

Stephanie Alva
Professor Lahman
Competence Plan
11 May 2006

I. Informative Messages- *Teachers should demonstrate competence in sending and receiving messages that give or obtain information.*

Send: Presents information in an animated and interesting way.

a. Knowledge- Communication Style

- 1. Uses energy: Vocal variety (emphasis, intonation, rate).*
- 2. Catches attention: Using humor, curiosity, suspense, emotion, analogy, metaphors, surprise, and narrative.*
- 3. Manipulates Mood: Humor enhances relationships and learning.*

All these steps need to be utilized in an elementary classroom. I believe teachers who are in lower grades need to have energy, good attention grabbers, humor, and be relaxed as well as friendly. I need to set the tone to my students on how relaxed I will be, but also needs to have control of a classroom. Energy plays a huge role in elementary classrooms. I need to have energy everyday because that energy will be a reflection on how much energy my students may have.

b. Behavior- Having energy in the classroom helps in all areas of teaching in the classroom. I need to use energy through the three steps of the communication style. If I do not have energy it will be hard to grab my students' attention or for that matter even catch their attention. For example I know when teaching spelling I can use a variety of teaching practices that involve the use of energy. When teaching word wall words I will have the students do an activity called the *Mexican Hat Dance*. During the *Mexican Hat Dance* the students will say the word and then spell the word while kicking their feet up and down with each letter they say. My students will do the *Mexican Hat Dance* for five several words that are up on the word wall. As the teacher I will need to have energy and be a great model by doing the *Mexican Hat Dance* with my students. This activity just is one example of how much energy has a role when teaching in the classroom.

c. Self Assessment- The hardest thing for me is to watch myself on a video, but I would like to assess myself based on what I see on a videotape. I can see from a videotape what I actually do that I may not realize, which will only benefit my students in the long run. As I watch the video I need to write down areas that I can improve on. For instance one day I videotape myself, and while I am watching the videotape I see some students finding it hard to pay attention. In that instant I need to realize that I am not getting my students' attention nor am I using the energy in my classroom. Then I know I need to work on that area of my teaching skills.

Other Assessment- To get feedback from my own class I can have the students fill out the evaluation form from the handout on page 149. The students will

only need to answer the one section on *enthusiasm*. I will ask the students to answer these five questions based on the *Mexican Hat Dance* lesson.

Receive: *Identify the main point of students' informative messages.*

a. Knowledge- Listening

Listening is a key component to teaching in the classroom. In order to understand our students we as teachers need to listen to what they have to say. Here are some important factors to consider when listening:

- 1. Focus on the student's main idea: Ask yourself, "What is this person's main idea?"*
- 2. Listen for intent, as well as the content, of the message: Ask yourself, "Why is this person saying this?"*
- 3. Give the student your full attention: Make sure to let the student voice their explanation before saying anything.*
- 4. Remove physical barriers, if possible: Maybe move to a separate room*
- 5. Remember the saying that meanings are in people not in words:*
- 6. Concentrate on the person as a student communicating their ideas: Listen with all your senses. Listen to the verbal message, but also look at the nonverbal message.*

All of these behaviors will help the communication process flow. I need to give my students my full attention when I am communicating one-on-one with them. I think teachers sometimes understand what they are saying, but the students may have understood the information from a different viewpoint. In order to understand what that student is learning it is our job to listen and try to help them. Too many teachers just assume that students understand something and these situations are where communication breaks down.

b. Behavior- As a teacher I think we need to listen to what students say about problems they are having and we can learn from them. For example if I had a lesson in class and I noticed a lot of students had puzzled looks on their faces then it should be obvious that something is not connecting to them. I need that feedback from my students and then the communication can open up. Once I put my listening skills to work I can learn from my own students and figure out where I need to explain the concept I was teaching better.

c. Self Assessment- For myself I can do the evaluation handout about receiving messages on page 296. I can ask myself these five questions which allow me reflect on the conversation or how I listened to my student. If I find I had some trouble with some areas I need to figure out why that may have been like that. Did I have barriers during the conversation that did not allow me to give my full attention to my student at that time? These are the types of questions I need to ask myself after completing this handout.

