therefore, in fact, furthermore, also, as a result…).

***To hand pick** - to choose yourself to suit your own purpose.*
***A set phrase** - an idiomatic expression or well known phrase.*
***To get through to someone** - to make them understand something.*

"Sincerity is the virtue of one who speaks and acts truly about his or her own feelings, thoughts, and desires."

Voltaire "One great use of words is to hide our thoughts."

Activity Six ***- It's not what you say it's the way you say it!***

Read the text and summarise the main points it makes in your own words. Pay great attention to your intonation, stress, pitch and to the tone of your voice while reading!

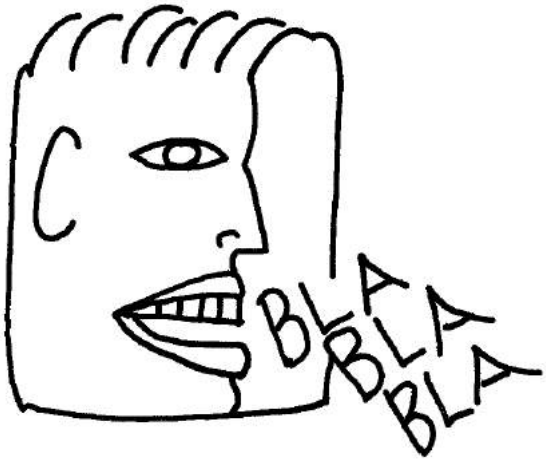
There's A Message In Your Voice.

While speech is how you use words, voice is how you create sound. To your listeners, your voice is a part of who you are and what you believe. Follow these tips on using your voice effectively when you're giving a presentation.

Your voice is a bigger and more important part of your presentation than you may think. With your voice, you can mutter, whisper, or shout. You can roar, suggest, demand. You can state, announce, assert, declare, affirm.

Use your voice for maximum impact.
From the sound of your voice, your listeners will make judgments about your attitude toward them and the ideas you're presenting. They'll judge your sincerity and credibility in part by your voice. And in turn that will affect how they respond to you and your message.

It follows that to be a good presenter, you must take care of your voice and learn to use it effectively. (See our article, Take Care Of Your Voice, also in this issue.) The proper use of your voice can emphasise and strengthen every message you deliver.



Vary the elements of sound for emphasis.
If the pitch, volume, rhythm, and timbre of your voice never fluctuate, you'll be speaking in a monotone. And you'll risk losing your audience as a result.

A monotone suggests to your listeners that you have little invested in them or in your message. It suggests you don't really care much whether or how your listeners respond.

A monotone provides too few points of emphasis, the kind that helps your audience comprehend your message. But you can supply those points of emphasis by making your voice more expressive. An expressive voice pauses and quickens ... changes pace ... lowers and raises both volume and pitch. It carries emotion ranging from certainty to doubt ... surprise to assurance ... delight to disgust.

Work expression into your voice by varying the elements of sound: volume, pitch, rhythm, and timbre. Try that now by reading this next sentence aloud:

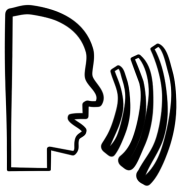
"I didn't tell her you were stupid."
Depending on how you vary the vocal elements, you can give this sentence any of several meanings. Begin by saying the sentence aloud, emphasising the first word with added volume. Continue repeating the sentence, each time emphasising a different word:

"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (Somebody else told her.)
"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I emphatically did not.)
"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I implied it.)
"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I told someone else.)

"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I told her someone else was stupid.)
"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I told her you're still stupid.)
"I didn't tell her you were stupid." (I told her something else about you.)

Identical words. Different meanings. That's the power of voice. Here are some more tips on harnessing your vocal power:

Adjust the volume.



Use changes in volume to prevent your voice from slipping into monotonous sameness and to alert your audience to the nuances of your message.

Always speak loudly enough so everyone in your audience can hear you. Speak a little more loudly if the audience is large, even if you're using a microphone. Lower the volume for an aside. Raise the volume gradually as you build toward a point. Change your volume when you're changing an idea or an approach.

Refine the pitch.

Pitch is the frequency of the sound waves you produce. It is about hitting high or low notes with your voice.

Become aware of pitch and learn to refine it, phrase-by-phrase. Questions, for example, should end on a higher note. Conversely, affirmative statements should end in a level or slightly lower pitch. The ending of statements on a high pitch can create doubt in your listeners. Vary your pitch throughout your presentation to establish and reinforce your message.

Alter the rhythm and tempo.



Rhythm is the pattern of the sounds you produce. Tempo is the pace of your voice. Use rhythm to carry meaning. Slow the pace to emphasise certain ideas. Quicken the pace to show excitement or humour.

Pause to underscore major points or to give listeners time to absorb a complex idea. Pause also when you're about to transition to another idea.

Control the timbre.

Timbre is the emotional quality of your voice. It's the attitude behind a word or a phrase. Listeners perceive a speaker's attitude and use their perception to build comprehension.

Use timbre to enhance your meaning or express the emotion or attitude you want to create. Choose words and phrases that support that attitude.

Vary your emotional expression to support and signify meaning.
Your voice is one of the many tools with which you communicate. Practice managing your voice. Become adept at using it to clarify your message and to carry its significance to your listeners.

Activity Seven - *Speech bubble.*

With a partner, or alone, complete the speech bubbles below; think about what their expressions or actions show and decide on something that they might be saying.









Activity Eight - Yours *sincerely…*

Act out the following situations, with sincerity by choosing your words carefully and using your voice as a tool!

Use one of the following expressions to introduce what you are saying:

I've got something I'd like to share with you.
There's something I have to get off my chest.
I really have to say something.
I'd really like you to know something.
In all honesty..
Quite frankly..
In all sincerity..
I've got to tell you that…
I really must say that…
It's important for you to know that…

- Ask someone to marry you.
- Tell someone that you have decided that they are not the right person for the job.
- Explain how much you appreciate what someone has done to you.
- Tell someone you love their new dress even though it's quite daring!
- Thank someone for sharing their sandwiches with you because you forgot yours.
- Make a speech because you are leaving your job.
- Make a political speech because you are a candidate to be mayor of your town.

Activity Nine - *Words don't come easy to me…*

Listen to the song and answer the questions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9y5eY1hKuE&noredirect=1

- *Why did he write this song?*
- *What does he find hard?*
- *Which term of endearment does he use?*
- *What happens when he tries to say what he means?*
- *What's the message he would like to convey?*
- *Which form of expression does he find easiest and why?*



Activity Ten - *Speech marks…*

These " " are called speech marks in English. Do you know the names for the rest of English punctuation? Let's have a team competition to find out!

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