



Client Communication: Parasitology (Instructor's Guide)

Time: 30 minutes

Group Size: 3

Materials Needed: Computer/projector

INSTRUCTIONS:

Display a list of communication skills on the screen using the provided PowerPoint (or software of your choice) so students may reference it during the activity. A skill that can be introduced here is the “tell back” or “ask-tell-ask” skill. You may alter this activity as needed, depending on your classroom setup. For more information about how you can set up your classroom, refer to Module 1: Client Communication Activity Instructor's Guide.

Before beginning, remind students that they have only a limited amount of time for each discussion. Therefore, they should first decide what key points they would like to talk about in their short time.

1. Student A will start as the veterinary expert. Student B will be the client. Student C will be the observer.
2. The students will hold a conversation (see parasites below), focusing on the communication skills they have learned to this point in your curriculum. Student A should explain pertinent information about their assigned parasite to Student B, and should solicit concerns or questions.
3. After a short time, stop the conversations to enter the feedback phase of the activity. The observer in each group will provide feedback to the students on their communication skills.
4. The students should then rotate roles, and initiate a second conversation.
5. After a short time, stop the conversations and begin feedback. The observer in each group will provide feedback to the students on their communication skills.
6. Rotate once again, as time permits.
7. Facilitate a discussion to debrief (10 minutes)
 - a. What communication skills worked well during your conversation?
 - b. What communication skills did you find difficult to use?
 - c. In regards to non-verbal skills, what felt comfortable for you? What felt uncomfortable? How have you seen these used in veterinary practices?
 - d. In the limited amount of time you had, what did you focus on for your parasite?

FLEAS SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Jones

Patient: 3-year-old castrated male Jack Russell terrier named Georgie

Chief Complaint: Pruritus

During your physical exam you discovered fleas on your patient, and need to have a discussion with the owner.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Other disease concerns (e.g., tapeworms, Bartonella, plague)
- Flea allergy dermatitis; blood loss in young animals
- Spread within homes/apartments (via duct work); Spread via wildlife (in attics, under homes)
- Cleaning the home; Difficulty in eliminating infestation w/o use of preventives and professional pest controls
- Monthly preventive care

TICKS SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Paisley

Patient: 4-year-old castrated male Beagle named Sprint

Chief Complaint: Owner noticed tick

The owner reported finding a tick on the patient earlier today, and wanted to get more information from you.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Other disease concerns (e.g., Borrelia, Rickettsial disease, anaplasmosis)
- Tick paralysis; blood loss in young animals
- Infestations within homes/apartments; Migration via wildlife and family travels
- Treating the home; Difficulty in eliminating infestation w/o use of preventives and professional pest controls
- Regular preventive care

HOOKWORMS/ROUNDWORMS/WHIPWORMS SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Nelson

Patient: 2-month-old male Dachshund named Squidge

Chief Complaint: Puppy exam

The owner obtained a new puppy last week. Talk to the owner about hookworms, roundworms, and/or whipworms.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Zoonotic potential
- Parasite transmission
- Regular preventive care
- Persistence of larvae in the environment (hookworms)
- Longevity of viable eggs in the environment (roundworms)
- Long life cycle (whipworms)
- Can be difficult to diagnose (whipworms)

TAPEWORMS SCENARIO – DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Jennings

Patient: 1-year-old castrated male mixed-breed dog named Teddy

Chief Complaint: Wellness exam

The owner noticed something that “looked like rice” in the patient’s feces. You suspect tapeworms.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Transmission through fleas, raw meat, amphibians, etc.
- Macroscopic identification
- Treatment, prevention

HEARTWORMS SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Brooks

Patient: 3-month-old female Dalmatian named Spot

Chief Complaint: Wellness exam

The owner obtained a new dog last week, and will be moving to an area with a high prevalence of heartworm disease.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Transmission via mosquitoes
- Differences between canine and feline infection
- Risk to indoor animals
- Geographic prevalence/incidence
- Regular preventive care

TOXOPLASMOSIS SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Hill

Patient: 5-year-old spayed female DSH named Lily

The owners recently found out that they will be having a baby, and are concerned about keeping their cat during this time. Have a discussion about toxoplasmosis.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Neurologic signs
- Zoonotic potential
- Pregnancy concerns for clients
- Litterbox care

DEMODEX SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Rogers

Patient: 7-year-old male Shar Pei mix named Duke

Chief Complaint: Pruritus

The owner recently adopted the patient from the local shelter. You find Demodex on a deep skin scrape.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Individual susceptibility
- Diagnosis and treatment

SCABIES SCENARIO - DVM

Client: Mr. or Ms. Williams

Patient: 7-year-old female mixed-breed dog named Ella

Chief Complaint: Pruritus

The owner is fostering the patient for a local rescue. You suspect Scabies.



Likely Student Talking Points:

- Zoonotic potential
- Transmission between animals
- Diagnosis and treatment