

**I was there** Sit in a chair and then get up to sharpen a pencil. Ask a volunteer to take your chair or put a Kimochis™ character in the empty seat. Then model how to call that student's name, use the communication tap and eye contact to convey the message: "Excuse me, I was there." If the student hasn't moved, use the words and then model saying "Thank you" when the person moves. Reverse roles so your students can practice this helpful communication tool. At the end of the show, always create time to consider when and where in real life your students can picture themselves using this new tool.



## Key 2

**Use a talking tone of voice instead of a fighting tone of voice.**

While verbal and written communication skills are important, we know that nonverbal behaviors make up a large part of our daily interpersonal communication: 30% tone of voice, 60% body language, 10% words. Therefore, it is vital to understand and master Key 2. The way students use their tone of voice when they feel upset will make the situation either better or worse. It will make the problem bigger or smaller. Use this language with students when their tone is not positive. Ask, "Will that voice make your problem bigger or smaller?"

### ACTIVITY I

#### *Talking vs. Fighting Voice*

##### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Some students may be unaware or unable to monitor (hear or feel) and regulate (use a talking tone vs. a fighting one) their tone of voice. This lesson will activate student awareness of the importance of their tone of voice and body language in communication. Do you want to listen to someone who yells and gives you mean looks?

**Early Childhood** Before the role-play, ask an adult in the classroom to stand up when they hear you use a fighting voice and stay in their chair when they hear a talking voice. Model this several times, then ask the students to do the same when they hear your voice. Do this routine enough times so the majority of students understand. Then give Cloud or Cat to a student to do a role-play. Whisper a short phrase ("That's mine"; "It's my turn"; "Move"). Then ask students to use the Kimochis™ character to say the words in a fighting or talking voice. The other students stand when they hear the fighting voice.

Catch it and name it when a student uses a talking voice—acknowledge their effort! When you hear a fighting voice, name it with, "Oops, I hear a fighting voice. Try a talking voice instead. Thanks."

**Elementary** Tell your class to stand up when they hear you use a fighting voice and to stay seated when you use a talking voice. Once your students can hear the difference, give Cloud or Cat to a student. Ask the students to say something through the characters using either a talking or fighting voice. The class stands when the Kimochis™ character uses a fighting voice.

Wrap up this activity by inviting students to share their experience with their own ability to monitor and regulate their tone of voice when they feel emotional. Ask students who believe they could work on their tone of voice to go to the front of the class. Remind students this activity is not to shame, blame or punish. It is an opportunity to demonstrate self-awareness. Ask each student how they would like their classmates to remind them if they forget to use a talking voice when feeling upset. Students can create a plan that works best for them. Offer suggestions like having friends gently call their name with a smile or say "Hey" to suggest there is no reason to yell. Allow students to practice

role-playing different tones of voice and offering shame-free reminders to make the right choice.

**Related Literature** *Little Miss Bossy* by Roger Hargreaves (see page 267).

## ACTIVITY 2

### ***Boomerang: A Communication Tool to Not Yell Back When Yelled At***

#### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Many people (children and adults) often do not “hear” when they use a fighting voice. The boomerang communication tool can help others hear how they sound without shaming or blaming.

Students can learn to show patience, understanding, and tolerance rather than reacting by yelling back when yelled at. (This is the old adage “Two wrongs don’t make a right.”) When your students are able to respond in a gentle tone, you will observe a positive shift in the emotional atmosphere of your classroom. In your “old” classroom, yelling might beget more yelling. In your Kimochis™ Classroom, yelling can now beget a talking tone (most of the time)!

**Early Childhood** Show Cat and tell the following story about her: “Sometimes Cat gets very bossy. She yells at kids and uses a fighting voice. Cat isn’t mean and doesn’t want to hurt kids’ feelings. But she gets so excited, she forgets to use a talking voice. This makes it hard for her friends to listen to her and makes them think things that are not true. Sometimes they think she is mean when really she just needs to practice using her talking face and voice.”

Model what Cat sounds like. Let various students hold Cat and boss you with common requests. Give them a few of the following scripts:

“I want the green shovel ... you get the blue.”

“That’s mine!”

“You’re not supposed to touch that!”

“I’m first, you’re second.”

**Here’s the Boomerang** Use a talking face and voice and simply say, “Cat?” (Sound like you think Cat did not realize how bossy she sounded.) This technique works so well. When Cat looks like she realizes she yelled, you say, “That’s okay. Sometimes I yell too.”

When you hear a student using a fighting voice in class, prompt other students to use these scripts. If they are unable, model this approach again, asking students to repeat the words after you. Provide positive reinforcement to students when you hear them trying to boomerang.

**Elementary** Remind your class about Cat’s bossy personality. The important part of the reminder is that Cat does not seem bossy because she is mean, but rather because she gets excited about her ideas and forgets to monitor or listen to her tone of voice. Check in with your class and ask for a show of hands of students who can relate to Cat. Cloud (who tends to snap when he’s mad) can also be used as an example of how to give a gentle reminder when someone yells.

**Here’s the Boomerang** Use a talking face and voice and simply say, “Cat?” (Sound like you think Cat did not realize how bossy she sounded.) You will be amazed at how well this technique works. When Cat looks like she realizes she yelled, you say, “That’s okay. Sometimes I yell too. Now what were you saying?”

Once your class understands this boomerang technique, use Cat to yell at various students so they can practice applying this new communication tool. (Ask students to put their legs out or fold their hands if they want a turn so you don’t unintentionally put someone on the spot. Remember, students can learn by watching.)