



High School

National FFA Organization

## Lesson HS.93

# EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

**Unit.** Stage Three of Development—DO

**Problem Area.** How Do I Effectively Communicate with Others to Accomplish the Vision?

**Precepts.** A5: Communicate effectively with others.

**National Standards.** NL-ENG.K-12.12 — Applying Language Skills — Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

**Student Learning Objectives.** As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

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





**Time.** Instruction time for this lesson: 100 minutes.



## Resources

Maxwell, John C. *Developing the Leader Within You*. Nashville, Tennessee. Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993.



## Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Overhead projector and transparencies
- ✓ News article (or children’s book, poem, or magazine article) with prepared questions
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Large sheets of paper
- ✓ Nine sheets of colored paper with words posted around room (see objective three)
- ✓ HS.93.AS.A—two per class
- ✓ HS.93.AS.B—one per student
- ✓ HS.93.AS.C—one per student
- ✓ HS.93.Assess—one per student
- ✓ HS.93.TM.A
- ✓ HS.93.TM.B
- ✓ HS.93.TM.C

*Note: See Objective Three for room setup before students arrive.*



**Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Competitive listening
- ▶ Passive listening



## Interest Approach

*Optional Interest Approach:*

*Use the following optional activity as “bell work” as students arrive to class. Use HS.93.TM.A. Greet students as they enter, and instruct them to formulate a response in their notes.*



As I take attendance, let’s get focused on today’s learning by quietly answering the questions on the overhead projector. 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 HS.93.TM.A 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.

 Who has a “super-thought” to share?

*Suggested Interest Approach:*

*Read an interesting news article that takes about one minute to complete. (Other ideas: excerpt from children’s book, poem, magazine article.) 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.*

 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,*

 What made this activity difficult?

 Some of you did very well. How were you able to do so well?

 If we were to do this again, what would you do differently?

 What skills that you just used will be beneficial to your future success?

*Establish the big-picture goal of today’s lesson by using a Choral Response Moment.*

 Today, we will strive to become active listeners. Active what?

*Students respond with “listeners.”*

 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. Use a Picasso Moment to facilitate the brainstorming. Students can only use pictures to represent their ideas. Pass out markers and large sheets of paper.*

 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. Play upbeat music while students draw.

 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 include: 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.*

 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.

*Use HS.93.AS.A. Ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the room and read the role-play for competitive listening.*

 Who is willing to display their acting talents for the class?

*Following the role-play, ask:*

 Have you dealt with people like this? What frustrates you about them?

*Use HS.93.TM.B.*

 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

#### A. **Competitive Listening**

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

*Using HS.93.AS.A 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:*



 Have you dealt with people like this? What’s the problem when the listener doesn’t respond?

**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 HS.93.AS.A. Following the role-play, ask,*

 What did this listener do differently than the first two?

**C. *Active Listening***

1. Genuinely interested in message
2. Check for understanding before responding
3. Restate message and reflect it back to sender—i.e., “What I hear you saying is ...”

*Conduct a quick review of material.*

 Turn to your neighbor and tell them the three modes of listening.

*Celebrate success.*

 Tell your partner, “I hear what you’re saying!”

*Transition into Objective Two.*

 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.

*Use a Little Professor Moment to present the content for Objective Two. The first person in the pair will listen to and teach A and B while the second person will handle C and D.*

 In your pairs, select one person to be Einstein and the other to be Edison. Einsteins, listen up! Edisons, you can zone out and daydream. Edisons, whatever you do, do not pay attention to the overhead projector or my voice.

*Use HS.93.TM.C.*

### II. Barriers to Effective Listening

- A. Your physical and mental state
  1. Physical—tired, hungry
  2. Mental—thinking about personal issues
- B. Your prejudices
  1. Allowing own personal beliefs to judge the speaker



*Instruct the Einsteins to teach A and B to the Edisons.*

 Einsteins, you are responsible for the Edisons' education. Teach well!

*Switch roles.*

 Edisons, listen up! Einsteins, you can zone out and daydream. Einsteins, whatever you do, do not pay attention to the overhead projector or my voice.

