

26. Listening

Stories

1. The Miller, his Son and the Donkey - *don't listen to everyone*
2. Harry and the Haystack - *listening to parents*
3. Icarus and Daedalus - *listen to your father's warnings*
4. Silly Jack - *think before you act*
5. The Silent Couple - *don't be stubborn*
6. The Rice Field - *trust your elders*

Visual Aids

1. Harry and the Haystack - obey to parents
2. Icarus and Daedalus - listen to your father's warnings
3. Silly Jack - think before you act
4. The Rice Field

Worksheets

1. Why it is Important to Listen
2. When People Don't Listen
3. Good and Bad Listeners
4. Listen to Your Conscience
5. Listen and Answer
6. How To Be A Good Listener

Teaching Notes

1. Teaching guide
2. Good and bad listeners
3. Listening games
4. Ten ways to help your pupils to listen
5. Quotes
6. Listening Activities
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8. Why listen?
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10. Ten listening building skills you can practise
11. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People
12. Take A Listening Walk and Learn To Listen

The Miller, his Son and the Donkey

Don't listen to everyone

A miller and his son were driving their donkey to a neighboring fair to sell him. They had not gone far when they met with a troop of women collected round a well, talking and laughing.

"Look there," cried one of them, "did you ever see such fellows, to be trudging along the road on foot when they might ride?"

The old man hearing this, quickly made his son mount the donkey, and continued to walk along merrily by his side. Presently they came up to a group of old men in earnest debate.

"There," said one of them, "it proves what I was a-saying. What respect is shown to old age in these days? Do you see that idle lad riding while his old father has to walk? Get down, you young scapegrace, and let the old man rest his weary limbs."

Upon this the old man made his son dismount, and got up himself. In this manner they had not proceeded far when they met a company of women and children:

"Why, you lazy old fellow," cried several tongues at once, "how can you ride upon the beast, while that poor little lad there can hardly keep pace by the side of you?"

The good-natured Miller immediately took up his son behind him. They had now almost reached the town.

"Pray, honest friend," said a citizen, "is that donkey your own?"

"Yes," replied the old man.

"O, one would not have thought so," said the other, "by the way you load him. Why, you two fellows are better able to carry the poor beast than he you."

"Anything to please you," said the old man; "we can but try."

So, alighting with his son, they tied the legs of the donkey together and with the help of a pole endeavored to carry him on their shoulders over a bridge near the entrance to the town. This entertaining sight brought the people in crowds to laugh at it, till the donkey, not liking the noise nor the strange handling that he was subject to, broke the cords that bound him and, tumbling off the pole, fell into the river. Upon this, the old man, vexed and ashamed, made the best of his way home again, convinced that by endeavoring to please everybody he had pleased nobody, and lost his donkey in the bargain.

Harry and the Haystack

'Bye, Mum,' Harry called as he hurried out of the house after lunch. 'I'm going to play ball with John over in the big field.'

'Have a good time,' said his mother, 'and be back before dark.'

'Right!' answered Harry, and closed the door. A moment later his mother opened it.

'Don't forget what Father said about the haystack!' she called. 'It's dangerous, and might fall down any minute, so don't play on it.'

'All right, Mum, don't worry. Cheers!'

And Harry was off again. But when he and John had played ball long enough, they began to look for something else to do. They played 'tag', but not for long. 'Tag' is no fun when there are only two to play. Next John and Harry went into the field beyond the barn. Here, by shouting towards the barn, they could hear their voices echo. And this passed the time for a while, but soon they were bored. The boys began looking at the big haystack.

Like most 'haystacks' it was made up of straw left over from the harvest. Straw is used as bedding for the cows in the winter. On modern farms the straw is put into bales before it is stacked. When this story took place, however, haystacks were just huge heaps of straw. In windy weather they had to be held down by ropes and big sheets of waterproof canvas. The haystack Harry and John were looking at was just dry straw, with no ropes and no canvas. Instead, the farm workers had given it a roof like a thatched cottage.

'It looks like a big, friendly monster,' said John.

'No,' said Harry. 'It looks like a little cottage.' The boys moved closer to it.

'Forget what it looks like: said John. 'Let's climb it! Let's climb the haystack. We could slide off on to the pile of hay at the bottom. Should be fun.'

'Yes, let's!' said Harry. But then he remembered. There was a pause. Harry looked worried. 'Dad said the big stack is dangerous,' Harry said. 'In fact, he said it might fall down,' he added. 'It was made about a year ago and the dry straw under the roof may move if we climb on top.'

'What rot!' said John. 'It's a big, friendly monster. How could it possibly be dangerous? And what harm would it do if it did fall down? Straw is very light. It's not going to break bones or anything.'

'Well, OK,' said Harry, not quite sure. 'Let's play on it and see what happens.'

So they ran to the haystack and began to play. There was a ladder standing against one side of it, so they climbed up to the ridge of the stack, then slid over the side until they fell gently down to the pile of hay at the bottom. It was great fun. Up they climbed and down they slid, over and over again. Nothing happened. The haystack didn't fall.

'There you are!' said John, as they rested. 'I told you. There isn't any danger at all.'

'You're right,' said Harry. 'But I wonder what Dad meant when he said it was dangerous.'

'Oh, nothing,' said John. 'Old folks just like to make a fuss.'

'I'm feeling a bit tired,' said Harry. 'How about lying down for a while on the hay?'

'You can. I don't want to,' said John. 'I'll wander round a bit while you take a nap.'

Harry lay down in the straw and began to snooze. The sun was warm. How comfortable it was! He stretched out this way and that, and then, before he knew it, he was asleep. Ten minutes later a big section of the haystack began to move. Disturbed by the boys' sliding down, it slowly shifted forward. Inch by inch, inch by inch. Then it fell. There was no noise, no sound of breaking or of falling. It just glided down like an avalanche right on top of Harry!

He woke up with a start. What had happened to the sun? It was pitch dark. Harry felt the pressure of the straw. He began to realize what had happened and he became terribly frightened. He tried to say, 'Straw is heavy; but when he opened his mouth it was soon filled with dust. Harry was panicking now. He couldn't breathe. He tried to cry out, but even more straw and straw dust filled his mouth, his nose, his eyes. Frantic with fright, he tried to move, but he couldn't. There was an awful feeling in the pit of his stomach. He was imprisoned. He imagined the headline in tomorrow's newspaper: **BOY BURIED ALIVE IN HAYSTACK!**

Fortunately John was not far away. Coming back to see if Harry was awake, he saw what had happened, and he became frantic with fright too!

'Help! Help!' he cried. 'The haystack's fallen on Harry. Quick! Help!'

Then he rushed to the great heap of straw, and began throwing it aside as fast as he could. But even as he worked, more straw fell and it seemed as though his task was hopeless.

Hearing John's cries, two farm workers ran over to see what was the matter.

'Hurry! Hurry!' cried John. 'Harry's buried under there. He'll suffocate if we don't get him out soon.' How they worked, throwing the straw aside!

Pretty soon they found Harry and dragged him out. He was unconscious but they carried him to the house and brought him round.

'Didn't I say those boys were not to play on the haystack?' demanded Father, rushing in from his work to find out what had happened.

'Sssh!' said Mother. 'He's had a bad shock, but he's getting over it. Don't say anything more just now. I'm sure he must have learned his lesson.'

He had. Indeed, Harry was so thankful that his life had been spared that he made up his mind never to disobey again. Even John had to agree that maybe the 'old folks' knew best after all.

Icarus and Daedalus

Daedalus was the most skillful builder and inventor of his day in ancient Greece. He built magnificent palaces and gardens, and created wonderful works of art throughout the land. His statues were so beautifully crafted they were taken for living beings, and it believed they could see and walk about. People said someone as cunning as Daedalus must have learned the secrets of his craft from the gods themselves.

Now across the sea, on the island of Crete, lived a king named Minos. King Minos had a terrible monster that was half bull and half man called the Minotaur, and he needed someplace to keep it. When he heard of Daedalus's cleverness, he invited him to come to his country and build a prison to hold the beast. So Daedalus and his young son, Icarus, sailed to Crete, and there Daedalus built the famous Labyrinth, a maze of winding passages so tangled and twisted that whoever went in could never find the way out. And they put the Minotaur.

When the Labyrinth was finished, Daedalus wanted to sail back Greece with his son, but Minos had made up his mind to keep them in Crete. He wanted Daedalus to stay and invent more wonderful devices for him, so he locked them both in a high tower beside the sea. The king knew Daedalus was clever enough to escape from the tower, so he also ordered that every ship be searched for stowaways before sailing from Crete.

Other men may have given up, but not Daedalus. From his high tower he watched the seagulls drifting on the ocean breezes. "Minos may control the land and the sea," he said, "but he does not rule the air. We'll go that way."

So he summoned all the secrets of his craft, and he set to work. Little by little, he gathered a great pile of feathers of all sizes. He fastened them together with thread, and molded them with wax and at last he had two great wings like those of the seagulls. He tied them to his shoulders, and after one or two clumsy efforts, he found that by waving his arms he could rise into the air. He held himself aloft, wavering this way and that with the wind, until he taught himself how to glide and soar on the currents as gracefully as any gull.

Next he built a second pair of wings for Icarus. He taught the boy how to move the feathers and rise a few feet into the air and then let him fly back and forth across the room. Then he taught him how to ride the air currents, climbing in circles, and hang in winds. They practiced together until Icarus was ready.

Finally the day came when the winds were just right. Father son strapped on their wings and prepared to fly home.

