
Navigating the Human Condition in the 21st Century | Lesson 2 | Overview

2 Keys:



When we don't have healthy ways to express ourselves, we will tend to use unhealthy ways.



Aggression is a form of expression.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students identify expression as necessary for cooperation.
- Students explore ways in which expression and cooperation create a foundation that allows humanity to survive and all human societies to function.
- Students consider healthy and unhealthy forms of expression and reflect on what can constitute healthy and unhealthy expression.

Materials:

- 1 copy of "Codex Fragment with Keys 4 and 5" per student
- 1 snack per student (for Supplemental Activity "Hide the Snack")
- 1 copy of "Intercepted Transmission #27" per student (supplemental activity)
- 1 copy of excerpt from *Soldiers of Peace* "Odysseus and the Power of Language" per student (supplemental ELA activity #1)
- 1 copy of handout with quotes from King and Brooks per student (supplemental ELA activity #2)
- *All lessons come with PowerPoint slides and require a way to share these with students. **Note:** the slides in this entire series of lessons often come with additional guidance in the notes section at the bottom of each slide, readable and editable in development mode and readable in presentation mode.*

Time:

- One 50-90 minute period depending on use of supplemental activities.
- *Supplemental activities are provided at the end of the lesson.*

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1. **Show** Slide 1: Title slide
2. **Show** Slide 2: Key Map
3. “In the last session we explored our foundational non-physical need for expression. Part of the human condition is the need to express ourselves and be heard. We talked about the many **different ways** people can express themselves, and the **vast range of things** people can express. **But expression can do much more than this.**”
4. **Show** Slide 3: Breaking GIF *This slide has animation. Click through as you read each section.*
 - a. “Expression makes cooperation possible.”
 - b. “Think about how much expression and cooperation it took to organize this event, to make the stage, lights, sound system, building, to develop this style of dance, and so on.”
 - c. “Expression and cooperation make practically everything we use possible.”
5. **Show** Slides 4 – 5: Foundation with Buildings Image #1
 - a. *These slides have animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. *An important idea to convey to students here is that in order to create practically everything we use every day, people must use expression to cooperate. Cooperation makes societies possible.*
 - c. *There are some spaces on the buildings that students can write on. Students can write more than three if they would like to.*
6. **Show** Slide 6: Foundation with Building Image #2
 - a. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. “Expression, at the bottom of this foundation, is a need.”
 - c. “Expression is a powerful need like hunger or thirst.”
7. **Show** Slide 7: Gazelle at Watering Hole
8. “We can compare expression to the need for water. **Because water is so fundamental to our survival**, if people don’t have clean water to drink, they will drink contaminated/dirty/toxic water in order to survive. In a similar way, **because expression is so fundamental to our survival**, if people don’t have healthy ways to express themselves, they will tend to use unhealthy ways.”
9. **Show** Slide 8: Key #4
 - a. *Students turn their codex fragment over.*
 - b. *Students record this key in the upper key box beneath the cracked foundation.*
10. **Show** Slide 9: Urinal Vandalized
 - a. Reflection question: “Why might this person be using this form of expression?”
11. **Reflection Question:**
 - a. *Refer back to list from last class about forms of expression.*
 - b. “Are there any forms of expression on this list that could be considered unhealthy? **Unhealthy meaning harmful to self or others.**”

