

COMMUNICATION



What is communication?

Communication is the sharing of thoughts, feelings, messages and information.

It usually takes at least two people to communicate. We might be the one doing the sharing or we might be the one on the receiving end. So, communication means understanding what others are saying and also being understood when we are talking.

Sometimes we communicate in larger groups – like when we have a conversation with a few people.

How do we communicate?

Most of the time we communicate by **talking**.

We can also communicate by **writing**.

Some people who are deaf or who have a communication disorder might use **signing** – like British Sign Language or American Sign Language.

Body language

Our spoken communication is helped by body language. This is a way of saying what is on our mind without using words. It is things like:

- smiling or frowning
- the way we look at someone
- nodding or shaking our head when someone is talking
- how we gesture with our hands

Good communication

To communicate well we need five things:

1. Language

Language is the ability to understand words and to use them to make sentences. For example, we must understand that “The happy girl is feeding the dog” is a proper sentence but “The feeding the is girl dog happy” is not.

2. Voice

Voice is the ability to make sounds by vibrating the vocal cords. We can alter how high or low our voice sounds. We can change how loudly or softly we speak.

3. Speech

Speech is the sounds we make to build the words we use in talking. For example, the word *cat* is made up of three sounds *c*, *a* and *t*.

4. Fluency

Fluency is the smooth, easy production of speech. The speech is made without any effort. It is relaxed and flowing.

5. Social Use

This is about how we use speech and language differently in different situations. For example, we would talk differently to a baby and an adult. It also means following social rules for talking to each other. For example, taking turns in a conversation and not talking all the time.