

1.3 ACTIVE LISTENING

Lesson Summary

Students will be able to notice, describe, and use active listening with each other. Listening is truly a challenging activity involving self-control and social awareness. Instead of listening, people often spend time thinking about their ideas so they are prepared to say something when the other person is done talking. Students will learn to listen carefully so that they can paraphrase what their classmates say. This active listening will be helpful as students work with their peers in their science lessons and service-learning experience.

(Approx. total time: 30 minutes)



Social and Emotional Learning Skills

Social and Emotional Competencies

Relationship Skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Social Awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Excerpted text from CASEL (2017).

Objectives

By the end of the lesson students will

Know (facts/information):

- Definitions of active listening and paraphrase.

Understand (concepts, big ideas):

- The best solutions arise when people with different knowledge and perspectives listen to each other, communicate respectfully, and collaborate to solve problems.

Be able to do (skills/behaviors):

- Notice, describe, and use active listening behaviors with each other.
- Listen actively (MNPS SEL "I Can" Statement).

Vocabulary

- **active listening:** refers to a kind of communication in which each person pays attention to the person talking well enough that he or she could repeat what the speaker is saying, if asked
- **paraphrase:** restating someone's ideas and thoughts in your own words in a way that shows understanding and respect for what they said

Materials

- Teacher Materials:
 - Active Listening Diagram - To be used on an interactive whiteboard or recreated as an anchor chart.

Instructional Strategies

Link to Prior Knowledge (5 minutes)

Model what it looks like to engage in active listening.

Today we are going to talk about what it means to be an active listener. Listening actively is very important when we are working together to accomplish a goal. I'm going to model what it looks like to listen actively. I want you to use your observation skills and notice how I act.

Model active listening with another adult or student. Make eye contact with the person talking. Turn to face the other person and nod to acknowledge what the other person is saying. Wait until the speaker is finished, and then, ask a follow-up question.

Have students describe what active listening looked like.

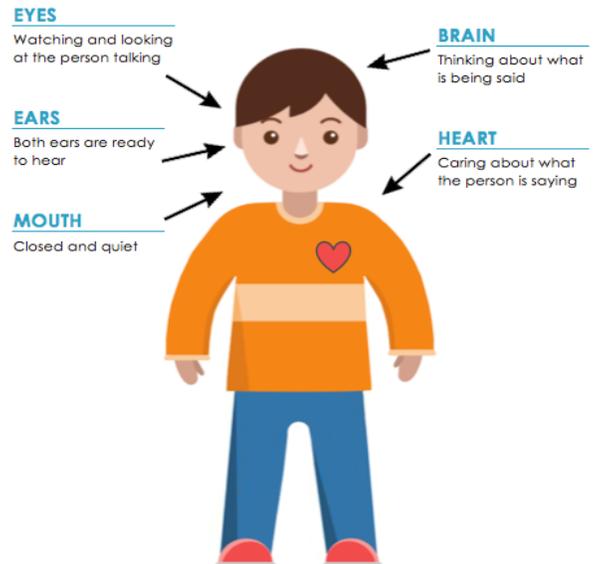
What did you notice about my body language as I listened actively to ____? Can you help me fill out this diagram? What did you notice about my eyes? What did you notice about my mouth? What were my ears doing? What do you think was going on in my mind? What about my heart?

Instruction (20 minutes)

Fill out the diagram of a person as a class.

Lead the students in a process of filling out a diagram of a person. The diagram can be recreated on an anchor chart or projected on an interactive whiteboard. Teachers may choose to give the person a name (e.g., Lee the Listener, Logan the Listener, Hannah Hears) to refer back to throughout the lesson and year.

Goal responses will highlight each active listening behavior: eyes watching, mouth closed, brain thinking about what is being said, ears ready to hear, heart showing caring for the person talking.



Introduce the concept of paraphrasing. Demonstrate how good active listening means that you can paraphrase your partner's ideas.

One way to know that you're actively listening is that you are able to paraphrase what you hear. Can anyone tell me what it means to paraphrase?

When we paraphrase what someone else said, we are restating their ideas and thoughts in our own words. This means we are really thinking carefully about what the other person is saying (not generating our own thoughts and ideas while we listen). Listening this carefully is a sign that we care about the person who is talking and understand what they said. We want our partner to feel heard and respected. Now to show my heart cared and my brain was thinking about what was said, I would like to say what ____ said in my own words. Can you help me paraphrase what ____ said?

Work together to paraphrase the other person's story. After listening to student contributions, give a paraphrased version of one or two sentences.

