

Unit C: Communication

Lesson 8: Effective Listening Skills

Student Learning Objectives:

Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1. Explain three modes of listening.
2. Identify barriers of effective listening.
3. Employ techniques for becoming a more effective listener.

Recommended Teaching Time: 2 hours

List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities:

- Writing surface
- PowerPoint Projector
- PowerPoint Slides
- Transparency Masters
- Copies of student worksheets
- Markers
- Paper
- News article

Terms: The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- Active listening
- Competitive listening
- Passive listening

Interest Approach:

Optional Interest Approach:

Use the following optional activity as students arrive to class. Use TM: 8-1. Greet students as they enter, and instruct them to formulate a response in their notes.

Script for Teacher: *As you enter the room, let's get focused on today's learning by quietly answering the questions displayed. Pick two of the three that you would like to answer. Just capture your basic thoughts in your notes. When you are finished, you may compare with a neighbor.*

Show TM: 8-1 (PowerPoint Slide 2) or place on writing surface.

- Are "listening" and "hearing" the same thing? Why or why not?
- People screen out or change the intended meaning of what they hear in more than 70 percent of communications. Do you agree? What does this tell us?

- “We were given two ears, but only one mouth, because listening is twice as hard as talking.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

Process students’ responses.

Script for Teacher: *Who has a “super-thought” to share?*

Suggested Interest Approach:

Read an interesting news article from the internet or local news that takes about one minute to complete. Choose an article that has plenty of details from which to ask questions. When finished, ask the students four to five questions about the reading to assess how well they listened. Do not tell them ahead of time that they will be quizzed.

Script for Teacher: *Lend me your ears. I have something to share with you...*

Reveal the correct answers to the class and recognize anyone who received a perfect score. Ask the class,

Script for Teacher: *What made this activity difficult?*

Script for Teacher: *Some of you did very well. How were you able to do so well?*

Script for Teacher: *If we were to do this again, what would you do differently?*

Script for Teacher: *What skills that you just used will be beneficial to your future success?*

Establish the big-picture goal of today’s lesson by having the students answer your questions aloud in unison.

Script for Teacher: *Today, we will strive to become active listeners. Active what?*

Students respond with “listeners.”

Script for Teacher: *What kind of listeners?*

Students respond with “active.”

Establish student motivation for learning by having them work in small groups to brainstorm why it is important to be a good listener. Students can only use pictures to represent their ideas. Pass out markers and large sheets of paper.

Script for Teacher: *For the next four minutes, we need to use our creativity and teamwork skills to visually represent the benefits of effective listening. My question for you is “What are the benefits of effective listening? In other words, why is it important to listen?”*

Split into groups of three to four students.

Script for Teacher: *Use your collective creativity to draw the benefits of listening.*

In each group, have the student with the shortest commute to school report back to the group. Anticipated responses: better relationships with others, improved grades by listening to teachers, increase your knowledge, more successful in a career, solve conflicts with others easier.

Make the transition into the lesson's content.

Script for Teacher: *If these great benefits interest you, then I encourage you to open your ears and listen to today's learning!*

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Explain three modes of listening.

Anticipated Problem: What are the three modes of listening?

Use WS: 8-1. Ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the room and read the role-play for competitive listening.

Script for Teacher: *Who is willing to display their acting talents for the class?*

Following the role-play, ask:

Script for Teacher: *Have you dealt with people like this? What frustrates you about them?*

Script for Teacher: *As we capture the first mode of listening in our notes, think of someone you know who has listened in these ways. Maybe even you have listened in these ways at times.*

I. Three basic modes of listening

(TM: 8-2 or PowerPoint Slide 3)

A. Competitive listening

1. Pretend to pay attention while waiting to give our own opinion.

Using WS: 8-1 again, ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the room and read the role play for passive listening. Following the role-play, ask:

Script for Teacher: *Have you dealt with people like this? What is the problem when the listener does not respond?*

(TM: 8-2 or PowerPoint Slide 4)

B. Passive listening

1. Attentive, but do not restate or reflect the message.

One last time, ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the room and read the role-play for active listening on WS: 8-1. Following the role-play, ask,

Script for Teacher: *What did this listener do differently than the first two?*

(TM: 8-2 or PowerPoint Slide 5)

- C. Active listening
 - 1. Genuinely interested in message.
 - 2. Check for understanding before responding.
 - 3. Restate message and reflect it back to the sender—ex. “What I hear you saying is...”

Conduct a quick review of the material.

Script for Teacher: *Turn to your neighbor and tell them the three modes of listening.*

Celebrate success.

Script for Teacher: *Tell your partner, “I hear what you are saying!”*

Transition into Objective Two.

Script for Teacher: *Our goal is obviously to become active listeners. However, sometimes various things can interfere with our ability to do just that. Let’s take a look at some barriers to effective listening.*

Objective 2: Identify barriers to effective listening.

Anticipated Problem: What are the barriers to effective listening?

Put students in groups of four. Have each group select a recorder and another person in the group to lead the discussion.

