

Initiating a Conversation

Skill to Teach	Initiating a Conversation. This lesson is designed primarily as a secondary or tertiary intervention to be taught in a small group.
Age	Secondary Level
Objective	Students will role-play the skill of Initiating a Conversation in a variety of possible situations to help promote generalization.
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills poster or skill steps written on board for Initiating a Conversation • Role-play scenarios • Additional role-play scenarios you create, if desired • Homework reflection and report sheet
Planned Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that there are lots of times in a day that they have conversations with other people. Ask students for examples of different situations, times and places that they might have a conversation. • Have scenario examples ready, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Talking to someone you have a crush on ○ Asking for help ○ Asking what someone did during the weekend ○ Discussing what you will do during a school break ○ Inviting someone to do something • Say that sometimes it is hard to initiate, or begin, the conversation. Tell students that they will learn and practice how to initiate a conversation with other people to make it easier to talk to people. • Tell them the steps of Initiating a Conversation and refer to a skills poster or write the steps on the board: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at the person or people. 2. Wait until no one else is talking about another topic. 3. Use a calm, pleasant voice. 4. Ask a question or begin talking about a new topic. 5. Make sure new topic is appropriate for your setting. <p>Note: This skill is an intermediate skill, found in <i>Teaching Social Skills to Youth</i>, available at www.boystownpress.org</p>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students how it will help them if they initiate a conversation like this. • Have some examples ready, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You will make new friends ○ Makes it easier to talk to people ○ People may be more willing to listen to you ○ It will feel less stressful ○ People may want to talk with you more or spend more time with you

Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give students a topic and ask them what they would do and say to initiate a conversation with the person in the scenario. Repeat this activity until students seem to have a clear idea what they might say to initiate a conversation.• Have them work in pairs or groups to role-play initiating the conversation in the scenarios you provide. <p>Note: Sample topics are provided in this lesson.</p>
Homework	Tell students to initiate conversation with two other people by class the next day (or block) and be ready to discuss as a class.
Assessment	This activity is assessed by observation. If desired, students can earn a participation grade or a school-wide reward, ticket, or merit.



Conversation Scenarios

1. During lunch, you want to sit by a friend.
2. In the hallway, you want to see if a friend wants to go to your house after school.
3. During class you want to work with someone. You need to ask him or her.
4. You forgot your pencil. Ask a classmate to borrow one.
5. You don't understand the directions on your Language Arts assignment.
6. You want to know what a classmate did this weekend.
7. A couple of your friends are talking about football.
8. In P.E., you're embarrassed because you can't do sit-ups very well.
9. The boy or girl you like is walking toward you in the hallway.
10. Every seat on the bus has at least one other person in it.
11. Your parent or guardian comes home from work.
12. You go to your grandma's house.
13. You go to a friend's house, and your friend's mom or dad opens the door.
14. You are at the grocery store and can't find what you need.
15. You are at the gas station and are paying for your item.