# Communication

As you can imagine, there are many different ways you can use the word ‘communication.’ For the purposes of this course, we’ll use Wood’s (2004) definition:

“A systemic process in which individuals interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings” (p. 9).

You might have noticed that this is a very broad definition. This broadness is intentional—our definition of communication needs to be broad enough to include diverse perspectives on communication and ways of studying it.

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**Putting the definition into practice**

Watch the following Big Bang Theory YouTube Clip, 'Please pass the butter' conversation between Amy and Sheldon.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ne9wrSZSNw

In the ‘Pass the Butter’ conversation between Amy and Sheldon, can you identify the central ideas within the definition of communication?

* Process: In what ways is their conversation ongoing an in motion?
* Systemic: In what ways is their conversation part of a larger system?
* Symbols: What symbols are mentioned and used in their conversation?
* Meaning: What meanings are happening here? How do Sheldon and Amy make meaning of what each other are saying?

As the reading and activity have explained in this topic, the definition of ‘communication’ is broad, but includes the core ideas of process, systemic, symbols, and meaning.