Other Assessment- To evaluate my students' listening in the classroom I can have them answer the questions on the handouts pages 77-79. I will then get feedback from my students on what problems they have with listening during class or

barriers that do not let them listen. Having my students answer these questions helps me understand what they are thinking and improve on the areas that are bothering them.

II. Affective Messages- *Teachers should demonstrate competence in sending and receiving messages that express or respond to feelings.*

Send: *Demonstrate openness, warmth, and positive regard for students.*

a. Knowledge- Positive/Negative Language

**A teacher needs to tell and not demand a student to do something that teacher needs to make sure they are using positive tone and positive language. For example instead of negatively saying to a student, "Don't slam the door," say, "Close the door quietly." Another example is a teacher should not say the phrase, "Don't just guess," but say, "Be ready to explain your answer and why you believe that is correct."*

I gave these two examples from the chart in our book on page 87. This book also has a chart that sorts out positive language and negative language. I looked over that chart and I can definitely see how the negative statements could be harmful if a student heard them. Under the negative column the statements all start with the word, "don't" and using that word just implies a demanding and mean tone of voice. The positive column though has a better way to get a teacher's point across without turning it into a demand.

b. Behavior- On the first day I need to make sure to create an open and warm first impression on my students. I need to make sure to send positive statements to my students because if I make demanding statements to the students they may respond in a defensive tone because of the severe tone in my voice. I will leave a bad first impression and that impression will stay with that student throughout the course of the year. For example when I am telling my students about the rules for the classroom I need to make sure that the rules are emphasized, but in a positive tone.

c. Self Assessment- There are some questions to pose to myself to help me assess if I do these things in the classroom. On the handout page 19 it talks about classroom climate and on the right side of the chart there are some questions I can ask myself to reflect on my classroom behavior. I need to definitely pay attention to the respect and warmth category questions. Those questions will assess my language with my students as well as the classroom climate I create for my students.

Other Assessment- Make a questionnaire for the students to answer. For example on page 87 in our book there is a chart. Make up a few questions that will evaluate my positive and negative language. I will have my students answer those questions based on the experience they have had in my classroom. I would try to do this questionnaire after two months of teaching them.

Receive: *Recognize verbal and nonverbal cues that reveal students' feelings.*

a. Knowledge- Non-verbal: Kinesics

- 1. Emblems: Nonverbal behaviors that have direct verbal translations.*
- 2. Illustrators: Nonverbal behaviors that are tied directly to speech.*

3. *Affect Displays: Facial expressions that communicate emotional states.*
4. *Regulators: Nonverbal behaviors used to control and maintain verbal interactions*
5. *Adapters: Nonverbal behaviors developed in childhood as adaptive behaviors to satisfy emotional or physical needs.*

Nonverbal cues that students reveal and show by their body language. For example kinesics is a big indicator for a teacher. Students will make facial expressions, body movements, and gestures that can help me clue in on the students' feelings. Some nonverbal behaviors that students use are shrugging the shoulders, which should indicate to the teacher that the student does not understand or comprehend what they are doing. Shrugging the shoulders is an example of emblems the first element I described above. An example of an illustrator would be actually showing a specific lake or river on a map during a social studies lesson. A frown on my face could indicate to the student that you are not pleased with their answer, which is known as an affect display. An example of a regulator could be a head nod, which could mean that the student understands. The last one would be an example of an adapter, such as a student chewing on their pencil. A student may chew on a pencil because they might be bored or be nervous. I need to watch for these indicators in my students in order to understand or be aware of how my students are feeling. A variety of feelings can be expressed in these five categories of kinesics.

b. Behavior- As a teacher I need to recognize these nonverbal behaviors and try to approach this confused state of the student and help my students clarify what they are learning or what they are to be doing. I have personally seen many students in elementary classrooms get frustrated because they do not understand a new concept. When students get frustrated they have a tendency to shut off and just sit at their desks. As a teacher I need to recognize my students' nonverbal behaviors, such as kicking the desk, frowning, constantly moving in their seats, crossing their arms on their lap, or even no eye contact from the student.

c. Self-Assessment- To evaluate myself I can use the hangout, *Six Ways to Improve Your Nonverbal Communications*. I would focus on the nonverbal sections for eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and posture and body orientation. All of these areas fit into the nonverbal behaviors of kinesics. As a teacher I need to be aware of how I am teaching with my nonverbal behaviors because it can change the meaning of what I am saying or my students may focus more on those movements than what I am saying to them.