"Remember all I've told you," Daedalus said. "Above all, remember you must not fly too high or too low. If you fly too low the ocean sprays will clog your wings and make them too heavy. If you fly too high, the heat of the sun will melt the wax, and your wings will fall apart. Stay close to me, and you'll be fine."

Up they rose, the boy after his father, and the hateful ground of Crete sank far beneath them. As they flew the plowman stopped work to gaze, and the shepherd leaned on his staff to watch them

and people came running out of their houses to catch a glimpse the two figures high above the treetops. Surely they were gods Apollo, perhaps, with Cupid after him.

At first the flight seemed terrible to both Daedalus and Icarus. The wide, endless sky dazed them, and even the quickest glance down made their brains reel. But gradually they grew used to riding among the clouds, and they lost their fear. Icarus felt the wind fill his wings and lift him higher and higher, and began to sense a freedom he had never known before. He looked down with great excitement at all the islands they passed, and their people, and at the broad blue sea spread out beneath him, dotted with the white sails of ships. He soared higher and higher, forgetting his father's warning. He forgot everything in the world but joy.

"Come back!" Daedalus called frantically. "You're flying too ! Remember the sun! Come down! Come down!"

But Icarus thought of nothing but his own excitement and glory. He longed to fly as close as he could to the heavens. Nearer nearer he came to the sun, and slowly his wings began to soften. One by one the feathers began to fall and scatter in the air, and suddenly the wax melted all at once. Icarus felt himself falling. He fluttered his arms as fast as he could, but no feathers remained to hold the air. He cried out for his father, but it was too late - with a scream he fell from his lofty height and plunged into the sea, disappearing beneath the waves.

Daedalus circled over the water again and again, but he saw nothing but feathers floating on the waves, and he knew his son was gone. At last the body came to the surface, and he managed to pluck it from the sea. With a heavy burden and broken heart Daedalus slowly flew away. When he reached land, he buried his son and built a temple to the gods. Then he hung up his wings, and never flew again.

Silly Jack

On Monday morning, Jack's mother sent him off to work for the carpenter. Jack worked hard, and at the end of the day the carpenter gave him a shiny new penny. Jack carried the penny home, tossing it in the air as he went. But as he crossed the little bridge over the narrow brook, he dropped the penny and lost it in the water below.

When he told her, Jack's mother shook her head. 'You silly boy,' she sighed, 'you should have put the penny in your pocket. You must remember that tomorrow.'

On Tuesday morning, Jack's mother sent him off to work for the farmer. Jack worked very hard, and at the end of the day the farmer gave him a jug of milk. Jack remembered his mother's words, and carefully slipped the jug of milk into his big coat pocket. But as he walked home, the milk splashed and splooshed and spilled out of the jug and all over Jack's fine coat.

When he told her, Jack's mother shook her head. 'You silly boy,' she sighed, 'you should have carried the jug on your head. You must remember that tomorrow.'

On Wednesday morning, Jack's mother sent him off to work for the baker. Jack worked very hard, and at the end of the day, the baker gave him a beautiful black cat. Jack remembered his mother's words, and carefully sat the cat on his head. But on the way home, the cat was frightened, leaped from Jack's head into a nearby tree, and refused to come down.

When he told her, Jack's mother shook her head. 'You silly boy,' she sighed, 'you should have tied a string around the cat's collar and pulled it home behind you. You must remember that tomorrow.'

On Thursday morning, Jack's mother sent him off to work for the butcher. Jack worked very hard, and at the end of the day, the butcher gave him a huge leg of lamb. Jack remembered his mother's words, tied a string around the meat, and pulled it home behind him. But by the time he got home, the meat was covered with dirt, and good for nothing but to be thrown away.

When he told her, Jack's mother shook her head. 'You silly, silly boy,' she sighed. 'Don't you know you should have carried it home on your shoulder? Promise me you will remember that tomorrow.'

Jack promised, and on Friday morning, his mother sent him off to work for the man who ran the stables. Jack worked very hard, and at the end of the day, the man gave him a donkey! Jack looked at the donkey. Jack remembered his promise. Then he swallowed hard, picked that donkey up, and hoisted it onto his shoulders. On the way home, Jack passed by the house of a rich man—a rich man whose beautiful daughter had never laughed in all her life. But when she saw poor, silly Jack giving that donkey a ride, she giggled, she chuckled, then she burst out laughing, right there and then. The rich man was delighted, and gave Jack his daughter's hand in marriage, and a huge fortune besides.

When he told her, Jack's mother didn't shake her head. No, she hugged him and she kissed him and she shouted, 'Hooray!' And she never ever called him 'silly' again.

The Silent Couple

There was once a young man who was said to be the most pigheaded fellow in town, and a young woman who was said to be the most mule-headed maiden, and of course they somehow managed to fall in love and be married. After the wedding ceremony, they had a grand feast at their new house, which lasted all day.

Finally all the friends and relatives could eat no more, and one by one they went home. The bride and groom collapsed from exhaustion, and were just getting ready to take off their shoes and relax, when the husband noticed that the last guest to leave had failed to close the door.

"My dear," he said, "would you mind getting up and shutting the door? There's a draft coming in."

"Why should I shut it?" yawned the wife. "I've been on my feet all day, and I just sat down. You shut it. "

"So that's the way it's going to be!" snapped the husband. "Just as soon as you get the ring on your finger, you turn into a lazy good-for-nothing! "

"How dare you!" shouted the bride. "We haven't even been married a day, and already you're calling me names and ordering me around! I should have known this is the kind of husband you'd turn out to be!"

"Nag, nag, nag," grumbled the husband. "Must I listen to your complaining forever?"

"And must I always listen to your carping and whining?" asked the wife.

They sat glaring at each other for a full five minutes. Then an idea popped into the bride's head.

"My dear," she said, "neither of us wants to shut the door, and both of us are tired of hearing the other's voice. So I propose a contest. The one who speaks first must get up and close the door."

"It's the best idea I've heard all day," replied the husband. "Let us begin now." !

So they made themselves comfortable, each on a chair, and sat face-to-face without saying a word.

They had been that way for about two hours when a couple of thieves with a cart passed by and saw the open door. They crept into the house, which seemed perfectly deserted, and began to steal everything they could lay their hands on. They took tables and chairs, pulled paintings off the walls, even rolled up carpets. But the newlyweds neither spoke nor moved.

"I can't believe this," thought the husband. "They'll take everything we own, and she won't make a sound."

"Why doesn't he call for help?" the wife asked herself. "Is he just going to sit there while they steal whatever they want?"

Eventually the thieves noticed the silent, motionless couple and, mistaking them for wax figures, stripped them of their jewelry, watches, and wallets. But neither husband nor wife uttered a sound.

The robbers hurried away with their loot, and the newlyweds sat through the night. At dawn a policeman walked by and, noticing the open door, stuck in his head to ask if everything was all right. But, of course, he couldn't get an answer out of the silent couple.

"Now, see here!" he yelled, "I'm an officer of the law! Who are you? Is this your house? What happened to all your furniture?" And still getting no response, he raised his hands to box the man's ears.

"Don't you dare!" cried the wife, jumping to her feet. "That's my new husband, and if you lay a finger on him, you'll have to answer to me!"

"I won!" yelled the husband, clapping his hands. "Now go and close the door. "

The Rice Field

A long, long time ago, in a faraway land called Japan, there was a small village. On one side of the village was the great ocean, and on the other side were high mountains.

A few of the people in the village made their living by fishing, but most of the men, women, and children worked in the rice fields that were high on top of one of the mountains. Every morning, the villagers climbed the mountain path to work. Every evening, they trekked down the mountain to sleep in their huts in the village.

Only a grandmother and her granddaughter-whose name was Hanako, lived on top of the mountain, where it was their job to keep the fires lit at night to scare off the wild animals who might eat the rice.

Early one morning, during the season when the rice fields turned golden and dry, ready for the harvest, Grandmother tended to the fires for one last time. Down below, the villagers began doing their morning chores before climbing the mountain to begin the day's work.

As she did every day after stirring the morning fire, Grandmother went to the mountain's edge to watch the sun rise. But, on this day, she did not see the sun coming up. Instead, what she saw brought her terrible fear.

As quickly as she could, she ran to the hut where her granddaughter was sleeping. "Hanako, "she called, "get up. Get up."

"Oh, Grandmother," said Hanako, "I am tired, please let me sleep."

"No, Hanako. Get up right now, and do as I say. Go get a burning stick from the fire."

Hanako knew that she must do as she was told, for she had; never heard her grandmother so excited. Without knowing why, Hanako went to get a burning stick from the fire, and soon she joined her grandmother who was standing near the fields.

Grandmother cried out a command, "Burn the rice fields." "But, Grandmother," Hanako cried, "we cannot burn the rice fields. This is our village's food. Without this rice, we will all starve."

"Do as I say," commanded her grandmother.

With tears streaming down her face, Hanako did as she was told. She touched her burning stick to the fields and set the precious rice on fire. Soon, huge clouds of black smoke were rising up from the rice fields on the top of the mountain.

Down below, the villagers saw the smoke, and in moments, every man, woman, and child in the village came running up the mountain.

When they reached the top, they could all see the flames destroying their precious rice. Their whole crop was ruined.

"What happened here?" they all cried out. "How did this horrible fire begin?"

"I set the fire," Grandmother told all the villagers.

"What? You set the fire? You stupid old woman! You have ruined our rice crop. We will all starve. How could you do such a stupid thing?"

"Look," said the grandmother, as she pointed out toward the sea. "Look at that fierce storm that is coming toward the shore. In less than an hour, gigantic waves will hit our little village, and everything will be destroyed."

