Adults Don't Write Essays
Written Communication as an Adult

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Published by *K20 Center*

Grade Level	12th Grade	**Time Frame**	180 Minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	3-4 Class Periods

Essential Question

What is the proper way to communicate in professional situations?

Summary

Through professional examples and practice, students learn how proper communication will be essential in their adult lives. They explore various types of scenarios in which adults communicate. Students will analyze characteristics and examples of what qualifies as effective and professional communication in adulthood. Using what they learn about communication as an adult, they will write their own responses to various prompts and scenarios in order to create a class portfolio of good examples of written communication.

Snapshot

Engage

Using ABC Graffiti, students create lists of the ways adults write in their daily lives.

Explore

Using AI, students explore how some language may be acceptable for some audiences and situations and not others.

Explain

Students discover characteristics of various types of communication that adults encounter on a daily basis with a specific focus on the situation and intended audience and assess their knowledge using Stoplight Stickies.

Extend

Students create a written response to scenarios that adults might encounter in their daily lives.

Evaluate

Students will evaluate peers' written responses using Emoji Reflection, choose the responses that best represent the characteristics of the type of communication, and create a class portfolio of samples for adult communication.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.1.R.1: Students will actively listen and speak clearly using appropriate discussion rules with control of verbal and nonverbal cues.

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.2.W.4: Routinely and recursively use resources to edit for grammar, usage, mechanics, and format in order to finalize drafts for publication.

12.4.W.2: Select language to create a specific effect in writing according to purpose and audience.

Attachments

- ABC Graffiti Poster—Adults Don't Write Essays.pdf
- Communication Types Board (Editable)—Adults Don't Write Essays.pptx
- Communication Types Board—Adults Don't Write Essays.ppsx
- Lesson Slides—Adults Don't Write Essays.pptx
- Scenario Choice Board (Editable)—Adults Don't Write Essays.pptx
- Scenario Choice Board Responses—Adults Don't Write Essays.docx
- Scenario Choice Board Responses—Adults Don't Write Essays.pdf
- Scenario Choice Board—Adults Don't Write Essays.ppsx
- Sentence Prompts—Adults Don't Write Essays.docx
- Sentence Prompts—Adults Don't Write Essays.pdf

Materials

- Lesson slides (attached)
- ABC Graffiti Poster (attached; one per group)
- Sentence Prompts (attached; one per pair)
- Communication Types Board (attached; one per student)
- Scenario Choice Board (attached; one per student)
- Scenario Choice Board Responses (attached; one per student)
- Emoji stickers
- Sticky notes (red, yellow, and green)
- Colored markers
- Student devices with internet access

Teacher's Note: PowerPoint Files

Both the **Communication Types Board** and the **Scenario Choice Board** are attached. Under "Facilitator Resources," you will find an editable PowerPoint (.pptx) version of the handouts. When granting electronic access to students, provide them the PowerPoint Show (.ppsx) versions found under "Learner Handouts." This version will enable students to view the board in presentation mode without being able to edit the content.

10 minutes
Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to facilitate this lesson. Begin by showing **slides 2-4** to introduce the title of the lesson, the essential question, and the learning objectives.

Display **slide 5** and introduce students to the idea of professional communication beyond the classroom by having the class brainstorm the ways adults communicate daily using the [ABC Graffiti](#) strategy.

Start by organizing students into small groups. Provide each group with one colored marker, with each group having a different color, and an **ABC Graffiti Poster** handout (attached). Ask groups to fill in the various ways adults use written communication for as many letters on their poster as possible in the time provided using their prior knowledge of the topic.

After 1-2 minutes, call time. Ask groups to rotate to the next poster, taking their marker with them. Give groups another 1-2 minutes to fill out the new poster, trying to come up with ideas for the letters the previous group did not think of. After another 1-2 minutes, call time. Ask groups to rotate one more time. This time, students can also add to letters that were previously used. After another 1-2 minutes, call time. Ask groups to rotate to their original poster to construct a summary statement synthesizing the poster's information and share their summary statements with the class.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 6** and distribute a copy of the **Sentence Prompts** handout (attached) to each pair of students.

