



Unit: Listening
Skill 15: Active Listening
Activity A: How To Listen

Worksheet

Active Listening Techniques

Technique	Purpose	To Do This	Example
Encouraging	To convey interest. To encourage the other person to keep talking.	Don't argue or disagree. Use Neutral words. Use varying voice intonations.	"Can you tell me more...?"
Clarifying	To help you clarify what is said. To get more information. To help the speaker see other views.	Ask questions. Restate wrong interpretations to force the speaker to explain further.	"When did this happen?"
Restating	To show you are listening and understanding. To check your meaning and interpretation.	Restate basic ideas and facts.	"So, you would like your parents to trust you more, is that right?"
Reflecting	To show you understand how the person feels. To help the person evaluate their own feelings.	Reflect the speaker's basic feelings.	"You seem very upset."
Summarizing	To review progress. To pull together important ideas and facts. To establish a basis for further discussion.	Restate major ideas expressed – including feelings.	"These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed..."
Validating	To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person.	Acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings. Show appreciation for their efforts and actions.	"I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter."



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Active Listening Exercise #1

When I was young I had a toy boat. It was given to me by my grandfather – I was very close with my grandfather. I remember the day that he gave it to me. I was only five years old, and we went to his house. I used to love going to his big, old house. We would go out for walks together, my parents staying behind. On this visit, soon after arriving, my grandfather came to me with his hands behind his back. I, for the life of me, cannot remember what I was doing as he approached, but I recall I hardly even noticed him.

Then, softly, he said my name and that he had something for me. I looked over, and he produced the most beautiful boat I had ever seen. The colors it was painted with were so bright – all of the work on it perfect. He'd made it himself, you see. Just for me. We went down to the park that afternoon and I sailed it on the pond. There was a breeze, a cool, cool breeze that sailed the clouds across the cerulean sky and sent my little toy boat out across the water. I still have it, that little boat. Whenever I see it, I miss my grandfather dearly.

Active Listening Exercise #2

We left the ballgame at about eight thirty, I suppose. It was already dark, and, I'll tell you, getting out of that parking lot was like fighting of a pack of lions. I'm surprised that we made it out of there with all our fenders intact at all. Anyway, we made a slow way to the expressway and the traffic didn't stop even then. In fact, after some clear sailing, the traffic came to almost a total standstill. Well, what had been a very pleasant evening was turning into quite a frustrating situation. There was a babysitter back at home costing us an arm and leg an hour. You pay so much for people you trust, you know?

But, anyway, we finally managed to get far enough along to see what the hold up was. Seemed there had been this horrible accident on the highway, and one lane was blocked. One lane. This was a four lane stretch of road and only one lane was blocked. It just makes me so mad. You know that these people didn't have to be going so slow! But, really, it's not the inconvenience that makes me so angry. I just wonder why people have to be so fascinated with something so tragic. That, by itself, seems tragic to me.