

SECTION ONE



BEGINNER LEVEL

LESSON ONE

THE YELLOW CONVERSATION

1. PARENT LETTER
2. THE YELLOW CONVERSATION (AN OVERVIEW)
3. LESSON ONE
 - a. INTRODUCTION
 - b. BASIC TRAINING
 - c. PRACTICE RUN AND ROLE PLAYS
 - d. WRAP UP AND HOMEWORK CHALLENGE
 - e. KEEP IT FUN
 - f. DISCUSSION
4. TEACHING TOOLS
 - a. ILLUSTRATION OF CMC WALL DISPLAY
 - b. ILLUSTRATION OF CMC COLOR CODED CONVERSATION PATH
 - c. THE YELLOW CONVERSATION COLLAGE – ACTIVITY (OPTIONAL)
 - d. THE YELLOW CONVERSATION - SONG LYRICS
 - e. THE YELLOW CONVERSATION AND ME – WORKSHEET
 - f. THE YELLOW CONVERSATION AND ME – ANSWER KEY
 - g. HOW TO PRACTICE YELLOW CONVERSATIONS AT HOME – INFORMATION SHEET

THE YELLOW CONVERSATION

(An overview)

GOAL: The child will demonstrate the ability to have a Yellow Conversation with the Conversation Coach four out of five times without the use of the Conversation Stones. In order to successfully achieve a Yellow Conversation, the child will make Meaningful Eye Contact with the Conversation Coach and will acknowledge the communication attempt with either a verbal (i.e. Hi, Bye) or nonverbal (i.e. smile, wave) response.

MATERIALS:

Conversation Stones (use Conversation Stones, black felt marker, and ball).

The Yellow Conversation is simply our hello's and our goodbye's. It is the easiest and fastest kind of communication exchange that we will likely have with another individual. For example, you're rushing through the grocery store with a time crunch on your hands? You see a friend and say a quick hello as you grab a cart and head down the aisles. On the way out of the store, you catch your friend's eye and say a quick goodbye. In so doing, you would have just experienced the Yellow Conversation.

This type of conversation is unique not only because it is so fast and easy to do but because it can be done with or without words. In fact, there are times when words would neither be effective (i.e. in the middle of a boisterous football game) or appropriate (i.e. in the middle of a symphony). In these situations, you might smile and give a quick wave to indicate a greeting or a farewell.

It is likely that we will have many of these types of conversations in a day. Though they may seem insignificant because of the skill level required, they are critical in relation to how we are viewed by other people. For example, consider the following situation:

You see a couple of old friends from high school. You make eye contact with them. It is apparent that they recognize you, so you smile and wave. Instead of reciprocating, they avoid eye contact and walk in the opposite direction. It is likely that your opinion about your old friends will change. Had they chosen to smile, wave or stop for a quick chat, you may have found a reason to rekindle the relationship. Either way, your mindset about them would have been positive.

The Yellow Conversation is powerful in its ability to shape how we view others and how they view us!

NOTE:

SPECIAL NEEDS: Children with special needs should be able to achieve the Yellow Conversation since the verbal demands are limited and the primary purpose is simply to acknowledge the presence of another individual with a greeting and/or a farewell. For more information about the use of this lesson with special needs children, please refer to Section Two of this manual.

MEANINGFUL EYE CONTACT: Meaningful Eye Contact will be an essential part of this first lesson. The Conversation Coach may use pausing, exaggerated body language or signing in order to draw the child's attention to himself/herself in order to attain MEC. Children who are unable to grasp the concept of making MEC may not be considered appropriate candidates for the CMC program. There are other programs available such as Reference & Regulate Therapy (David Loyst), which may be better suited for these individuals.

“Color My Conversation is intended for children with sufficient referencing skills to engage in conversations. Children typically start early conversations around 2-3 years of age. By this time, they have developed the ability to look at people for a long time, follow simple social cues (i.e. point and gaze following), and begin reading more sophisticated non-verbal cues. If children have not yet developed these skills, they should participate in a program which develops natural social referencing skills, such as Reference and Regulate, as a pre-requisite to Color My Conversation.”



LESSON ONE

THE YELLOW CONVERSATION

INTRODUCTION

Signs to consider in this lesson: hello, goodbye, yellow.