The people stood quietly watching, and before long, they saw that Grandmother was absolutely right. The great storm brought twenty-five-foot-high waves onto the shore, and every hut in the little village was crushed under tons of water.

The villagers looked down at their little village, which lay in ruins, and they looked around at their rice fields that were burned down, and one man cried out, "We have nothing left. Everything is gone. We are ruined."

And every villager moaned and wept. But one woman said, "All is not lost. We have our lives. Everyone has lived through the storm."

And the village elder said, "That is right, my children, we have the gift of life. So, this afternoon, we will start all over again. We will build new huts, and we will plant new fields.

"But, first, we must thank Grandmother. Far from being a stupid old woman, as some of us have called her, she is really very wise and brave. Grandmother saved all our lives. For, if we had not seen the clouds of smoke from the fires she set in the fields, we would not have run up the mountain so quickly, and we would have been trapped by the waters of the storm."

And for the rest of her life, Grandmother was honored by the villagers for her wisdom and her courage.

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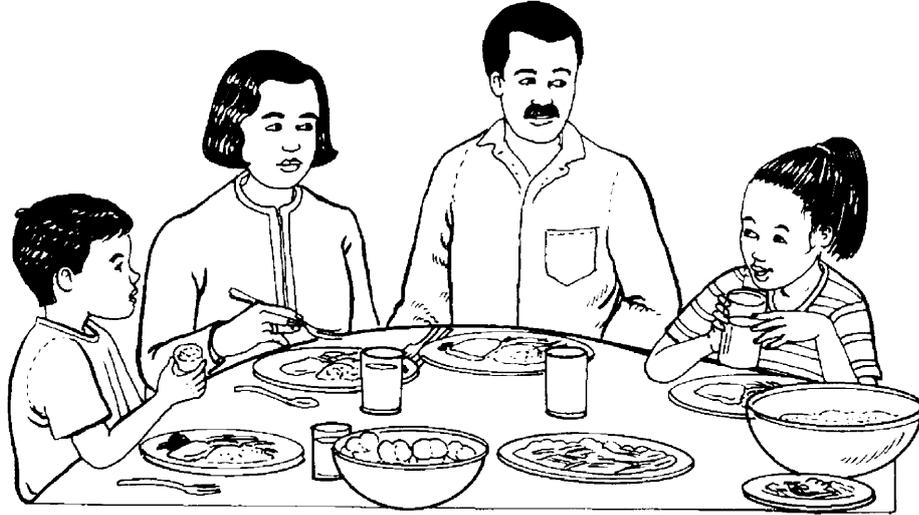
Part 26

Listening



to pay attention to what someone is saying

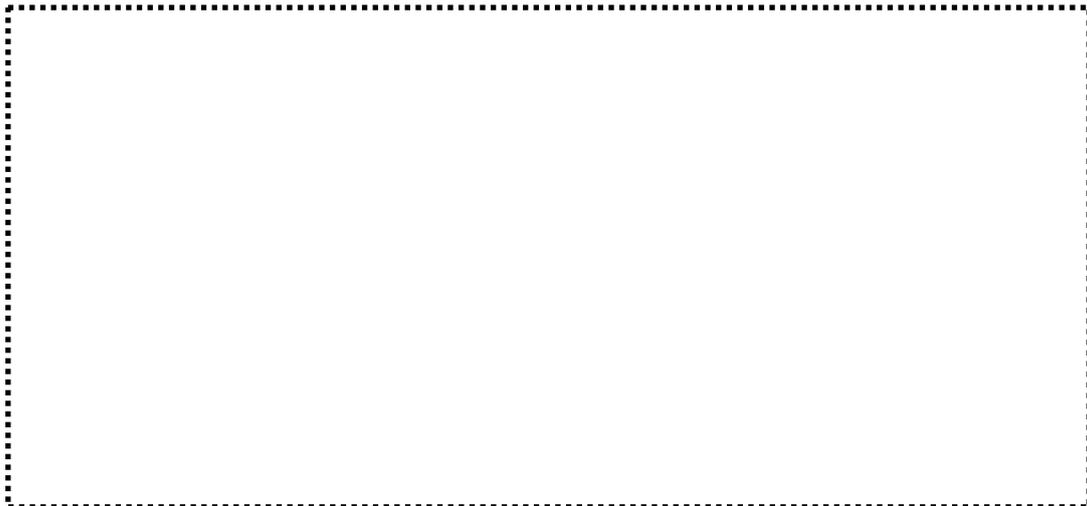
Why it is Important to Listen



Can you think of three reasons why it is important to listen to others?

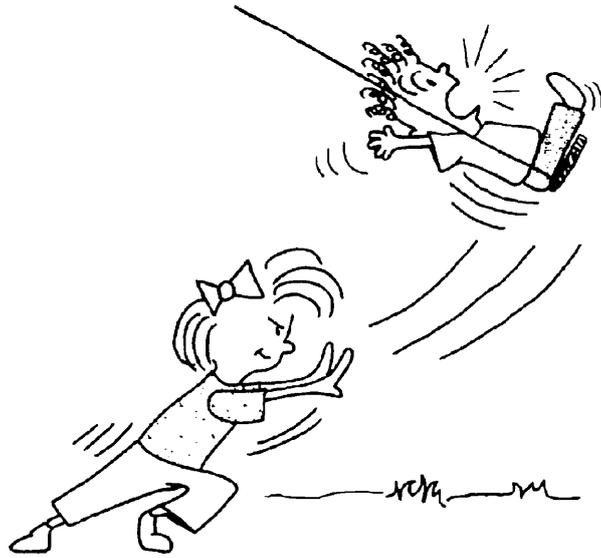
- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Draw a picture and write about a situation that shows good listening at home.



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.....

When People Don't Listen



Discussion Questions

- 1) Has anybody ever got mad at you because you weren't listening to them? What happened?
- 2) How does it feel when someone won't listen to your ideas or opinions?
- 3) What are some reasons why people don't listen?
- 4) What's wrong with not listening when someone is talking to you?
- 5) Have you ever had a bad misunderstanding because you didn't listen carefully - or because somebody didn't listen carefully to you?

*Think of a time when somebody didn't listen and it made a difference.
Explain what happened and illustrate the story*

Some Answers

Why it is important to listen

- Listening is the basis of conflict resolution,
"The best way to diffuse an argument is to listen first, second, and last." -- Anabel Jensen
- It is the core of trust,
- It is very important for building good relationships. It fosters more meaningful, more helpful, closer friendships. Listening is a core competency for communication and for relationships
- It is central to the development of healthy self-concept.
- It helps to understand and know others.
- It develops respect for others
- When you are getting directions to go somewhere
- When listening to someone's problem
- It shows you care and that you understood the other person. Thus, people will enjoy talking to you and will open up more.

When people don't listen

- It causes misunderstanding
- It upsets friends
- It can cause accidents
- It creates bad feelings

Listen to Your Conscience



Our conscience is like a little in our head that tells us what is

and When we listen to it and do what is right, we feel content

When we ignore it and do something wrong, we bad inside. The more we listen to

our conscience the it becomes. When parents teach children right and wrong and

children, their conscience grows stronger. When children don't listen to their

parents, the conscience becomes and it is harder to do good

Listening to parents is very important for children to develop a strong

content	deeds	voice	weaker	listen
stronger	conscience	feel	wrong	right

Listen and Answer



Which word doesn't belong?

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

5.....

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7.....

8.....

9.....

10.....

Write the mystery word.

11.....

12.....

13.....

14.....

15.....

Write the correct word so that the sentence makes sense.

16.....

17.....

18.....

19.....

20.....

Listen and Answer



Write the word that doesn't fit

1. dog, cat, *snake*, mouse
2. leg, arm, eye, *shoe*
3. girl, boy, chicken, *rock*
4. *curtains*, door, window, roof
5. turtle, snake, lizard, *rabbit*
6. Spring, Summer, Autumn, *Wednesday*, Winter
7. cherry, apple, *cucumber*, grape, orange
8. hat, boots, coat, scarf, *swimsuit*
9. Heart, lungs, *feet*, kidneys, brain
10. skyscraper, *sheep*, traffic, streets, people

Write the mystery word

11. I'm usually rectangular. I can be thick or thin. Children look at my pictures and read my words. What am I? *a book*
12. I fly in the sky, but I do not carry people. I hunt at night. When I see something to eat I swoop down and grab it. What am I? *an owl*.
13. I am yellow and long. I grow in bunches in South America. Many people enjoy eating me. What am I? *a banana*
14. People are very afraid of me. My strong and swirling winds destroy everything in my path. I happen mostly in Midwestern America. What am I? *a tornado*
15. I come in dark clouds, such as blue, brown and grey. People, especially adults, wear me outdoors. I protect their eyes from the sunlight. What am I? *sunglasses*

Write the correct word so that the sentence makes sense.

16. The volcano spewed smoke, *beds* and ashes. (lava)
17. The man went into the restaurant and ordered *jewelry* (a meal)
18. The robbers broke into the store to steal *dust*. (cash)
19. Sam built a greenhouse so that he could raise *dolphins*. (tomatoes)
20. Ben and I will try to meet you at the bottom of the *ocean*. (street)

How To Be A Good Listener

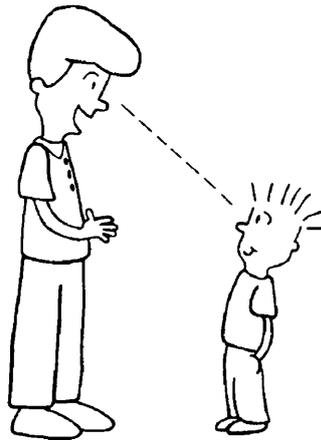
1. LOOK at the person who is talking.
2. LISTEN, and don't interrupt.
3. ASK questions to find out more.
4. NOD, or say something to show you understand.
5. REPEAT what you heard in your own words.

