



## Listening to Others

Listening to what others have to say is an important skill because it helps students learn new things, understand what someone wants them to do, and shows others that they are interested in what other people have to say.

**The goal of the lesson is to teach students active listening skills.**

The objectives of the lesson for students include:

- learning the steps of the skill of “Listening to Others.”
- practicing the skill.
- generalizing the use of the skill to different situations and different people.

### Introduce the Skill

Ask students to tell you about different times when they were talking to someone and the person was not listening. Ask the students the following questions:

- What did the person do that made you feel that he or she was not listening to you?
- How did you feel?

**SAY:** “Let’s talk about how to listen to others.”

### Describe the Appropriate Behavior

Provide students with the behavioral steps for the skill of “Listening to Others.”

**NOTE:** Steps can be posted on a bulletin board or shown on an overhead, etc. Please adapt the steps to fit your expectations and the needs of your students.

**SAY:** “Here are the steps of the skill of ‘Listening to Others.’”

1. **Look at the person who is talking and remain quiet.**
2. **Wait until the person is through talking before you speak.**
3. **Show that you heard the person by nodding your head, saying “Okay” or “That’s interesting,” etc.**

**SAY:** “These are the steps we are going to use for the skill of ‘Listening to Others’ in this class and building.”

### **Give a Reason**

Ask students to provide reasons for why they think it might be important to use these steps when listening to others. Here are some examples of reasons to use in case students have difficulty thinking of ones on their own:

- Other people are more likely to listen to you.
- You might not make as many mistakes on your work.

### **Practice**

Choose one or more of the following activities to complete your lesson by allowing the students to practice the skill.

1. Have students tell their partner the steps of the skill.
2. **Journaling ideas**
  - Ask students to write about a time when they didn’t listen to something they were told and what happened because they didn’t listen.
  - Ask students to write about a time when they learned something new or interesting because they listened.
3. **Role-play**
  - Have students practice listening while another student reads them a story. Ask the students who are listening to paraphrase the story.
  - Using the story activity, have students listen to the story on audiotape or watch a video recording.
4. Divide the class into groups of 10. Ask each group to sit in a circle and play “The Telephone Game.”
  - Write down the statement you are going to whisper into the ear of the first student in each group.
  - Whisper the statement into the first student’s ear.

**NOTE:** Make sure that you whisper something that can be related to the importance of listening at the end of the activity. Statements to pass on should be related to school or the class and should not be about individuals or something that could be misconstrued as gossip. (Examples: "I need to go to the office to get some pens, paper, and staples"; "Four U.S. presidents were assassinated: Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, and Kennedy.")

- Once you have whispered the statement to the first student, ask him or her to whisper it to the next person. Have each student pass along the statement in this way until it reaches the last student in the group.

- Ask the last student to repeat what he or she was told.

- Read the original statement you wrote down at the beginning

of the activity.

- Debrief the activity by asking/discussing the following questions:

How close was what the last person said to the original statement on the paper?

What might have happened to keep the statement accurate as it

was being passed around, or what could have caused it to become different?

5. Ask for volunteers to act out the steps of "Listening to Others."

6. Have students pair up with the peer whose last name is alphabetically

closest to their name. Instruct the students to find out each other's favorite

color, food, game, and school activity. Have each student describe his or her partner's "favorites" to the rest of the class. The class should listen and

write down the name of the student whose "favorites list" looks the most

like theirs.

- Debrief the activity by asking the following questions:

Did you learn new things about your partner by listening to

him or her?

How could you tell your partner was listening to you?

Did you find someone else in the class who likes many of the

same things that you like?

7. Use children's literature to begin the discussion on the importance of

listening to others. Some examples of books to use are *Won't You Ever Listen?: Social Skill: Listening*, by Carol Cummings (PreK-3rd), and

*Listen, Buddy*, by Helen Lester (infants-preschoolers).

**SAY:** “Thank you for completing the practice activity. We will continue to discuss the skill of ‘Listening to Others’ for the rest of the week.”

**NOTE:** Each day of the week, review the steps of the skill, discuss why it is important to use the skill, and practice when possible.

### Other Ideas for Practice

**NOTE:** As you develop other ideas for practicing the skill, write them here and share them with other staff members in your building.

**For younger students (K-5), use literature to lead a discussion on how to listen to others.** Books by popular children’s author Julia Cook, including *The Worst Day of My Life Ever!*, are recommended.

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