“Okay kids, today we are going to be learning about conversations. Wow! That’s a BIG word! Let’s say that word 5 times (i.e. Con-ver-sa-tions...). **A conversation is simply when we talk with another person. We are going to be learning about lots of different types of conversations and the first one that we are going to talk about is what I call the Yellow Conversation!** (Place the yellow Hello and Goodbye Conversation Stones on the floor in front of you. Have the children sit on chairs in the shape of a semi circle. Leave yourself enough room to be able to move along the stones.)

BASIC TRAINING

When we want to start a conversation with someone, we say Hello. What other words might we say? (Glean ideas from the children as you write the word “Hello” in bold lettering in the center of the first yellow stone and then draw lines to create four quadrants).

Those are great ideas! Sometimes, I will say hello this way! (Write some of the children’s examples in the quadrants and/or add your own. Suggestions might include the following: Hey, Hi, etc.).

This is our “Hello” Conversation Stone and I am going to put it right here. (Show the stone to the children and then place it on the floor in front of you).

If we have our hellos, we also have our goodbyes. So when you end a conversation, how do you say goodbye to people? (Glean ideas from the children as you write the word “Goodbye” in bold lettering in the center of the second yellow stone and then draw lines to create four quadrants).

Great suggestions! Sometimes, I will say goodbye this way. (Write some of the children’s examples in the quadrants and/or add your own. Suggestions might include the following: See you, Bye, Catch you later, Bye for now).

This is our “goodbye” stone and I’m going to place it right over here. (Show the second stone and then place it a safe distance from you so that you can easily take one good-sized step onto it from your first stone).

Now this is what a “Hello-Goodbye” conversation OR what I call a Yellow Conversation looks like. (Stand on the Hello stone and pick up your soft ball. Make MEC with one of the children who may have stronger language skills. Once MEC is attained, toss the ball to the child as you say one of the options selected from the Hello stone).

Hi, Courtney! (Leave your hands out in the position to receive the ball as you look expectantly and attempt to make MEC with the child. As the child says hello and tosses the ball back to you, provide nonverbal reinforcement of their response with a smile and a head nod. Then step onto the Goodbye stone and toss the ball back to the same child as you say one of the options selected from it).

See ya later! (Leave your hands out in the position to receive the ball as you look expectantly and attempt to make MEC with the child. As the child says goodbye and tosses the ball back to you, provide nonverbal reinforcement of this behavior with a smile and other nonverbal cues such as a “thumbs up” or “high five”).

PRACTICE RUN AND ROLE PLAYS

That is as simple as it gets with the Yellow Conversation. Now, it's your turn. (Repeat this exercise with your other children in the group. Once each child has had a turn with the Conversation Coach, allow the children to practice with their peers either as the conversation initiator or conversation responder).

So what does a Yellow Conversation look like when you're speaking to a group of people? Let me show you! (Leave the room and shut the door. Then knock. It is highly likely that the children may chuckle at this point. Open the door and then greet the group).

Hey everybody! (Children respond).

See you after class! (After you have said your farewell, leave the room and shut the door. Wait for a second and then come back into the room).

It's just that simple.

Now, I am going to do the Yellow Conversation again but this time I'm NOT going to use any words. Watch me. (Leave the room and shut the door. Then knock. Open the door and then smile and wave. Wait for the children to reciprocate. Now check your watch, look up at the kids, and wave goodbye as you leave the room. Wait for a short moment in the hallway and then re-enter the room).

We just had a Yellow Conversation and I didn't even say a word, did I? I let my body do the talking. That's what we call Body Language. What's it called? (Have the children practice this new vocabulary item).

Did you know that our bodies could talk? Watch me. (Do some nonverbal gestures and have the children guess them. Examples may include emotions such as excitement, frustration, and sadness, or they may be more detailed messages such as "Stop right there!" or "Go away!").

What have we learned so far about the Yellow Conversation? We've learned that it is the hello (sign hello) and goodbye (sign goodbye) part of a conversation. We've learned that we can do it without words. We can use our... (sweep your hand down in front of your body and wait for the children to respond). ***Right! We can use our Body Language.***

Now, I have a question for you? Is the Yellow Conversation really that important? (Children respond).

You know it may be the smallest conversation, BUT it happens to be one of the most important ones that we can have. People might decide if you are nice OR not just by depending on how you do this conversation. Let me show you. (Role play: instruct one of the children to smile at you as you walk by. Take a book and pretend to look at it as you walk past the child. When he/she smiles, look at the child with little interest and then go back to reading your book. Then ask the child some questions).