**“We were given two ears but only one mouth.
This is because God knew that listening was twice as hard as talking.”**

Learn these five points. Draw a picture to illustrate it, cut it out and laminate it.
Put it on a wall a home and read it every day until you know it off by heart.
If you are having problems listening, read it through again.

How To Be Good Listener

1. LOOK at the person who is talking.
2. LISTEN, and don't interrupt.
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1. Teaching Guide

Listening to others for grades K-5

EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

Children learn:

- How poor listening habits can cause serious trouble between people.
- Why it is so important to be a good listener.
- How to be a good listener.

HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER

1. LOOK at the person who is talking.
2. LISTEN, and don't interrupt.
3. ASK questions to find out more.
4. NOD, or say something to show you understand.
5. REPEAT what you heard in your own words.

THE VIDEO STORY

Groark wins his friends back by learning to listen.

Groark and his friends, Essie and Nubbs, are working on a dance routine for a talent show. His failure to listen to their ideas and concerns upsets his friends, causes misunderstandings, and eventually results in Essie being injured. When Groark is told to go away, he turns to a group of real children who help him understand how his poor listening habits caused such trouble and how he can become a better listener. Groark asks his friends for a second chance, and his greatly improved listening skills make everybody happy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you are using the video, ask the first two questions before viewing.

1. Has anybody ever gotten mad at you because you weren't listening to them? What happened?
2. How does it feel when someone won't listen to your ideas or opinions?
3. Why do you think Essie and Nubbs were upset with Groark?
4. Why wasn't Groark listening?
5. What are some reasons why people don't listen?
6. What's wrong with not listening when someone is talking to you?
7. How can not listening create hard feelings between friends?
8. Is there a difference between hearing and listening? What is the difference?
9. Have you ever had a bad misunderstanding because you didn't listen carefully - or because somebody didn't listen carefully to you?
10. How can listening carefully help friendships?
11. When somebody is not listening to you, what can you do to get them to listen?
12. What did you learn from this video?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Model listening skills by having one student describe a favorite activity and tell why he or she likes it. After two or three minutes, restate what was said by saying, "I heard you say that..." Have the students tell you ways that you showed you were a good listener.

2. Have a directed art lesson. Give each student a piece of paper and pencil, crayons or markers. Have students draw as you give each instruction. Describe, step-by-step, how to draw a simple animal, building, or scene. Let students share their drawings.

Older students can try the activity in pairs. One partner describes the picture while the other listens and draws it. They then switch and the first partner draws while the other describes a picture. When the pictures are completed, the drawings can be shared with the class or posted on a bulletin board.

3. Create a group story by having the students sit in a group. One person starts to tell a story. After a certain time limit, or when the student gets to a point in the story that it can change, the next person continues the story. This goes from one person to the next around the circle until the story is completed. Discuss how listening carefully to what each person added to the story helped the group tell the story. This can be done with younger children by having each child contribute one or two sentences or ideas to the story.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Have students keep a daily journal of how listening or not listening affected their day. Younger children can draw pictures in their journals. Discuss at the end of the day some of these experiences.

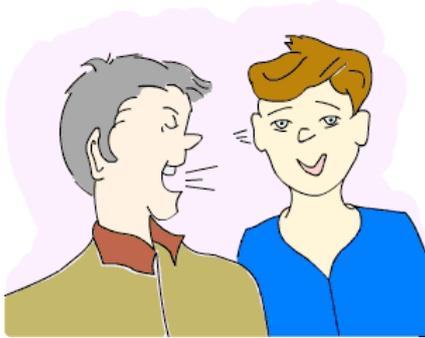
2. Read a story to the class that illustrates listening or not listening skills. Have the students draw pictures or write a different version of the story to illustrate how the story would have changed if the characters had been listening better. Stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Three Little Pigs, Little Red Riding Hood, and other fairy tales can be used, emphasizing how the characters did not listen to instructions and how that caused them problems. For older students, be aware of other literature they are reading and point out situations in the stories where listening skills are important.

3. Older students can create a newspaper with each student being a reporter. Each reporter interviews another student, asking about such topics as accomplishments, family experiences, travels, or favorite activities, foods, movies, television programs, etc. The interviews are written up and "published" in the newspaper. After it is distributed to the class, have a discussion to find out if the reporters accurately listened and reported what they were told. Discuss how listening skills were helpful in completing the assignment.

4. How many ways can you think of to show someone that you aren't listening? Make a list.

2. Good and Bad Listeners

When You Talk, I Listen ...



A good listener

1. Uses eye contact appropriately.
2. Is attentive and alert to a speaker's verbal and nonverbal behavior.
3. Is patient and doesn't interrupt (waits for the speaker to finish).
4. Is responsive, using verbal and nonverbal expressions.
5. Asks questions in a nonthreatening tone.
6. Paraphrases, restates or summarizes what the speaker says.
7. Provides constructive (verbal or nonverbal) feedback.
8. Is empathic (works to understand the speaker).
9. Shows interest in the speaker as a person.
10. Demonstrates a caring attitude and is willing to listen.
11. Doesn't criticize, is nonjudgmental.
12. Is open-minded.

But Do You ?



A poor listener

1. Interrupts the speaker (is impatient).
2. Doesn't give eye contact (eyes wander).
3. Is distracted (fidgeting) and does not pay attention to the speaker.
4. Is not interested in the speaker (doesn't care; daydreaming).
5. Gives the speaker little or no (verbal or nonverbal) feedback.
6. Changes the subject.
7. Is judgmental.
8. Is closed-minded.
9. Talks too much.
10. Is self-preoccupied.
11. Gives unwanted advice.
12. Too busy to listen.

3. Listening Games

Telephone (game)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

(Redirected from Chinese whispers)

Telephone

Players: 3 or more

Age range: 5 and up

Setup time: < 5 minutes

Playing time: 5–15 minutes

Rules complexity: Low

Strategy depth: Low

Random chance: Low

Skills required: listening, whispering

The telephone game, also known as Chinese whispers and whisper down the lane, is a game often played by children at parties or in the playground in which a phrase or sentence is passed on from one player to another, but is subtly altered in transit.

How to play

As many players as possible line up such that they can whisper to their immediate neighbours but not hear any players further away. The player at the 'beginning' of the line thinks of a phrase (or, in the case of young children, is supplied one by an adult), and whispers it as quietly as possible to her/his neighbour. The neighbour then passes on the message to the next player to the best of his/her ability. The passing continues in this fashion until it reaches the player at the 'end' of the line, who calls out the message s/he received.

If the game has been 'successful', the final message will bear little or no resemblance to the original, due to the cumulative effect of mistakes along the line. Often, however, the message does not reach the end of the line, due to someone accidentally speaking too loudly. Deliberately changing the phrase is often considered cheating, but if the starting phrase is badly picked, there may be disappointingly little natural change.

Purpose

The game has no objective, and no winner - the entertainment comes from comparing the original and final messages. Even if the line is not completed, the last few people to receive the message can compare this with the original, and some messages will be unrecognisable after only a few steps. From an educational point of view, the game requires good teamwork to co-ordinate a successful line, as well as teaching an important truth about how easily information can become corrupted by indirect communication. The game has also been used in schools to simulate the spread of gossip and its harmful effects.

In the Media

In The PTA Disbands, an episode of The Simpsons, Bart attempts to spread "Skinner said the teachers will crack any minute" throughout the crowd of Springfield Elementary School teachers. By the time it reaches Mrs. Krabappel, it has turned into "Skinner said the teachers will crack any minute, purple monkey dishwasher."

Drawing

This exercise is also designed to underscore some of the problems involved with listening and word interpretation. It takes about 10 minutes and can be used with groups of any size.

Procedure

1. The group is instructed to: "Draw a short vertical line to represent a mama bull, a papa bull, and a baby bull."
2. Their task is to correctly follow the instructions.
3. After the group has completed the exercise, ask for correct solutions.

Discussion

Anyone drawing three lines interprets a MAMA BULL as being possible. There is not any mama bulls. In addition, the lines may be of varied length—normally the mama bull is a medium-sized vertical line, the papa bull the longest, and the baby bull the shortest. Why? There is nothing in the statement to indicate size variation, yet preset concepts concerning "mama," "papa," and "baby" tend to lead to the length variation. Was the group also tempted to follow impossible instructions?

Bus Driver

Procedure

1. The class is instructed to answer the following problem: "You are driving a buss. You go east 12 miles, and turn south and go 2 miles and take on 9 passengers, then you turn west and go 3 miles and let off 4 passengers. How old is the bus driver?"
2. After the class has completed the exercise, ask for solutions.

Discussion

Most listeners will attempt to follow the numbers and arrive at a solution based on them. The actual solution is the age of each listener. The problem uses the work "you" four times. What is the relationship between listening and interpretation? Why did people fail to hear the term "you?" What are the implications for any orally delivered instructions?

Communication Games

Crazy Sentence

~ From the book "104 Activities That Build:" ~

Listening to details can be very important when trying to solve a problem or when attempting to follow complicated directions. Sometimes the details are not essential but at other times these details are the most important part of the information being conveyed.

