

- targeted
 - adaptable
 - Primary
 - Intermediate
 - Middle
 - Senior
- Introduce the strategy**

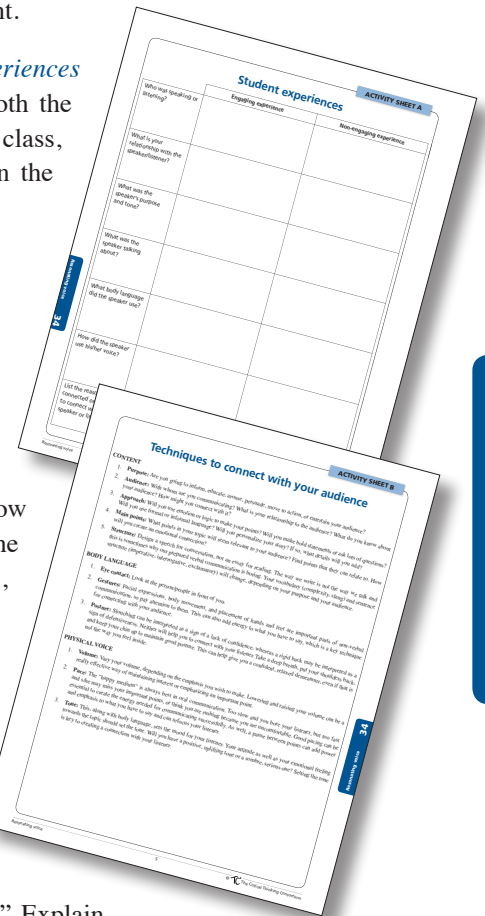
Resonating voice

speaking in a way that connects with your audience

- Objectives:**
- recognize when verbal communication connects with the audience
 - appreciate that the elements of verbal communication (content, tone, voice) will change, depending on the audience.

Use the following activities to introduce this strategy

- Ask students to think about a time when they were really interested and eager to listen to what someone was saying or when someone listened eagerly to what they were saying. Invite them to tell a partner about this experience and identify techniques used by the speaker to engage the audience. When students have shared with one partner, invite them to form new partnerships and share the experience again. Next, ask students to think of a time when they were not interested in what a speaker had to say or when someone was not interested in listening to them. Invite them to tell their partner about the experience and identify techniques that could have been used to increase engagement.
- Provide students with a copy of *Student experiences* (Activity Sheet A) to record the qualities of both the engaging and non-engaging experiences. As a class, discuss the similarities and differences between the two situations.
- Based on the discussion, draw out the elements of effective communication (content, tone, voice). Point out the importance of knowing your audience. Pose the question, “What should you know about your audience?” Record student ideas on the board. Suggestions may include age, interests, values, your relationship. Suggest that often we know these things but we need to be mindful of them in conversation. Provide students with a copy of *Techniques to connect with your audience* (Activity Sheet B) and ask them to read the sheet, highlighting any information new to them.
- Pose the question, “How will speaking change, depending on your audience (listener)?” Explain that frequently, when we are “finding our voice” and trying to communicate (tell a story, inform, or convince people of our points of view), if we do not connect with the listener/audience, we will be unsuccessful, even if we have great points and stories to tell. We may need to change our main points, tone, tactic, presentation, and even vocabulary, depending on our listener or audience. Explain to students that the term voice can be used in a metaphorical sense (e.g., as an author selecting and organizing words) as well as a physical sense (e.g., the way words are spoken).



