



Show Respect Online

Essential Question

How can I make sure my emails are clear and respectful?

Lesson Overview

Students explore the similarities and differences between in-person and online communications, and then learn how to write clear and respectful emails.

Students begin by discussing how to be clear and respectful when they talk with people, either face to face or on the telephone. They explore the concept of tone, then compare and contrast what it is like to communicate face to face versus online. Students learn some rules that can help them express themselves clearly and respectfully when they write email messages. They then apply what they have learned by editing an email message.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- understand how to show respect in social situations.
- recognize the importance of tone in both face-to-face and online communications.
- learn rules for writing clear and respectful emails by editing an email message.

Materials and Preparation

-  Preview the video, “Mindful Messaging,” and prepare to show it to students.
- Copy the **Email Edit Student Handout**, one for each student.

Family Resources

- Send home the **Effective Email Communication Family Tip Sheet (Elementary School)**.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Standards Alignment –

Common Core:

grade K: RL.1, RL.4, RL.10, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4, W.2, W.5, W.7, W.8, W.10, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.2, SL.3, SL.6, L.6

grade 1: RL.1, RL.4, RI.1, RI.4, RI.10, RF.4a, W.5, W.7, W.8, L.6

grade 2: RL.1, RI.4, RI.10, W.2, W.5, W.7, W.8, SL.1a, SL.1b, SL.1c, SL.3, SL.6, L.6

NETS•S: 5a, 5d

Key Vocabulary –

respectful: in a way that shows you care about another person’s feelings

tone: the way something sounds and the feelings it expresses

edit (verb): to change something that is written to make it better

introduction

Warm-up (10 minutes)

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **respectful**.

ASK:

What are some examples of how to be clear and respectful to others when you are talking in school?

Sample responses:

- Try to talk clearly, and explain what you mean if someone doesn't understand.
- Listen to what other people have to say.
- Take turns talking.
- Speak instead of shouting.
- Don't make fun of people.
- Say "please" and "thank you."
- Say nice things to people.

Note: Consider recording student responses, so that you may return to them later in the lesson.

INVITE students to discuss what might happen if people did not try talk clearly and respectfully at school.

ASK:

What would happen if it was okay to say mean things to other people?

Students should understand that people's feeling would get hurt and everyone would be upset and angry.

What would happen if we didn't take turns talking, or if we were allowed to shout in class?

Students should conclude that without such rules everyone might be talking or shouting at once, and no one could learn anything.

teach 1

Mindful Messaging (15 minutes)

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **tone**.

 **SHOW** students the "Mindful Messaging" video.

INVITE students to recount what they saw in the video. (A girl sent three of her friends the same text message. She was trying to be friendly, but they read the tone of her text message the wrong way.)

WRITE the following word on the board or on chart paper in three different ways:

Whatever :(

Whatever!!!

WHATEVER

POINT OUT that in the video, Alexa, David, and Evan sent text messages of the same word. However, they wrote the message in different ways in order to convey different tones.

INVITE students to identify differences among the three messages. (Alexa's message has a frowny face after it. David used a lot of exclamation points. Evan wrote his message in all uppercase letters.)

HAVE students say the three different text messages aloud. Students should say Alexa's message (which includes

the sad face emoticon) in a soft and disappointed tone. Students should say David’s message (which includes exclamation marks) in an excited and enthusiastic tone. Students should shout Evan’s message (which is written in all caps) in an angry tone.

ENCOURAGE students to think about the difference between hearing a sentence said aloud and seeing it typed. Students should understand that when a sentence is typed, the tone isn’t always obvious. People miss out on communication cues, like seeing facial expressions and body language, or hearing the way a voice sounds.

teach 2

Email Edit (20 minutes)

EXPLAIN to students that people are increasingly connecting virtually, through texts, IMs, and emails rather than in person. That’s why tone is so important when it comes to sending typed messages.

TELL students there are some rules they can follow to make sure they are being clear and polite when they send messages electronically, especially through email.

DISTRIBUTE the **Email Edit Student Handout**, one for each student.