Being able to listen carefully to what is said and to all the words that a person is saying isn't an easy task. Sometimes we must listen with our eyes and observe body language, facial expressions, and eye movement in order to get all the information needed. The better you "listen" to the details, the more you will hear and the better you will understand what is being said.

Objective

To use good listening skills in order to win the game.

Who: People who need to work on their ability to listen carefully to what is said so they can increase their understanding of the information given.

Group Size: 4 or more

Materials:

Paper
Pens or pencils
2 Chairs

Description

Prior to this activity make up a dozen or so sentences that are complete and correct but make them crazy and random; then write each sentence on a small piece of paper. Some examples of crazy sentences are:

"My prom date had a large tattoo." "Big Bird is my idol." "The blue cow swam over the moon."
"It is good to eat spiders and caterpillars for breakfast." "Rubber bands stick to the ceiling on Christmas day."

Be creative and come up with many more. Also, prior to the game set up two chairs in the front of the room.

For the activity select two people from the group and ask them to sit in the chairs that you have set up in the front of the room. Give each person a piece of paper with one of the crazy sentences on it. The two players must read the sentence to themselves and then engage in conversation. The object is to slip in the sentence without the other person guessing what it is. You may wish to give them a topic to start with such as fishing, country music, bowling, buying shoes, or anything else that has nothing to do with the sentences. Also give them a one or two minute time limit to slip their sentences in during the conversation. After the time limit, allow the people in the audience to guess what the crazy sentence is and whoever guesses correctly is given the opportunity to play the game for the next round.

Discussion Prompts

1. What did you have to do in order to detect the hidden sentence?
2. When do you use your best listening skills? Why?
3. When is it important for you to show good listening skills?

Variations:

Each player may tell a story, instead of engaging in a conversation with one other player.

bullet

This game can be done with three people engaging in conversation at the same time instead of just two.

Play in teams and allow each team to make up sentences for the other team to use when telling a story to their own team.

Direction

~ From the book "The wRECKing Yard of games and activities" ~

In our society there is a constant transfer of information from one person to another. You must be careful when you pass information on if you want it to stay accurate. One great example shows up in the rules for a game. If you check with people in different parts of the country, you will find out that many of the games have different rules. Someone, sometime changed the rules a little bit.

In this activity someone gets a set of rules and the group gets to see how easy it can be to make mistakes in passing them on. This can be a fun way to see what can happen when information is not passed on correctly.

Objective: For people to recognize the importance of using good communication skills when giving directions and when receiving directions. To recognize the difficulties encountered when interpreting what someone else said.

Who: People who believe everything they hear. People who could benefit from listening carefully to directions and passing them along correctly.

Group Size: 2 or more

Materials

Varies

Description

Chose a game that has a few specific rules that must be followed in order to play the game (and enough rules to make it hard to remember them all). Prior to the activity select one person and give him/her the directions for the game without telling the rest of the group. Verbally explain the game and clearly state all of the rules.

At the time of the game, the person who has heard the rules will give the directions to the rest of the group without any help from you. Allow the group to play the game at least once through before having a group discussion or making any corrections or clarifications in the rules of the game.

Discussion Prompts

1. Was there any confusion about the rules of the game?
2. Why do you think the game was explained correctly (or incorrectly)?
3. What is important to remember when listening to others and when giving directions?

Variations

Select a game that requires two teams. Separate the two teams and select one member from each team to receive the directions for the game. Each person explains the rules to his/her team.

Give each team a different set of directions, on purpose.

4. Ten ways to help your pupils to listen

Sue Palmer

Published: 21 February 2003

Children need to learn to listen before they can listen to learn, says Sue Palmer

Recent media coverage of "the daily grunt" has alerted the wider world to what primary teachers have known for two decades - that cultural and environmental changes, especially the availability of all-day TV and video, are leading to a steady deterioration in children's language skills.

Educational gurus have also woken up to the problem. Revised guidelines on speaking and listening are due out from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority later this year, and we are already seeing increased emphasis on spoken language activities from Ofsted and the National Literacy Strategy.

However, for most teachers, rather more pressing than speaking is the question of pupils' listening skills. The teachers I meet on in-service training courses are universally concerned about children's decreasing ability to pay attention in class. After all, speech acquisition depends on the ability to listen. And poor listening skills can lead to problems in all areas of learning, particularly literacy, as well as a host of behavioural difficulties.

The suggestions below all provide opportunities to focus on development of listening skills. They are child-friendly and easy to organise, and it should be possible to integrate them into a normal school day without needing too much extra time.

1 Teach rules for listening

Children who haven't learned to listen naturally need help in understanding what listening actually involves. For instance, many are unable to concentrate on what a speaker is saying because they're too easily distracted by other things that are going on around them. They simply aren't aware that listening means cutting oneself off from those distractions.

Make a poster listing the main rules and teach them explicitly as part of English work or PSHE. If possible, involve the children in working out the rules, but try to end up with something like the following list.

A good listener:

- * looks at the speaker
- * tries to keep still
- * concentrates on what the speaker is saying
- * thinks about what the speaker is saying
- * asks questions if they don't understand
- * values what the speaker has to say
- * tries to remember what the speaker has said.

Focus on one rule at a time.

Discuss what it means and why it's important.

Put it into practice immediately by giving a paired task (for example:

"Take turns to ask your partner what she or he did last weekend") and asking some children to report back to the class. This could be integrated with circle time activities (see 7).

2 Model how to be a good listener

In class and group discussion, and when talking with children individually, demonstrate how a good listener behaves. This isn't always easy, because there are so many other demands on your attention, so if possible off-load "crowd control" duties to a classroom assistant, or employ visual behavioural cues (see 10).

The video *Thinking Allowed*, produced by the Queen's Primary School in Richmond-upon-Thames (£25; tel: 020 8940 3580), shows teachers leading class discussions, with commentary on the skills and techniques involved. It also provides ideas for organising small-group discussion, to develop not only speaking and listening but thinking skills across the curriculum.

3 Play listening games

Many traditional games, like "Simon Says" and "Chinese Whispers", rely on discriminative listening skills. As well as filling in the odd 10 minutes, listening games provide an enjoyable opportunity to upgrade the status of listening and remind children of your rules.

For nursery and reception children, *Helping Young Children to Listen*, by Ros Bayley and Lynn Broadbent (£12.50, Lawrence Educational Publishing, tel: 01922 643833), gives a wide selection of games to encourage early listening skills, supervised by a cuddly leopard cub called Lola. For listening games that specifically develop phonemic awareness try *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children* by Marilyn Jager Adams et al (£21, tel: 020 7833 2307, Jessica Kingsley Publishers).

4 Read to children

From a literacy point of view, reading to children is probably the single most important thing you can do. It is, therefore, tragic that the pressures of the national curriculum and other initiatives have led to the abandonment of the time-honoured tradition of storytime in many classrooms.

Now that the powers-that-be are recommending a return to cross-curricular teaching, make sure reading aloud has first claim on time gained from "double accounting". This is a way of motivating children to read, exposing them to well-written language and honing their listening skills, all at the same time.

In key stage 1, avoid reading exclusively from picture books. Children need opportunities to "make the picture in their heads", while listening to a poem or verbal narrative. Today's children, spoon-fed other people's images on TV, often find it difficult to activate their own imaginations. Start with a vivid poem, and talk afterwards about the sort of "pictures" it made them see. Gradually work up to short stories, then short books, such as *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* by Jill Tomlinson (£4.99, Egmont, tel: 020 7761 3500).

5 Use music and song

Music is fundamental to literacy, since it helps train the brain to patterns and the ear to qualities of sound. Songs are particularly useful, because the melody helps children memorise words, and memorisation aids the development of auditory memory - essential for reading. Action songs, which develop kinaesthetic memory, are especially memorable. *Music in Action With Big Books* by Gaunt and Dunville (resource book and CD) link musical activities to many popular texts (£15 +p&p, Lovely Music, tel: 01937 832946). Teachers who don't feel confident about teaching music can always use audio resources (see 8). A & C Black produce a variety of tapes and CDs that are easy

for the non-specialist to use, including tapes of popular collections such as Okki-Tokki-Unga and Apusskidu.

6 Train auditory memory

Acquisition of literacy skills (and, arguably, all learning) relies on auditory memory, so the more we practise this particular mental muscle, the greater the eventual payoff. Encourage children throughout school to learn the words of songs, rhymes and poems. Organise a recitation competition, with heats in each class (you could provide sheets of appropriate poems for children to choose from if they don't have a favourite).

For early years, Time to Talk, by Alison Schroeder (£19.95, LDA, tel: 01945 463441), is a speaking skills course which provides a rhyme a week for learning and reciting. And don't begrudge hymn practice. At a time when musical activities and poetry recital are often crowded out of the curriculum, this is the only time many children ever learn how to commit words to memory.

7 Develop circle time

Circle time automatically involves the development and deployment of good listening skills and is widely used as part of schools' PHSE policy. Lucky Duck Publishing (tel: 0117 973 2881) produce many useful materials, including an introductory video, Coming Round to Circle Time (£37.60), and the book Developing Circle Time (£9), which contain a wealth of practical ideas.

Strategies introduced in circle time can then be brought into play across the curriculum. For instance, during paired or group discussion, children still learning the art of turn-taking find it helpful to have a symbolic object for the speaker to hold (such as the conch in Lord of the Flies).

8 Use tapes and CDs

As well as music, there are many audio resources featuring the spoken word.

