

The Important Things

By

B.L. Morrison School

Postville

Ben.....James Jacque
Stephanie.....Haley Edmunds-Shiwak
Mom.....Kathryn Worthman
Kate.....Jocelyn Jacque
Teacher.....Kelsey Jacque
Kimberly.....Kendra Manak

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Stephanie, Kate, Kimberly, and Ben are high school students who have been given an assignment to explain what communication is and why it's important. Being typical teenagers, they find themselves wrapped up in the art of texting on their phones, and believe that this is the only form of communication that is relevant to their lives. However, when an accident occurs as a result of their texting, they soon find out that they must take time to communicate the important things.

Scene 1:

SD: (Lights appear on teacher and students sitting at desks)

Teacher: “Alright students, let’s get started. Our next assignment is about communication. What is communication? Why is it important to who we are and how we live?”

Kate: “It’s like talking to friends and stuff, telling people where you’re gonna be so you can meet up.”

Ben: “It’s like Kimberly going on Craig’s list to look for a date.”

Kimberly: “It’s like when Ben posts on Facebook that it’s only 8 o’clock and he’s in for the night, because his life is sad like that.”

Ben: “Good one.”

Teacher: “All good answers. Communication is the giving and receiving of information. It’s talking and listening; sharing a message. I want you to think about this for your next assignment. Show me what it looks like when you communicate information, and why it’s important to do so.”

Stephanie: *(takes out her phone, texting)* “Well, if this class is going to be about communication, might as well return some texts.”

Teacher: *(takes Stephanie’s phone)* “Open your books to page 275, please. Stephanie is going to begin to read the next chapter.”

Stephanie: *(pouting, arms crossed)* “I feel so isolated.”

Scene 2

(Lights appear on Stephanie, Kate, and Kimberly sitting in a livingroom)

Kimberly: *(Leans head back)* This is so boring. When is your idiot brother going to be back with the car? Tonight is supposed to be your night to have it.”

Kate: You’re not bored, you just need to know where he is every minute or you’ll die.

Stephanie: She’s right. You’re like in love with my idiot brother.

Kimberly: Yeah, right. The car, remember? We want the car.

Stephanie: Why don’t you just text him to bring back the car? Give you an excuse to talk to him anyway.

Kimberly: No way! And anyway, he might be driving. It’s not safe for him to be looking at his phone.

Stephanie: That’s dumb. Kate, you text him.

(Stephanie’s mom enters)

Mom: *(Carrying a box)* Hey girls, how’s it going?

Stephanie: Fine, just waiting for Ben to come back with the car. What’s in the box?

Mom: *(Pulls out some letters)* They’re letters I found from grandma to grandpa when they were first courting. I’m all excited to read them.

Kate: Courting. What an ancient word.

Mom: Anyway, sounds like Ben just pulled in with the car. *(Walks off)*

Kimberly: Finally! ...How’s my hair? *(Pats it down)*

(Girls walk off, lights dim.)

Scene 3

(Lights appear on Stephanie, Ben, Kate, and Kimberly doing homework; books and pencils. Loud background thuds and crashes)

Kate: Ben, what answer did you get for question 9?

Ben: Umm... *(Checks book)*

Kate: And what is all that noise anyway?

Stephanie: Mom found more ancient memorabilia in the basement. She's been up and down the steps with boxes for the past two days.

(Mom enters)

Mom: Hey, you guys have been studying for ages. Anyone want something to drink?

Stephanie: No, mom. But can you be a little quieter with the boxes? Math is hard enough on the head.

Mom: Oh, sorry. I've just been so caught up in grandma's love letters. I know there are more, but I can't seem to find them.

Stephanie: You're still hung up on those sappy letters? I think I'd rather be doing math.

Kimberly: *(Looking dreamily at Ben)* Oh, I don't know. A little sappy never hurt anybody.

Mom: *(To Stephanie)* They're just so interesting. Do you know that your grandparents had a huge misunderstanding that might have caused them to not get married? Where would I be if that happened? Where would you be?

Stephanie: *(Sarcastically)* Probably listening to a different mom, telling a different story.

Mom: Right! But they got it all straightened out in the end. Communication is the key. *(Exits)*

Ben: Communication. I feel like we've been hearing that word a lot lately.

Kate: Yes, we have an assignment on it, remember? Due Friday.

Kimberly: *(Picks up a book)* What is communication? What does it look like, and why is it important to our lives?

Stephanie: Well, I know what it looks like. It looks like I'm going to be printing off a bunch of text messages to bring to class for Friday.

Kate: It's more than just text messages.

Stephanie: For you, it is. Your folks are always talking your phone away.

Kate: My dad thinks I need to communicate with less foul language.

Stephanie: *(To Ben)* Speaking of foul language, I need the car tomorrow night, and I don't want any arguments.

Ben: Fine, I'm gonna stay in and catch up on some more school work anyway. Try and get that assignment out of the way.

(Lights dim)

Scene 4

(Lights appear on teacher and students sitting at desks)

Teacher: One more day you guys, before the communication assignment is due in. Does anyone have any questions on it at this point?

Stephanie: *(Raises hand)* Yes. Can I just submit some of my text messages and be done with it?

Kate: Yeah, if she can do that, can I too?

Kimberly: YOU DON'T HAVE A PHONE!

Kate: I could get it back if I told my dad it was for school.

Teacher: I'm not going to stop you if you wish to submit texts as a form of communication. I just wish you would go a little deeper with it. Communication involves so many things. It's not just about the mall and who's going. It's about telling the people who matter that you love them. It's about holding someone's hand when you're scared. These are the important things. Please think about it.

Stephanie: I don't think I can fit all that into one text, but I'll try.

Teacher: *(sighs)* Alright, time for math!

