

Speak with Grace & Elegance

An activity of "Tee & Boba"

If you are a regular *What's Up* reader, you would know that "**Tee & Boba**" is a cartoon about a pair of adorable hamsters (see page 28, *What's Up* October 2022).

The two buddies are always up to antics. But, have you noticed how they speak to each other? Tee and Boba are always polite and kind, even when one might be annoyed with the other. This pays off — the two of them enjoy their friendship.

LESSON ONE: How we speak to others matters when growing friendships.

Next, read "**Finding an emoji for forgiveness**" (page 18). You may have used lots of emojis yourself. They are fun. An emoji saves time and can add that extra zing to your messages. However, emojis are short cuts. Instead of using emojis, making your sentences longer with special words can get a different effect.

LESSON 2: Thoughtfully adding special words to your sentences helps you to be good to others.

Bring these two lessons together and we are on the road to speaking with grace and elegance. Play this game to get the hang of it!

1. Write short, very direct sentences in the empty boxes below. They can be about anything you might say abruptly in real life. Five examples are given.
2. Form circles of four or five students each. Cut out the strips below and put them in a paper bag or envelope. There should be ten slips from each group member. That is, if there are four students in your group, you should have 40 slips in the bag. When you have done this, you are ready to start the game.
3. Take turns to convert the abrupt sentences into gentler, kinder, and more gracious ones. To do this, the first person takes out a slip, reads out its original wording to the group and then converts that sentence by adding and/or changing words. Then, the next person takes out a different slip and does the same. Keep going until the slips are used up (or you run out of time). You may help one another.

EXAMPLE: Instead of "*Wipe your nose!*", say "*Would you like a tissue for your nose?*"

✂ Cut these ↓ into individual slips.

"Wipe your nose!"

"What a stupid thing to say!"

"No, that's totally wrong!"

"Move! I want more space."

"Don't phone me all the time."	

5. Reflect on how easy (or difficult) it was for you to reframe the sentences. In real life, would you be able to do the rephrasing in your mind before you speak? Let us know! Write to letters@whatsup.sg about your efforts to speak with grace and elegance.