

Communication, Day 3: Asking What You Want

Special Education: Secondary, Lesson # 10

Student Learning Objectives:

To be able to...

1. Identify something they want
2. State a fact or a feeling
3. Ask straight for what they want

Materials Needed:

Transparencies - case study and starter statements
A set of game cards
One copy of the worksheets for each student

Agenda:

1. Case study
2. Practice steps
3. Worksheet
4. Debrief worksheet
5. The asking game
6. Supporting activity

The ability to make a clear request for something that we know we want is an important social skill, one that contributes directly to personal satisfaction. We can't expect others to read our minds - we must express our wishes clearly, in order to have others respond the way we would like them to.

Activities:

“This lesson is about asking for what you want”
Create mini-albums with pictures of commonly requested items. Students can then point to the picture to request the item they would like. You might create several different albums
 - eating at restaurants (pictures of different types of food and beverages),
 recreation time (pictures of the student doing different recreational activities),
 a mini-phone book (pictures and phone numbers of commonly called friends).

Use your imagination to create useful communication tools for helping your students ask for what they want.

If role playing this case study, use actual turtlenecks of different colors. Have Betsy look at and hold the red turtleneck. Then have her get her mother's attention and gesture by pointing that she really wants the red one

1. Case Study

- A. Introduce today's lesson by telling students:
“The ability to ask for what you want without using other people or being used by them, is an important skill”
- B. Read or roleplay the following case study to your class and project the transparency:
*“Betsy was shopping for new school clothes with her mother. Turtlenecks were on sale at one store and they came in lots of different colors, including Betsy's favorite color - bright red.
 Betsy's mother said, Oh look, a sale on turtlenecks. We'll get this green one and this blue one and maybe this white one. They'll look good with your new school skirts and slacks.”
 Betsy watched and waited, but her mother didn't pick up a red turtleneck. She sighed and felt sad as her mother bought three different sweaters but Betsy didn't say anything.
 For three weeks, whenever she got dressed in the morning, Betsy looked at the turtlenecks. She knew she should feel grateful for the three new turtlenecks in her closet but somehow she just felt disappointed that her mother hadn't picked out a red one for her.”*
- C. Ask the class: “What went wrong?”
 Betsy didn't ask for what she wanted.
 It's easy to ask assertively for what you want.
 There are three main steps:
 1) Decide what it is you want (be specific).
 2) State a fact or a feeling.
 3) Ask straight for what you want.
 Write the steps on the blackboard or on butcher paper under the heading “Asking for what you want”.
- D. Ask the class how things might have gone if Betsy had followed these simple steps.
“Betsy was shopping for new school clothes with her mother. Turtlenecks were on sale at one store and they came in lots of different colors, including Betsy's favorite color - bright red.

Betsy's mother said, Oh look, a sale on turtle-necks. We'll get this green one and this blue one and maybe this white one. They'll look good with your new school skirts and slacks."

Betsy watched and waited, but her mother didn't pick up a red turtle-neck. So Betsy decided to use the three steps to ask for what she wanted.

1) **Decide what it is you want** (be specific).

Betsy really wanted a red turtle-neck so she said to her mother

2) **State a fact or a feeling:**

"Gee mom, this red turtle-neck is my favorite color."

3) **Ask straight for what you want.**

I would like the red turtle-neck instead of the green one please. "Okay, Betsy", said her mother. The red turtle-neck is really nice too. Let's put the green one back and get the red one instead."

Betsy was happy and proud of herself for asking straight for what she wanted. And she got her red turtle-neck!"

2. Practice Steps

A. Tell students you want them to try this three step process for themselves.

"Imagine it's the end of the week. Tomorrow is Saturday and you haven't made any plans yet. You have a free Saturday and lots of energy. What do you want to do with your day?"

Ask students to brainstorm ideas for what to do on Saturday. Write their ideas on the board.

Some ideas:

- hiking
- yardwork
- shopping
- go out to a restaurant
- go to a movie
- ask a friend to visit
- get ahead on home-work
- write letters

The first step is to decide what your choice is.

Ask students to look at the list and decide on their first choice, the thing they would like to do most.

The second step is to state a fact or a feeling.

Ask students to think about words they might use for this step. Some examples:

"I've had a busy week and I'm really looking forward to relaxing on Saturday", or "I feel excited about having

Use pictures of the various choices and ask students to select their choice. Have students point to their first choice.