Practise the strategy

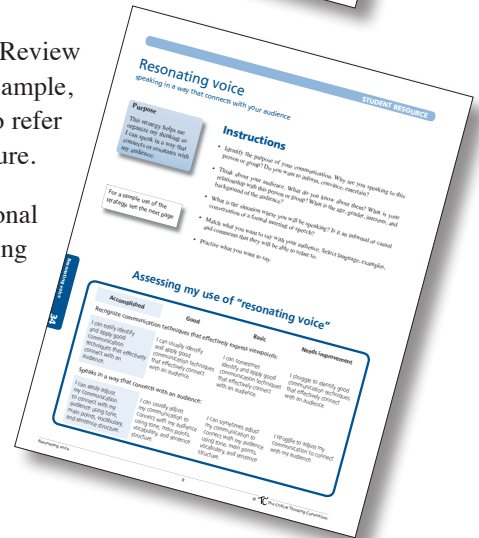
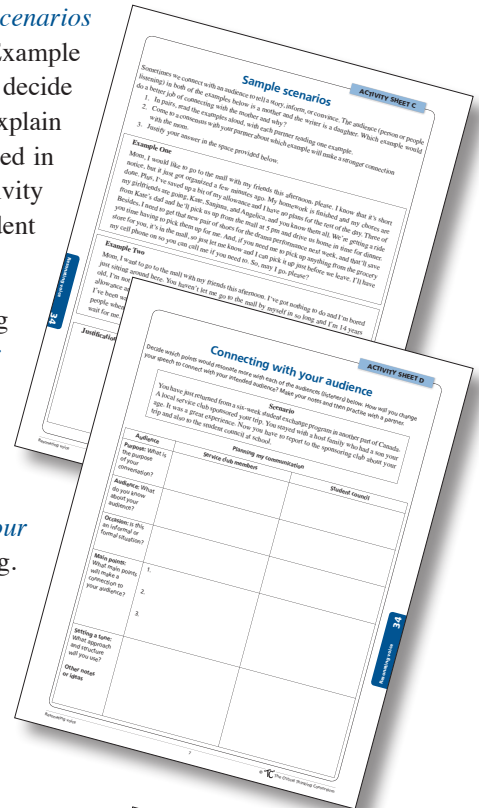
- Provide pairs of students with a copy of *Sample scenarios* (Activity Sheet C). Instruct one partner to read Example A aloud and the other partner to read Example B, decide which example is most suited to the audience and explain why. Encourage students to use the ideas presented in *Techniques to connect with your audience* (Activity Sheet B) to support their answer. Discuss student findings as a class.
- Invite students to practise the strategy using the scenario provided in *Connecting with your audience* (Activity Sheet D). Explain that the task is to outline the main points of their speech in the chart, demonstrating how the communication would change based on the audience. Encourage students to use *Techniques to connect with your audience* (Activity Sheet B) to support their planning.
- When students have completed their outline, invite them to spread out around the room to practise their communication aloud. After they have practised, students deliver one or both of their speeches to a partner. Encourage students to provide effective feedback to the speakers.

Reinforce the strategy

- Introduce *Resonating voice* (Student Resource). Review each of the elements: purpose, strategies, practice sample, and self-assessment rubric. Encourage students to refer to this resource when using the strategy in the future.
- Invite students to apply this strategy to a personal communication situation or a topic they are studying in school.

Apply the strategy to everyday teaching

- At appropriate times over the ensuing several weeks, encourage students to use this strategy in regular classroom situations, including the following:
 - discussing where this strategy has since been useful in real-life situations;
 - reworking short stories and novels by considering how characters' conversations might change given a different audience;
 - explaining newspaper articles when discussing current events;
 - reworking advertisements;
 - reporting school or class events.



Assess use of the strategy

- Encourage students to refer to the rubric found in the Student Resource when self-assessing their use of this oral strategy.
 - Allow students opportunities to apply the strategy two or three times without evaluation.
 - Guide students in interpreting and using the rubric to assess their own responses.
 - Encourage students to use the rubric whenever they use this strategy.
- To use the rubric for teacher evaluation of student work, remove the first person (student) reference from each descriptor.

Student experiences

	Engaging experience	Non-engaging experience
Who was speaking or listening?		
What is your relationship with the speaker/listener?		
What was the speaker's purpose and tone?		
What was the speaker talking about?		
What body language did the speaker use?		
How did the speaker use his/her voice?		
List the reasons you connected or failed to connect with the speaker or listener.		

