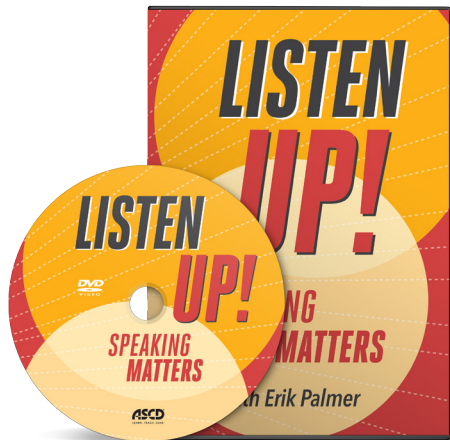


# ASCD STUDY GUIDE

## Listen Up! Speaking Matters



As you view the video, you will see communication skills in practice in a variety of classroom settings across several grade levels and content areas. Use this study guide to record your observations of the featured classrooms and to further explore the communication elements discussed during the video. You can watch the video until the end before answering the questions, or pause the video at preselected points to reflect on the content and how you might apply the lessons and skills from the video to your own practice.

### Before watching the video, answer the following questions:

**1. List activities in your class that involve student collaboration. What do you look for as indicators that students are collaborating well? List the kinds of occasions that encourage students to speak in your class, whether formally or informally. Do most of your students impress you as speakers?**

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**2. Think about your current teaching and lesson-planning practices. What methods and strategies do you use to do the following?**

Guide students to work well with others

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Teach students how to evaluate media

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Show students how to incorporate multimedia into presentations

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Help students adapt oral communication for varied audiences

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**3. Explore your thinking about listening and speaking. In the context of your current classroom practices, how do you answer the following questions?**

What is the difference between a collaborative discussion and a discussion?

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A child tells you she wants to be a great speaker, whether one-to-one, small-group, large-group, in-person, or digitally. What skills do you tell her she needs to master?

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What strategies or methods should teachers use to teach media literacy?

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**After watching the introduction to the video, answer the following questions:**

**1. We are introduced to PVLEGS, an acronym for the essential components of any successful communication. What word is represented by each letter of the acronym?**

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**2. Each of those words simplify several concepts. How might students benefit from using this kind of simple, consistent vocabulary to discuss oral communication skills while learning them?**

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**3. Erik asks teachers at Mission Viejo Elementary School to be more aware of students' speaking skills. How well do your students speak? What do you notice?**

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**4. Erik asks teachers to increase expectations for all students' speaking skills. How would you describe your school's levels of expectation for all students?**

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**5. Erik asks teachers to teach specific communication lessons. Does your school have a scope and sequence for teaching speaking skills? Do you have materials and specific lessons to teach the skills needed to deliver an effective talk? How do you help students be more effective verbal communicators?**

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## After watching the interview with Sarah McCarty and Alex Hull, read the text below:

Sarah refers to a checklist for “building a speech,” the first part of effective oral communication (the second part is “performing a speech”). Here’s that checklist, adapted from Erik’s book, *Well Spoken: Teaching Speaking to All Students* (Stenhouse Publishers, 2011):

### ACOVA

#### Audience

- If I was listening to this talk, I would be totally interested.

#### Content

- Important: I only said things that really matter.
- Connectors: I included things to make the audience think, “I get it! That connects to my life!”
- Explanations: I explained things that the audience would not have understood.
- Verbal viruses: I never ever say things such as “like” or “um” or “ya know.”

#### Organization

- Grabber opening: After a few words, everyone in the audience will be paying attention and curious to know more.
- Great closing: I didn’t just stop talking. I had a really cool finish to my talk.

#### Visual aid

- Easy to see: I made something large enough to be visible by everyone.
- Important: I only show things that really, really help my audience. I don’t have lots of words on the visual aid.
- Not decorated: I don’t have lots of silly stuff around the edges. I just have a couple of really good pictures.

#### Appearance

- I look good. I went out of my way to dress like a big time presenter.

**After reviewing the checklist, answer the following questions:****1. What items on the checklist have you not typically addressed with your students?**

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**2. How might this checklist improve student presentations in your classroom?**

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**After observing the Mission Viejo 4th grade classroom featured in the video, read the text below and answer the following questions:**

After building a talk, the student must perform it. We didn't see students building the talks, but the video mentions the elements of that process (e.g., a grabber opening and powerful visual aids). Alex talks about developing "digital rough drafts" with digital tools (Photo Booth on iPads in this case) to video practice talks for self-evaluation and for teaching opportunities.