On student devices, have pairs of students navigate to Goblin Tools and choose the "Formalizer" in the menu across the top of the page. Ask students to choose a sentence from the handout to type into the box. Next, the students will choose "more professional," and then select "convert." Students will copy the new professional statement on their handouts. Set a timer for 7 minutes. During this time, ask students to write down the AI responses for at least 5 situations.

After they have completed their five statements, each pair should join another pair, forming groups of four. Students should discuss the sentence they chose to convert and how the intended audience of their statements may react to the original informal sentences versus the new, more professional statements.

> **Teacher's Note: AI Tools Unavailable**
>
> If your school district restricts the use of AI, you could have the students rewrite five sentences in a more professional way, and when they join another pair, they can exchange their papers, get feedback, and discuss the differences.

60 minutes
Explain

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Activity

Prior to this, create a large-scale version of the **Communication Types Board** (attached) from slide 2 of the handout. The large-scale version can be written on the white board or created on poster paper. Alternatively, if you have a projection board, slide 2 could be projected onto the board.

Teacher's Note: Accessing the Communication Types Board

There are two approaches to assessing the **Communication Types Board**:

1. Provide students the link to a view-only digital copy.
2. Provide students with the electronic or printed copy of the PowerPoint version (attached).

Slide 7 includes a QR Code and link to the view-only digital copy of the board. If providing students with a printed or electronic copy of the attached handout, delete the QR Code and link from the slide.

Display **slide 7** and share the digital link or the electronic PowerPoint copy of the **Communication Types Board** handout (attached). For students using the PowerPoint, direct them to view the board on slide 2. Instruct students to choose five situations where adults communicate to explore further by clicking on each communication type.

- For students using the electronic PowerPoint copy found under "Learner Handouts," have them automatically open the file in presentation mode. Explain that when they select an option from the board, they will be redirected to a new slide with a description of the type of communication. After they have read through the descriptions, ask students to select "See Example" at the bottom to be redirected to an example slide. From that slide, if they select "Back to Board," they will be brought back to the board with all communication type options.

- For students using the digital link, have them select the plus sign (+) within each box. A pop-up will provide information on that communication type. If they scroll, they will see an example. When they are done viewing that type, instruct them to select the "X" in the top right corner to close that pop-up in order to return to the board with all communication type options.

After students have had time to explore five different types of communication, move to **slide 8** and explain how they will use a modified version of the Stoplight Stickies strategy to assess their knowledge of the five strategies they studied. Using the large-scale copy of the board, instruct students to find the communication types that they have studied. They can put a sticky note that represents their confidence level about the communication.

- Red Note: Have them write questions they may have or request clarification for anything that may confuse you.
- Yellow Note: Have them write about a situation that could occur when the rules they found for that communication type may not be appropriate for the situation.
- Green Note: Have them write about the reasons they feel confident about this type of communication.

After students have posted their notes on the large-scale class version of the board, lead a class discussion regarding some of the comments posted for each colored note of various communication scenarios.

https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/lesson/3859?rev=39314

75 minutes

Extend

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=UpxpF7yCa5o

Display **slide 9** with the ICAP video and provide each student a sticky note. Explain that the video is an interview with a Writer, Editor, and Researcher who talks about written communication in her experiences. Introduce students to the Point of Most Significance (POMS) strategy. Ask them to write what the "POMS" of the video was on their sticky note. After they have finished, ask a few students to share their answers with the class.

Teacher's Note: Accessing the Scenario Choice Board

There are two approaches to assessing the **Scenario Choice Board**:

1. Provide students the link to a view-only digital copy.
2. Provide students with the electronic or printed copy of the PowerPoint version (attached).

Slide 10 includes a QR Code and link to the view-only digital copy of the board. If providing students with a printed or electronic copy of the attached handout, delete the QR Code and link from the slide.

Next, move to **slide 10**. Provide the digital link or the electronic PowerPoint copy of the **Scenario Choice Board** handout (attached) and a copy of the **Scenario Choice Board Responses** handout (attached). Ask students to select three communication types for further exploration. Once they have chosen their communication types, have them select the corresponding link, which will lead to a scenario tailored to each type.

