**Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Homeroom**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Using “I” Statements***

A person sitting on a table

Description automatically generated**Directions:** Read the following article[[1]](#footnote-1) excerpt about “I” statements, and answer the questions that follow.

Disagreement is an inevitable part of human life. We can try to avoid it, but doing so can only make things worse. In fact, there’s a lot that we can learn from conversations where we don’t see eye to eye with others. Too often, disagreements result in defensiveness, hurt feelings, and damaged relationships. One of the best ways to avoid this trap is by replacing “you” statements with “I” statements.

To illustrate the difference in tone between these two kinds of statements, here are some examples of “you” statements rewritten as “I” statements:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Example “You” Statements** | **…Rewritten as “I” Statements** |
| “You never make time for me or text me. You are inconsiderate.” | “When you don’t reach out to me, I feel disconnected and lonely.” |
| “You never even offer to help me with anything around the house. You’re too busy doing your own thing.” | “When you don’t help out around the house, I feel overwhelmed and underappreciated.” |
| “You never hear me. You don’t understand me.” | “When you don’t listen compassionately, I feel frustrated and alone.” |

|  |
| --- |
| **Stop and Jot:** How would it feel if someone made the statements on the left toward you? How would that compare with how it’d feel to hear the statements on the right?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

When someone makes a “you” statement, they can cause the listener to feel defensive. Making a “you” statement can sound like you’re attempting to shift blame or accuse someone else of being at fault. It can also imply a lack of ownership for one’s feelings. In contrast, when a person uses “I” statements, they often come across as less argumentative and accusatory, and might even spark a hint of compassion or empathy in the listener. It’s a way of clearly stating one’s thoughts and feelings, without provoking anger and resentment.

**Practice *Using “I” Statements***

**Directions:** Reflect on something that happened this week that frustrated you. Use the following template to practice writing an “I” statement that expresses your feelings about it.

|  |
| --- |
| I feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  (be specific)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   (give details of the behavior or circumstances)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   (this is the hard one: the "why")  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

***Using “I” Statements* Mini-Practice**

**Directions:** In your neatest handwriting, complete the tables below.

1. Read the following scenario and then write a “you” statement in response.

**Scenario**: It’s Wednesday, and it’s your busiest night of homework each week. You’re stressed, but grateful that you found a quiet place to sit down and get started. Moments later, your parent walks in, and begins reminding you about all of the chores you still haven’t done today.

Rewrite the “you” statement on the left as an “I” statement on the right.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **“You” Statement** | **…Rewritten as an “I” statement** |
| "You always remind me about my chores on Wednesdays when you know I have a lot of homework.” |  |

1. Write a “you” statement that you have said in the past. Rewrite it as an “I” statement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **“You” Statement** | **…Rewritten as an “I” statement** |
|  |  |

**Stamp Your Learning for *Using “I” Statements***

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. When you are in a disagreement with someone, why might it be better to make an “I” statement instead of a “you” statement?

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1. What are two specific ways that you can apply what you learned about “I” statements to your everyday life?

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1. Excerpted and adapted from “Ways to (Respectfully) Disagree” by KidsHealth. Accessed on 11/10/2020 at <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/tips-disagree.html?ref=search> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)