Did you like that conversation? Why? Why Not? What did I do that bothered you? (Child responds to questions. Then re-role play the scenario and ask the child how it feels when you use body language that encourages a successful Yellow Conversation. Practice a variety of role-plays using unsuccessful or successful Yellow Conversations (i.e. being too goofy, being shy, being grumpy). Discuss how our choice of words or actions may affect how others feel towards us or how we may feel towards others).

You may want to do some additional discussion about where and when Yellow Conversations could be used (i.e. school hallway, library, mall, on the street). Tell the kids some of the reasons why you love Yellow Conversations. Some examples may include the following: because they are quick and easy to use when you're in a rush, because they acknowledge another person's presence which may make him/her feel valued, and because you can have a Yellow Conversation without speaking (i.e. wave, wink, mouth words silently).

HELPFUL HINTS...

1. Words can be written OR pictures can be drawn on the yellow Conversation Stones.
 - a. FOR READERS: you may write the actual words and phrases into the quadrants on the Conversation Stones.
 - b. FOR NONREADERS: you may draw a picture of a stick man who is facing frontwards and waving for the hello stone and a stick man who is walking away while waving for the goodbye stone.
2. Signing is optional but encouraged. You may use it as much or as little as needed to provide visual support for the children as they are learning the new vocabulary which may include the following words: yellow, hello, goodbye.
3. If you have children who are shy or unsure in their social abilities, it can be helpful to walk along the Conversation Path with them and provide as many verbal supports as necessary.
4. When stepping on the stones, glance down at them to demonstrate that you are getting information from them. By this role model, your children will then see that they can do the same thing.
5. When engaging in a conversation with the children, remember to make Meaningful Eye Contact with them.
6. Try to select greetings that are socially appropriate for the children and their peers. For example, younger children may like the farewell “See you later alligator” while an older child may prefer “Chow!” or “Peace Out”. If the examples are acceptable and preferable ways for an adolescent to communicate with his/her peers, then they are acceptable for the CMC program.
7. When working in a small group or classroom setting look for the child with the stronger language skills to use when introducing a new lesson so that the weaker children can have someone to model after.
8. If a child does not know what to do with the ball when you throw it to him/her with a greeting, use your body language rather than words to direct them. Motion for him/her to throw it back to you. If they do so but fail to greet you, look confused and repeat the step. If the child still doesn't know how to reciprocate the greeting, do the verbal exchange with another child to provide a model. Once a successful model has been demonstrated, repeat the conversation with the original child.

WRAP UP AND HOMEWORK CHALLENGE

Great job today kids! We've learned a lot about the Yellow Conversation. Let's review. What are Yellow Conversations? Where can we have a Yellow Conversation? Do we need to use words when we have them? What is it called when we use our body to talk? Why is the Yellow Conversation so important? Great thinking, everyone. For the next lesson, we are going to learn about a different conversation. It's called the Short Conversation.

I have two homework challenges for you. When you leave this room today, I want you to have at least one Yellow Conversation with one of your classmates. And when you go home tonight, tell your Mom and Dad what we learned today about the Yellow Conversation. Maybe they can tell you some of their favorite ways to say Hello and Goodbye.

KEEP IT FUN

1. **Wall display:** Create a wall display by placing the Hello and Goodbye display stones from your kit onto the bulletin board
2. **Collage:** Take the children on an adventure walk. Take your camera and walk around the school as you snap some photographs of places where Yellow Conversations might occur. Print the pictures off and make them into The Yellow Conversation Collage. You can make a larger collage to add to your wall display or the children can make a smaller one to take home.
3. **Sing:** Teach the children the The Yellow Conversation Song. It is strongly encouraged that the songs in the CMC program be attempted regardless of the age of the child because there is teaching information embedded within the lyrics. Should a child not appreciate the musical aspect of the songs, the Conversation Coach may choose to speak the lyrics without the music (i.e. like a rap).
4. **THE YELLOW CONVERSATION AND ME** can be done in class or used as a homework assignment. **The HOW TO PRACTICE YELLOW CONVERSATIONS AT HOME** sheet can be sent home if requested by the parents.