Encourage students to refer back to the Communication Types Board for information about how to complete their scenarios accurately. Ask students to record their responses to their three scenarios on their handout.

Teacher's Note: Optional Extension

Consider giving students an opportunity to practice their professional public speaking skills by making phone calls to professional contacts. Arrange a time for students to call a professional to discuss pre-established scenarios. Provide students with the scenario (i.e., a phone interview, making an appointment, etc.) and have them write a script for their call using the information from the lesson. Make sure that the professional is prepared with their role in the call beforehand.

Evaluate

Teacher's Note: Emoji Stickers

Have your emojis prepared in advance, if possible. Use the emoji stickers recommended in the Emoji Reflection strategy. You may wish to use the Emoji Gallery below from the strategy card. If you cannot provide emoji stickers, prompt students to draw emojis on the responses instead. Consider drawing examples of their options of emojis as if providing them certain stickers to choose from in order to provide guidance for voting.
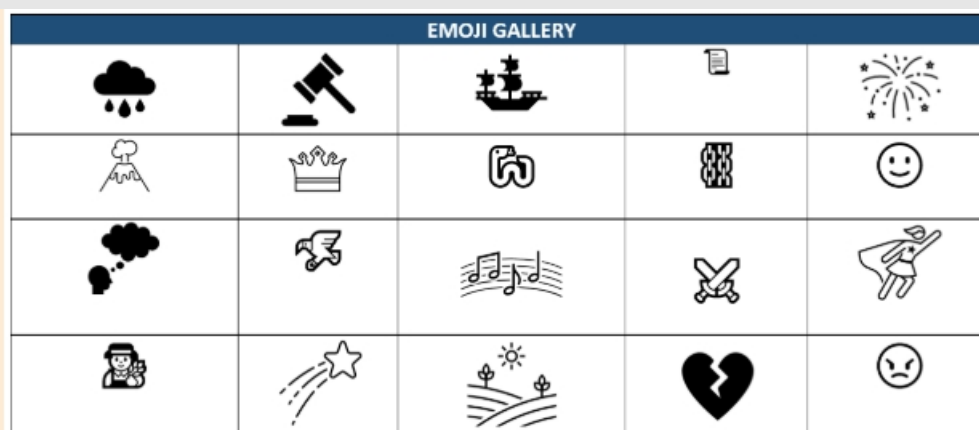
Move to **slide 11** and explain that students are to use a modified version of the Emoji Reflection strategy. Divide your class into groups of 3-5. Give each group a selection of student responses from a variety of communication types that were created using the Scenario Choice Board and a selection of emoji stickers. Explain that they will use the stickers to vote. Explain the meaning of each of the emoji stickers, ensuring that certain stickers represent students' perception of the response for voting, such as one emoji is used for their favorite response.

Prompt students to read through the responses of their peers and vote on the response using their emoji stickers. Set a timer that is appropriate for the number of samples for each group. After the timer goes off, ask the groups to discuss why they chose certain emojis for various responses. After they have identified their favorites, ask them to identify the samples that are well-written and which follow the guidelines for the communication type best. Have students work together to decide which student writing samples to include in a class portfolio of adult writing samples, ensuring there is at least one exceptional example for each communication type.

Teacher's Note: Communication Types Portfolio

Remove student's names from the response samples to provide anonymity. After samples have been chosen, consider compiling the chosen samples into a digital class portfolio and providing an electronic version for students to refer to in the future.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). ABC graffiti. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/96

- K20 Center. (n.d.) Emoji reflection. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/927

- K20 Center. (n.d.) Goblin tools. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/3864

- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 7 minute timer. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWwvdLxwV9c&list=PL-aUhEQeaZXLMF3fltNDxiuSkEr0pq0c2&index=10

- K20 Center. (2025, April 3). K20 ICAP - Writing for success with Pam Bracken. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpxpF7yCa5o

- K20 Center. (n.d.) Point of most significance (POMS). Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/101

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Stoplight stickies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/92

- K20 Center. (n.d.). QR codes. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2449