

Lesson 8 — Tone of Voice

Subject 4 — Non-Verbal Communication: Tone of Voice

Objective: Students will hear the feeling in a person's tone of voice, understand that the same words can mean different things, and control their own volume, speed, and tone to fit the situation.

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials:

- “Three Dials” wall poster (loud/quiet, fast/slow, friendly/sharp)
- Volume scale card, 0 to 4
- Tone cards (sentence plus assigned tone)
- Match the Tone worksheet
- Situation cards

LESSON SEQUENCE

Phase	What Happens
Warm-Up / Hook 5 min	Say the words “Thanks a lot” four times — warm, sarcastic, angry, and flat. Ask what you meant each time. The words never changed. Explain that how you say it can matter more than what you say.
Direct Instruction / Modelling 10 min	Teach the three dials from the poster: Dial 1 — Volume. Loud or quiet. Match it to the place and to how far away the person is. Dial 2 — Speed. Fast talking can sound excited or nervous. Slow talking can sound calm or bored. Dial 3 — Tone. Friendly or sharp. This is the one that changes the meaning of the words. Introduce the volume scale: 0 is silent, 1 is a whisper, 2 is a normal talking voice, 3 is a strong voice across a room, 4 is a shout for outside or emergencies. Model a sentence at each volume level and have students name the right setting for each.
Guided Practice 12 min	Hand out tone cards. A student reads his sentence in the assigned tone and the group guesses the tone. Then give a situation and ask which tone fits: “You are asking a teacher for help while others are working,” “Your friend is upset and telling you why.” Practise the volume dial physically — hold up a number and a student speaks at that level.
Independent Practice 12 min	Students complete the Match the Tone worksheet — read the situation, choose the volume, speed, and tone. Second half: pairs practise saying the same sentence three different ways and



Phase	What Happens
	naming what each version means.
Wrap-Up & Review <i>6 min</i>	Review the three dials and the volume scale together. Each student names one place he will need a level 1 or 2 voice today. Set the goal: check your volume before you speak.

GAMES

Same Words, New Tone

Everyone gets the same sentence. Each student says it in a tone drawn from a card — excited, annoyed, unsure, kind, bored. The group guesses the tone each time.

Volume Dial

Hold up a number from 0 to 4. A student says his sentence at that level. Then call out a place — lunchroom, quiet room, outside — and students choose the number themselves.

Tone Detective

Play or read a short exchange. Students identify the tone and predict what happens next in the conversation because of it.

WHAT THE TEACHER CAN SAY

- “What number voice does this room need?”
- “Your words were fine, but your tone was sharp. Try it again.”
- “Listen to how he said it, not just what he said.”
- “Slow down a little so he can follow you.”
- “That was a friendly tone. That is what makes people want to answer you.”

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Student adjusts volume to the setting without a reminder
- Student identifies a sharp or annoyed tone in someone else
- Student recognises when his own tone did not match what he meant
- Student can repair a message by changing the tone rather than the words
- Student slows down when the listener is not following

SUPPORTS AND ADAPTATIONS

- Keep the 0 to 4 volume card visible in the room and point to a number instead of speaking a correction
- Record the student with permission so he can hear his own tone
- For flat or monotone speakers, work on one dial only — usually friendly versus sharp
- Pre-teach the tone needed before a known hard moment, such as asking for help
- Pair tone practice with the facial expression lesson so the face and the voice are learned together

