



“Soft” Skills Integration

Are You Really Listening?

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STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After completing these activities, students will...

1. Recognize the importance of listening skills.
2. Demonstrate listening skills for use today and in the future.

TIME REQUIRED: 50 minutes

RESOURCES:

1. FFA.org

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. Bandana or other item that can be used as a blindfold.
2. Tables and chairs that can be used to make a maze within the room.
3. Bread.
4. Jelly.
5. Peanut butter (if a student has a peanut allergy, use only jelly or another substance).
6. Butter knife.

SUGGESTED USE:

Incorporate any of these activities into the class curriculum before and during the following:

1. Team-building activities.
2. Collaborative or group projects.
3. Communication activities.

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE ALIGNED TO THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action: Assume responsibility and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired results, no matter what the goal or task at hand.
- FFA.PL-B.Relationship: Build relationships, work as a team player and appreciate the talents of others.
- FFA.PL-D.Character: Conduct oneself appropriately in relation to others regardless of the situation.
- FFA.PG-H.Social Growth: Successfully interact with others and adapt to various social situations.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication: Effectively interact with others in personal and professional settings.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making: Analyze a situation and execute an appropriate course of action.
- FFA.CS-O.Flexibility/Adaptability: Be flexible in various situations and adapt to change.

Common Core - Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

Next Generation Science Standards

- HS-ETS1-3 Evaluate a solution to a complex real-world problem based on prioritized criteria and trade-offs that account for a range of constraints, including cost, safety, reliability, and aesthetics as well as possible social, cultural, and environmental impacts.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.01. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee. Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others.
- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason. Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods.
- CRP.06. Demonstrate creativity and innovation. Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems

in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization.

- CRP.08. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem.
- CRP.09. Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management. Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem.
- CRP.12. Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence. Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Implement Innovations
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Leadership and Responsibility
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Think Creatively
- Work Creatively with Others

ACTIVITY:

Introduction: Listening is an essential skill to implement in both the classroom and future workplace. This lesson will teach students to work together to achieve a common goal.

Students, today we are going to work together to create good listening habits. Our goal is to work in pairs to get one another through simple tasks.

➤ *Activity #1: The Listening Maze*

- Move the desks and tables into a somewhat simple maze within the classroom or room.
- Have two students volunteer to participate in the activity.
 - Ask these students to step out of the room momentarily.
- Ask the rest of the students to scatter around the room, staying out of the path of the maze.
 - Explain to the students that the two who are in the hallway will be working on walking through the maze. One student will walk through the maze blindfolded, and the other will give them directions.
 - The students who are bystanders can talk to one another while the student is navigating through the maze. All of them should still be paying attention to the two students who are working on getting through the maze.
- Step into the hall and ask for one student to volunteer to be blindfolded.
- Tell the students in the hall that it is their goal to get the blindfolded student through the maze only using clear directions and good listening skills.
 - The student giving directions must stay in one spot and may not touch the other student.
 - Allow the students to have a few moments to strategize.
- Have the students from the hall come back into the room and begin their journey through the maze.
- Once they have completed the maze, allow them to sit down and talk about their experiences.
 - What would have made this process easier?
 - Were the other students talking a distraction?
 - Why did it take you so long to get through the maze?
- To take this a step further: Have the blindfolded student and navigator start over any time the blindfolded student bumps into a wall of the maze.
- Repeat the task to see if someone can come up with a successful way to navigate the maze quickly.

➤ *Activity #2: Peanut Butter and Jelly Walk-through*

- This task will require students to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich by only following the directions of the group.
- Have students get into small groups. Once they are in the groups, have them decide who will be the sandwich maker and which students will be part of the directions committee.
- Give three minutes for the students in the directions committee to collaborate and create a game plan; they must designate one person who will be the "directions speaker."
 - While this is happening, have all of the sandwich makers meet with you and explain that they may only do exactly what the directions speaker tells them to do.
 - Example: If the speaker says, "Put the peanut butter on the bread," the student should sit the peanut butter container on top of the bread.
- Have the students tell the sandwich maker how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich step-by-step.
 - Step-by-step should be similar to this:
 - Open the bread bag.

- Get two pieces of bread out of the bag.
 - Get a butter knife.
 - Open the peanut butter.
 - Open the jelly.
 - Grab one piece of bread.
 - Take peanut butter out of the container with the knife.
 - Spread the peanut butter evenly on one of the bread slices.
 - Grab the other piece of bread.
 - Spread the jelly onto the bread using the butter knife.
 - Put the butter knife down.
 - Close all of the containers.
 - Put the two pieces of bread together so that the jelly and peanut butter are touching.
 - Eat and enjoy!
- e. The first team with a completed peanut butter and jelly sandwich marks the end of the activity.
- *Activity #3: Debrief*
- a. Ask the students what was difficult about making the peanut butter and jelly difficult? What was successful? What didn't work?
 - b. Talk about their successes, the most successful group should have worked together to create instructions that were easy to follow and had a sandwich maker that was a good listener.
 - c. Talk about their failures, what prevented them from making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich the very first time?

Leveling Up: To add another dimension to the activity, have the students complete the maze or sandwich as a class. Additionally, if there is one team that is struggling or doing very well, mix the teams up to create a more even playing field.

Conclusion: Listening is essential for life. What about this experience did you learn about yourself? What about this experience did you learn about your classmates?