



GOAL: Communicate Effectively with Family Members

GUIDEPOST I: Where to Start

- Before you begin addressing this outcome in your tutoring sessions, it's important to have a conversation with your learner about the help they need. In discussion, you can discover more information about how communication works within their family.

As you do this, find out what they already do well when communicating with family members—i.e. what has worked well in the past. Then, ask about the more difficult aspects of family communication—what they want to learn to help improve their family communication.

- To introduce this activity, you might say something like this:
“Since you know best what you want to learn about family communication, let’s look at some real life examples of how your family communicates well, then we’ll also talk about situations in which you have difficulty communicating and could use some help.”
- As a team, write down your learner’s examples of successful family communication, then make a similar list of situations that were difficult. You can organize these notes in a simple two-column chart.

 Successful Family Communication	 Difficult Family Communication

- After an initial discussion, and completion of this list of real-life examples, practice writing the most important questions your learner has about communication issues within the family. Use the questions they create to begin seeking assistance and support.

GUIDEPOST II: What You Will Learn

- Now that you know the important questions your learner has about family communication, you can begin the search for resources that might be useful.

LIBRARY RESOURCES:

Your local library will have useful resources to help with family communication.

- Help your learner practice asking the questions they have. You can role-play a scenario in which you are the librarian (or member of the literacy staff) and they ask the questions. When your learner is comfortable stating and sharing their questions, they can begin asking for the resources they need. Remind your learner that it's okay to write down their questions and to use these notes when seeking information.

Note for Tutors:

Your learner may be hesitant or embarrassed to share personal information about their family. Even though they have discussed this goal with you, they may still be uncomfortable asking others for help. You can reassure them that communication within families is an issue that many people deal with, and those in positions to help have heard questions like theirs many times before. This is one reason why it's so important to spend time forming and practicing the important questions before they seek assistance.



WEB-BASED RESOURCES:

Here is sample of online resources discovered when searching for *family communication skills*:

[The Momiverse--10 positive family communication skills: 10 Positive Communication Skills for Your Home](#)

[apacenter.com--Tips for improving family communication: Tips for Improving Family Communication](#)

[Family & Media--10 tips for better communication within the family:](#) *Reasons Why Family Communication is So Important*, including information the use of technology and the Internet.

[Love to know -- The Importance of Family Communication:](#) including ideas for family bonding activities.

[Good therapy.org--Therapy for communication issues:](#) Including a directory of where to find professional counseling.

There is so much information online designed to help families improve communication. Simply sitting at the computer with your learner during the web search will help them understand that this need is very common and shared by many families in the community. They are not alone!

GUIDEPOST III: How You Will Learn – Multisensory Strategies

- When reviewing web-based information, the challenges for your learner are:
- 1) to find the information that answers the specific questions they have, and
 - 2) to read and comprehend this information.

1. READING AND COMPREHENSION PRACTICE

Strategies for reading and understanding web-based information.

Use a variety of strategies to help your learner read and understand information online.

- Ask your learner to briefly preview a webpage they will be reading and **predict** what kind of information they expect to find. They can make notes on their predictions and check back later to see if they were correct.
- Ask you learner to **skim** the webpage information before reading and pick out words which are unfamiliar and would be a challenge to read and understand on their own.
- When reading information on the site, you and your learner can use an **echo-reading technique** in which you read a portion of the webpage and they reread the same portion right after you.
- When your learner comes across unfamiliar words or phrases, add them to their list of new vocabulary

How to study new vocabulary.

- Using index cards, ask your learner to write an unfamiliar word or phrase on one side of the card. Ask your learner to say the letters aloud as they write the new word.
- On the opposite side of the card, help your learner locate a definition of the word (use a dictionary, Wikipedia, or a glossary). Your learner can write the definition, or take even more ownership of the new word by using it in their own sentence written on the back side of the index card.
- The new vocabulary can be studied by the learner away from the tutoring session. Then, the spelling and meaning of the words can be reinforced and practiced during upcoming tutoring sessions and new vocabulary cards can be added as needed.

The KWL Chart for Enhancing Comprehension

One useful method for helping your learner locate, read, and understand web-based information is the **KWL Chart**. It's easy to use and only takes a minute to prepare. Here's the process:

- Draw a KWL Chart on paper or whiteboard (see example below).
- Discuss the family communication topic which your learner is seeking information about. As a team, write what the learner already knows about the topic in the first (K) column.
- Discuss what information the learner wants to know about the topic--the questions they want answers to--in the second (W) column of the chart.
- Explain that, as they review the website, the learner will make notes about what they learned--the possible answers to their questions--in the third (L) column (Give the learner an individual copy of KWL chart to record their own ideas as they read).
- The learner reviews the website, making notes in the third column (L) about what they have learned.
- Then, your learner shares their notes with you, discussing what they have learned and any remaining questions they have about the topic.

KWL Chart – A Guided Teaching and Learning Activity

Topic/Question: _____		
What I <u>Know</u>	What I <u>Want</u> to Know	What I <u>Learned</u>

2. WRITING PRACTICE

Ask your learner to keep a journal about the goal of improving family communication.

- The journal can include their new vocabulary list.
- The journal can also include personal notes about what they have learned concerning family communication, and how they have successfully used what they have learned in family situations.
- Ask your learner to write any unanswered questions they have in their journal. You can use these questions to plan future tutoring lessons.

3. INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (Homework)

- Ask your learner to review the vocabulary cards they have created so they can improve word recognition and comprehension of the new words. Make sure to check and reinforce this activity in the next tutoring session.
- Ask your learner to review the personal notes they have made in their journal. If some of the information is still not clear to them, you can address that in a future session.

4. REAL WORLD PRACTICE

➤ Your learner will have many opportunities in their daily life to pay attention to communication within their family.

- Ask your learner to make notes in their journal about what works well, based on what they've learned in their lessons about communications.
- They can also pay attention and make notes about what communication skills they still need to work on.
- These journal notes can be reviewed and discussed in upcoming tutoring sessions and used to form questions for future research.

GUIDEPOST IV: What Worked, What Didn't, What Can You Use?

At the conclusion of the instructional session, spend some time reviewing what was learned that day and planning what your learner wants to work on in future sessions.

- Say something like, **“Let’s think about what we learned today and how you can use it on your own as you work toward your goal. Which tutoring activities worked well today, and which did not work so well. We can then plan what we’d like to work on in our next session.”**

Here’s some examples of specific questions you might ask:

1. How did searching on the website go today? Are you comfortable finding the information you will need? If not, what can we work on next time to make it easier for you?
 2. What useful information did you learn today about the topic of family communication?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 3. What can you review and practice on your own to help you reach your goal?
 4. What do you want to practice together in our next meeting?
- As you ask for feedback, look for examples of progress along with milestones that are important for your learner to achieve along their path to independence.
 - This information can be a valuable motivator (for both your learner and you) as you both look back at what has been accomplished in the tutoring sessions.

Milestones that indicate learner progress:

Initial Effort – The ultimate goal of learning about family communication has been discussed and the learner has described what they want to learn about this topic. As a team you are formulating the most important questions that your learner has about family communications, and practicing how best to ask those questions.

Making Progress – You and your learner are exploring resources, including websites and library materials, with essential information about family communication skills. New vocabulary is being learned and reinforced in the tutoring sessions. The learner is starting to apply what they’ve learned to real-life family situations.

Goal Accomplished – Your learner can read and understand the information they have located that answers their questions about family communication. Using the what they have learned; they are feeling more confident and successful when communicating within their family.