



## TeachableMoment Classroom Lessons

Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility

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# ACTIVE LISTENING (FOR GRADES 3-6)

Submitted by [Morningside Center](#) [1] on Mon, 11/07/2011 - 12:00

**Area:** Social & Emotional Learning

**Grade Level:** Elementary School

**Topic:** Active Listening

**Description:**

In this lesson, students practice active listening by paraphrasing what they hear.

### Learning Outcome

Students will practice active listening by paraphrasing what they hear.

### Materials Needed

Agenda written on chalkboard or chart paper

Active Listening Checklist (see below)

This lesson calls for a role play that you have arranged in advance with a student.

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## GATHERING:

### FAVORITE COLORS LISTENING GAME

Explain to students that today we're going to practice listening to one another by repeating what we've heard to show that we've really heard it.

Have a student tell what his or her favorite color is and then call on the next person to speak. The next person to speak repeats what the first person said and then adds what his or her favorite color is. That person calls on a third person to speak who repeats only what the person right before him - the second person - said and adds what his or her favorite color is.

If students forget what the person before them said or start to tell their favorite colors without first repeating what they have just heard, gently point it out and ask them to try again.

Continue with other statements such as, "On Saturday, I like to .... "

### Check Agenda

Go over the day's plan and ask if it is okay.

## Introduction to Active Listening

Role-play active listening with a student. Ask the student to talk about a strong feeling she/he has been having lately. Model paying good attention and paraphrase what the student is saying.

**A. Discuss:** How did I show (name) I was listening? How did I respond to what (name) was telling me?

**B. Present the rules for active listening below and make sure students are clear about the meaning of each one.**

### Active Listening Checklist

1. Focus on the person who is speaking.
2. Show by your tone of voice, your friendly expression, and your "body language" that you are interested and want to be helpful.
3. Don't interrupt.
4. Accept the person's feelings without judgment.
5. Paraphrase what the person has said to be sure you understand.

## ACTIVE LISTENING PRACTICE

**Introduction:** Explain that students are going to practice paraphrasing by working with a partner. One person will talk about a topic you suggest and the other will paraphrase. You will keep time.

**A. Divide the class into pairs.** Using a topic from below, have one person talk for one minute and have his or her partner paraphrase.

- What is a strong feeling you've been having lately?
- If you were granted three wishes, what would they be?

**B. Have the pairs give each other feedback.** Ask the people who did the paraphrasing to tell their partners what it was like for them to do this. Did they have trouble listening? Did they have trouble remembering what they heard? How did they feel about the experience? Then have the people who did the talking say what it was like for them to have their partner listen and paraphrase.

**C. Switch roles and repeat.**

**D. Discuss:**

- Was it easy or hard to paraphrase?
- How did it feel to do it?
- When you were the speaker, what was it like to hear yourself paraphrased?

**E. Repeat with other topics if desired.**

**F. Summarize:** Active listening is a tool that helps people clarify their understanding of one another and is essential in solving conflicts.

### Evaluation

Ask a few volunteers:

- Is it easier for you to listen or to speak?
- What was one thing you learned from today's lesson?
- What was one thing that you need to practice more?

## **CLOSING**

Go-round. In one word, say something you are looking forward to.

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## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:**

### **ACTIVE LISTENING PRACTICE**

Have students discuss an interesting topic either in the whole class or in small groups. Before speakers can give their own views, they must paraphrase the statement of the preceding speaker. This is especially helpful when a discussion becomes controversial and students have a hard time listening to different points of view.

Possible topic: Some people think schools should be in session 12 months a year. What do you think?

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*We welcome your thoughts and suggestions about these activities!*

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**Source URL:** <http://www.morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/active-listening-grades-3-6>

**Links:**

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