Using tapes and CDs brings other voices into the classroom, providing a professionally-made listening experience. The BBC produces a wide range of taped material at very reasonable prices, including the justly popular Let's Move (£2.53+£3.99 (notes)) for KS1 and Just Poetry (£2.53, teacher's book, £14.99), comprehensive coverage of the poetry requirements of the National Literacy Strategy for KS2 (for a full list consult the BBC Education catalogue, tel: 0870 830 8000). Lucky Duck (see above) produces a CD called Guided Imagery for Circle Time (£10+VAT), which is an excellent resource for PHSE and helps develop children's capacity to imagine.

Try sometimes telling the class beforehand that you are not going to rewind the tape. In a "rewind culture", many children don't bother attending carefully the first time. Again, they need their awareness raised to help them concentrate. (Indeed, before starting, what about issuing a warning:

"Listen very carefully. I shall say this only once.") To encourage listening out of school, urge parents to use book tapes on long car journeys and at bedtime. A disturbing number of children now have televisions in their bedrooms, when intellectual development - and very probably social, emotional and behavioural development too - would be better served by a tape-recorder and a well-read book.

Explain this to parents and, if you really want to help, start a library of talking books to borrow from school (Talking Bookshop, tel: 020 7491 4117).

9 Use dictation

Used with discretion, dictation helps in teaching and assessing phonics, spelling and handwriting. It allows children to focus purely on transcriptional skills - hearing the words and transforming them into symbols on the page - without the added distraction of thinking up what to say and how to say it. It is also an occasion when listening skills are at a premium.

To maximise effectiveness, dictations should be short, occasional and delivered with an established routine: teacher reads the whole piece, re-reads in short clear chunks while pupils write, then reads the whole piece again at the end for checking.

If you haven't time to make up your own, weekly spelling-practice dictations are provided as part of Big Book Spelling which I co-wrote with Michaela Morgan (£190 each (Lower + Upper Junior) Ginn, tel: 01865 888000).

10 Make lessons worth listening to

A major problem in teaching is that there are so many different reasons for using your voice. As well as when needing to impart facts, teachers also talk for organisational reasons, in social interaction with pupils, and to establish and maintain appropriate standards of behaviour. With so much exposure to the same voice, it's not surprising that pupils sometimes switch off - there's a fair chance what you're saying is not relevant to them.

This is a good reason for using audio resources, encouraging children's contributions to lessons and using the voices of other adults who may be around.

Perhaps a teaching assistant can help you deliver the lesson, turning some of it into dialogue, a question-and-answer session or a mini-performance.

Look also for ways of substituting other modes of communication wherever possible: * Instead of using your voice to call the class to order, devise a physical signal such as holding one arm in the air, and train pupils to respond by sitting quietly and signalling back to you.

* If there are classroom routines or rules that you frequently need to repeat, make a poster of them so you can just point to it.

* For pupils who constantly need reminding about how to behave, make visual cue cards with simple pictures that a teaching assistant can hold up - for instance, a face in profile with an arrow coming from the eye and a caption saying "Look at the teacher"; child sitting with folded arms and a caption saying "Sit still and quietly"; an arm raised to answer a question with a caption saying, "Put up your hand to answer".

Sue Palmer is main presenter of the National Literacy Trust primary conference, entitled "Listen, Speak, Write", to be held in London, Birmingham and York during March. Tel: 020 7828 2435 for details. Online booking at: www.literacytrust.org.uk

5. Quotes

We were given two ears but only one mouth.

This is because God knew that listening was twice as hard as talking.

If we were supposed to talk more than we listen, we would have two mouths and one ear

-Mark Twain

Listening is a core competency for communication and for relationships

"The best way to diffuse an argument is to listen first, second, and last."

-- Anabel Jensen

"My only advice is to stay aware, listen carefully, and yell for help if you need it."

-- Judy Blume

The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.

— Ralph Nichols

Education commences at the mother's knee, and every word spoken within the hearing of little children tends towards the formation of character.

— Hosea Ballou

If you have good sense, you will listen and obey; if all you do is talk, you will destroy yourself.

-- Proverbs 10: 8

Invest in truth and wisdom, discipline and good sense, and don't part with them.

-- Proverbs 23: 23

Words can bring death or life! Talk too much, and you will eat everything you say.

-- Proverbs 18: 21

Salespeople continually ask me what the one single most important skill is to master to have a successful sales career. My answer is simple: Listening. A good salesperson is a good listener. A great salesperson is a great listener.

"If speaking is silver, then listening is gold."

-- Turkish proverb

"It is the province of knowledge to speak. And it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."

-- Oliver Wendell Holmes

"He who answers before listening, that is his folly and shame."

-- Proverbs 18:13

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

-- In James 1:19

6. Listening Activities

1. Describe a favorite activity

One tells why he or she likes the activity. After two or three minutes, restate what was said by saying, "I heard you say that..." Have the students tell you ways that you showed you were a good listener.

2. A directed art lesson.

a) Give each student a piece of paper and pencil, crayons or markers. Have students draw as you give each instruction. Describe, step-by-step, how to **draw** a simple animal, building, or scene. Let students share their drawings.

b) One partner describes the picture while the other listens and draws it. They then switch and the first partner draws while the other describes a picture. When the pictures are completed, the drawings can be shared with the class or posted on a bulletin board.

3. Create a group story

Students sit in a group. One person starts to tell a story. The next person continues the story. This goes from one person to the next around the circle until the story is completed. Discuss how listening carefully to what each person added to the story helped the group tell the story.

4. Back-to-back listening --

Partners sit back-to-back; one person tells a story and the other person draws illustrations.

5. Simon Says

7. Seminar report

33rd Children's Seminar

Listening April 2002

cooking-Midori

assistants-Patrik, Sigfrid

On a beautiful Spring day in April we had a seminar about listening. Fifteen children participated. Johan coordinated, Midori was cooking, with the assistance of Yumiko, Patrik and Sigfrid. In the morning discussed three points: How to be a good listener, why it's important and what problems are caused when people don't listen. In the afternoon we played a game of brännboll and acted out some stories that teach about listening. Each child took home a list of five ways to be a good listener, which they should learn and practise. They might even be helpful to other members of the family!

1. LOOK at the person who is talking.
2. LISTEN, and don't interrupt.
3. ASK questions to find out more.
4. NOD, or say something to show you understand.
5. REPEAT what you heard in your own words.

“We were given two ears but only one mouth. This is because God knew that listening was twice as hard as talking.”

8. Why Listen?

There is no communication that goes only one way; if we want to be heard, we will practice hearing.

- 1) Listening is the basis of conflict resolution,
- 2) the core of trust,
- 3) and also central to the development of healthy self-concept.

Listening is an active process. It involves being in the moment, interpreting, and deferring judgement. One of the largest blocks to listening is our desire to solve problems. I often find myself leaping into talking... even though I know that listening will serve better. Another barrier to listening is time. A colleague has made a "sacred" time each night when she and one of her daughters is home, she always spends a few minutes just sitting on the edge of their beds, ready to listen.

What is Listening?

Listening can be listening to your own self; it can be listening to someone you have trouble hearing; or it can be listening to your family and friends. It can also be listening to the wind, to water, to children playing, or to new knowledge. Effective listening includes paying close attention to body language and to intent -- **to truly hear, listen with all your senses.**

Listening Practice

- Try "layered listening" where you focus on sound, then listen for a sound farther away, and again, and again until you are hearing as far as you can see. Metaphorically, you can use this technique listening to people as well -- what can you hear beneath the surface of their words?
- Practice listening by drawing pictures of the words you hear.
- There are many variations on "back-to-back" listening -- for instance, partners sit back-to-back; one person tells a story and the other person draws illustrations.
- Listen to "Peter and the Wolf" to learn the sounds of various instruments; then practice identifying those instruments in other pieces of music.

Is Hearing the Same as Listening?

Hearing is simply taking in sound, and is a natural, automatic process. Listening, however, is a learned process, and includes paying attention, processing the sensory data coming in, and remembering it.

Since listening has to be learned, and since we learn from those around us, if we have good listening models, we will probably turn out to be effective listeners. If we have poor models we may or may not be effective listeners.

The Practice of Listening: Active Listening

Active Listening is a useful way of listening whenever you are getting directions, having an argument, or listening to someone's problem. Your focus as the listener is on the speaker, and you

provide an active mirror to reflect an understanding of what the other person is meaning and feeling.

There are THREE TECHNIQUES in Active Listening.

- 1) Paraphrase, or summarize in your own words, what the person has just said. Don't be a parrot; just summarize briefly.
- 2) Express an acceptance of the other's feelings, if they seem important.
- 3) Ask non-threatening questions in order to find out more information and encourage the other to fully express their feelings and ideas.

Listening to Children

"To help your child be a better listener, try these steps: Stop what you're doing, look at your child and listen fully when she speaks. Ask questions. This not only shows you're listening, but also that you are interested in what your child has to say.

Play games that encourage listening, such as Simon Says or, for older children, Trivial Pursuit."

The sense of hearing

Parents can help to develop a sense of hearing and listening by helping children listen to objects and animals. You can cut pictures of animals and everyday household items out of magazines and glue the pictures on paper. Then use a tape recorder to record sounds of these objects and animals. Encourage children to point to the appropriate picture as each sound is played.

How Can Parents Model Good Listening Skills?

Listen Better, Learn More

In one of the Family Circus cartoon strips, the little girl looks up at her father, who is reading the newspaper, and says: "Daddy, you have to listen to me with your eyes as well as your ears." That statement says almost all there is to say about listening, whether in our personal conversations or in learning in school.

Do Listening Skills Affect Learning?