(Students groan)

(Lights dim)

Scene 5

(Lights appear on Stephanie, looking for her phone)

Ben: *(Walks in, waving Stephanie's phone)* Looking for this? You left it in the car again. I'm surprised you even put it down long enough to lose it. You're like addicted or something.

Stephanie: *(Takes phone)* Ugh, I've been looking everywhere. Thanks.

Ben: Far be it from me to gripe about technology, but you use that thing way too much. It's not healthy.

Stephanie: What are you talking about? You've always got your phone on you.

Ben: Hey, I can give up my phone anytime. *(Hands phone to Stephanie)* Here, take it.

Stephanie: I don't know what you're trying to prove by insulting me and giving me your phone, but whatever.

Ben: I'm not trying to insult you. Just...come up for air now and then. Okay? And I don't want to see you driving with that thing in your face either. I didn't want to say anything in front of the girls, but I've seen you use it in the car a couple of times now. You could have an accident or something.

Stephanie: *(Texting)* Yeah, okay. Big brother speech over?

Ben: *(Sighs and shakes head)* Yeah. Big brother speech over. *(Exits)*

(Lights dim)

Scene 6

(Lights appear on Stephanie, Kate, and Kimberly chatting)

Stephanie: *(Sighs, frustrated)* Who's been blabbing to Big Ben about me texting in the car? He said he's seen me do it, but I'm too careful about it to let him see me. So, who's been telling on me?

(Silence)

Kimberly: Okay, okay. Ben and I have no secrets from each other.

Stephanie: And no relationship either. You're not his girlfriend. You've been in love with each other for like ever, and you're the only two people in the world who don't know about it. Talk about a breakdown in communication. And anyway, if my mom catches me texting and driving again, I'll lose the car, and you ladies can walk everywhere!

Kimberly: Okay, sorry... Do you really think he's in love with me?

(Stephanie & Kate roll eyes)

Kate: My dad is always at me about using my phone in the car too.

Stephanie: Kate, you're like never getting your phone back in this century.

Kate: A girl can dream.

Kimberly: Do you really think he's in love with me?

(Stephanie & Kate walk off)

Kimberly: You guys? *(Walks off too)*

(Lights dim)

Scene 7

(Lights appear on Stephanie and Kimberly texting on phones; Kate scowling)

Stephanie: *(Texting; looks at Kimberly, laughs)*

Kimberly: *(Texting; looks at Stephanie, laughs)*

Kate: *(Arms crossed, scowling)*

(Ben enters)

Ben: *(Picks up his backpack)* You girls could try, oh, I don't know, talking to each other. Like with your mouths and lips, with words and sounds. *(Shakes head; exits)*

(Texting and laughing continues)

(Lights dim)

Scene 8

(Lights appear on Stephanie, Kate, and Kimberly)

Stephanie: Mom, we're leaving. Taking the car, be back late. *(Texting)*

Mom: *(Offstage)* Alright, be safe on the road. I love you.

Stephanie: *(Texting)* Mhmm.

(Girls walk off; get into the car, Stephanie driving)

Kate: So where are we going first? To get the movie tickets, or to get some food?

Kimberly: Food first, always food first.

(Text beeps)

Stephanie: Kimberly, can you hand me my phone?

Kimberly: But you're driving.

Kate: *(Hands phone to Stephanie)* Don't be such a baby!

Stephanie: *(Reads texts, laughs)* "Turns out Mike and Rob are going to the movies too.

Kimberly: See, I don't know why Ben couldn't come. There's gonna be other guys here too.

Stephanie: Alright, since you can't spend two minutes away from my brother, I'll ask them to pick him up on their way. *(Texting)*

Kimberly: *(Grabs wheel)* Woah! Steph, look out!

(Car crashes, lights fade out fast to darkness)

Scene 9

(Lights appear on Kate and Kimberly, bandaged up, pacing hospital)

(Mom and Ben enter)

Mom: *(Frantic)* Where is she?! What's happened?

Kimberly: I told her not to. I told her it wasn't safe!

Mom: *(Shaking Kimberly's shoulders)* Told her not to what? What's going on?!

Kate: It was so fast. She just looked down for a second. Her phone was ringing, and... *(Crying)*

Ben: She was texting. She knows better!

Mom: *(Looking around frantically)* I have to see a doctor! Someone help me please. My daughter's been in an accident!

(Lights dim)

Scene 10

(Lights appear on Stephanie lying in hospital bed. Mom, Ben, Kimberly, and Kate stand around)

Mom: *(Holds Stephanie's hand)* Please honey, please wake up! I know you can hear me. They said you can hear me. I love you so much. How could I let you leave the house without making sure you knew that?

Kimberly: *(Quietly)* Please be okay, please be okay.

(Kimberly's phone rings)

Kate: All this...because of a text. I think I'm going to be sick. *(Hand over mouth, runs off)*

Mom: *(Holding Stephanie's hand)* Wake up, Steph! Please just squeeze my hand if you can hear me.

Stephanie: *(Squeezes her mother's hand, opens eyes)*

Mom: Oh, thank God! *(Cries)*

(Ben and Kimberly hug)

(Lights dim)

Scene 11

(Lights appear on students in classroom, Ben standing at front with teacher)

Ben: Texting while driving is a real and dangerous issue affecting teens today. It has become the leading cause of death in teens in the U.S. According to the Globe and Mail, 1.6 million accidents per year are caused by what has become known as distracted driving.

Teacher: Communication is about giving and receiving information; sharing a message. Whether it be a grandmother's love letter, or a big brother's lecture about safe driving. The message we wish to share with you is the texting while driving is dangerous. No text message is worth risking your life or someone else's life. Communicate the important things. Tell the people around you that you love them.

All: Don't text and drive.

(Lights dim)