Lesson Plan

Demonstrating Effective Speaking and Listening Skills  
Hearing vs. Listening

Objective: Students will differentiate between *hearing* and *listening* and will participate in an exercise that emphasizes the importance of giving clear and concise directions as well as listening actively and following directions.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate effective speaking and listening skills.**

*Demonstration includes*

* *communicating effectively with customers and fellow coworkers (e.g., avoiding the use of slang, being pleasant and helpful)*
* *exhibiting public and group speaking skills*
* *comprehending details and following directions*
* *repeating directions or requests to ensure understanding (i.e., practicing active listening).*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

* Demonstrate positive work ethic.
* Demonstrate self-representation skills.
* Demonstrate conflict-resolution skills.
* Demonstrate an understanding of workplace organizations, systems, and climates.
* Demonstrate job-acquisition and advancement skills.

Correlations to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

English: 6.1, 6.7, 7.1, 7.7, 8.7, 9.6, 10.1, 10.6

History and Social Science: GOVT.16

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Display Teacher Resource #1: Venn Diagram.*** Ask students what, if anything, is the difference between hearing and listening. Answers and examples should address the fact that hearing is passive while listening is active, and that listening involves hearing as well as thinking about what is heard. Ask students what behaviors demonstrate listening (e.g., eye contact, full attention/not multi-tasking, nodding, or asking clarifying questions).
2. ***After giving each student one sheet of paper (8.5x11 will work fine), offer the following directions, pausing after each instruction to give students time to comply.*** Let students know that there is nopeeking and they cannot ask any questions. *Note: this portion of the lesson was adapted from “Listen Hear!,” on page 30 of* [*Soft Skills to Pay the Bills — Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success*](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/) *(*[*https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/*](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/)*).*
   1. Pick up your sheet of paper and hold it in front of you.
   2. **Close your eyes** and listen carefully to my directions.
   3. Fold your sheet of paper in half.
   4. Tear off the upper right-hand corner.
   5. Fold the paper in half again and tear off the upper left-hand corner.
   6. Fold the paper in half again.
   7. Tear off the lower right-hand corner.
3. ***Once the folding/tearing activity is over, ask students to open their eyes and compare papers.*** Do they look alike? Did every student follow all the steps given? Were students tempted to ask clarifying questions? Ask students for their feedback on your instructions (there will probably be some critiquing and pointing out things such as, “Which way were we supposed to be holding our papers in the first place?” Discuss the need for people to receive information in a variety of ways to be successful. Discuss the importance of listening actively, asking questions, and communicating clearly and specifically (especially when giving directions for others to follow).
4. ***Ask students to respond to the following journal prompt:*** Give an example of a time when you really thought you knew what you were supposed to do but did not. What happened?
5. ***Share student experiences and conclude by making a list of effective strategies for giving and receiving instructions.***

Formative Assessment**:**

* Assess student understanding and participation as demonstrated in the class and small group discussions.
* Evaluate student understanding of concepts within the lesson as demonstrated in the journal response.

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

* To modify the length and difficulty of this lesson, the Venn diagram can be completed as a class. The journaling activity can be completed as part of a whole-class or small-group discussion.
* To extend this activity and provide further enrichment, ask students to re-write the instructions given in step #2 and re-do the folding and tearing activity in small groups. Did the changes that students made to the instructions make them clearer and easier to follow?

Suggestions for Follow-up:

* Build on student knowledge regarding effective listening and speaking by completing activity 5, “Quit Talkin’! I Know What to Do!,” on pages 32-34 of [Soft Skills to Pay the Bills — Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/) (<https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>).
* Ask each student to interview a professional (e.g., a teacher, coach, employer, relative, or friend) about the importance of clear communication in the workplace, then discuss the interviews in class. What themes were evident across the interviews?