Techniques to connect with your audience

CONTENT

1. **Purpose:** Are you going to inform, educate, arouse, persuade, move to action, or entertain your audience?
2. **Audience:** With whom are you communicating? What is your relationship to the audience? What do you know about your audience? How might you connect with it?
3. **Approach:** Will you use emotion or logic to make your points? Will you make bold statements or ask lots of questions? Will you use formal or informal language? Will you personalize your story? If so, what details will you add?
4. **Main points:** What points in your topic will seem relevant to your audience? Find points that they can relate to. How will you create an emotional connection?
5. **Structure:** Design a speech for conversation, not an essay for reading. The way we write is not the way we talk and this is sometimes why our prepared verbal communication is boring. Your vocabulary (complexity, slang) and sentence structure (imperative, interrogative, exclamatory) will change, depending on your purpose and your audience.

BODY LANGUAGE

1. **Eye contact:** Look at the person/people in front of you.
2. **Gestures:** Facial expressions, body movement, and placement of hands and feet are important parts of non-verbal communication, so pay attention to them. This can also add energy to what you have to say, which is a key technique for connecting with your audience.
3. **Posture:** Slouching can be interpreted as a sign of a lack of confidence, whereas a rigid back may be interpreted as a sign of defensiveness. Neither will help you to connect with your listener. Take a deep breath, put your shoulders back, and keep your chin up to maintain good posture. This can help give you a confident, relaxed demeanour, even if that is not the way you feel inside.

PHYSICAL VOICE

1. **Volume:** Vary your volume, depending on the emphasis you wish to make. Lowering and raising your volume can be a really effective way of maintaining interest or emphasizing an important point.
2. **Pace:** The “happy medium” is always best in oral communication. Too slow and you bore your listener, but too fast and s/he may miss your important points, or think you are rushing because you are uncomfortable. Good pacing can be essential to create the energy needed for communicating successfully. As well, a pause between points can add power and emphasis to what you have to say and can refocus your listener.
3. **Tone:** This, along with body language, sets the mood for your listener. Your attitude as well as your emotional feeling towards the topic should set the tone. Will you have a positive, uplifting tone or a sombre, serious one? Setting the tone is key to creating a connection with your listener.

Sample scenarios

Sometimes we connect with an audience to tell a story, inform, or convince. The audience (person or people listening) in both of the examples below is a mother and the writer is a daughter. Which example would do a better job of connecting with the mother and why?

1. In pairs, read the examples aloud, with each partner reading one example.
2. Come to a consensus with your partner about which example will make a stronger connection with the mom.
3. Justify your answer in the space provided below.

Example One

Mom, I would like to go to the mall with my friends this afternoon, please. I know that it's short notice, but it just got organized a few minutes ago. My homework is finished and my chores are done. Plus, I've saved up a bit of my allowance and I have no plans for the rest of the day. Three of my girlfriends are going, Kate, Sanjana, and Angelica, and you know them all. We're getting a ride from Kate's dad and he'll pick us up from the mall at 5 pm and drive us home in time for dinner. Besides, I need to get that new pair of shoes for the drama performance next week, and that'll save you time having to pick them up for me. And, if you need me to pick up anything from the grocery store for you, it's in the mall, so just let me know and I can pick it up just before we leave. I'll have my cell phone on so you can call me if you need to. So, may I go, please?

Example Two

Mom, I want to go to the mall with my friends this afternoon. I've got nothing to do and I'm bored just sitting around here. You haven't let me go to the mall by myself in so long and I'm 14 years old, I'm not a little kid anymore, so I should be able to go when I want to. Besides, I have some allowance and I should be able to spend it the way I want to, when I want to. I've got some stuff I've been wanting to buy for a while. I'm going with my friends and we might meet up with some people when we get there. Also, we might get dinner there or I might be home for dinner so don't wait for me.

