



THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL VOICES

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OBJECTIVES

A successful negotiator does not only negotiate with what a person says, rather with what a person actually thinks and feels. This speaking / oral exercise is designed to help students learn how to access this critical information.

Students will learn how to access this information by exploring the gap between a person's external voice (what he/she says) and the internal voice (what he/she actually thinks or feels). By role-playing the internal and external voices of the characters, the students will gain insight into how the other side thinks and feels, which in turn will help them create a better approach to negotiating a resolution to the conflict.

This lesson integrates negotiation skills and speaking skills with the Israeli Module F Literature program. The teacher may choose any short story that the class has read and draw from it two characters who are in conflict.

Note: This is not limited to literary characters. Rather, the teacher can create/choose a scenario with any two individuals who are in conflict. Possible role-plays include the following pairings with an endless variety of conflicts that the teacher can create:

Mother/teenager
Principal/teenage student
Teacher/teenage student
Two teenage friends
Two siblings

LEAD-IN / PREP

Teacher Reference Sheet (in this document at end of Teacher Guidelines)

The teacher should choose characters and prepare scenarios for the groups. All groups can be given the same scenario or they can each be different. The scenario must be one in which two individuals or literary characters are in conflict. For example, in Amy Tan's "Rules of the Game", a good scenario would be the last scene in which Waverly returns home and her mother, Mrs. Jong, won't talk to her.

Example role play cards for a) Literature Program; and b) a non-literature context:

a) **For Literature lesson:**

Short Story: “Rules of the Game” by Amy Tan

Characters: Waverly and her mother, Mrs. Jong

Conflict: The final scene after Waverly returns home from the market after she was embarrassed her mother and her mother stopped talking to her.

b) **Non-literature scenario:**

Characters: Father (or mother) / teenager daughter, Karen (or can be a teenage son)

Conflict: It’s Wednesday evening, a school night, and Karen wants to go to a friend’s birthday party. Her father won’t let her go because she has a math test the next morning and she failed the last math test. For Karen this is the end of the world because the parents of her friend have prepared a special party; they have arranged for the whole group to go to a popular club, sit in the VIP room (for very exclusive guests), and watch a show that is THE hit of the country. Even if Karen wanted to go another night, she couldn’t because tickets are sold out for the next year.

ACTIVITIES

1. Place students in groups of four. Two students will role-play the characters’ external voices and two students will role-play the characters’ internal voices.

The conversation should focus on the conflict. Each side should express his/her views and what they think of the conflict.

- **Outer Voice:** This is what the characters say to one another, without revealing the full extent of what they really think and feel. The outer voice can carry on a polite conversation while the inner voice is raging with anger.
- **Inner Voice:** This is what the character is thinking and feeling but doesn’t say. As a conversation becomes more difficult and tenser, the inner voice grows stronger.

2. Round 1: (10 minutes)

Students create this dialogue as they go. The external voices begin the conversation. As the external voices speak, the internal voices interrupt and say what the character is really thinking/feeling. (**See Teacher Reference Sheet** for examples of Internal/External dialogues.)

3. Round 1 - Debriefing – (10 minutes)

Debrief in groups. Use the following questions to debrief the learning experience: What insight did you gain from the exercise?

- How did hearing the internal voice affect the way the external voice expressed itself?
- Why is it important to hear the internal voice?

- What problems did you discover?
- What was helpful?

2. Round 2: Switching Roles (10 minutes)

The students switch roles. Those who were the external voices will switch to the other side (the other external voice). Those who were the internal voices will likewise switch to the other internal voice. This way all the students will be role-playing the other side.

The same format is followed: Students create this dialogue as they go. The external voices begin the conversation. As the external voices speak, the internal voices will interrupt and say what the character is really thinking/feeling.

3. Round 2 - Debriefing –Full class forum (10 minutes)

Debrief in full class forum. Use the following questions to debrief the learning experience:

- What did you learn by switching sides?
- How would you apply this to your life? Explain
- Read the following to the students: “In life you must negotiate not what people say, but rather what they actually feel and think.”
 - Do you think this is true?
 - How does this exercise relate to that and what can you conclude from your experience doing this exercise?
 - What problems did you discover?
 - What was helpful?
 - How can you apply the idea of the external/internal voices to your life?

Additional Round - Optional:

4. Give students another role play. (10 minutes)

This time, without stopping to debrief part 1, they will go straight to the second round – switching places.

TIME REQUIRED IN CLASSROOM

40 minutes

Teacher Reference Page

Sample Internal/External Voice Dialogues

Scenario: A teenage boy is rushing out of the house, leaving behind a big mess of all his clothing, books, etc. in the living room.

Mother (External):

Could you please clean up this mess before you leave?

Mother (Internal):

I cannot stand this mess anymore. How dare you think you can just rush out and leave me to clean up your mess. It's time you took some responsibility. You are 16 years old, not 5.

Teenage son (External):

I can't, I'm in a rush, my friends are waiting for me.

Teenage Son (Internal):

Why do you always try to delay me every time I'm in a rush? Besides, you know you can clean this up in 5 minutes and that if I stop and start dealing with it, it will delay me at least a half-hour. And people are waiting for me!

Mother (External):

It will only take a minute.

Mother (Internal):

I am not going to let you leave me with this big mess again. You are going to the beach to meet your friends – that can wait. Enough is enough! Let them wait an hour for you – I don't care! You have no respect.

Son (External):

I can't, mom, you know I love you, but they are waiting.

Son (Internal):

You know you are the only mother that makes friends wait. You know that you don't need me to clean up this mess, you know you just want to annoy me!

Scenario: Amy Tan's short story "Rules of the Game." This is based on the final scene after Waverly returns home from the market after she was embarrassed her mother and her mother stopped talking to her.

Waverly (External voice): Hello, Mother.

Waverly (Internal voice): I cannot stand you anymore.

Mother (**Eternal voice**): (Turning away and telling the rest of the family) **If this girl doesn't care about us, we don't care about her.**

Mother (Internal voice): You have no idea how much you hurt me, my own daughter! I wish I could just dig a hole and bury myself I am so devastated.

Waverly: (External): I tried to explain this to you already.

Waverly: (Internal voice): You don't understand anything, you are too Chinese and we are in America!

Mother (External voice): You caused shame on the family.

Mother (Internal voice): Don't you understand anything?! We are a proud Chinese family. We have respect, we have strong family values. You go around behaving like a rude American girl. I have taught you our traditions and ways. I taught you the art of invisible strength and all my daily truths to help you and your brothers and look what you did!



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