Listening is not a school subject like reading and writing. Many of us seem to feel it comes naturally and that as long as we can listen to directions on how to find the restroom, nothing more needs to be said. The latest studies reveal that listening is a very large part of school learning and is one of our primary means of interacting with other people on a personal basis. It is estimated that between 50 and 75 percent of students' classroom time is spent listening to the teacher, to other students, or to audio media.

Can Parents Guide Their Children To Better Listening?

According to research on listening skills, being a good listener means focusing attention on the message and reviewing the important information. Parents can model good listening behavior for their children and advise them on ways to listen as an active learner, pick out highlights of a conversation, and ask relevant questions. Sometimes it helps to "show" children that an active listener is one who looks the speaker in the eye and is willing to turn the television off to make sure that the listener is not distracted by outside interference.

Guidelines For Modeling Good Listening Skills

- * **Be interested and attentive.** Children can tell whether they have a parent's interest and attention by the way the parent replies or does not reply. Forget about the telephone and other distractions. Maintain eye contact to show that you really are with the child.
 - * **Encourage talking.** Some children need an invitation to start talking. You might begin with, "Tell me about your day at school." Children are more likely to share their ideas and feelings when others think them important.
 - * **Listen patiently.** People think faster than they speak. With limited vocabulary and experience in talking, children often take longer than adults to find the right word. Listen as though you have plenty of time.
 - * **Hear children out.** Avoid cutting children off before they have finished speaking. It is easy to form an opinion or reject children's views before they finish what they have to say. It may be difficult to listen respectfully and not correct misconceptions, but respect their right to have and express their opinions.
 - * **Listen to nonverbal messages.** Many messages children send are communicated nonverbally by their tone of voice, their facial expressions, their energy level, their posture, or changes in their behavior patterns. You can often tell more from the way a child says something than from what is said. When a child comes in obviously upset, be sure to find a quiet time then or sometime that day to help explore those feelings.
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Suggestions For Improving Communication With Children

- * **Be interested.** Ask about children's ideas and opinions regularly. If you show your children that you are really interested in what they think, what they feel, and what their opinions are, they will become comfortable about expressing their thoughts to you.
- * **Avoid dead-end questions.** Ask children the kinds of questions that will extend interaction rather than cut it off. Questions that require a yes or no or right answer lead a conversation to a dead end. Questions that ask children to describe, explain, or share ideas extend the conversation.
- * **Extend conversation.** Try to pick up a piece of your child's conversation. Respond to his or her statements by asking a question that restates or uses some of the same words your child used. When you use children's own phrasing or terms, you strengthen their confidence in their conversational and verbal skills and reassure them that their ideas are being listened to and valued.
- * **Share your thoughts.** Share what you are thinking with your child. For instance, if you are puzzling over how to rearrange your furniture, get your child involved with questions such as, "I'm not sure where to put this shelf. Where do you think would be a good place?"
- * **Observe signs.** Watch the child for signs that it is time to end a conversation. When a child begins to stare into space, give silly responses, or ask you to repeat several of your comments, it is probably time to stop the exchange.
- * **Reflect feelings.** One of the most important skills good listeners have is the ability to put themselves in the shoes of others or empathize with the speaker by attempting to understand his or her thoughts and feelings. As a parent, try to mirror your children's feelings by repeating them. You might reflect a child's feelings by commenting, "It sounds as if you're angry at your math teacher." Restating or rephrasing what children have said is useful when they are experiencing powerful emotions that they may not be fully aware of.
- * **Help clarify and relate experiences.** As you listen, try to make your child's feelings clear by stating them in your own words. Your wider vocabulary can help children express themselves as

accurately and clearly as possible and give them a deeper understanding of words and inner thoughts.

Why Are Parents Important In Building Children's Communication Skills?

Parents play an essential role in building children's communication skills because children spend more time with their parents than with any other adult. Children also have a deeper involvement with their parents than with any other adult, and the family as a unit has lifelong contact with its members. Parents control many of the contacts a child has with society as well as society's contacts with the child.

Adults, parents, and teachers set a powerful example of good or poor communication. Communication skills are influenced by the examples children see and hear. Parents and teachers who listen to their children with interest, attention, and patience set a good example. The greatest audience children can have is an adult who is important to them and interested in them.

People need to practice and acquire skills to be good listeners, because a speaker cannot throw you information in the same manner that a dart player tosses a dart at a passive dartboard. Information is an intangible substance that must be sent by the speaker and received by an active listener.

The “Face It” Solution for Effective Listening

Many people are familiar with the scene of the child standing in front of dad, just bursting to tell him what happened in school that day. Unfortunately, dad has the paper in front of his face and even when he drops the paper down half-way, it is visibly apparent that he is not really listening.

A student solved the problem of getting dad to listen from behind his protective paper wall. Her solution was to say, “Move your face, dad, when I'm talking to you.” This simple solution will force even the poorest listener to adopt effective listening skills because it captures the essence of good listening.

Good Listeners Listen with their Faces

The first skill that you can practice to be a good listener is to **act like a good listener**. We have spent a lot of our modern lives working at tuning out all of the information that is thrust at us. It therefore becomes important to change our physical body language from that of a deflector to that of a receiver, much like a satellite dish. Our faces contain most of the receptive equipment in our bodies, so it is only natural that we should tilt our faces towards the channel of information.

A second skill is to use the other bodily receptors besides your ears. You can be a better listener when you **look at the other person**. Your eyes pick up the non-verbal signals that all people send out when they are speaking. By looking at the speaker, your eyes will also complete the eye contact that speakers are trying to make. A speaker will work harder at sending out the information when they see a receptive audience in attendance. Your eyes help complete the communication circuit that must be established between speaker and listener.

When you have established eye and face contact with your speaker, you must then **react to the speaker** by sending out non-verbal signals. Your face must move and give the range of emotions that indicate whether you are following what the speaker has to say. By moving your face to the

information, you can better concentrate on what the person is saying. Your face must become an active and contoured catcher of information.

It is extremely difficult to receive information when your mouth is moving information out at the same time.

A good listener will stop talking and use receptive language instead. Use the I see . . . un huh . . . oh really words and phrases that follow and encourage your speaker's train of thought. This forces you to react to the ideas presented, rather than the person. You can then move to asking questions, instead of giving your opinion on the information being presented. It is a true listening skill to use your mouth as a moving receptor of information rather than a broadcaster.

A final skill is to move your mind to **concentrate on what the speaker is saying.** You cannot fully hear their point of view or process information when you argue mentally or judge what they are saying before they have completed. An open mind is a mind that is receiving and listening to information.

If you really want to listen, you will act like a good listener. Good listeners are good catchers because they give their speakers a target and then move that target to capture the information that is being sent. When good listeners aren't understanding their speakers, they will send signals to the speaker about what they expect next, or how the speaker can change the speed of information delivery to suit the listener. Above all, a good listener involves all of their face to be an active moving listener.

Things to Remember

1. If you are really listening intently, you should feel tired after your speaker has finished. Effective listening is an active rather than a passive activity.
2. When you find yourself drifting away during a listening session, change your body position and concentrate on using one of the above skills. Once one of the skills is being used, the other active skills will come into place as well.
3. Your body position defines whether you will have the chance of being a good listener or a good deflector. Good listeners are like poor boxers: they lead with their faces.
4. Meaning cannot just be transmitted as a tangible substance by the speaker. It must also be stimulated or aroused in the receiver. The receiver must therefore be an active participant for the cycle of communication to be complete.

9. Stories

God speak to me

The little child whispered, "God, speak to me." And a meadowlark sang. But the child did not hear. So the child yelled, "God, speak to me!" And the thunder rolled across the sky. But the child did not listen. The child looked around and said, "God let me see you." And a star shone brightly

But the child did not notice. And the child shouted, "God show me a miracle!" And a life was born. But the child did not know. So the child cried out in despair, "Touch me God, and let me know you are here!" Whereupon God reached down And touched the child. But the child brushed the butterfly away and walked away unknowingly.

Books for Children

Showers, Paul. *The Listening Walk*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992.

The key to a successful listening walk is to avoid talking to others and to open one's ears to the world of sound. In this book, illustrated by Alikei Brandenburg, a young girl takes a listening walk with her father and her dog Major. The setting is urban and the soundscape is rich in sounds. Some sounds are not pleasant at all, such as the sound of cars, construction, and other human noise activities. Others, such as the tapping of Major's toenails on the side walk, a sprinkler, and birds in the park are enriching. The book concludes by asking the reader to close the book, close their eyes and just listen. There are always sounds to hear.

Morris, Winifred. *Just Listen*. New York: Atheneum, 1990

Tara is an urban child surround by the constant sounds of the city. Only when she goes to visit her Grandmother does she experience the unique silence of the country. Her grandmother always takes her out for a long walks to listen to the natural world. Grandma frequently whisper to Tara, " Now what do you hear?"

One day Tara's grandmother asks her to listen very carefully. When she does listen she hears a very special sound - the unique sound of self. Her grandmother encourages her to always remember that sound as it is her's and no one else's.

Brown, Margaret Wise. *The Noisy Book*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993.

Muffin, a very little dog, one day gets a cinder in his eye. The veterinarian puts a bandage around Muffin's eyes and he can no longer see. His ears now become his guide to the world around him. It is an acoustical world of often confusing sounds. When Muffin finally arrives home he hears a sound he cannot identify. It is both familiar and yet strange. He cannot determine what it is. Readers are asked to guess what it is Muffin might be hearing and the answer is finally revealed at the end of the story.