**1. What is the purpose of rough drafts in writing? What would be the benefits of requiring rough drafts for speeches?**

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**2. Think about all of the work needed to prepare and present these book talks. What were students expected to do?**

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**3. How did Alex and Sarah ask students to use PVLEGS to evaluate each presentation?**

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**4. How did the teacher reinforce the elements of effective speaking after each performance?**

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**5. Alex and Sara discuss the improvement they noticed between the speeches shown in the video and those from previous years. How did the speeches in the video “raise the bar”?**

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**After observing the Mission Viejo 5th grade classroom featured in the video, read the text below and answer the following questions:**

In the video, Steve Walz presents two speaking activities: one for a biome presentation in science class and one for a book study in reading class. Rather than ask students to work on all six elements of performance (PVLEGS), Steve wants them to choose two elements to focus on.

**1. How does Steve’s directive reinforce PVLEGS?**

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**2. Why does Steve think that listening is a valuable skill? What language does he use to describe its value?**

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**3. How does he compare speaking skills to other classroom skills students are developing?**

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## ACTIVITY

**Select a unit from your curriculum for which students will prepare talks.**

**1. How do you currently prepare students to develop these talks?**

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**2. What might you do differently after watching this video to explicitly teach your students to apply the elements of building and performing those talks?**

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**After observing the Campus Middle School 8th grade language arts collaboration activity featured in the video, answer the following questions:**

**1. Describe how labeling groups with rock band names contributes to collaboration.**

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**2. As you watched, what did you observe about the thought process that went into the teacher's planning for collaboration?**

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**3. What did the teacher require of the students in the lesson?**

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**4. What did you notice about the ways that students were working together?**

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**After observing the Campus Middle School 8th grade language arts adapting speech lesson featured in the video, answer the following questions:**

**1. Most state standards include a speaking standard that requires adapting speech to a variety of contexts. What is the specific language of the speaking standard for your grade level? How are you teaching students to meet that standard?**

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**2. In the video, Erik discusses how to build a speech and writes ACOVA on the whiteboard. What do those letters represent? Which one is the focus for this lesson? Which other component does the video mention?**

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**3. How did Erik set up the lesson?**

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**4. How did the speeches demonstrate student understanding of adapting speech?**

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**After observing the Heritage High School 9th grade English media literacy lesson featured in the video, answer the following questions:**

**1. What is Nate's motivation for teaching media literacy?**

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**2. How does Nate set up the lesson? What is the benefit of assigning specific jobs?**

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**3. How would the five key questions improve your students' ability to critically analyze media?**

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## ACTIVITY

**Nate fits media literacy into his unit about *Anthem* by Ayn Rand. Develop an assignment that fits into one of your upcoming units, one that will expose students to media. Adapt the language used in Nate's five key questions of media literacy to answer the questions below, as appropriate for your class.**

**1. What unit will you use?**

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**2. What media does that unit employ?**

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**3. How will the lessons you learned from watching Nate enhance that unit?**

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**After observing the Heritage High School 11th grade English Ignite Talks featured in the video, answer the following questions:**

**1. In this lesson, Nate works with his students on building a talk using the Ignite format. What are the advantages of that format? What are the challenges of that format?**

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**2. How does Nate combine collaboration, speaking performance skills, and media literacy into this lesson?**

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**3. Most standards ask students to use media strategically in presentations. How does Nate's lesson further that goal?**

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## Notes

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## Resources

For additional resources, strategies, and ideas, visit [www.pvlegs.com](http://www.pvlegs.com) or [erikpalmer.net](http://erikpalmer.net)

**Other titles by Erik Palmer:**

- Palmer, E. (2012). *Digitally speaking: How to improve student presentations with technology*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Palmer, E. (2016). *Good thinking: Teaching argument, persuasion, and reasoning*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Palmer, E. (2011). *Well spoken: Teaching speaking to all students*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Palmer, E. (2015). *Researching in a digital world: How do I teach my students to conduct quality online research?* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Palmer, E. (2014). *Teaching the core skills of listening & speaking*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.