

Thank you

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INTEREST IN
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *Teaching the Social Skills of Academic Interaction, Grades 4-12*, by Harvey "Smokey" Daniels and Nancy Steineke. This lesson shows how to explicitly teach active listening skills, crucial for classroom and life interactions.

LEARN MORE about this title, including Features, Table of Contents, and Reviews.

LESSON II: ACTIVE LISTENING

Why Use It?

Here's a shocker: most students do not come to us as particularly good listeners. And if we don't fix this promptly, many forms of collaboration will be ruled out of our classrooms. Of course, none of us was born knowing how to give our full attention to another person (except, possibly, to our mothers during our first few months of life). It seems that active listening must always be taught explicitly.

But now, in the world where our students are growing up, focused listening seems to be a dying practice. Who gives their full attention to *anything* anymore? It's so retro; multitasking is the preferred modern mind-set. (We don't know about you, but when we multitask we simply do a crappier job at *everything*.)

Suffice it to say, most of our students need remedial listening. This lesson makes a start of it.

When to Use It



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This is an early-in-the-year lesson, for sure. Kids have to get this set of skills down so that they can work effectively with both partners and groups. But one practice session may not be enough. If you are not getting the uptake you desire, try doing a fishbowl demonstration with a skillful student or another adult, asking kids to notice what the two of you are doing, and back-mapping those listening behaviors to the ingredients on the Slide 5 list.

Preparation

- Have an interesting, kid-friendly article copied and ready to go. You'll need a copy for each student.

The Lesson

Slide 1



TITLE: Active Listening

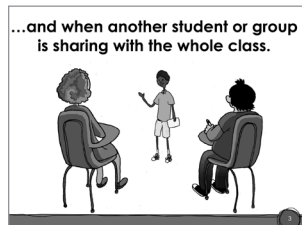
- Sometimes we will open this lesson by saying:
 - *Have you ever heard that expression, being “all ears”? What does that mean? Who can share?*
 - *By the end of this lesson you probably won't actually grow any more ears, but the ones you already have might get a little bigger.*

Slide 2



- *What positive body language do you notice?*

Slide 3



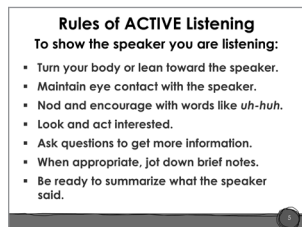
- Take ideas from a few volunteers as you ask:
 - *What do you notice kids doing in these two pictures? Even without hearing any audio, we can infer that these kids are practicing active listening. So let's try it ourselves now.*

Slide 4



- Pass out the article. As they read silently, kids will be using the simplest text annotation model of all—when you notice something that would be fun to talk about with your partner, you stop and mark or underline it.
- Later, pairs can refer back to this section to start or sustain a conversation.

Slide 5



- Here we show the most commonly cited ingredients of active listening.
- Go through them patiently, making sure kids understand what each one means.
- If your students think of new items, cheer their thinking and add them to the list!
- Explain that when the demonstration starts, they should try to use as many of these behaviors as they can.

Slide 6

Choose a highlight of the article to discuss.
Ready to actively listen to each other?
Have a good conversation!



I will leave the rules of active listening up on the screen to remind you.

- Be emphatic and explicit about these steps:
 - Review your notes
 - Together with your partner, pick a topic
- When you are confident that kids understand the task, skip right ahead to Slide 7, so they will have the rules in front of them as they experiment.

Slide 7


Rules of ACTIVE Listening
To show the speaker you are listening:

- Turn your body or lean toward the speaker.
- Maintain eye contact with the speaker.
- Nod and encourage with words like *uh-huh*.
- Look and act interested.
- Ask questions to get more information.
- When appropriate, jot down brief notes.
- Be ready to summarize what the speaker said.

- Keep the rules visible to support kids' practice.

Slide 8

Get ready to summarize your partner's comments right back to him/her.
Take a minute to think.
Put your partner's main ideas into your own words and be as accurate as you can.
Ready?
Summarize!



- *Now we are narrowing in on one vital and challenging aspect of active listening: paraphrasing what your partner said. This really requires attention and focus—if you are just thoughtlessly nodding while your partner speaks (and mainly waiting for your next turn to come), you'll be unable to summarize.*
- Allow kids the think time to recollect and create a gist statement of what their partner said. Encourage them to jot down notes if that is helpful.
- Let the partner with the earliest birthday try it out.

Slide 9

Partners, was the summary accurate?
How could it be even better?
Now switch roles and summarize.



Then, talk about how it went.

- In their pairs, have the kids debrief the process.
- Challenge them to find ways of making the next summary even more accurate when they switch partners.
- Now signal partner #2 to give his or her summary.

Slide 10

Let's hear what some partners had to say about the article. Will someone volunteer?

Before our volunteer shares with us, let's get ready to listen actively.

How are we going to show that we are engaged and attentive?
Remind us.




- Now you shift to whole-class talk, where kids will continue to practice the same active listening habits, just in a larger group setting.
- Set this up by first getting one kid to volunteer to share with the class—but then putting that student “on hold” for a minute while you discuss active listening with the audience members.
- After kids have offered their own reminders for active listening, show the next slide.

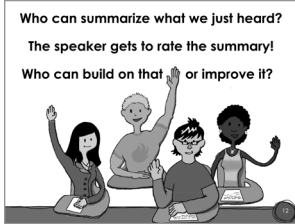
Slide 11

EVERYONE...

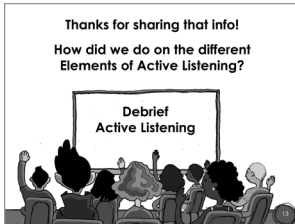
- Turn your body toward the speaker.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Nod and encourage with words like *uh-huh*.
- Look and act interested.
- Jot down brief notes.
- Ask questions to get more information.
- Be ready to summarize what the speaker said.



- This is basically the earlier active listening ingredients list (with a few tweaks to better represent large groups).
- Kids should be ready to hear the volunteer's report, using their best active listening skills.

Slide 12

→ Now invite your volunteer to share.

Slide 13

- When the volunteer is finished, get someone to start summarizing.
- Invite other kids to join in and improve it.
- Keep asking the volunteer if the summaries are accurate, and seek more students to clarify, refine, and improve the summary.

Additional Suggestion

- Using the list from Slide 11, have kids reflect on their success in using the other ingredients of active listening.

Further Comments**Slide 14**

Active Listening is something kids will depend on—and something that requires plenty of practice. You can redo this lesson with different partners and topics. You can do shorter, more targeted minilessons on other active listening “subskills,” such as body language, supportive language, or asking questions.