



# FIRST CONTACT

*InterGalactic  
Communication Challenge*

# WELCOME

*Perhaps we've never been visited by aliens  
because they have looked upon Earth  
and decided there's no sign of intelligent life.*

*Neil deGrasse Tyson*

Are you ready to have a lot of fun? In this challenge, you will be divided into two groups. If you are doing this at home, you will need a parent or sibling to play the other part.

While a fun premise, the time to think about how we would communicate with extraterrestrial life is now, not after first contact. Enjoy the challenge!

## Resources

- [Extraterrestrial Intelligence](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Communication with extraterrestrials](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Astrolinguistics](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Alien language](#) (Wikipedia)

# PREMISE

It finally happened. Contact has been made between Earth and an intelligent extraterrestrial lifeform.

## Team Human

You are part of a team of linguists chosen to attempt to make first contact. You are reasonably sure about your safety, but the extraterrestrials are far more advanced, and you know if the exchange does not go well, it could result in an intergalactic war!

# TEAM HUMAN

You are part of a team of linguists chosen to attempt to communicate during first contact.

**As a group, decide upon three phrases you want to communicate to the alien group.**

- You cannot speak, as the aliens do not appear to have an ability to hear you.
- You cannot use written communication, as your words and numbers have no meaning to them.
- Certain gestures the aliens find threatening, and using them would lead to intergalactic war:
  - Shaking your head yes / no
  - Pointing at them
  - Putting your hands together

If you are able to get the other group to guess your messages, you have have a peaceful first contact! If not, well that's why we think about these things while we have the leisure to do so!

# TEAM ALIEN

You are part of a team of linguists chosen to attempt to communicate during first contact.

**As a group, decide upon three phrases you want to communicate to the human group.**

- You cannot speak, as the humans do not appear to have an ability to hear you.
- You cannot use written communication, as your words and numbers have no meaning to them.
- Certain gestures you find threatening, and you definitely wouldn't use them, and would consider it an act of war if the humans did them:
  - Shaking their head yes / no
  - Pointing at you
  - Putting their hands together

If you are able to get the other group to guess your messages, you have have a peaceful first contact! If not, well that's why we think about these things while we have the leisure to do so!

# GET CREATIVE

If time allows, have each group draw what they think the most likely alien visitors look like, and then compare creations. Each group should think about:

- Why did you think this was the most likely alien form?
- What type of planet would such an alien live on? What would it look like? What type of atmosphere and environment would the planet have?
- How does the alien eat, speak, hear, smell?
- How does the alien communicate?
- If such an alien were to visit Earth, what would it think of humans?
- If such an alien were to visit Earth, what could humans do to make it comfortable, and to feel welcome?



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