Other Assessment- I can make "mental" notes on a student that are communicating with nonverbal behaviors. I need to keep a sticky note or something to write those behaviors down on so I can remember what student is communicating nonverbally. With these "mental" notes I can remember the situation and try to help them with whatever we are doing in the classroom.

III. Imaginative Messages- Teachers should demonstrate competence in sending and receiving messages that speculate, theorize, or fantasize.

Send: Use expressive vocal and physical behaviors when creating and recreating examples, stories, or narratives.

a. Knowledge- Storytelling

1. Let the audience use their senses to see the people and the places that you describe in the story.
2. Use different vocal patterns. Use different rhythm, pitch, tone, volume, and intensity.
3. Make sure you provide the story with definite closure.
4. Make sure you capture your audience's attention from the beginning.
5. Make sure you give your story a specific event.
6. Use eye contact, develop a relationship with your students, and make them feel as though the story is told for each of them specifically.
7. Pay attention to and emphasize the words that make the story enjoyable.
8. Use enthusiasm when telling the story.
9. Make sure you pick characters and events on a careful basis.

Each one of these nine ideas should be considered when reading a story or narrative to the class. Unlike in high school how some people do not read vocal expression, the elementary teachers really need to focus and practice on these ideas. As a teacher I need to engage my listening audience and really set the tone for the story. Using different vocal patterns is the key to keeping the attention of the students. I have observed some classrooms and many elementary teachers use these same ideas to read their books. Students respond by laughter to the different aspects of how the teacher reads the dialogue and the story.

b. Behavior- I will practice on my own the book I am going to read at least a few times so that I am familiar with the text. If the book is a chapter book I will at least try to read the chapter and figure out where it would be expected to get the attention of my students by my vocal patterns or eye contact or the emphasis of different words. If I am not getting the response I would like from the students I need to go back after reading the book or chapter and see where I can improve next time. It is always good to reflect on what you do right and what you do wrong.

c. Self-Assessment- For my self reflection I can go to the Table 8.3 and pick one or two of those areas to improve on next time I read. Only picking one or two areas is good because then I will not feel so down if I did not do so well on all of the areas. I can write down what I did well or what I need to improve on. People tend to criticize themselves more than anyone else and most of the time it is not positive feedback to themselves. So allowing myself to only criticize two areas will not lower my self-esteem as a reader to my students.

Other Assessment- Use Table 8.1 on page 206, as a guide. Using that

table I can create my own questions for the students to answer following the reading. The students will be able to give feedback on what they liked or did not see that they would like to see.

Receive: *Respond to students' use of imagination with appreciation.*

a. Knowledge- Leading Discussions

Characteristics of the Discussion Method

1. Experiential learning: Being involved in the process is when we learn to our best ability.

2. Emphasis on students: Having the discussion be the students' discussion is very important.

3. Focus on critical thinking: An inquiring mind is better than the right answer.

4. Use of questions: Questions promotes student involvement, meaning is derived from social interaction.

5. Focus on responses: Listen to what the students are saying in response.

I believe it is important to let the students talk about their own feelings, ideas or even questions they might have. As a teacher I need to listen to the discussion and feedback my students are telling me or their peers. I believe we can learn so much more from students and then we need expand on that information for them leading them into a different area of that same particular subject in the discussion. Allowing students to express themselves instead of them listening to the teacher lecture makes the students feel a part of the lesson. So the emphasis of the students is very important.

b. Behavior- As a teacher I will have discussions in my classroom, but I will not always say something to keep the discussion going. In lower elementary grades leading a discussion could be quite chaotic, but keeping the class under control will allow the students to each have a say in what they think. For example say we were responding to a book we just read. The students should each get a chance to say what they think about the book and share their own opinions with the classroom. In the upper elementary classrooms though the discussions should be more student lead and the teacher should put their two sense in by asking questions and making new ideas come to mind.

c. Self-Assessment- To critique my own job and role in the discussion I need to see if my questions were appropriate for the topic at hand. As a guide I can ask questions based on the list of inventory questions. Before the discussion I can make some questions that go along with this table on page 159 in the handouts and then after the discussion I can see what could have been a more appropriate question at the time or see if the question was appropriate to keep the students talking.

