

# **A Classroom Example**

## ***Speaking Out at a School Board Meeting***

**Facilitator Copy**

**Situation:** A family literacy program

**Goal:** Speaking out at a school board meeting

A learner (parent) in a family literacy program was concerned about the lack of services that her child was being provided. Her child was recently diagnosed as ADHD and the parent felt that the school was not paying attention to this.

The learner had already spoken to her child's teacher and had talked to other parents who seemed to share a similar concern. The learner was angry about the lack of support and felt that no one was listening to her. The parent educator felt it was important to help the learner understand how to speak effectively to ensure that others listened to her concerns. They both agreed that it was not beneficial to lose control in front of the school board.

The parent educator asked the learner what she thought worked well in her previous conversations with her child's teacher. They made a list of the positive and negative factors of the meetings and also discussed the context of the conversations. From these discussions the parent educator was able to determine what the learner already understood about how to speak effectively and also what she knew about the topic: ADHD and the school's services.

Because the learner was going to apply the skill of speaking in a high-risk context, the parent educator provided role plays and opportunities of speaking before a group.

### **EFF Connections:**

**Purposeful:** How does this example meet the purposes of the learner?

*Learner's purpose for participating in the program was to become more effective in her role as family member – which included being able to “support children's formal education”- and to build the knowledge and skills they need to do that. Learner knows she needs to work on speaking effectively since this has been an issue in the past. The parent educator and learner will use the COPs to guide their work together so that the learner will be well prepared to effectively use the skill in a real-life situation.*

**Contextual:** How is this example applicable in a real-life context?

*Speaking in front of a school board is a real-world context, especially if the individual is trying to provide support for her child. This activity will give her a*

*chance to learn how to speak in other difficult situations without getting angry and keeping a clear focus on what her message and purpose for communicating are.*

**Constructivist:** How does this example indicate a constructivist approach?  
*She began by engaging the learner in figuring out what she already knew about the skill and about the topic; from there, they had to do research on ADHD so that the learner could clearly articulate why her child needed special attention. The parent educator also considered what the learner already knew about speaking effectively and built on this as they worked on each of the COPs.*

**Challenge:** Can you identify the primary standard that will be used in this activity?  
*Speak So Others Can Understand*

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**Contextual:** How is this example applicable in a real-life context?

**Constructivist:** How does this example indicate a constructivist approach?

**Challenge:** Can you identify the primary standard that will be used in this activity?

**Afternoon Activity:**

How does the classroom example take into account the component of the framework (4 purposes, skill wheel, standards, roles or common activities) you are working on?

## A Classroom Example *Speaking Out at a School Board Meeting*

Addressing the components of performance (COPs) for the standard

### Speak So Others Can Understand

<i>Components of Performance</i>	<i>Learner Strategies</i>
Determine the purpose for communicating	Learner will need to carefully consider this – what is her purpose for wanting to speak to the school board: Is her purpose to vent about her frustrations with her child’s teacher? (hopefully not) To complain about the school system overall? (hopefully not) Or is her purpose to try to get the school board to understand the special needs of ADHA students? (hopefully)
Organize and relay information to effectively serve the purpose, context, and listener.	Once the learner has decided her purpose (to inform and influence the board about ADHD), she will need to consider what information she wants to present, then organize it; she will want to give examples of the types of accommodations that she feels need to be made for her child (and other ADHD children); she will also want to have documentation from professionals who understand ADHD to lend credibility to her suggestions.
Pay attention to conventions of oral English communication, including grammar, word choice, register, pace, and gesture in order to minimize barriers to listener’s comprehension.	Because the learner has been very frustrated with the school in the past, she will have to work extensively on this with role playing; the parent educator and learner will need to discuss the anticipated responses from the board, then practice role playing those interactions so that the learner will be able to speak without anger and blame.
Use multiple strategies to monitor the effectiveness of the communication.	The learner will need to listen carefully to the responses she gets from the school board to see whether they understand her concerns.