

Listening

ESTIMATED TIME

1 class period

PREREQUISITES

■ This lesson is foundational to Lesson 21 on *Conflict Resolution* and, later on, Lesson 26 on *Giving and Receiving Constructive Criticism*.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- *Listening Rubric*
- *Listening Techniques*
- *Sentence Completion Exercise*

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Students are constantly asked to listen in every classroom, to directions, to the teacher, to their peers. This lesson will help students to improve their ability to listen by utilizing active listening skills.

LESSON GOAL

Explore and implement strategies to become an active, empathetic, and effective listener.

Essential Question

How can I promote active listening?

Student Expectations

1. Fill out a *Sentence Completion Exercise* and read it to the class.
2. Listen to a speaker with silence and nonverbal techniques.
3. Respond to a speaker by parroting and paraphrasing.
4. Empathize with speaker and validate their feelings.
5. On your own, watch for one interaction at site and apply listening techniques.
6. Write a reflection about listening, including thoughts and observations on your recent interaction.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of listening in and out of school.
2. Implement appropriate listening techniques.

RATIONALE

Adolescents are able to think critically, but they are also at an egocentric stage in their lives. Adolescents often mistake listening as just hearing what someone says. However, this lesson will help to redefine and improve listening abilities. Students will acquire many new skills at an internship site, including the ability to listen, if given proper instruction and support. The ability to listen is one of the many areas that will benefit them at the work site, as well as many other areas of their lives. This lesson will help students to understand and implement the many techniques needed to listen empathetically, actively, and effectively.



Listening Rubric



Sentence Completion Exercise

PROCEDURES: WHAT TO DO

1. **WHOLE GROUP** Hand out *Listening Rubric* to introduce the lesson and explain how students will be evaluated. Then discuss the following.
 - a. Listening is one of the most important skills you can have at a job site and in school. How can your ability to listen to others have a major impact on your effectiveness as an intern, and on your relationships with coworkers?
 - b. How is *listening* like and not like *hearing*?
 - c. What is listening?
 - d. What is an example of a time you felt that you listened well? What made you listen carefully?
 - e. What is an example of a time you felt that someone really listened to you? How did you feel?
 - f. Why do we listen? (to get information, to understand, to learn, for enjoyment)
 - g. Explain that we listen all the time, but becoming “good at it” takes reflection and practice! According to Mindtools.com, “depending on the study being quoted, we remember a dismal 25-50% of what we hear. That means that when you talk to your boss, colleagues, customers or friends for 10 minutes, they only really hear 2½-5 minutes of the conversation.”
 - h. What if we look at it from the other angle? Mindtools.com says “When you are receiving directions or being presented with information, you aren’t hearing the whole message either. You hope the important parts are captured in your 25-50%, but what if they’re not?” Does anyone have any examples to support or refute these statistics?
 - i. The ability to listen effectively and completely is a skill that we can all benefit from improving. By becoming a better listener, you will improve your job performance and relationship with others. You will also be better able to avoid conflict and misunderstandings — all necessary for internship success.

ASSESSMENT

Discussion Contribute to discussion to develop an understanding of how listening is more than just hearing.

2. **WHOLE GROUP** Have students practice the most basic form of listening with each other with this activity.
 - a. Hand out the *Sentence Completion Exercise* activity. Remind students to be detailed and prepared to read to the group what they have written, and give them time to work.
 - b. When ready, have the students sit in a circle or designate an order of sharing. Explain that we are not going to comment on each other’s sentence completions. We are just going to listen. Begin the activity by reading your own first sentence and continue to go around the room as long as appropriate for the students.
 - c. Discuss what kind of listening just occurred and how it felt to not be interrupted or responded to. If there was laughter, discuss that



Listening Techniques



Student Pages

as well.

- d. Letting others know you are listening can be something as simple as a nod of the head or a simple “uh huh.” Nodding your head is an example of using body language to acknowledge that you are listening. It also functions as a reminder to pay attention and not let your mind wander. Did anyone use body language during that exercise? What kind of body language shows you are listening?

ASSESSMENT

Sentence Completion Participate in activity by completing sentences and listening silently to others.

3. **WHOLE GROUP** Hand out *Listening Techniques* and review and discuss it with students. Then discuss the following questions.
 - a. Does this list of techniques surprise anyone? Has anyone ever employed any of these techniques? How did they work out for you?
 - b. What is new to people? What needs to be defined?
 - c. According to Mindtools.com, “The way to become a better listener is to practice ‘active listening.’ This is where you make a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying but, more importantly, to try and understand the total message being sent.”
 - d. How can you pay attention to both verbal and nonverbal messages?
 - e. How can you encourage someone to keep talking? (eye contact, show interest, ask questions)
 - f. How do you discourage someone politely from talking?
 - g. How can you show that you understood the speaker? (ask a question, parroting, paraphrasing)
 - h. What is the difference between parroting and paraphrasing? (Parroting is repeating back to the person what you just heard, like a parrot might do, or how you might quote someone in a paper or during a conversation by signaling quotation marks in the air. Paraphrasing is similar to parroting, but instead of just repeating, you summarize and reword what you heard back for the speaker.)
 - i. Notice that both of these forms of listening are actually talking! That is why people refer to this as active listening.

