Be A Polished Presenter

**Project Skills:**
Collecting, preparing, and presenting information

**Life Skills:**
Learning to Learn, Planning/Organizing, Communication

**Academic Standards:**
LA.3.5.22; LA.3.6.1.1; LA.4.5.2.3; LA.4.5.2.5; LA.4.6.1.1; LA.5.5.2.1

**Grade Level(s):** 3-5

**Time:** 60-90 minutes

**Supplies Needed:**
- Bag or pillowcase
- Timer
- Topic slips (one per youth)

**Not Supplied:**
- Random objects (one per youth)

**Advance Preparation:**
- Read over the lesson plan and make sure you have all the supplies needed.

**BACKGROUND**
No matter what you decide to be when you grow up, you will need to be a good communicator. Whether you work for a company, school, or stay at home to raise a family, you will need to be able to communicate clearly.

There are all different types of communication skills- some are more formal than others. Being able to make introductions, give a report, or even speak on the phone are examples of everyday public speaking skills. In fact, communication is not always verbal. Sometimes we communicate thoughts and feelings without saying a word through body language and even art!

Today, we are going to practice 3 different types of communication skills:
- *Getting to Know You*
- *Public Speaking Shake Up*
- *Storytelling*

**WHAT TO DO**
You can have the entire group do each lesson in succession, or have smaller teams rotate through three different stations. Read or share the background information for each category of manners, and then have youth perform the activity.

*Getting to Know You*- Meeting people and making introductions are one of the most basic communication skills. Divide your group into pairs and give them three minutes to find out as much information as possible about their partner, before introducing them to the entire group. Examples of information they should get is: Name, Age, Whether or not they have a pet, Special talent, etc. After the three minutes are up, have each pair stand up and introduce each other to the whole group.
Storytelling- Storytelling is another public speaking skill. Tell the youth that today they will be inventing their very own unique story as a group. Beforehand, collect a variety of odd objects and place them in a paper sack or pillow case. Be sure to have at least one item for each member of the group. If your group is larger than 12, you may want to have more than one bag/group. Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person pulls an item from the bag, and begins to tell a story based on that item. After a few sentences, he/she passes the bag to the next person, and he or she pulls another item and adds to the story. Repeat the process until everyone in the circle has pulled an item out of the bag and added at least one sentence to the story.

Public Speaking Shake Up- Explain to the group, that sometimes you may be called on to speak about a topic without being prepared ahead of time. This is called “extemporaneous speaking,” or “speaking off the cuff.” Ahead of time, write random topics on slips of paper and place them in a bag. Make sure you have at least one topic per person in the group. Examples of topics are: fishing, 4-H camp, basketball, roller coasters, etc. Tell the youth that when we are nervous, we often use words like “um, er, like, you know…” These are called fillers, and to be a polished speaker, you should avoid using these words. Tell them that each person will draw a topic from the bag and speak for 60 seconds. The person that can go the longest without using a filler wins.

TALK IT OVER
Sharing-
- What was the hardest part of this activity?
- What other types of occasions have you had to make introductions or “speak off the cuff?”
Processing-
- What are some other situations you can think of that would require speaking skills?
- Why do you think it is important for you to be comfortable making introductions or meeting people?
Generalizing-
- Why does how you speak in public affect what people think of you?
Applying-
- How do you think public speaking skills will benefit you in the future?

ENHANCEMENT
Ask a variety of professionals to visit your group and talk about how public speaking helps them in their job (examples are teachers, preachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, etc).

TRAINER TIP
For younger youth, they will probably be more comfortable being paired with a same-sex partner for the Getting To Know You Activity.
An icebreaker is a fun way to introduce a topic and excite the youth. Here are a couple of ideas:

- **Time Travels-** make copies of the communication tools on pages 34-35 of the CCS Communications Leader’s Guide. Tape one of the communication picture cards on the back of each youth. Instruct them that their task is to guess what the picture is on their back. They can only ask “yes” or “no” questions.

- **Tongue Twisters-** Have youth warm up by saying tongue twisters. Copy the tongue twisters on page 39 of the Communications Toolkit Curriculum by Michigan State University and cut up into strips. Have youth draw a tongue twister out of the bag and see who can say the tongue twister the fastest.