- c. “Can you think of any other forms of expression that could be considered unhealthy?”
Note to Teacher: “Healthy” and “Unhealthy” exist along a spectrum, so these designations are not always binary and can vary in degree (see Slide Notes for more information).
- 12. **Show** Slide 10: King Quote
 - a. “We can return to talk about this more deeply later, but take a moment to reflect on what King meant by ‘a riot is . . . the language of the unheard’”, and the “cry of one who . . . would rather be dead than ignored”. *2-minute turn and talk.*
- 13. **Show** Slide 11: Foundation beneath Buildings
 - a. “We have talked about how everything we create together is built on the foundations of expression and cooperation.”
- 14. **Show** Slides 12 – 13: Cracked Foundation beneath Buildings
 - a. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. “But when the foundations are cracked, what happens to everything built on top?”
 - c. “When the **foundation of expression cracks** because people don’t have healthy ways to express themselves, or are unable to make their voice heard, this creates cracks in cooperation and can harm everything built on top of this cracked foundation.”
 - d. “**Cracks in cooperation** can represent **cooperation that doesn’t work well** (ineffective cooperation) or cooperation that is **directed toward destructive goals** (destructive cooperation).”
 - e. *On the codex fragment in the cracked cooperation space, have students write “Cracks in Cooperation = Ineffective or Destructive Cooperation.”*
- 15. **Show** Slide 14: Intro to Island of Aggression
 - a. “To learn more about how expression can become unhealthy and affect everything on top of this foundation, we will explore the Island of Aggression.”
 - b. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - c. “Exploring the Island of Aggression will allow us to uncover the secrets of aggression, and learn how the true nature of aggression is different from how it appears on the surface.”
- 16. **Show** Slide 15: Bear and Wolves Question
 - a. “What if aggression is not what it seems to be?”
 - b. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - c. “What if there are secrets about aggression that most people don’t know?”
 - d. “Let’s uncover some of those secrets by starting with a question.”
 - e. *Click slide to advance text. Have students read the scenario and question, then turn and discuss with a partner:*
 - i. What do you think will happen?
 - ii. Who will eat first?
 - iii. How will it be decided?
- 17. **Show** Slide 16: Warning Aggression
 - a. “In this scenario, bears and wolves will usually use warning aggression.”

- b. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - c. “When animals use warning aggression, they make noise, appear larger, or use some other feature of their appearance to frighten away a threat.”
 - d. “Warning aggression is also called **posturing**.”

Note to Teacher: Students will record the definition of warning aggression in the next lesson on the next codex fragment.
- 18. **Show** Slide 17: Bear and Wolves Video
 - a. “In this 3-min video, watch how none of the animals get bitten or injured. It’s all about **warning**.”
 - b. *Click on the image to play video.*
- 19. **Reflection Questions:** *Have students turn and discuss with a partner.*
 - a. What kinds of behaviors did you see in the bear? In the wolves?
 - b. How was their behavior different from physical fighting?
 - c. What were the animals expressing?
- 20. **Show** Slide 18 Cobra and Review of Warning Aggression Definition
 - a. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. “When animals use warning aggression, they make noise, appear larger, or use some other feature of their appearance to frighten away a threat.”
- 21. **Show** Slide 19 Question
 - a. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. **Question:** “Why do animals use warning aggression rather than fight?”
 - c. **Explanation:** “Animals use warning aggression to avoid injury. There are no hospitals in the wild!”
- 22. **Show** Slide 20: Question
 - a. **Question:** “If we encounter a wild animal showing warning aggression toward us, but we ignore the warning, the animal has two primary options. What are those two options?”
 - b. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - c. “Fight or flight.”

Note to Teacher: Animals can also “submit” and “freeze,” but their primary options when they are dealing with another species (rather than their own species), and warning aggression does not work, is fight or flight.
- 23. **Show** Slide 21: Key #5
 - a. *Students record this key on their codex fragment in the last remaining key space.*
- 24. **Show** Slide 22 – 26: People Posturing
 - a. “Do people use warning aggression?”
 - b. *This slide has animation. Before clicking to reveal the images, you can ask students the following questions:*
 - c. **Guiding Questions:** “How do people use warning aggression? What are examples? Can you demonstrate how people might use warning aggression?”
 - d. *Students might act out an example of warning aggression, such as puffing out one’s chest or trying to stand tall.*

- e. *After showing the images, you can ask, “When might someone feel the need to use warning aggression?”*
- 25. **Show** Slide 27: More on Warning Aggression
 - a. *This slide has animation. Click to advance text.*
 - b. “Warning aggression intends to threaten in order to **avoid** violence.
 - c. “This is why aggression and violence are not always the same thing.
 - d. “The most common form of aggression in nature is warning aggression, which is trying to **prevent** violence.”
- 26. **Transition** to Slides 28-33 “Let’s look at some other forms of warning aggression in nature.”
- 27. **Show** Slides 28-33 *These slides have animation. Click through to see the GIFs.*
- 28. **Show** Slide 34: **Activity #1** – Rattlesnake as a symbol for America
 - a. “The rattlesnake was a symbol for America prior to and during the American Revolution. What ideas that we explored today are represented in these two images?”
 - b. *This slide has animation. Click to show images and captions.*
 - c. *Students can work in pairs or small groups to discuss these questions. They can write out their responses, or share back with the whole group.*
 - d. *If students don’t come to these answers on their own, you can share the following with them.* “The Join or Die political cartoon shows the **importance of cooperation**. What is Join or Die saying about cooperation?”
 - e. “The Gadsden Flag shows **warning aggression**.”
Note to Teacher: The Gadsden flag has been used by groups on both the left and the right, and is offered as a specialty license plate in twelve states.
- 31. **Show** Slide 35: **Activity #2** – First Amendment as Freedom of Expression
Read or have a student read the First Amendment. Students can work in pairs or small groups to discuss the following questions. They can write out their responses, or share back with the whole group.
 - a. Question #1 “What are the different forms of expression listed in the First Amendment?”
Note to Teacher: Answers include:
 - 1. Freedom of religious expression
 - 2. Speech
 - 3. Expression of the press
 - 4. Assembly (a form of expression)
 - 5. Petitioning the government (another form of expression)
 - b. Question #2 “Given what we have talked about, can you imagine why freedom of expression is the First Amendment?”
Note to Teacher: Answers can include: “As citizens we use expression to get everything we need. **Freedom of expression is the right that empowers us to protect all of our other rights.**”
 - c. Question #3 “How does expression empower us to protect all of our other rights?”