REVIEW the “Check Before You Send” questions at the top of the handout as a class, and invite students to share any additional rules they can think of.

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **edit**.

EXPLAIN to students that they will edit an email message to make sure it is clear and polite.

INVITE students to complete the editing exercise, using the “Check Before You Send” questions. Encourage students to read the message aloud *before* they edit it, as well as *after*. Reading the message aloud will help them catch mistakes and show them the tone of the message. Students should make the following changes:

- Edit the first two sentences for proper use of uppercase letters.
- Correct the spelling of “u” and “rite.”
- Rewrite the last sentence to make it more polite.
- Add another sentence to conclude the email.
- Change the ending “Guess Who” to “Max.”

closing

Wrap-up (5 minutes)

You can use these questions to assess your students’ understanding of the lesson objectives.

ASK:

What are some differences between saying something aloud to someone and writing it in an email?

When you write something, people may not always understand your tone.

What are some ways to be respectful when sending an email, text, or IM?

Students should be able to name and explain most of the rules they learned in Teach 2.

What should you do before you send an email, text, or IM?

Students should understand that it is important to read and edit their message before sending it.

Extension Activity

Have students compose an email message to you from a classroom computer. First, have them compose a message that is riddled with errors and does not follow the rules they learned in Teach 2. Then have them edit their message and resend the corrected version. If time permits, you could reply with your comments on the differences between the two emails.

At-Home Activity

Have students share with a parent or other adult family member the rules for writing clear and respectful emails. Students can then compose an email to a relative, edit it, and send it with the adult's help. If students do not have a computer at home, invite them to bring their emails to school and send them from a computer in the classroom or school library.

Show Respect Online

Check Before You Send

Be sure to ask yourself the following questions before sending an email:

1. Would I say this message to someone's face?

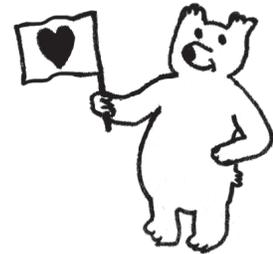
Never send a text, email, comment, or post that you wouldn't say to someone in person.

2. Did I check for spelling mistakes?

Check your spelling to show that you care about your email, and that you are not in a rush.

3. Did I use capital letters correctly?

Be careful when using UPPERCASE letters. It's like SHOUTING.



Directions

Help Max edit his message. Use the questions above to help you. Then add one sentence.

TO: joe@mainstreet.com
FROM: max@myschool.edu
SUBJECT: my birthday

Dear Uncle Joe,

HOW ARE YOU? why don't u rite to me?

Send me a video game for my birthday.

From,
Guess Who

Show Respect Online

1. Which is an example of being respectful?



a)



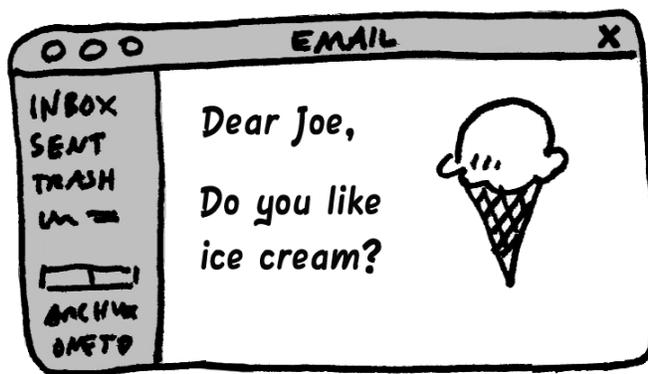
b)



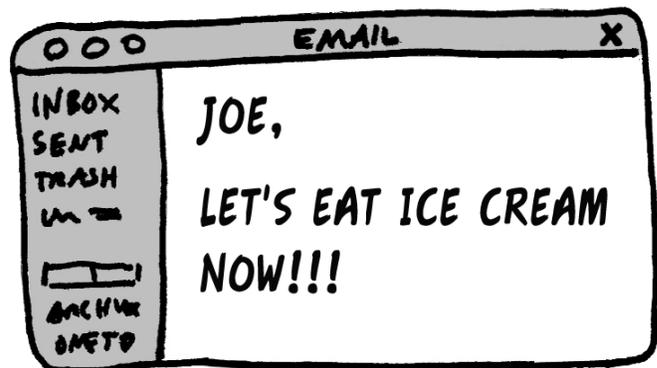
c)

