

## Destination L1: A Thematic Unit

# “Op Eep Ork” Means “Bring a Friend” or, Alien Speak

### STUDENT ACTIVITY

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to explore ways that we communicate with each other when our normal paths, such as speech, are limited.

#### PROBLEM

What are ways or modes, other than spoken language, that we use to communicate?

#### PROCEDURE

**Create a scene where you use an imaginary language to communicate specific information. The goal is to make the class understand what you are explaining.**

1. Break into groups of two or three.
2. Create an imaginary language. This does not need to be a whole vocabulary, but think about how the language sounds. What are the strongest letters? What kind of rhythm does it have? Do you use a high/low/squeaky/growling voice as you speak?

#### **Now that you've developed a language:**

3. Choose one of the following scenarios to “explain” to the class:
  - Give directions to a local store or mall (try to explain what type of store it is).
  - Explain a process such as how to make ice cubes or do a dance step.
  - Explain a concept like “love” or “hate.”
4. Develop your scenario. With your partner, take a few minutes and agree on a general plan that you will use to explain your scenario. Don't spend more than 10 minutes. This is an improvisation, which means you are creating a scene spontaneously as you interact with your partner.

#### **Tips for Improvising**

- Be aware of your partner; work as a team. Make opportunities for each other; take turns speaking/acting. Don't let one person do all the work.
  - Move around. Don't get rooted in one place.
  - If you use pantomime or gestures, be sure to make them obvious and precise.
  - Most important, keep “in character” no matter what. Think of your imaginary language as creating a character. As you communicate your scenario, behave as if you *are* that character.
5. Present your scenarios to the class and have them try to figure out what you and your partner are communicating. Be sure not to tell the class which scenario you and your partner chose or how to understand your imaginary language.
  6. Take notes when you are in the audience. Identify what helps each group communicate effectively? What blocks communication? When you performed your scenario, what helped to convey your message?

#### **Making the Connection**

As a class, discuss how this experience affects the definition of communication that you developed at the beginning of this section. Does it change or reinforce your definition? Why or why not?