Justification

Connecting with your audience

Decide which points would resonate more with each of the audiences (listeners) below. How will you change your speech to connect with your intended audience? Make your notes and then practise with a partner.

Scenario

You have just returned from a six-week student exchange program in another part of Canada. A local service club sponsored your trip. You stayed with a host family who had a son your age. It was a great experience. Now you have to report to the sponsoring club about your trip and also to the student council at school.

Planning my communication

Audience	Service club members	Student council
Purpose: What is the purpose of your conversation?		
Audience: What do you know about your audience?		
Occasion: Is this an informal or formal situation?		
Main points: What main points will make a connection to your audience?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	
Setting a tone: What approach and structure will you use? Other notes or ideas		

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Purpose

This strategy helps me organize my thinking so I can speak in a way that connects or resonates with my audience.

For a sample use of the strategy, see the next page.

Instructions

- Identify the purpose of your communication. Why are you speaking to this person or group? Do you want to inform, convince, entertain?
- Think about your audience. What do you know about them? What is your relationship with this person or group? What is the age, gender, interests, and background of the audience?
- What is the situation where you will be speaking? Is it an informal or casual conversation or a formal meeting or speech?
- Match what you want to say with your audience. Select language, examples, and comments that they will be able to relate to.
- Practise what you want to say.

Assessing my use of “resonating voice”

Accomplished

Good

Basic

Needs improvement

Recognize communication techniques that effectively express viewpoints:

I can easily identify and apply good communication techniques that effectively connect with an audience.

I can usually identify and apply good communication techniques that effectively connect with an audience.

I can sometimes identify and apply good communication techniques that effectively connect with an audience.

I struggle to identify good communication techniques that effectively connect with an audience.

Speaks in a way that connects with an audience:

I can easily adjust my communication to connect with my audience using tone, main points, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

I can usually adjust my communication to connect with my audience using tone, main points, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

I can sometimes adjust my communication to connect with my audience using tone, main points, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

I struggle to adjust my communication to connect with my audience.

SAMPLE

use of the strategy

Scenario

You have just returned from a six-week student exchange program in another part of Canada. A local service club sponsored your trip. You stayed with a host family who had a son your age. It was a great experience. Now you have to report to the sponsoring club about your trip and also to the student council at school.

Planning my communication

Audience	Service club members	Student council
Purpose: What is the purpose of your conversation?	<i>To inform and to express appreciation.</i>	<i>To inform and to create interest, perhaps to entertain.</i>
Audience: What do you know about your audience?	<i>They are middle-aged. I don't know them personally. They are English speaking and want to encourage bilingualism in Canada. They want to know that I represented my community well and that the experience was valuable to me.</i>	<i>They are my age. I know them well. They want to know about the fun things I did, the interesting people I met, the things that were hard.</i>
Occasion: Is this an informal or formal situation?	<i>Semi-formal – speaking for 5 minutes at their monthly meeting.</i>	<i>Informal – sharing during a council meeting.</i>
Main points: What main points will make a connection to your audience?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Comparison of my community with the one I visited –</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>size</i> <i>industry</i> <i>French culture</i> <i>Experiences I had there – speaking French daily, visiting the local museum, seeing bilingualism in action, attending school in French.</i> <i>What I learned – gained confidence, improved my French and my understanding of the importance of the French language to Canada, appreciated the diversity of Canada.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>People I met – the boy I stayed with, people at school (Etienne, Jacqueline, Marie-Pierre, Jonathan)</i> <i>What I did for fun – skateboard park, school dance, music concert</i> <i>Stories – finding my way in the subway, locking myself out of the house, feeling stupid because I couldn't communicate well at first</i> <i>Challenges – speaking no English</i>
Setting a tone: What approach and structure will you use?	<i>Full sentences, logical, informative</i>	<i>Humorous, casual, slang expressions are ok, funny stories</i>
Other notes or ideas		