- a) Shouting if someone does not agree with what you are saying
- b) Taking turns talking
- c) Making sure your shoes are tied

2. Which message is polite? Circle your answer.



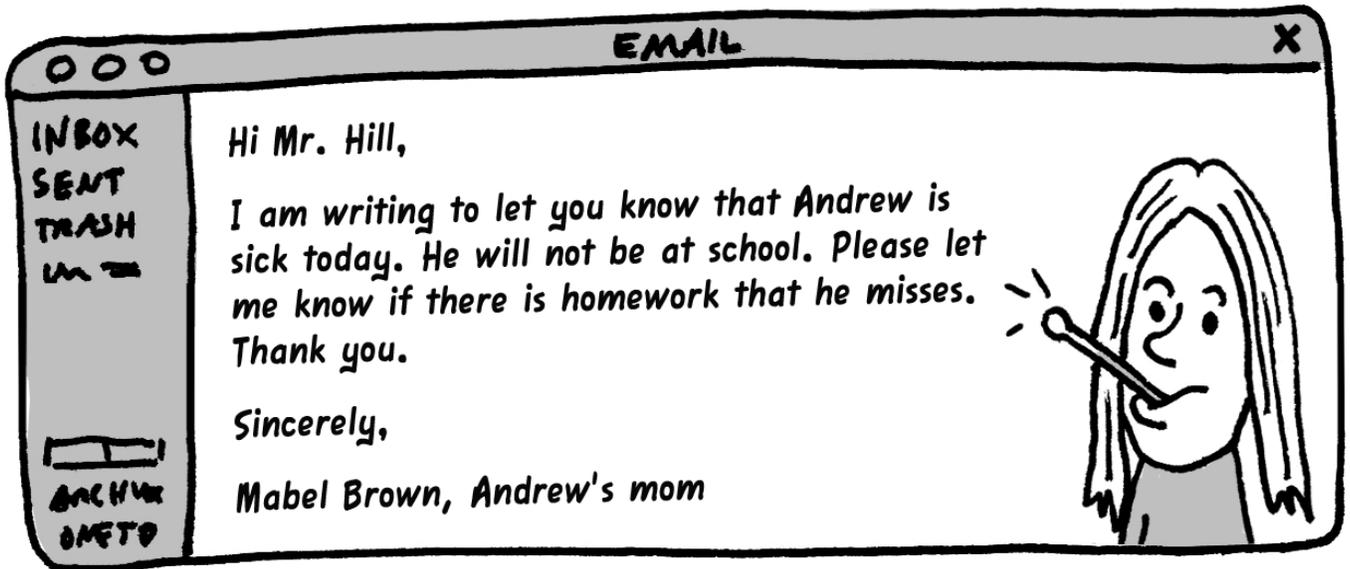
A message that is written in lowercase and UPPERCASE letter



A message with only UPPERCASE letters

Show Respect Online

3. What is the best subject line for the email below?



- a) Thank you
- b) Sick today
- c) Let me know

Show Respect Online

1. Which is an example of being respectful?



a)



b)



c)