4. **SMALL GROUP** Have students pair up and use the *Sentence Completion Exercise* to say something to each other and practice parroting and paraphrasing. Give these tips.
 - a. Let the person parrot back to you what they heard.
 - b. Switch and repeat.
 - c. Do the same with paraphrasing.
 - d. A helpful way to begin both types of active listening are “I think I heard you say...is that correct?” or “So you are saying...”
 - e. Practice as much as you need to so that the teacher can listen to you when you are ready to perform.

ASSESSMENT

Parroting and Paraphrasing Participate in activity by parroting and paraphrasing the speaker's words.

- 5. INDIVIDUAL** Have each student use the *Listening Techniques* to create a set



ASSIGNMENT 1

of 10 or more listening tips that they can use to become a more effective, empathetic, and active listener. Then have students share their tips with the class and create a class tips list. Have students use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their tips for evaluation, but let the students know this should be kept out for revision and updating.

ASSESSMENT

Listening Tips Use discussion and learning to create a personalized guide on how to listen actively and empathetically to others.

- 6. WHOLE GROUP** Explain that good listening skills require a high level of self-awareness. You have to know which techniques and situations you struggle with so that you can set yourself up for success. It takes a lot of practice to be a good listener, but when you do, you will impress mentors and co-workers. Discuss the following questions.
- Are you a good listener?
 - What are some bad habits some listeners have?
 - How do you keep your mind from wandering when others are speaking? (ask questions, turn off the TV, or computer).
 - Explain that being an *empathetic* listener is a more advanced level. To take listening to the next level, you can be an empathic listener. What is *empathy*? *Empathy* is the capacity to recognize or understand another's state of mind or emotions. It is often characterized as the ability to "put oneself into another's shoes," or to in some way experience the outlook or emotions of another person even if you have never had the same experience. Share examples in which you were empathetic or someone was to you.
 - What are some techniques for empathetic listening? (mirror facial expressions and body language, provide comforting words).
- 7. PAIRS** Have students take turns sharing and practicing empathetic listening with each other by either using the *Sentence Completion Exercise* or something new they would like to say. To listen empathetically, they should mirror facial expressions and body language, lean in, and when the speaker is finished, say comforting things like, "Sounds as if you are feeling _____ because _____" or "How are you feeling about that?"

ASSESSMENT

Empathize Participate in activity by empathizing with and inquiring about the feelings behind the speaker's words.

REFLECTION

Have students write a reflection on the following prompt. Have them use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their reflections.



ASSIGNMENT 2

Record, describe, and explain at least one recent incident (after this lesson) in which you were called upon to listen to someone. What techniques did you use? Why is important to actively and empathetically listen to others in school, at a work site and in life?

ASSESSMENT

Reflection Demonstrate understanding of listening at an internship site.

ASSESSMENT

Use the *Listening Rubric* to evaluate student performance. Have students complete the rubric as a self-evaluation and then discuss the results.

In addition to the rubric, each submission should be evaluated individually for appropriateness for submission to the ePortfolio before posting.

INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Use Announcements to remind students of assignments and due dates.
- Announcements should be coordinated with Assignments and Schedule.

SCHEDULE

- Add Assignments to the Schedule.

EVALUATE/REVIEW

- Student Assignments
- Student Portfolio
- Add a test or quiz if desired.

LESSONS

- Review Lessons.
- Add Resources if desired.
- Change a Lesson if desired.
- Schedule a Lesson.
- Unschedule a Lesson.

COMMUNICATE IF DESIRED

- Blogger
- Chat Room
- Drop box
- Mailtool
- Roster

Ohio Academic Content Standards

English Language Arts Grade 10

Communication Oral and Visual

Listening and Viewing

1. Apply active listening strategies (e.g., monitoring message for clarity, selecting and organizing essential information, noting cues such as changes in pace) in a variety of settings.
2. Interpret types of arguments used by the speaker such as authority and appeals to audience.
3. Evaluate the credibility of the speaker (e.g., hidden agendas, slanted or biased material) and recognize fallacies of reasoning used in presentations and media messages.
4. Identify how language choice and delivery styles (e.g., repetition, appeal to emotion, eye contact) contribute to meaning.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students on IEPs might need additional practice with someone they trust, or a detailed script to run through.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Gifted students might decide that they would like to educate others on being active listeners and function as student teachers, informational poster creators, workshop leaders, or peer mediators. Peer mediation would require additional research and training, but could be an excellent extension of this lesson and support student focused and organized school improvement.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITE SOURCES

Preview sites for appropriateness before recommending them to students. If links are broken, search for similar information.

- Suicide Prevention Service Hotline Training. Although most communication will not be about suicidal feelings, the SPS hotline training materials showcase excellent listening skills because the caller's life might be at stake. Some of this information can be found at: <http://www.callthehotline.com/>
- Access this interesting site for step by step self guided practice for listening skills. <http://www.studygs.net/listening.htm>
- Access this site Manktelow, James. "Active Listening." Mind Tools, Ltd. Aug. 2003. 12 June 2008 <<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm>> for more information and statistics about listening.