Beech, Linda. *The Magic School Bus, In The Haunted Museum: A Book About Sound*. New York: Scholastic, 1995.

Ms. Frizzle's music class sets out to perform a concert at a "Sound Museum". Along the way the Magic School Bus has a flat tire and the students find themselves in what looks like a haunted house. They explore the house hearing many sounds only to learn that they are in the Sound

Museum itself. There are doors that lead to a jungle full of exotic sounds, another door leads to a mountain landscape where echo's can be made. The children learn much about new sounds and how sounds are made. The next day the class performs its concert and Carlos, who had been chided for his invented instrument that makes only strange sounds, learns that the instrument will only play properly if he modifies it so it can vibrate the way it is suppose to.

Stafford, William. The Animal That Drank Up Sound. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1992.

This story, illustrated by Debra Frasier, tells the tale of an animal that needed sound. It moves slowly and silently from high on the mountain to the valley below. One day the animal finally drinks up all the sounds of a wonderful green summer. It takes " the croak of toads, and all the little, shiny noise grass blades make." It is of course winter that has come as the snowy white animal that brings a special quiet to the land.

Calaora, Lorraine, Karcovski-Bagen, Christopher. Noisy and Quiet, Grosset and Dunalp, Inc., 1977.

In this book of opposites children learn about quiet and noise. It is a book designed for parents and children to use together. A mother and father can, for example, help a child understand the difference between the quiet of a desolate beech and one beaming with activity. The book encourages an awareness of sound in a variety of urban and rural environments. The inside title page is especially effective with a family of rabbits nibbling at the grass along an airport runway with a roaring jet lifting off in the background. There are activities at the end of the book which children can do to learn about the making of sound and quiet.

10. Ten listening building skills you can practice

1. Write things down as others are speaking. Jot down a word rather than interrupt the other person's thought: to keep the thought; to impress the other person; to be polite; to keep listening instead of interrupting.
2. Verify the situation (sometimes) before giving feedback.
3. Qualify the situation with questions before giving feedback or responding.
4. Don't interrupt the next time you think you know the answer.
5. Go for an hour without speaking.
6. Next time you eat with a group, don't talk for the first half hour.
7. Ask questions to clarify.
8. Ask questions to show interest or concern.
9. Ask questions to get more information or learn.
10. Ask yourself if you're listening the way you want to be listened to.

11. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,

by Stephen Covey,

In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey sets out a seven-part model for effective performance in business and personal life. To compress his entire framework into three paragraphs doesn't do it justice, but for the sake of economy we'll try anyway!

First, Covey recommends taking the time to listen to yourself (habits 1-3) in order to identify your own core values and goals. This step makes it possible for you to behave exactly as you believe the person you wish to be would behave, because it allows you to consult your own values and goals before acting. Thus you act only in ways that are consistent with those values and goals. This step should be repeated regularly as time passes and circumstances change.

Stephen Covey's seven habits are:

- * be proactive;
- * begin with the end in mind;
- * put first things first;
- * think win/win;
- * seek first to understand, then to be understood;
- * synergize;
- * sharpen the saw.

Second, Covey recommends listening to others (habits 4-6) in order to become aware of the values and goals of others. This enables you to find common ground and thus maintain productive relationships with them.

Third, (habit 7) Covey recommends regularly seeking to improve and reinforce yourself in ways that are important to you.

Time Management flows from self-awareness. Perhaps the most frequently discussed portion of Covey's book is Covey's practical yet profound recommendation regarding time management. Covey promotes weekly planning sessions to line up projects according to how well they fit your core values and goals. He advocates allocating the bulk of your time to tasks you identify as "important" (not to be confused with merely "urgent") by virtue of being closest to your core values and goals. Ideally tasks that you identify as less important will occupy little or none of your time because you will streamline, delegate or drop them altogether.

Empathic Listening is essential to effective communication. Another frequently discussed section of the book is Habit 5 ("First Seek to Understand...") found within a chapter appropriately enough entitled "Principles of Empathic Listening." Covey emphasizes the importance, the power, and in some situations the necessity of not merely going through the mechanical responses that might be required for ordinary listening, but opening oneself to the talker to the point where one can actually feel what they are feeling. Covey, as others, believes that the only way to establish communication in some professional and personal situations is by becoming, in small part, the person you are listening to. He uses the words "sensing" (others call it "intuition") to describe the information a listener can perceive through deep, empathic listening. The experience Covey describes, standing for a moment in another's shoes and seeing the world through their eyes, is something everyone is

capable of, but most of us rarely (if ever) deliberately do. Covey notes that it takes time to listen empathically and practice to become adept at it, but the reward is a whole new level of communication and problem solving because a person acquires the ability to see a situation simultaneously from multiple points of view.

Listening is essential to effectiveness as a speaker. Covey also points out that to be an effective speaker one has to absorb feedback from (listen to) one's audience and adjust one's presentations according to what works most effectively for them.

12. Take A Listening Walk and Learn To Listen

Author: Gary Ferrington

Have you ever noticed how much time you spend making noise each day? There are friends and family to talk to. Music to play on the stereo, television programs to entertain you, grass to mow, dishes to wash and laundry to do. Your days are full of sound making.

Some of these sounds are important in that they provide useful information. Other sounds entertain. And still others are the by-products of human activity which form an ambient background for daily life.

It's interesting that even when we have a moment for reflective quiet we try to fill it with sound. For many of us quiet seems empty and void and because of that we seemingly become anxious without sound.

Taking time to listen to the sounds around us is worth the effort. We live in an acoustic environment full of subtle and not so subtle sounds that both enrich and detract from our daily life. Giving attention to these acoustical events not only enhances our appreciation of natural and human soundscapes but also makes us aware of endangered sounds and those sounds, which like weeds, may be destroying the soundscape.

We all listen of course. But purposeful listening is learned. By practicing purposeful listening we give attention to the soundscape around us. Here is a simple example. Stop for a minute at the end of this sentence and listen to the immediate sounds around you.

What did you hear? I heard a city bus pass by and a helicopter flying overhead. I also heard birds, the wind, a hall clock, and children playing.

What is important is that we both took a moment to stop and purposefully listen. In doing so, we started the first step to opening our ears and mind to the soundscape which surrounds us every day.

Some sounds may be disturbing to one's personal health. Those sounds that irate like the thumping of a neighbors stereo, or city traffic, can cause one to be anxious and disturb one's rest. In the long run one's cardiovascular system may be effected.

Other sounds are relaxing and give one a sense of peacefulness. Many believe the sound of the ocean surf or a flowing stream provide restful acoustic experiences.

Purposeful listening can be made into an enjoyable experience when combined with walking. A listening walk is something one can do by oneself, or share with others.

A few simple rules apply. First, talking is not permitted. The purpose is to listen and one's vocal and mental quite is important for a walk to be effective. Second, plan a journey through a soundscape which may initially provide a variety of sounds. Later seek out more quiet soundscapes which require developed listening skills. Third, after the walk reflect about what you've heard and what affect it had on you.

Where to walk and the length of the walk should be determined by personal or collective interests. Sometimes initial walks are interesting if done in places where a variety of sounds can be heard. Then, as noted above, choose increasingly difficult walks which include more and more quiet.

I once took a walk in Vancouver, British Columbia which began on a tree lined West End residential street filled with morning bird song. Then I proceeded onto the promenade along the bay where the subtle sound of waves washing over loose gravel could be distinctly heard. Bicyclists and joggers passed by and I listened to their sounds as well.

I turned from the bay and walked into the lobby of an old hotel and out the back door. The hushed sounds of thick carpet and overstuffed chairs created a aural sense of solitude and elegance.

I then went on to explore the acoustics of an apartment vestibule with hard reflective surfaces echoing every body movement. An empty band gazebo and the sound of a rain storm resonating on the roof brought the walk to a close as I returned to the tree lined street where large rain drops collected and fell from overhead branches thumping onto my opened umbrella.

Allow 30 to 60 minutes for a listening walk. First walks may seem a bit strange especially when participating with a group of people. I recall that on a recent walk strangers passed our listening group and noticed our quietness. One passer-by suggested that we must be some type of religious order given our non-talkative demeanor.

Each listening walk you make will provide you with new experiences. If you walk alone write down your reflections in a journal. If you are with a group spend a bit of time debriefing your shared experiences. Take the same walk at different times of the day or under varied weather conditions. Notice the differences in the quality and quantity of sounds you'll hear.

The more you walk and listen the more you'll discover. Listening walks are not only informative they are entertaining. There's always an ever changing concert of sound around you.

What is important is that you are taking time to listen and to give yourself time to reflect. Such activity openness one to

Learn To Listen - Three Ways It Benefits Relationships

We always hear about communication being the key in a relationship. If we are always talking and not listening, then communication becomes meaningless. It's not easy to hear what someone else is saying, especially when our feelings, thoughts and opinions are different. Here are three reasons why learning to listen benefits our relationships.

1. Shows Respect – When having a discussion, listening to the other person shows that you respect what they are saying. Even if we disagree with what's being said, we still need to respect their thoughts and feelings.
2. Helps Us To Understand – It's difficult to understand what someone is trying to tell us if we aren't listening. Listening helps to understand why someone is feeling a certain way. Once we understand, we can move forward with the situation and take the steps needed.
3. Helps To Be Approachable – In relationships, it's important for someone to feel they can talk to us about anything. Learning to listen can help others feel comfortable approaching us any time they

need or want to discuss something. We are likely to have a more open and healthy relationship if we are approachable.

We want others to respect, understand and be approachable to us right? Work on learning to listen and watch your relationships grow in positive ways.