a) Shouting if someone does not agree with what you are saying

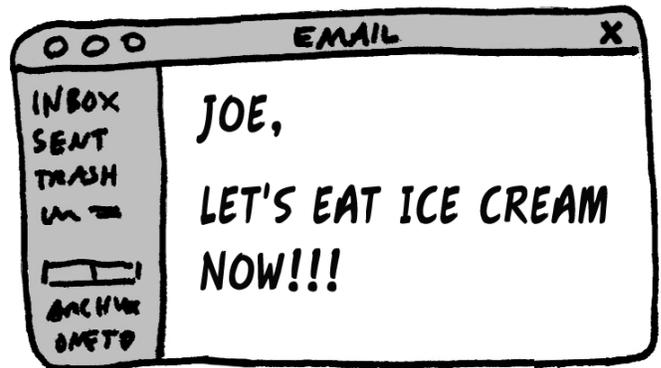
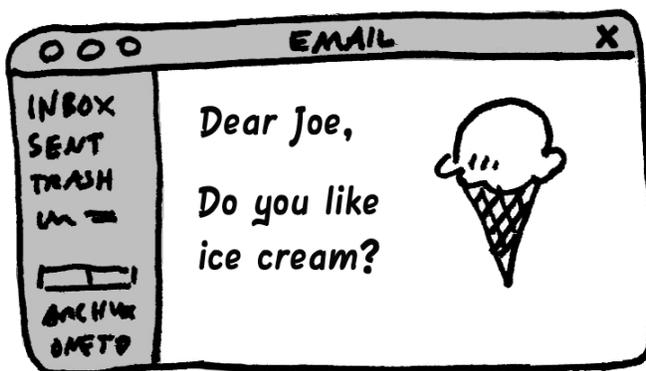
b) Taking turns talking

c) Making sure your shoes are tied

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**. It is respectful to others to take turns talking. Shouting to get your point across is rude. Tying your shoes is important, but is not necessarily a sign of respect.

2. Which message is polite? Circle your answer.



A message that is written in lowercase and UPPERCASE letters

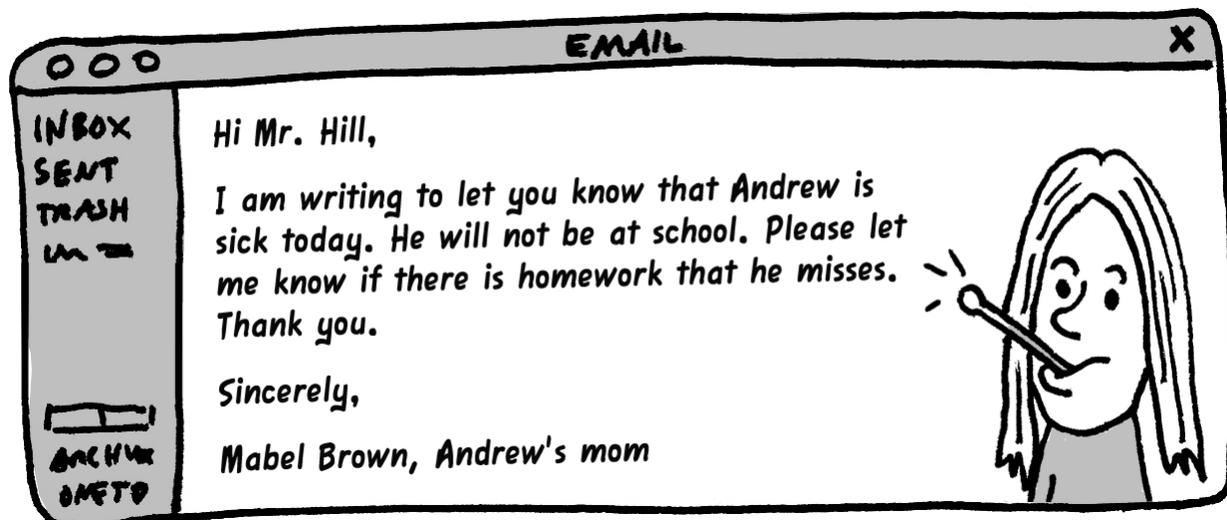
A message with only UPPERCASE letters

Answer feedback

You should have circled the first message. A polite email is not written in all UPPERCASE letters. Writing in all UPPERCASE is like shouting at someone in a message.

Show Respect Online

3. What is the best subject line for the email below?



- a) Thank you
- b) Sick today**
- c) Let me know

Answer feedback

The correct answer is **b**. Sick today gives a good hint to the teacher about the subject of the email and that this student will not be in school. “Thank you” is polite, but does not tell what the email is about. “Let me know” is a little rude and does not tell what the email is about.