

The Catalyst: The Power of the Conversation

(Year 8 - Ages 13-14)

Lesson 5 of 9

Lesson Summary

In chemistry, a Catalyst is a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change. In the donation system, the Family Conversation is that catalyst. Without it, the process stalls.

This 60-minute lesson investigates the "Consent Gap"—the statistical reality that while 80% of Australians support donation, only 40% of families agree if they haven't discussed it. Students will analyze why families say "No" (fear, uncertainty, protection) and how the simple act of stating a wish (The Catalyst) flips that dynamic, empowering the family to say "Yes." The lesson culminates in a "Scriptwriting Lab" where students design low-pressure ways to break the ice.

Learning Intentions

Students will

- Define the role of the Next of Kin in the Australian donation process (The "Soft Opt-in").
- Analyze national data to understand the correlation between "Prior Knowledge" and "Family Consent."
- Investigate the psychological barriers (The "Taboo") that prevent families from discussing organ donation.
- Develop communication strategies to initiate mature conversations about personal values.

Success Criteria

Students can

- Explain the "Catalyst Effect": How one conversation doubles the probability of donation (40% vs 80%).
- Identify three reasons why families might refuse donation if they are unsure of their loved one's wishes.
- Create a "Conversation Script" that uses a specific hook (e.g., a news story or school lesson) to introduce the topic naturally.
- Role-play a respectful, non-confrontational conversation opener.

Lesson Details

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|----------------------|--|
| Time: | 60 minutes |
| Year Level: | Year 8 (Ages 13-14) |
| Unit: | This is Lesson 5 of 9 in the series. |
| Educational Partner: | This lesson is adapted from resources provided by DonateLife |

General Capabilities

Personal and Social Capability (Social Awareness); Literacy (Interacting); Ethical Understanding; Critical and Creative Thinking.



Curriculum Mapping and Links

Australian Curriculum (v9.0)

| Subject | Strand | Content Descriptor |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Health and Physical Education | Personal, Social and Community Health | <u>AC9HP8P06</u> : ...Select and apply strategies to manage emotional responses and resolve conflict... (Focus on navigating sensitive conversations) |
| English | Literacy / Interacting | <u>AC9E8LY01</u> : Use interaction skills... to present and justify a point of view... (Focus on articulating values to family) |
| Civics and Citizenship | Knowledge and Understanding | <u>AC9HS8K04</u> : The freedoms and responsibilities of citizens... (Responsibility to inform next of kin) |

Queensland Curriculum (QCAA)

| Subject | Syllabus | Content Description |
|-------------------------------|----------|--|
| Health and Physical Education | Year 8 | Analyze factors that influence interactions and relationships (Communication). |
| English | Year 8 | Create spoken texts that adjust language for audience and purpose. |
| Civics and Citizenship | Year 8 | Participation in civil society (Family as the first unit of society). |



Resources Required

- Whiteboard/Smartboard.
- Resource: "The Consent Gap Graph" (Visual data showing the 40% vs 80% split).
- Video Hook: A clip showing a "Catalyst" reaction (e.g., Mentos in Coke) to visualize the concept of activation.
- Student Worksheet: "The Catalyst Protocol: Scripting the Talk."
- Prop: A physical "Key" to represent the conversation unlocking the process.

Skills

- Communication (Articulating complex ideas).
- Data Analysis (Interpreting social statistics).
- Emotional Intelligence (Understanding family dynamics).
- Strategic Thinking (Planning a conversation).

Teacher Preparation

- The Metaphor: "The Catalyst." Explain that a donor can be registered, and a hospital can be ready, but without the Family Consent (The Catalyst), the reaction (Lifesaving) cannot happen.
- Key Statistic: Be ready to write this on the board:
 - Unknown Wishes: 44% Consent Rate.
 - Known Wishes: 80%+ Consent Rate.
 - The Lesson: Your voice doubles the chance of saving a life.
- Sensitivity: Acknowledge that talking about death is hard. Frame it as "Talking about Life" and "Talking about Heroism."

Additional Information

This lesson addresses the "Bystander Effect" in families. Everyone assumes "someone else knows," but often no one does. By empowering Year 8s to be the "Catalyst," we turn them into active agents of change within their own homes. It validates their voice as important and mature enough to lead a family discussion.