Script for Teacher: *I want you to get into groups of four and select someone in the groups to serve as the recorder (note taker) and another who will lead the discussion. Once you have selected these two individuals when I say go, I want each group to answer the following question: “What are the barriers to effective Listening?” When I say the word “LISTEN” you will have 3 minutes to develop your list of barriers. Please keep in mind these can be things that may prevent you from being an effective listener. What are the questions? LISTEN!!!*

At the end of 3 minutes have the recorders keep their notes that were taken hidden and begin discussing the barriers to effective listening.

II. Barriers to effective listening

(TM: 8-3 or PowerPoint Slide 6)

- A. Your physical and mental state
 - 1. Physical—tired, hungry.
 - 2. Mental—thinking about personal issues.

(TM: 8-3 or PowerPoint Slide 7)

- B. Your prejudices
1. Allowing own personal beliefs to judge the speaker.

(TM: 8-3 or PowerPoint Slide 8)

- C. The speaker
1. Difficult to hear or understand—monotone, low volume.
 2. Poor body language—little eye contact or wild gestures.
 3. Use of jargon or complex ideas.

(TM: 8-3 or PowerPoint Slide 9)

- D. The environment
1. Temperature, light, noise, space, seating, other people.

Script for Teacher: Let's compare what we have just discussed with what the recorders have in their notes. Will the leaders of each group please share what was recorded from each group on what you thought were barriers to effective listening.

As the leaders of each group share their list compare their ideas with what has been discussed and reinforce thoughts and ideas presented by each group.

Transition into Objective Three.

Script for Teacher: *Now that we have identified some things that can get in our way, let's explore some ways to become better listeners and deal with these barriers.*

Objective 3: Employ techniques for becoming a more effective listener.

Anticipated Problem: What are some techniques for becoming a more effective listener?

Have the following list of words written on colored sheets of paper around the room. Place only one word on each piece of paper and write it small enough so that the students cannot read it from their seats. Post the words upside down, under tables, on the ceiling, on the floor, etc.

- Feedback
- Nodding
- Interrupt
- Listener
- Imagine
- Personal
- Major
- Conclusions
- Physical

Pass out WS: 8-2. Give the students three minutes to go get the information they need to complete the worksheet. Divide the class into teams of three to four

students. Optional: provide a reward to the team who can accomplish the task the fastest. Be on the lookout for safety.

Script for Teacher: *This next activity requires your desire to work together and work fast. You may have noticed some colored sheets of paper around the room today, and are asking yourselves, “Hmm, I wonder what those are.”*

Script for Teacher: *We will be using them for the next activity. As you can see, the worksheet has blanks on it. The colored sheets have very small words written on them. Use the words around the room to fill in those blanks. Here is the catch: only one person can be at a colored sheet at a time. You must wait until he/she has left it before you can look at it. Once the first person has found a word and told it to his/her group, a new team member must go in search of the second, and so on. Do not remove the colored sheets from where they are posted. Be careful as you make your way around the room. What questions can I answer? Ready, set, go!*

The missing words are in parentheses.

(PowerPoint Slide 10)

III. Becoming a more effective listener

- A. Give the speaker and yourself (feedback).
 - 1. Maintaining eye contact and good posture, smiling, and (nodding) the head.
 - 2. Comment or ask questions, but do not (interrupt).
 - a. Tell me more about....
 - b. It is my sense that....
 - c. In what way?
 - d. How so?

(PowerPoint Slide 11)

- B. Be a “selfish” (listener).
 - 1. (Imagine) yourself using the information—What is in it for me?
 - 2. Relate the information to (personal) experiences.
- C. Stay focused and listen for (major) ideas.
- D. Avoid jumping to (conclusions) and overreacting emotionally.
- E. Adjust the (physical) environment.

Share the correct answers. Instruct the teams to read through their list and identify any tips for effective listening they do not understand. Ask them to share with the class, and have other teams attempt to answer their questions.

Script for Teacher: *In your teams, read through the tips for becoming an effective listener on your worksheet. Star any that need clarification.*

Script for Teacher: *What questions can we answer about the tips?*

If groups need clarification, ask:

Script for Teacher: *Can anyone help us out with this one?*

Review/Summary: Use the questions on **PowerPoint Slide 12** to review the objectives of this lesson.

Time permitting, use the same activity as the interest approach, but use a different news article and create questions to ask the students to see how well they listened.

Have the students create 10 questions and answers that address today' lesson. Use the following example: Question: You should comment or ask questions, but don't do this. Answer: interrupt.

Students could start on this assignment in class if time permits. Use it during the next class session to review prior learning.

For an additional homework assignment, give each student a copy of WS: 8-3, which is a self-evaluation of listening effectiveness.

Application: Have the students create skits that demonstrate the three modes of listening: competitive, passive, and active. Apply them to certain settings they randomly draw, such as a classroom, dining room, etc.

Evaluation: Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. A sample test is included.

Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Multiple Choice

1. B
2. A
3. A

Part Two: Short Answer

4. Three of the following: temperature, light, noise, space, seating, and other people all influence the ability to listen.
5. Five of the following:
 - Give the speaker and yourself feedback.
 - Maintain eye contact and good posture, smiling, and nodding the head.
 - Comment or ask questions, but do not interrupt.
 - Be a “selfish” listener.
 - Imagine yourself using the information: What’s in it for me?
 - Relate the information to personal experiences.
 - Stay focused and listen for major ideas.
 - Avoid jumping to conclusions and overreacting emotionally.
 - Adjust the physical environment.

Effective Listening Skills

Part One: Multiple Choice.

1. Namir pretends to pay attention while awaiting to give his own opinion. This describes what mode of listening?
 - a. Active
 - b. Competitive
 - c. Passive
 - d. Ready
2. Sindo restates and reflects back to Cheydan what he has said. This describes what mode of listening?
 - a. Active
 - b. Competitive
 - c. Passive
 - d. Ready
3. Which of the following is not one of the barriers to effective communication discussed in class?
 - a. Asking questions
 - b. Personal prejudices
 - c. The listener's mental and physical state
 - d. The speaker's body language

Part Two: Short Answer.

Instructions: Provide information to answer the following questions.

4. List three ways to environment influences how effectively you listen.

5. List five tips discussed in class for becoming a more effective listener.

- Are “listening” and “hearing” the same thing? Why or why not?
- People screen out or change the intended meaning of what they hear in more than 70 percent of communications. Do you agree? What does this tell us?
- “We were given two ears, but only one mouth, because listening is twice as hard as talking.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

THREE BASIC MODES OF LISTENING

➤ Competitive listening

- ✓ Pretend to pay attention while waiting to give our own opinion.

➤ Passive listening

- ✓ Attentive, but do not restate or reflect the message.

➤ Active listening

- ✓ Genuinely interested in message
- ✓ Check for understanding before responding
- ✓ Restate message and reflect it back to sender—
ex. “What I hear you saying is...”

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Your physical and mental state
 - ✓ Physical—tired, hungry
 - ✓ Mental—thinking about personal issues

- Your prejudices
 - ✓ Allowing own personal beliefs to judge the speaker

- The speaker
 - ✓ Difficult to hear or understand—monotone, low volume.
 - ✓ Poor body language—little eye contact or wild gestures.
 - ✓ Use of jargon or complex ideas.

- The environment
 - ✓ Temperature, light, noise, space, seating, other people

ROLE PLAY

Role play for competitive listening:

Student 1: Hey, I have this great idea. We should raise chickens.

Student 2: Chickens—why would we want to do anything with those animals?
What we need to do is raise a crop, like wheat.

Student 1: Really, chickens are becoming popular with our students. Some of them are worth a lot of money.

Student 2: Growing wheat will raise a lot of money that we really need. And, besides, I like crops better than livestock.

Role play for passive listening:

Student 1: Hey, I have this great idea. We should raise goats.

Student 2: (nodding head) Yeah.

Student 1: We have a lot of students with goats and they make great teaching animals. People come from all over to learn more about goats.

Student 2: (nodding head) Yeah.

Role play for active listening:

Student 1: Hey, I have this great idea. We should raise sheep.

Student 2: Why do you say that?

Student 1: Because sheep make great teaching animals. They would make great projects for the students.

Student 2: In what way?

Student 1: They require little money to get started, and are easy to take care of.

Student 2: Sounds like you really think raising sheep would go over well. We could research it some more and make a decision.

WS: 8-2

Directions:

Fill in the blanks by using the words posted around the room. Add this sheet to your notes.

III. Becoming a more effective listener

- A. Give the speaker and yourself _____.
 - 1. Maintain eye contact and good posture, smiling, and _____ the head.
 - 2. Comment or ask questions, but do not _____.
 - a. Tell me more about...
 - b. It is my sense that...
 - c. In what way?
 - d. How so?
- B. Be a “selfish” _____
 - 1. _____ yourself using the information—What is in it for me?
 - 2. Relate the information to _____ experiences.
- C. Stay focused and listen for _____ ideas.
- D. Avoid jumping to _____ and overreacting emotionally.
- E. Adjust the _____ environment.

SELF EVALUATION OF LISTENING EFFECTIVENESS

Directions:

Rate yourself in the following areas. Be honest with yourself, and carefully reflect on your listening abilities.

1 = Never 2 = Seldom 3 = Sometimes 4 = Usually 5 = Almost Always

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I do not overreact to emotional statements. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I listen carefully, even when I disagree with something. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I listen for what is not being said. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I give my full attention and am not preoccupied with other concerns. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I show appropriate non-verbal responses, such as nodding and facial expressions. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I ask relevant questions to clarify what the speaker is saying. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I do not change the topic when someone is speaking to me. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I listen more than I talk. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I accurately recall comments at a later date. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I maintain eye contact with the speaker. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I do not interrupt. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I listen for key facts and phrases. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I repeat verbally and in my head what the speaker is saying. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am able to tune out distractions. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I make an effort to seem interested in what others have to say. |