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

*Instruct the Edisons to teach C and D to the Einsteins.*

 Edisons, you are responsible for the Einsteins' education. Good luck!

*Transition into Objective Three.*

 Now that we've 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.

*Use a modified Go Get It Moment to present the content for Objective Three. 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 HS.93.AS.B. Give the students three minutes to go get the information they need to complete the activity sheet. 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.*

 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.”

 We will be using them for the next activity. As you can see, the activity sheet 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’s the catch: only one person from your team can be out of his or her seat at a time. Also, only one person can be at a colored sheet at a time. You must wait until he or she has left it before you can look at it. Once the first person has found a word and told it to his or 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.*

### 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 don’t (interrupt).
    - a. Tell me more about ...; It’s my sense that ...; In what way?; How so?
- B. Be a “selfish” (listener).
  - 1. (Imagine) yourself using the information—What’s 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.*

 In your teams, read through the tips for becoming an effective listener on your activity sheet. Star any that need clarification.

 What questions can we answer about the tips?

*If groups need clarification, ask:*

 Can anyone help us out with this one?





## Review/Summary

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

*Use a A and Q Moment for homework. Have the students create 10 Jeopardy answers and their corresponding questions that address today's lesson. Use the following example: Answer: You should comment or ask questions, but don't do this: What is 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 HS.93.AS.C, which is a self-evaluation of listening effectiveness.*



## Application

### ► Extended Classroom Activity:

*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 doctor's office, kindergarten room, family dinner, etc.*

### ► FFA Activity:

*In teams, instruct students to develop a top-five list of FFA activities that require effective listening and give their reasoning.*

### ► SAE Activity:

*Write two paragraphs that explain how effective listening is critical to students' SAEs.*

### ► Connections to Other Lessons:

*HS.50.Lesson: Communicating With Customers*

*HS.52.Lesson: Meeting New People*

*HS.53.Lesson: Beginning Conversations*

*HS.57.Lesson: Building Mutual Interest*

*HS.77.Lesson: Communication Methods on Teams*

*HS.89.Lesson: Conducting a One-on-One Visit*



## ✓ Evaluation

Use HS.93.Assess to evaluate student mastery of content.

### Answers to Assessment:

#### 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 don't 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

Instructions: Write the capital letter of the correct response.

1. Colin pretends to pay attention while waiting to give his own opinion. This describes what mode of listening?
  - A. Active
  - B. Competitive
  - C. Passive
  - D. Ready
2. Madeline restates and reflects back to Carl 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 the 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

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## ◆ 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—i.e.,  
“What I hear you saying is ...”



# BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

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- ◆ Your physical and mental state
  - Physical—tired, hungry
  - Mental—thinking about personal issues
- ◆ Your prejudices
  - Allowing own personal beliefs to judge the speaker



## ROLE PLAY

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### ► Role Play for Competitive Listening

Student #1: Hey, I have this great idea for our FFA chapter. We should host a guinea pig show.

Student #2: Guinea pigs—why would we want to do anything with those rodents? What we need to do is have a fun, recreational activity like a dance.

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

Student #2: A dance will raise a lot of money that we really need. And, besides, I like to get my swerve on.

### ► Role Play for Passive Listening

Student #1: Hey, I have this great idea for our FFA chapter. We should host a hamster show.

Student #2: (nodding head) Yeah.

Student #1: We have a lot of students with hamsters and they make great show animals. People come from all over to see a hamster show.

Student #2: (nodding head) Yeah.

### ► Role Play for Active Listening

Student #1: Hey, I have this great idea for our FFA chapter. We should host a gerbil show.

Student #2: Why do you say that?

Student #1: Because gerbils make great show animals. They love to strut their stuff and show off for the audience. They would make great projects for the students.

Student #2: In what way?

Student #1: They require little money to get started, are easy to take care of, and reproduce fast!

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



**► 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 don't \_\_\_\_\_.
    - a. Tell me more about ...; It's my sense that ...; In what way?; How so?
- B. Be a "selfish" \_\_\_\_\_.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ yourself using the information—What's 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.                  |

