



Comment Cards



For Developing

Conversation Skills



Reply to a Comment

Directions:

There are 24 comment cards (red bubbles) with 24 adjoining reply cards (blue arrow). Cards are rectangles $3 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{1}{4}$ inches. There are 4 sets to a page. Print them out on cardstock. Cut them apart on the horizontal lines. Fold the cards on the center line and glue shut or laminate shut. This will create a sturdy card with a front and a corresponding back.

Directions are also provided for a conversation scaffolding activity.

The cards provide examples of things people may say during a conversation and are meant to be used as task cards for structured practice. They provide examples of questions and comments frequently said in conversations. Students read the comment side and then use their reasoning to figure out a reply that could keep the conversation going, without changing the topic or dominating. Students are told that the reply is a suggested answer and it is possible to have another correct answer. If this is a group activity, it can be discussed by members of the group.

A conversation scaffolding activity is included as a way to bring the developed skills to the conversation level, but still provide structure and a visual representation. Please read the directions for that activity.

Reply to a Comment



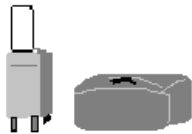
I watched a really good movie yesterday.



What was it about? Is it something I would like to watch?



My family is going on a trip during the school break.



Where are you going?



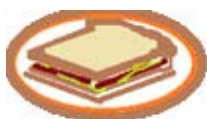
I like the treats my mom bakes for the holidays.



What kind does she make?



I am good at making sandwiches.



What kind of sandwiches do you like to make?



Reply to a Comment



I watch football on the weekends.



I do too. What teams do you like?



We had to take my dog to the vet on Saturday.



I hope he is OK. What happened?



I need to do a lot of homework.



What do you have to do?



I am reading a really good book.



What is the title? Would I like it?



Conversation Scaffolding

- For some students, having a conversation is not a natural event. They may need work on some basic skills in a more structured activity. They need to know the differences between a comment and a question. They need to know how to start a topic, how to add to a topic and how to encourage another person to talk by responding to what they said. One way to illustrate this is to use paper shapes to represent a comment, question, and change of topic.
- Prepare ahead some die cut shapes to represent questions, comments, and change of topic. I use rectangles for comments, octagons for questions, and wedge shapes for change of topic. Each person in the conversation gets their own color of shapes. This provides a good visual of who contributes to the conversation and what part they played.
- Review the differences between questions and comments. Then talk about the ways comments and questions can be used to join a conversation or include someone else into a conversation. Tell them it is important to use their detective skills to figure out what questions can be asked from a comment to continue the conversation. Practice using the comment cards to develop your detective abilities.
- Try out your newly acquired commenting skills using the conversation scaffolding activity. As students talk, have them place a paper down on the table in a linear fashion representing their comment, question or change in topic. An adult may need to monitor the paper trail if students forget to put their shapes down. After a few minutes of conversation look at the trail. What does it tell you? Try again and see what it looks like for the 2nd round.
- Everyone should have a chance to participate and one color should not dominate. There should be several color exchanges before the topic is changed. Are all students represented by the colors for both commenting and asking questions? Is one person changing topics frequently? Talk with the students about the pattern that is created and see if they can make changes in the way they participate.
- Can you tell what happened in the following conversations? Which conversation had speakers who dominated the conversation on their particular topic?



Conversation 1



Conversation 2