



Decibella

By Julia Cook

Learning to modulate the volume, the speed and intensity of a given behavior is an important life skill. Children who move fast and intense are often mistaken for being aggressive. Children who naturally have a big voice are often viewed as irritating or bossy. Modulation is a key life skill for getting along with others.

Social Emotional Skill: Modulation voice

Decibella is a little girl who has difficulty regulating the volume of her voice. She speaks very loudly all of the time which is disruptive to her class. Her teacher helps her to understand that there are 5 different volumes that are typically used and when each voice is appropriate.

Key Vocabulary: Decibel—a unit used to measure the intensity or loudness of a sound.

Discussion

- Why did her classmates nickname Isabella “Decibella?”
- Why do you think Decibella talked so loudly all of the time?
- What do you feel in your body when other people are shouting all of the time?
- Which voice is the hardest for you to use at school?
- What is a polite way to ask someone to lower the volume of their voice?
- How can our class help one another be mindful of our tone of voice?

Follow up

- Point to different volumes on the chart and have the children say, “slurpadoodle” with that particular voice.
- Show pictures of different scenarios and have children point to the appropriate volume that should be used in that setting.
- Role play different scenarios and demonstrate the different volumes that should be used.

A friend is about to get hit in the face with a ball. What would you say and how would you say it?

Your pencil broke and you want to ask your table mate if you can borrow a pencil. What would you say and how would you say it?

You are giving a book report to your class. What would you say and how would you say it?

You don't like your dessert and want to ask a friend to trade. What would you say and how would you say it?

Your table is working on a group project. You want to volunteer to be the materials helper. What would you say and how would you say it?

The friend that you are sitting next to at lunch is yelling in your ear. You want to ask him to speak more softly. What would you say and how would you say it?

You are very frustrated because you messed up your drawing in art. You want to ask your teacher if you can start over. What would you say and how would you say it?

Someone takes the ball away from you at recess. You want to tell him to give it back. What would you say and how would you say it?

- Discuss the fact that we can say the same words with different volumes, and it will mean different things. Illustrate with some examples.

Say, "May I please borrow a pencil" in a whisper. What does that communicate? Say it again in an outside voice. What does that communicate?

Say, "Can I play kickball with you?" in a whisper. What does that communicate? Say it again in a strong speaker voice. What does that communicate.

- Talk about hearing preservation and the potential danger of being exposed to prolonged noise. Interested children can do a project investigation on the topic.
- Sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" in an outside voice, table talk voice and whisper. Sing other familiar songs in the same manner.

Deci-Reader

Outside

Strong Speaker

Table Talk

6- inch

Whisper