

Lesson Plan: The Manners Detective Agency

Materials Needed:

- A "detective" prop (optional, e.g., a magnifying glass, a fedora hat, or a simple paper badge)
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- Markers or crayons
- A plate, cup, fork, spoon, and napkin
- A simple, enjoyable snack (e.g., cookies and milk, fruit slices)
- One piece of blank or decorative paper for a thank-you note
- An envelope

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate three polite greeting behaviors (e.g., making eye contact, smiling, saying "please" and "thank you").
- Correctly set a simple table place setting.
- Practice three key table manners during a snack.
- Compose and write a simple thank-you note expressing gratitude.

Alignment with Standards

This lesson aligns with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies, specifically focusing on:

- **Social Awareness:** Understanding social cues and showing empathy and respect for others.
- **Relationship Skills:** Communicating clearly and maintaining positive relationships.

Lesson Procedure

1. Introduction: The Manners Detective (5 minutes)

Teacher: "Welcome, Detective! Today, the Manners Detective Agency has a very important mission. Our mission is to uncover the secret codes that people use to be kind and respectful to each other. We call these codes 'manners.' Our first case is finding out why manners are so important. What do you think? Why do we say 'please' or hold a door for someone?"

- Discuss the student's ideas. Guide them to the understanding that good manners make other people feel happy, respected, and comfortable.
- Present the student with their "detective" prop to make the theme engaging.

2. Activity 1: The Case of the Awkward Greeting (10 minutes)

Teacher: "Our first case file is open! We need to investigate how to greet people. I'm going to act out two greetings. You, the detective, must tell me which one uses good manners and which one is the 'Manners Mix-Up.'"

- **Scenario 1 (Manners Mix-Up):** Greet the student by looking at the floor, mumbling "hi," and then quickly walking away.
- **Scenario 2 (Good Manners):** Greet the student by looking at them with a smile, saying "Hello! It's so nice to see you," and speaking clearly.

- Discuss what made the second greeting feel better (eye contact, smiling, clear voice).
- **Role-Play:** Practice greeting each other. Pretend you are meeting a new friend, a grandparent, or a teacher. Encourage using phrases like "Hello," "Nice to meet you," "Please," and "Thank you."

3. Activity 2: The Case of the Confusing Table (15 minutes)

Teacher: "Detective, we have a new case. Someone is getting ready for a meal, but they don't know where anything goes! It's our job to set the table correctly so eating is easy and not messy."

- **Demonstration:** Show the student the plate, cup, fork, spoon, and napkin.
- **Instruction:** Guide the student to set a simple place setting. A simple trick: The fork is on the left (4 letters, just like LEFT). The spoon/knife are on the right (5 letters, just like RIGHT). The plate goes in the middle, the cup above the spoon, and the napkin on the left of the fork or on the plate.
- **"Fancy Snack Time" Practice:** Serve the prepared snack. While eating, practice these three "super-spy" table manner skills:
 1. Chewing with your mouth closed.
 2. Using your napkin to wipe your mouth.
 3. Saying "please" and "thank you" when asking for something.

4. Activity 3: The Secret Code of Gratitude (10 minutes)

Teacher: "Excellent work, Detective! Our final case is one of the most important. It's about showing someone you appreciate them after they've done something nice for you, like giving you a gift. The secret code for this is a 'thank-you note.'"

- Brainstorm a time someone gave the student a gift or did something kind for them (real or imaginary).
- Explain the three simple parts of a thank-you note:
 1. **Greeting:** "Dear [Name],"
 2. **The Thank You:** "Thank you so much for the [gift/kind act]." Mention something you like about it or how you'll use it.
 3. **Closing:** "From, [Your Name]" or "Love, [Your Name]"
- The student writes their own thank-you note on the decorative paper. Encourage them to add a drawing. Place it in the envelope.

5. Conclusion: You're a Manners Expert! (5 minutes)

Teacher: "Detective, you have successfully solved every case today! You've cracked the codes of polite greetings, table settings, and showing gratitude. Your mission is complete. What was the most important manners secret you learned today and why?"

- Listen to the student's reflection.
- Praise their hard work and present them with a "Manners Detective Agency - Case Closed!" certificate (can be a simple hand-drawn star on an index card).

Assessment

- **Formative:** Observe the student's participation and understanding during the role-playing, table-setting activity, and snack time. Provide gentle corrections and positive reinforcement.
- **Summative:** The completed thank-you note will serve as a tangible assessment of the student's ability to apply the concept of written gratitude.

Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:** If writing is a challenge, provide a fill-in-the-blank template for the thank-you note or allow the student to dictate the note while the teacher writes. Use picture cards to represent the different steps of setting a table.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Introduce more complex etiquette, such as how to properly introduce two people to each other ("Mom, this is my friend, Sam. Sam, this is my mom."). Add a knife to the place setting and discuss how it is used. Discuss the difference between formal and informal greetings.