Other Assessment- Students need to know what is expected out of the during the discussion. As a guide the teacher can had out these participation principles that are bolded at the bottom of page 163 in the handouts. I think that these really show the students what they should and should not do during the discussion. After the discussion the students will be able to see what they can improve on and what they thought they did well during the discussion.

IV. Ritualistic Messages- Teachers should demonstrate competence in sending and receiving messages that maintain social relationships and facilitate interaction.

Send: Model appropriate social amenities in ordinary classroom interaction.

a. Knowledge- Small Group

Collaborative Learning:

1. *Positive interdependence: Clear structure and task.*
2. *Face-to-face interaction: Facing each other during group work.*
3. *Individual responsibility: Be responsible for the task or the primary purpose of the group.*
4. *Appropriate interpersonal skills: Paraphrasing, clarifying, listening, responding, agreeing, and disagreeing.*

As we discussed in class small group are very beneficial for the students. The students are developing those social skills and they are allowed a little more freedom than in the regular setting classroom lessons. These four areas are the basics of what will be going on in the group and these four areas need to be explained to the students before ever dividing up into small groups for a project. Students need to be guided on how small groups work and what the roles are involved with small group. Making sure the students know that each person has a task is very important because it allows the student to understand that they have a responsibility to the group they are in.

b. Behavior- As a teacher I want to have small groups in my classroom. I will explain to them the role of a small group and why we use small groups in the classroom. Students often ask why questions so it is important to address those questions. Once I put them into small groups I will always assign roles of each group member by picking the name out of a basket and then assigning them a role to play. These roles can be very fun for the students if the name of them is creative because then students will have a motivation to become that role player in the group!

c. Self-Assessment- On top of page 197, in the handouts, I can use these six questions to see what I need to improve on or what I did well during the small group activities.

Other Assessment- To evaluate the small groups I can use table 7.3 as an evaluation form handout. As the teacher I will be going around to each group and listening and also helping them with new ideas or help them with problems they might be having. I can show the students this assessment on what they can improve on the next time they meet together or it will show them what they did well to accomplish their task at hand.

Receive: Acknowledge appropriate performance of social amenities; diplomatically correct inappropriate behavior.

a. Knowledge- Self Centered and Disruptive Roles

1. *Stagehog (self centered)- Seeks recognition and attention by monopolizing conversation; wants the spotlight; prevents others from expressing their opinions fully.*

2. *Isolate- (disruptive role)- Deserts the group; withdraws from participation; acts indifferent, aloof, uninvolved; resists efforts to include him in group decision making.*
3. *Clown (both)-Engages in horseplay; thrives on practical jokes and comic routines; diverts members' attention away from serious discussion of ideas and issues; step beyond the boundaries of mere tension reliever.*
4. *Blocker(disruptive role)- Thwarts progress of group; does not cooperate; opposes much of what group attempts to accomplish; incessantly reintroduces dead issues; makes negative remarks to members.*
5. *Fighter-Controller(self centered)- Tries to dominate group; competes with members; abuses those who disagree; picks quarrels with members interrupts to interject own opinions into discussion.*
6. *Zealot(self centered)- Tries to convert members to a pet cause or idea; delivers sermons to group on state of the world; exhibits fanaticism.*
7. *Cynic(disruptive role)- Displays sour outlook (a person who "smells flowers [and] looks around for a coffin"; engages in fault finding; focuses on negatives; predicts failure of group.*

Talking to these students about disruptive roles are not a topic of discussion in classroom because there is not enough time and normally teachers already have their own ways of dealing with these disruptive roles. I feel that explaining a few not all of these disruptive roles would be vital to the students' knowledge. Once the students know about a certain disruptive role they might be more aware of what they or their peers are doing.

b. Behavior- As a teacher I can have the guidance counselor come in and talk about disruptive roles. I have actually seen a counselor come in and do an activity that leads the students through what they should say to a student who is misbehaving and how to say it without being mean. The example that was used was talking out loud in class and not doing the assignment at the time. Simply put the student sitting next to him or her can say, "This time is suppose to be used to do our work and get our homework done."

c. Self-Assessment- As a self assessment I can work on seeing how I oversee the disruptive roles and how I respond to the actions that interrupt the classroom. Ask questions like: Did I respond to the student in a nice tone? Was I too demanding or not demanding enough? Asking these types of questions will be a great way to see where I can improve on my own ways of dealing with the disruptive roles that happen and disrupt the classroom. I also need to think about all the students and keep in mind if I acted appropriately in front of the whole class.

