

Social and Emotional Learning

Lesson Title: Listening and Me

Grade Level: Middle School

Project and Purpose

Students identify good listening skills and create and analyze scenarios that illustrate good and poor listening skills.

Essential Question

How can we improve our listening skills?

Materials

- Good Listeners... slide / handout
- Listening Self-Assessment — one per student
- Listening Scenario Worksheet — one per group

Teacher

1. Introduce today's topic by telling students that according to a 2012 article in *Forbes Magazine*, good listeners do the following:
 - Face the speaker.
 - Maintain eye contact.
 - Are attentive but relaxed.
 - Keep an open mind. This means no passing judgement on what the person is saying with words, facial expressions, body language, or sounds.
 - Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.
 - Never interrupt or impose their "solutions" or stories. When you listen, you should not talk.
 - Wait for the speaker to pause before asking questions and ask questions ONLY to ensure understanding.
 - Try to feel what the speaker is feeling. This is called empathy. Empathy goes a long way to create a better experience for the people involved.
2. Ask students to describe how these skills make a person a good listener and why listening skills are important. What else would they add to this list?
3. Have students form groups of two or three and distribute the Listening Self-Assessment List to each person. Tell students that rather than taking the assessment, they are to do the following:
 - Read the assessment with their partners.
 - Apply the good listening skills list to each statement in the self-assessment to analyze if the statement is a depiction of someone with good listening skills or poor listening skills. Explain why/why not.

Good Listeners...

✓ **Face the speaker.**

✓ **Maintain eye contact.**

✓ **Are attentive but relaxed.**

✓ **Keep an open mind. This means no passing judgement on what the person is saying with words, facial expressions, body language, or sounds.**

✓ **Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.**

✓ **Never interrupt or impose their “solutions” or stories. When you listen, you should not talk.**

✓ **Wait for the speaker to pause before asking questions and ask questions ONLY to ensure understanding.**

✓ **Try to feel what the speaker is feeling. This is called empathy. Empathy goes a long way to create a better experience for the people involved.**

Listening Self-Assessment

Directions

First, work with your group to apply the Good Listeners criteria to each statement to determine if this statement exemplifies depicts a person with good or poor listening skills.

On your own, read each statement and rate yourself according to the scale where 5 = Always and 1 = Never.

- I am particularly good at being quiet when others talk. 5 4 3 2 1
- When a teacher starts to lecture, I turn off. 5 4 3 2 1
- When a friend talks, I often check my phone. 5 4 3 2 1
- When a parent talks, I often check my phone. 5 4 3 2 1
- When a teacher talks, I often check my phone. 5 4 3 2 1
- I like making eye contact with whoever is speaking. 5 4 3 2 1
- I like to close my eyes when someone speaks to me. 5 4 3 2 1
- When someone talks, I need to move around to listen better. 5 4 3 2 1
- When someone talks, I try to stop moving and face the person. 5 4 3 2 1
- When someone talks, I face the person. 5 4 3 2 1
- I tend to nod while people talk to me. 5 4 3 2 1
- I tend to fidget with stuff when someone talks to me. 5 4 3 2 1
- I tend to ask a lot of questions when somebody talks to me. 5 4 3 2 1
- I don't give advice unless someone asks me to. 5 4 3 2 1
- I tend to finish people's sentences for them. 5 4 3 2 1
- Whenever possible, I throw in a joke when people are talking. 5 4 3 2 1
- I tend to begin talking before other people finish speaking. 5 4 3 2 1
- I use the words "I" and "me" a lot. 5 4 3 2 1

Listening Scenarios

Names of people in group: _____

1. In the first box, write a scenario that illustrates good OR bad listening skills. A scenario is a very short story (about 1 minute long) that features two or three characters. There is a problem, but it does not get resolved. The scenario can reflect events that happen in school but should not use familiar names.

Scenario example

Raul ran up to his best friend Claudio to tell him his good news: he had made the soccer team! Claudio's eyes were glued to the game on his phone. Claudio fist bumped Raul and said, "What's up, man?" but never looked up from his phone. Raul said, "I made the team! I didn't think the coach was going to take me, especially after how I messed up the last day of try outs!" He tried showing Claudio how he had missed two of the shots on goal, but Claudio was into his game. Claudio said, "Cool, man. Congratulations and all," but Raul thought he might be talking to one of the characters in the game, not him.

Scenario

2. Hand your scenario to another group. The second group's job is to analyze and write two or three sentences in the box below describing the listening skill or skills that are shown being done well or done poorly.