

Why Use *Speaking of Sex...*

Communicating frankly about sexuality is difficult. Aside from the embarrassment that can color such discussion, there is often confusion. What is sex? Different people have different answers to even this most basic question. What kinds of behavior constitute sexuality? Does handholding belong in that category? What about furtive glances across a crowded room? When does flirtation cross the line into harassment and when is it just “leading one on”? Sexual negotiations are clouded in conflicting emotions and complex power relationships. With all this fog how can anyone make their own desires clear, let alone understand the intentions of another? This confusion can lead to some humorous or heartbreaking misunderstandings. It can also lead to rape.

Speaking of Sex... asserts that each of us is responsible for our own behavior. It asks students to evaluate their attitudes regarding sex and sexuality in order to clearly articulate their own desires. Finally, *Speaking of Sex...* teaches methods of assertive communication and encourages honest dialogue as a means of preventing potentially tragic misunderstandings.

Speaking of Sex... uses theatre and discussion to do just that. Scenes and talk-back material shine a provocative light on behaviors that often go unchallenged. Students may get angry with the characters, or they may see their own experience reflected back at them. Whichever it is, they are drawn into a discussion in which they express their own views and hear those of their peers. Long-held beliefs are challenged as students listen to the often unspoken experiences of others. Whether minds are changed is hard to say, but students definitely leave with a better understanding of the issues that remain and a sense that resolving those issues is their personal responsibility.



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