

Worksheet for Life Lesson 7: Sometimes Making Faces Can Be a Good Idea

Have you ever heard an adult say, “LOOK AT ME WHEN I’M TALKING TO YOU” or remind you to “LOOK AT ME WHEN YOU’RE SPEAKING”? For some kids, looking at the person they’re talking or listening to is easy. For most kids, that’s hard. After all, you hear with your ears, not your eyes . . . so what difference does it make if you look at them when they’re talking or not?

Truth is, people like you to look at them for a few reasons. It gives them the idea that you are interested in them. It gives them the idea that you’re interested in what they’re talking about. And most important, by giving people the sense that you’re interested in them or what they’re talking about, they enjoy the conversation and like being with you . . . and that helps to build friendships, which all of us like.

So today, let’s start to work on getting better at that “I like you” look. Here are some fun exercises to try.

PART I: MOVIE TIME!

1. Watch the scene from *Despicable Me 2* where Agnes is rehearsing the Mother’s Day poem she’s been assigned to recite for school.
2. How did Agnes do? Does Agnes look at Gru? Does her face say, “Wow, look at me, listen-up, what I’m going to tell you about is really great”? No . . . of course not.
3. Now, pair up with someone and tell them something that happened to you. Use the robot voice and blank face, just like Agnes. Try it . . . don’t be shy.
4. Now that your face is frozen, try to get it moving again. Watch the clip from *Despicable Me* where Gru wins a huge, stuffed unicorn for Agnes. Look at Agnes’s face now and listen to her voice when she’s talking.
5. How did Agnes do this time? Did she look at Gru? Did her face say, “Wow, look at me, listen-up, what I’m going to tell you about is really great”?

Worksheet for Life Lesson 7: Sometimes Making Faces Can Be a Good Idea *(Continued)*

6. Now it's your turn. Think for a minute about something that you saw, something that you heard about, or something that you did that you thought was pretty neat. Got an idea? Okay, now try telling someone else about it.

Before you start, pause, think about what you want to tell the other kid, and then start your conversation. You might say:

Hey, did you know that _____
happened today?

Hey, today I saw that _____
happened.

Hey did you hear that _____
happened?

Whatever you go with, try to do it two ways, first . . . do it the boring way. Make it as horribly boring as you can. For your second take, try it with some excitement. Do your best to get across the idea that whatever you saw, heard about, or did, it was great.

PART 2: "LIVE ACTION!" TIME

For this activity, you and a partner will act out an everyday situation where you're just talking. You don't need or want anything in particular from the other kid. You're just passing the time and maybe getting to know the other person a little bit. This is a time when you could bring up a story of something that happened to you or you heard about or saw. You could pretend that the conversation is happening while you're waiting for the bus. Or you're on the bus. Or hanging around at school. Or at lunch.

After you've practiced a couple of situations, think about what you've learned.

1. Are you pretty good at looking at other kids when they're talking?

(continued)

Worksheet for Life Lesson 7: Sometimes Making Faces Can Be a Good Idea (*Continued*)

2. Are you pretty good at looking at other kids when you're talking?

3. Are you pretty good at sounding excited when they're talking?

4. Are you pretty good at sounding excited when you're talking?

5. Can you think of things to talk about pretty easily?

If any of these are a problem for you, practice during the week. For example, when you watch TV, really focus on how the characters behave. Do they look at each other? How do they show enthusiasm or act interested? Another way to practice would be to agree with your family that every night at dinner, each person gets a turn to start up a conversation about something they think other people would like to talk about. Just like learning anything new, it takes time. Practice about 15 minutes a day if you can, but remember that any amount of time is better than nothing.