



Social Skills

Tone of Voice

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Tone of Voice

Often, when people think of non-verbal communication they think of facial expressions and body language, but don't think of tone of voice. We use tone of voice to express and to interpret emotions and intentions. How you say something can be as important as the words you use. Of course, this is a major reason why the intended message in texts and emails can be misinterpreted. If you want to see a perfect (and hysterical) example of this, check out the YouTube video "Key & Peele: Text Message Confusion". If you'd like to share it with your students, you might want to choose the censored version! When individuals on the autism spectrum struggle with interpreting or effectively using tone of voice it can, unfortunately, be a difficult skill to teach. I've designed an activity that targets both interpretation and use of tone of voice. At the very least, *Tone of Voice* can serve as an evaluation tool. At my school we've had students who came across as rude or whiny, but when we discovered that their tone of voice did not match their intentions we better understood how to respond.

Name _____

Date _____

Tone of Voice

Changing our tone of voice is another way we communicate non-verbally.

How we say something can be as important as what we say.

For example saying, "Thanks so much for the beautiful card!" in a sarcastic tone of voice means you're not thankful and you didn't think the card was beautiful.

Here are some emotions we can express through our tone of voice:

happiness	frustration	despair
anger	elation	annoyance
sadness	disgust	surprise
fear	pride	relief
anxiety	embarrassment	jealousy
boredom	confusion	suspicion
disappointment	sarcasm	shock

Directions: Take turns choosing three of the emotions listed above. Write them down on a piece of paper, numbered 1–3, but don't let anyone else see them. Now record yourself saying one of the sentences below using a different tone of voice each time to convey your chosen three emotions. Say your chosen sentence exactly as written below; do not add any words. Then play the audio recording for others, and see if they can guess which emotions you tried to convey. They may need to hear each one more than once.

Sentences to record:

I saw my ex, Juan, at Sara's party last night.

My mom said I cannot go camping with you this weekend.

Did you see Ty when you were at the mall?

Isabelle showed up this morning at my door.

I got the tickets for the show, and they cost \$36 each.

I don't know if you met my girlfriend Riley.

My brother ended up winning the spelling bee at his school.

You need to finish your art project before I come over on Wednesday.