"I like/want/feel good about this"

Saturday for something I want to do.” Discuss.

The third step is to ask straight for what you want.

Ask students to think about words they might use to ask for what they want to do. Some ideas:

“I’d really like to....” or On Saturday, I want to...”.

Discuss.

Ask students to describe how they think it would feel to ask for what they wanted.

Discuss.

3. Worksheet

- A. Hand out the worksheet. This exercise can be done individually or in pairs.
- B. Discuss asking for what you want when you are ordering in a restaurant. On this worksheet you are going to practice the three steps, and fill in the blanks with words you might use.
- C. The first step is to decide what you want. Have students check the box to indicate which type of beverage they would like to drink.
- D. The second step is to state a fact or a feeling. Sample starter statements may help students to come up with the words they want to use to state a fact or a feeling. Post or project the Starter Statements transparency.
- E. The third step is to ask straight for what you want. Again post or project the sample starter statements to help students with language they can use to ask for what they want.

Use an actual picture menu and have students practice looking it over and then pointing to their choices.

4. Debrief Worksheet.

- A. Ask for volunteers to share their responses with the rest of the class or to act out their steps as a short skit.
- B. Point out the three steps as they occur.

5. The Asking Game

- A. Cut up the game cards worksheet. Ask for a pair of volunteers to do the roleplaying. (You may want to model this with a teaching assistant first).
- B. Hand out the first game card to the volunteers.
- C. Give the volunteers several minutes to discuss the game card you give them. Have them write down their own ideas for stating a fact or feeling and asking straight for what you want.
- D. Then you have two options:
 - Ask students to read their responses aloud to the class.
 - Ask students to roleplay their responses for the class.

Work one-on-one with some students to help them determine something that they want.

Ask students to get the attention of the person whose permission they need.

Ask students to practice asking by pointing to what they want.

People First is an international self-advocacy organization. Consider starting a school chapter of this organization so that students have an opportunity available for asking for what they want.

- E. One variation on this approach is to have several pairs of volunteers work simultaneously on the same game card. This approach will point out that there are many different ways to ask for the same thing.
- F. Repeat with the other game cards.

6. Supporting Activity.

Have a discussion about voting and getting involved politically. There are a variety of advocacy movements students can become part of if they want to ask for something on a different scale. Discuss ways of asking for things - letter writing campaigns, sign posting, editorials, direct contacts.

Help students identify things they would like to ask for that would affect their world.

Dear Trusted Adult,

In class we talked about the importance of being able to ask for what you want. Students learned about making effective requests and a three step approach to asking for what you want.

The three steps are:

- decide what it is you want
- state a fact or a feeling
- ask straight for what you want.

These steps were learned through using case studies and worksheets and then practiced using a roleplay exercise.

The ability to make a clear request for something that we know we want is an important social skill, one that contributes directly to personal satisfaction. We can't expect others to read our minds - we must express our wishes clearly, in order to have others respond the way we would like them to.

You can support this learning by:

- Discussing the three steps and starter statements:
 1. Decide what it is you want
 2. State a fact or a feeling.
 - I feel...*
 - I heard that...*
 - You once said that...*
 - It bothers me when you...*
 3. Ask straight for what you want
 - Could I...?*
 - May I...?*
 - I wish you would...*
 - Why don't we...?*
- Practicing these steps and starter statements in the following situations:
 - you would like someone else to take out the garbage
 - you would like to change the channel and watch a different show on television
 - you would like to go out for ice cream with your friend

