

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

Science is about asking and answering questions. So, you have to be able to communicate well. Try giving precise drawing instructions to a blindfolded partner.

MATERIALS: Two different coloured pencils; paper. Optional -- blindfold.

DOING IT:

1. Your partner should close his or her eyes, or put on a blindfold.
2. Draw a path on a sheet of paper with one colour of pencil. Don't lift the pencil until the path is complete. The path can go in any direction, be easy or complicated, take up the whole sheet or only a corner, cross itself, or form geometric shapes. Put an arrow at the start and an X at the end.
3. Give your blindfolded partner a pencil of a different colour and position it at the arrow. The blindfolded person has to trace over the path -- following only the verbal instructions you provide. You can give any verbal instructions you wish, but you can't touch the pencil or the blindfolded person's hand.
4. How difficult is this communication challenge? Why? What can you do to make your instructions clearer?
5. Switch roles and try the activity again.



We often take communication for granted. But sometimes it's not so easy to get someone to understand something. Communication is important in science because the more complex our world gets, the more we have to understand in order to make responsible decisions. This activity challenges people to develop communication strategies, as well as demonstrates that people think differently. What means one thing to one person may not mean the same thing to another. Meanings aren't in words; they are in people.

Topics: Scientific Method; Communication; Decision-Making; Senses.

