Nonverbal communication activities are a great way to enhance critical social and emotional skills; and, in this activity, students will practice for a puppet show by reading scripts. Feeling words indicate what emotion should be conveyed while saying the line. Students will read and give each other feedback on how to change their tone of voice to match the emotion. Students will then use cut-outs of a lemur and a hedgehog to create different puppets for the different emotions.

Prep
Print and cut out the hedgehog and lemur parts. Laminate all of the parts separately and cut out. Place pieces of the hook (hard) side of the velcro on the lemur’s and hedgehog’s face and body where mouth and head would go. Place pieces of the loop (soft) side of the velcro on the backs of all of the mouth and head pieces.

Pre-Activity Discussion (7 minutes)
Invite discussion on nonverbal communication by asking the following questions:

- When we’re talking to someone, what are some things we should pay attention to besides the words we’re using?
• When we’re **listening** to someone, what should we do to make sure they know we are listening to them?

• How can things like tone of voice, facial expressions, or body language, change the meaning of the words we are saying?

Guide students towards the idea that nonverbal cues like tone of voice (how our voice sounds when we talk), facial expressions (frown, smile, eyebrows raised, etc.), and body language (how we stand, arms crossed, etc.) are just as important as the words we choose.

**Activity (25 minutes)**

1. Assign one student to be the hedgehog and the other student to be the lemur.
2. Instruct students that before they do the puppet show, they will practice their tones of voice. In front of each of their lines in the script, there will be a feeling word in parentheses, such as “surprised” or “angry.” When it is their character’s turn to speak, the student should read the line in a tone of voice that matches that feeling word.
3. Since this is practice, after each person reads his or her line, the partner should give feedback on whether the tone of voice matched the feeling word, and what they could do to make the tone of voice match better.*
4. Once the students have gone through the script a couple times and mastered their tones of voice, they can create their puppets. Students should create one puppet for each emotion that their animal displays in the script. Partners should again give feedback on whether the puppets’ facial expressions and body language match the feeling word.
5. Students can now put on the puppet show using the correct emotion puppet and the correct tone of voice as they read their lines.
6. (Optional) If students have practiced and performed with both scripts, have them write their own script! They should write dialogue between the lemur and the hedgehog and identify the emotions that match each line.

*Good place stop if you need to split up the lesson for time.

**Post-Activity Discussion (7 minutes)**

After the puppet show, help students reflect on the activity by discussing some of the following questions:
• Was anything about this activity difficult? Easy?
• If the tone of voice didn’t match the emotion word, what happened?
• If the facial expressions and body language didn’t match the tone of voice or words, what happened?

**SAY:** When we are talking to someone, the words we choose to use are only one thing that help us get our meaning across. We also need to think about what expression we have on our face (facial expression), HOW we say the words (tone of voice), and how we hold our body (body language). If any of those things don’t match each other, it’s more likely the person we are talking to will be confused.

**Educator Notes**
**Communication Lesson: Nonverbal Communication**

**Lemur/Hedgehog Script #1**

Lemur *(proud)*: Hey Hedgehog, I took your lunch box. It was...

Hedgehog *(sad)*: I know you did, Lemur, Suzy told me she saw you with it.

Lemur *(confused)*: What’s wrong, Hedgehog?

Hedgehog *(sad)*: Where did we go wrong Lemur?! Best friends since kindergarten and now this!

Lemur *(confused)*: What are you talking about?

Hedgehog *(sad)*: My best friend, a thief! Taking my only lunchbox, leaving me to starve - oh, how could you Lemur?!

Lemur *(confused)*: You left it on the bus by mistake. I took it and put it in your cubby for you.

Hedgehog *(sad)*: Oooooooohhhhhhh. Well, now I feel bad for burying your lunch in the playground to get back at you.

Hedgehog *(curious)*: I wonder where I put it....

Lemur *(mad)*: You did what?!

**Lemur/Hedgehog Script #2**

Lemur *(happy)*: Hey Hedgehog, we’re supposed to go to the beach this weekend, but...

Hedgehog *(nervous)*: The beach?! But I’ll get sand in my fur - It’ll take weeks to get it all out!

Lemur *(happy)*: ...but...

Hedgehog *(nervous)*: The water is too cold this time of year - we’ll freeze!

Lemur *(confused)*: ...but...

Hedgehog *(nervous)*: Sand crabs! Crabs that live in the sand will bite our tails! It’ll be a DISASTER!

Lemur *(confused)*: ...but Hedgehog, it’s supposed to rain this weekend. We can’t go to the beach.

Hedgehog *(excited)*: ...ooooooohhhhhhh!

Hedgehog *(excited)*: Then, would you babysit my hedgehog babies during the first movie?

Lemur *(happy)*: Ok.

Hedgehog *(excited)*: Thanks! You’ll have a great time with Baby Hedgely, Spike Jr, Minnie, Spinnie, Rolley, Polley, Pokey, Quillbert, Shewsby, Poppies, Prickles, Bristles, and Rascal J, McPricklypants...

Lemur *(nervous)*: Eek!
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