DISCUSSION

1. Why is the ball used during the Yellow Conversation lesson? The talking ball is a strong teaching tool for a couple of reasons:
 - **Meaningful Eye Contact:** *If the ball is thrown to the child along with a verbal greeting and the child's eye contact is fleeting, the Conversation Coach can use the ball to draw attention to himself/herself. Once the child's gaze moves towards the coach's face and eye contact has been attained, the Yellow Conversation can be attempted again. Typically if this is done 2-3 times, the child will grasp his/her part in the conversation and the need for lengthy explanations can be eliminated.*
 - **Turn taking:** *The ball helps provide a visual reference for whom the conversation partners are and whom they are not! For example, children who might have a tendency to interrupt others can visually see that the conversation is taking place between the two conversation partners tossing the ball.*
2. Why are the words Hello and Goodbye used for the greetings? *Simply because they are the most basic greetings that we use and the goal of the CMC program is to keep the terminology as basic as possible.*
3. How much of your practice training session is typically spent on teaching the concept of the Yellow Conversation? *This first lesson may only take 15-20 minutes, however, the Conversation Coach should continue to review it in subsequent lessons.*

YELLOW CONVERSATION

CHORUS (Repeat)

Oh, YELLOW Conversations
There's not much that I say
Just a HELLO and a GOODBYE
And I'll be on my way

VERSE ONE

I can have them any time
I can have them any place
I don't need to use my words (speech)
There is another way

VERSE TWO

I look at you and smile
I look at you and wave
These little things I do
To wish you a good day

CHORUS

Oh YELLOW Conversations
There's not much that I say
Just a HELLO and a GOODBYE
And I'll be on my way!!!



HELLO!



GOODBYE!



PURPOSE: This song is sung while teaching the Yellow Conversation. It is primarily meant for the younger children and those with Special Needs. It may be spoken for the older children, however, most children enjoy it either way.

THE YELLOW CONVERSATION AND ME

Yellow Conversations are very QUICK! They just have a _____ and a _____. The best thing about a Yellow Conversation is we can have them without using words. We can use our hands (i.e. wave) or our faces (i.e. smile, wink) to do the talking for us.

Places where I may have a Yellow Conversation:

Places where I may have a Yellow Conversation:	
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Greetings are something that I do at the beginning of a conversation.
My favorite way to greet people is to say:**

Greetings are something that I do at the beginning of a conversation. My favorite way to greet people is to say:	
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Farewells are something that I do at the end of a conversation.
My favorite way to say farewell to someone is to say:**

Farewells are something that I do at the end of a conversation. My favorite way to say farewell to someone is to say:	
_____	_____
_____	_____

**THIS IS WHAT A YELLOW CONVERSATION
LOOKS LIKE TO ME!**

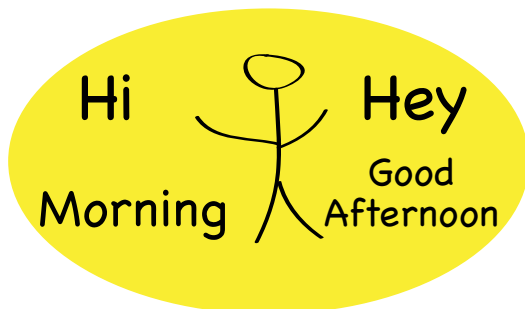
On the back of this worksheet, draw a picture of what the Yellow Conversation looks like to you!

HOW TO PRACTICE YELLOW CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

Materials needed:

- Scissors
 - Yellow construction paper
 - Black felt pen
 - Ball
1. Cut out two yellow Conversation stones.
 2. On one stone, draw a stick man (or write the word Hello) in the center of the stone. Divide the stone into quadrants and write four examples of greetings in the spaces created (i.e. Hi, Hey, Morning, Good afternoon).
 3. On the second stone, draw a stick man (or write the word Goodbye) in the center of the stone. Divide the stone into quadrants and write four examples of farewells in the spaces created (i.e. Goodbye, Bye, Bye for now, See you soon, See you later alligator).
 4. Place the stones on the floor. Now you are ready to have your Yellow Conversation.
 5. Take your ball and stand on the Hello stone. Toss the ball to your child as you say one of the greetings. Your child will throw the ball back to you as he/she responds to your greeting. Now step on the Goodbye stone. Toss the ball back to your child as you say one of the farewells. Your child will throw the ball back to you as he/she responds to your farewell.
 6. Now you can reverse the roles and let your child start the Yellow Conversation with you.

Hello



Goodbye