- d. “Do you see how this comes full circle? We went from expression as the *first* need to activate (simultaneously with breathing) in babies, to expression as the *first* amendment of this new country. Do you see the connection? Expression is the **foundational need** that helps us get all of our other needs met. Expression is the **foundational right** that helps us protect all of our other rights.”

33. **Show** Slide 36: Key Map

- a. *Review the keys with the students.*
- b. “We have one more key to uncover before we unlock our first skill that can strengthen the foundation of expression and cooperation.”

Supplemental Activity “Hide the Snack”

This activity allows students to experience how expression makes cooperation possible.

Materials:

- Enough snacks for each student in the class.

Procedure:

1. Pair students.
2. Send one student from each pair out of the room.
3. Students in the room hide a snack for their partner somewhere in the room. (It should be in a place that is neither too easy nor too difficult to find.)
4. Partners are allowed back in the room.
5. Students who hid the snack direct their partner to the snack giving them clues via **facial expressions only**. (This can include moving eyes, lips, smiling, frowning, etc. They may not mouth words.)
6. The activity is then repeated. The students who left the room now hide the snack for their partners.

For the sake of time, you can have the first student hide 2 snacks, one for each partner in the pair. You do not need to repeat the activity then.

Reflection questions:

- What did you use to communicate your clues to your partner? (Expressions, eye movements, etc.)
- How quickly did you come up with a system that you both understood without communicating it?
- What was most difficult about the activity? Was anything surprisingly easy?

Key Takeaway: This activity shows how students can cooperate toward a shared goal just by using simple facial expressions. If we use our *full potential to express ourselves*, imagine how powerful our cooperation can become. (What could our full potential to express ourselves look like?)

Supplemental Activity: Intercepted transmission (Handout)

This activity can be done independently or in pairs or small groups.

This is an imaginary transmission intercepted from an unknown source. It both covers content from the lesson and foreshadows concepts we will see in upcoming lessons.

Students will not know all of the answers! Some answers will be found in the codex fragment and in lesson content, and some give room for interpretation.

- Have students read through this imaginary intercepted transmission, and see how many of the blanks they can fill in.
- Make sure to let them know **they may not be able to answer all of the questions** and that **some blanks could be filled in multiple ways**.

Supplemental ELA Activity Odysseus and the Dangers of Language (Handout)

1. Read the excerpt from *Soldiers of Peace* (Chappell, 2017).
2. What is the author's claim about language?
3. Using the graphic organizer at the end of the excerpt, add evidence from the text to each subtopic connected to the central idea. Link your evidence with a line to its subtopic.

Alternatively, teachers can use this text as a longer writing assignment under the same standard.

Supplemental ELA Activity Riots and Breaking Glass (Handout)

Show slide 8: King quote

- What does it mean to be unheard?
- Are there people who often go unheard?

Show slide 27: Brooks quote

This is an excerpt from Gwendolyn Brooks' poem "Boy Breaking Glass."

The full poem is available on [The Poetry Foundation](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44111/boy-breaking-glass) website.

- Why does the character in this poem call breaking a window an act of creation? What are they creating? *2-minute turn and talk*
- In your ship's log respond to the following prompt:
 - How do these two quotes help illustrate our 4th key?
When we don't have healthy ways to express ourselves, we will tend to use unhealthy ways.