

Communicating with children

Sarah Prescott, 9, has come with her mother to see her GP because of a laceration on her arm.

Pre-watching

- 1 With reference to Unit 12, what elements of good communication should the doctor consider to minimise the child's anxiety in these stages:

- Establishing initial rapport with a child
- Developing rapport with a child

Global observations

- 2a Watch the whole clip and tick the stages that the doctor covers.

Establishing initial rapport

- ☐ greets patient
- ☐ demonstrates respect and interest
- ☐ pays child a compliment
- ☐ checks child is comfortable

Developing rapport

- ☐ acknowledges child's feelings
- ☐ shows empathy and support
- ☐ shows sensitivity
- ☐ shares thoughts with patient
- ☐ explains why examination is needed
- ☐ asks for permission to examine child

- 2b Overall, how effective do you think the doctor's communication has been?

- 2c Do you think the doctor's tone of voice helps to put the child at ease? Note down two examples to justify your answer

- 2d Watch the clip again with the volume turned down and note down examples of the doctor's non-verbal communication. Evaluate these in line with models of good communication.

Watching for detail

- Part 1:** from Start to *No, I think that's all right.*
(00:00>01:23)

- 3 Watch Part 1 of the clip and complete the following examples where the doctor shows empathy and support.

Patient: ... I scraped my arm on a nail.

Doctor: Oh dear. Well, _____

_____, _____ .

Accidents happen all the time. It _____

_____ .

...

Doctor: [puts gloves on] Right, let's—oh no, that _____ nasty. I _____

_____ hurts. Does it? You're being very _____ .

- Part 2:** from ... *but what I need to do* to End.
(01:23>02:48)

- 4 Watch Part 2 of the clip. When the doctor says *What I need to do is give you an injection*, the child reacts quite negatively. What softeners could he have used to reduce her anxiety?

- 5 Answer these questions.

- 1 What do you think of the doctor's explanation for giving an injection?
- 2 How effective do you think the doctor's distraction technique is when he asks her to imagine she's lying on a beach?
- 3 Do you think the doctor closes the interview well?

Over to you

Role-play the scenario you have just watched. Work in threes, taking it in turns to play the role of the doctor, patient and observer.

Patient: you should show greater resistance to having an injection than the child in the clip.

Doctor: pay particular attention to your tone of voice and body language.

Observer: give feedback on the doctor's tone of voice, non-verbal communication and degree of empathy shown.