Ask two students to model active listening and paraphrasing.

Call on two students and assign one to be the speaker and one to be the listener. If needed, explain that modeling active listening means that you, as the teacher, will suggest a topic. (Potential topics include details about a recent family trip, their last birthday, or their favorite school subject.) Then, the speaker will talk about that topic and the listener will demonstrate active listening behaviors.

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Now I am going to ask two of you to model what active listening and paraphrasing look like. Who would like to model this for the class?

As _____ and _____ model, I want you all to watch. What do you notice? Pay attention to what their bodies are doing. What signs do we see that they are listening actively?

After the two students model, ask the students to share what they noticed about the model pair. Repeat the student responses and gesture to the board or anchor chart to support learning.

Students should describe the behaviors they notice. Then, invite the students to identify a partner with whom to practice active listening.

Have students find a partner, practice active listening skills, and paraphrase what their partner says.

Now we are all going to practice. I am going to count down from 5 to 0. When I get to 0, I want each of you to be sitting with a partner to practice active listening.

With your partner, you are going to practice active listening while discussing _____. I would like one person to discuss this topic while the other uses their new active listening skills. After the first person is done speaking, the listener will paraphrase what their partner said. When I say, "go," you will practice with your partner while I walk around and observe.

Circulate and make sure each partner has the chance to be the speaker and the active listener. Be sure the students are also paraphrasing.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask the students to reflect on their experience using active listening and paraphrasing.

Select from the questions below as a closing for the lesson:

- What did you notice about active listening?
- What did you notice your partner doing with their body that let you know they were listening actively to you?
- How did you feel when you were talking and your partner was listening actively to you?
- Was it easy or hard to paraphrase what your partner told you?
- How did active listening help you to paraphrase what your partner told you?

I am glad we got to practice new skills today. We will practice active listening and paraphrasing throughout the year, especially when we work as a group on our service-learning project and during our science lessons on renewable and non-renewable resources. These skills will come in handy when we discuss problems and solutions because you all will have many ideas to share and listening actively helps us learn and shows that we care about each other's ideas.

Revisit the active listening diagram your class created throughout the year when your class is going to be working in pairs, groups or even preparing for a guest to come speak to your class.

Assessment

Notice and record instances when you see students using active listening with their peers.

Optional Extensions

Adapt the closing activity to match the needs of your class or individual students. This could be a group discussion or students could be asked to turn and talk with a partner to increase accountability. This discussion could be extended into a brief journal entry or exit ticket about their experience with active listening and paraphrasing. A sample topic may include: How did active listening feel similar to and different from how you usually listen?

References

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2017). *Core social and emotional learning competencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies/>

Truesdale, S. P. (1990). Whole-body listening: Developing active auditory skills. *Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools*, 21: 183-184. Note. Some teachers prefer to call active listening “whole-body listening,” as described in this article by Truesdale.

Planning Page

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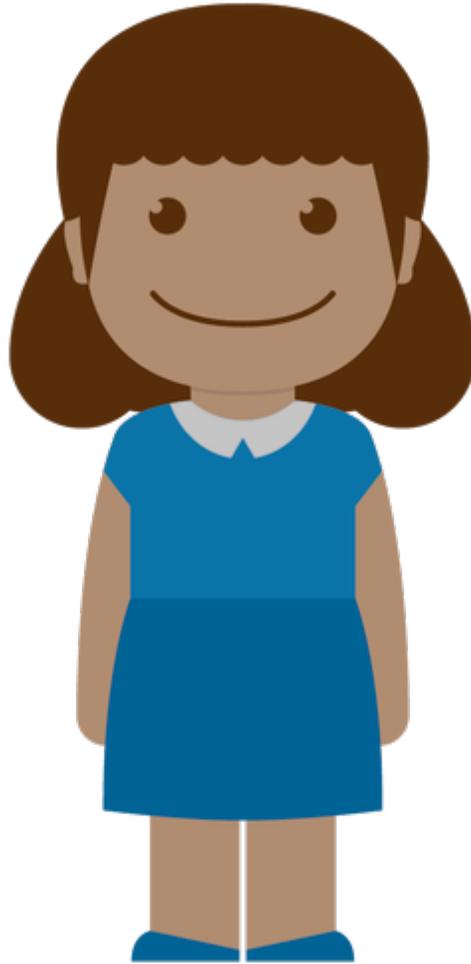
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EYES

Watching and looking at the person talking

BRAIN

Thinking about what is being said

EARS

Both ears are ready to hear

HEART

Caring about what the person is saying

MOUTH

Closed and quiet