Other Assessment- Students may see some of these disruptive roles in class and if that student sees it they should be allowed to say something to that student. Not in a negative tone, but in a reminding tone to that student. This process allows the students to see what is going on and hold each other accountable for their actions.

V. Persuasive Messages- *Teachers should demonstrate competence in sending and receiving messages that seek to convince.*

Send: *Offer sound reasons and evidence in support of ideas.*

a. Knowledge- Perception

1. *“Look before you leap”:* Draw your own conclusions on the best evidence possible and then be willing to change them.

2. *Make a commitment to accurate perception:* Seek out all possible information by allowing others to disclose to you and be willing to disclose to them.

For upper elementary classrooms this would be a topic discussed in the subject of social studies. Looking at a point of view of a person in history is a unique idea to tie into lessons. By having the students think like that person in history they are able to use the content from their reading and see that person's perspective and how they viewed things. We all have our own opinions, but sometimes we do not think about what the other person is feeling and only see our opinions. Teaching students to think in other person's shoes is a great way for them to also learn a life lesson on why it is important to think of the other person and not just themselves.

b. Behavior- If I were teaching an upper elementary classroom I would do an activity where the student has choose a person in history based on their social studies chapter's subject. I would then have them read an excerpt about that person and have them discussion in groups what they think that person is trying to get across to the reader. I would make the students think as if they were that person in history by putting themselves in that person's shoes.

c. Self-Assessment- As a self assessment I need to be aware of what I should might say to my students that gives a bias opinion or my own perception. Before a social studies lesson especially I need to teach the content my own opinions. Now, I can talk about my own opinions, but make sure to give evidence based on the content on why I have that reason in my head.

Other Assessment- The students will be able to work on their own perception skills and see how their opinions play a role in building their own perception. Make a list of questions to help them keep their thinking on the right track. On the list a question might be: What information did you base your perception on? This question allows the students to find that content they based their perception on.

Receive: *Question the adequacy of reason and evidence given.*

a. Knowledge-Bloom's Taxonomy

Level 1: Knowledge- Exhibits memory of previously-learned material by Recall facts, terms, basic concepts and answers.

Level 2: Comprehension- Demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas By organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions, And stating main ideas.

Level 3: Application- Solve problems to new situations by applying Acquired knowledge, facts, techniques, and rules in a different way.

Level 4: Analysis- Examine and break information into parts by

Identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to Support generalizations.

Level 5: Synthesis- Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.

Level 6: Evaluation- Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality or work based on a set of criteria.

As a teacher we need to be very aware of the questions we ask in the classroom. I especially need to improve in this area because I need to work on questions that involve more comprehension for my students. Not so much in lower grades, but in upper grades I need to think about the questions I am asking to get my students thinking and comprehending. Each of these six levels of Bloom's is a great divider of questions that allow the teacher to make questions ahead of time for their lesson. Just working on these questions will help me practice types and ideas of questions that will be vital in the classroom. The more we work on question building the more our students will have a better answer or response to that question.

b. Behavior- I want to use good questions in the classroom. In order to do this though I need to make sure I am familiar with levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and what is involved with asking a question. For example, when I ask a question it should not be a simple cut answer type question, but rather a question that gets the students thinking a little harder. These last three levels in Bloom's: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are a great way for to expand the students' thinking process. We as teachers need to model answer questions and show our thinking process by talking out loud about what I am thinking to come up with the answer to the question. Showing students a model is a great way for the student to see how to answer a question and not just come up with any old answer.

c. Self-Assessment- I can use the handout of page 156 and 157 on the six levels to see if I am asking the right types of questions and what areas of the six levels I need to use more of or less of. This will show if I'm focusing on too many question of one level or not enough questions.

Other Assessment- The students will be able to evaluate their own thinking process. Make a list of a few steps that allow the students to see what is involved in the thinking process. To evaluate their own thinking they see if they followed these steps or see where they fell short on these steps. This will allow the students to see what they need to improve on.