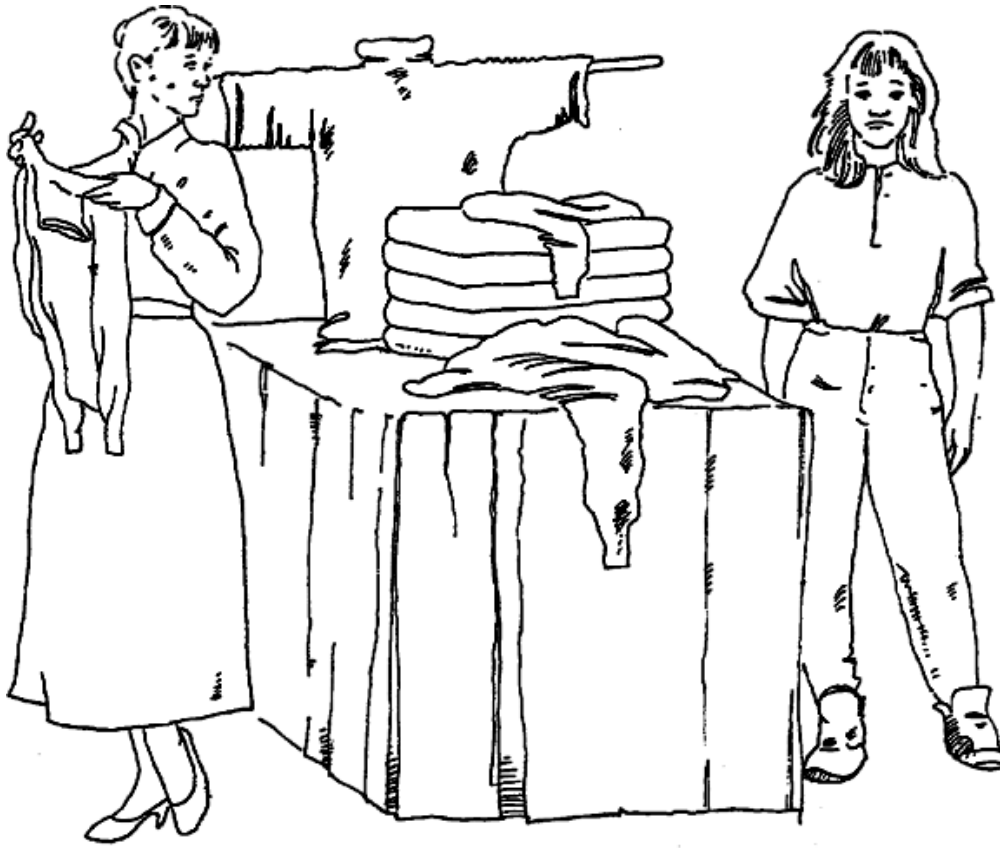
If you have any questions or comments, please call me.

Sincerely,

Teacher, Principal or Nurse

NOTE: All Trusted Adult Exercises are Optional.

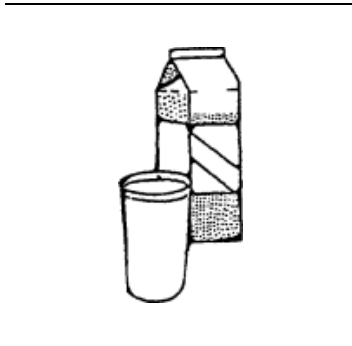
Case Study Transparency



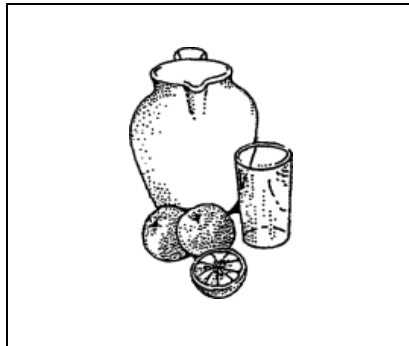
Asking For What You Want: Worksheet

**You are in a restaurant for breakfast.
You are thirsty.
There are three choices.**

1. Decide what you want.



Milk



Orange juice



Tea

2. State a fact or a feeling:

3. Ask straight for what you want:

“I would like some _____ please.”

Starter Statements

Stating a fact or a feeling.

I feel...

I heard that...

You once said that...

It bothers me when you...

Asking straight for what you want.

Could I...?

May I...?

I wish you would...

Why don't we...?

Asking Game Cards

<p>1. You would like your grandmother to give you a ride to your friend's house.</p> <p>A. State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>B. Ask straight for what you want:</p>	<p>2. You would like one of your classmates (who isn't really a friend yet) to come 'hang out' at your house after school.</p> <p>A. State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>B. Ask straight for what you want:</p>
<p>3. You would like to go to a basketball game with a certain guy or girl.</p> <p>A. State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>B. Ask straight for what you want:</p>	<p>4. You had a really hard day at school. You really need a hug. Your mother walks into the room.</p> <p>A. State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>B. Ask straight for what you want:</p>