



Middle School

National FFA Organization

Lesson MS.39

GOOD LISTENING HABITS

Unit.

Stage Two of Development—WE

Problem Area.

How Do I Initiate Relationships with Others.

Precepts.

A5: Communicate effectively with others.

National Standards.

NL-ENG.K12.12 - 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 List six non-verbal habits of a good listener.
- 2 Define and discuss paraphrasing as a method of improving listening skills.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Building Leaders for Life, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1992.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Transparency markers
- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ MS.39.AS.A—one per student
- ✓ MS.39.AS.B—one per student
- ✓ MS.39.AS.C—one per student
- ✓ MS.39.TM.A
- ✓ MS.39.TM.B
- ✓ MS.39.Assess—one per student
- ✓ 5 sheets of 8.5- × 11-inch construction paper boldly numbered 1 through 5 respectively



Key Terms. The following term is presented in this lesson and appears in bold italics:

- ▶ Paraphrasing



Interest Approach

Before class begins, position the sheets of construction paper boldly numbered 1-5 on the walls around the room.



Ladies and gentlemen, what does it take to be an effective leader? Think about the traits effective leaders have in common.

Use a *Go Get it Moment* and have students come pick up copies of MS.39.AS.C.



When I say go get it, come and pick up copies of this assignment sheet.

Ready - Go get it!

Five Most Important Qualities of an Officer

Rank the following traits in order of their importance: 1 = most important; 5 = least important

- *Dependability*
- *Diligence*
- *Friendliness*
- *Enthusiasm*





Read the list of leadership traits on the handout and rank them in their order of importance, with 1 being most important and 5 being least important. Take three minutes. Start now. Look up at the front of the room when finished.

Wait while the class completes the handout.



Great! It looks as though most of you are finished. Now, let's see which of us have the same rankings. When I read a trait from the list, get up and stand under the number you chose as your ranking for that trait.

Call out one of the leadership traits. Have students move to stand under the number they chose as their ranking. Select one person from the number one ranking and one person from the number five ranking to step to the front of each group



The rest of us are going to listen and watch while the two of you tell each other why you ranked this trait the way you did.

Ask the student from the number five group to tell why he or she put the trait last. Then ask the student from the number one group why he or she ranked the trait first.



Why did you rank this trait last on your list?

Listen to the student's response. Don't add your own comments yet.



And what do you think?

Listen to the second response.



Okay, thank you very much. Everyone take your seats.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. List six non-verbal habits of a good listener.

What we just saw was two people expressing their opinions to each other. Was this one-way or two-way communication?

Correct response: two-way because two people were speaking



What are the two parts of effective communication?



Correct response: talking and listening



Great! Right now, we're going to focus on what we can do as communicators to ensure that we are effective listeners. What did these two do that showed they were listening to each other?

Brainstorm with the class and enter the responses on the writing surface. Anticipated responses: they looked at each other; they nodded their heads



Great! Thanks for your responses. Let's compare our observations with a list of non-verbal things that effective listeners do.

Pass out MS.39.AS.A, and put MS.39.TM.A on the overhead projector, revealing only the title. Ask the class to look at the list on the writing surface and figure out what word should go in each blank on their handout. Reveal each habit, one at a time, to confirm the correct response. Instruct students to fill in the blanks on the handout. Use the transparency markers to write the explanation next to each habit. Have students write the information on their handout.

I. Six Non-verbal Habits of an Effective Listener

- A. S mile to show open-minded interest and make the speaker feel at ease
- B. O pen Posture means to face the speaker without crossing your arms or legs
- C. F ocus give the speaker your full attention
- D. T ilt Forward means to lean forward toward the speaker to show interest
- E. E ye Contact to let the speaker know you are paying attention
- F. N od to let the speaker know you heard what he or she said



Look at your handouts. Do we have a word on the board that fits in the first line?

Listen for the correct response and continue.



Yes, "smile" fits in the first blank. Why is smiling important to being a good listener? Smiling is important because it shows that we are receptive to what the speaker has to say, and it makes the speaker feel more relaxed. Write the explanation on your handout next to the word "smile."

Continue leading students as they complete the rest of the handout.



We have an opportunity to use your artistic skills to help you remember these six listening habits. Turn your paper over and divide it into six squares. Write a habit in each square and take three or four minutes to draw an icon or symbol to help you remember each habit. Ready. Begin!

Use a Hieroglyphics Moment to review the six habits on the back of their handouts.



Objective 2. Define and discuss paraphrasing as a method of improving listening skills.



Now that we've talked about some non-verbal things that you can use to become better listeners, let's talk about a way we can use our speaking skills to listen better.

What can we tell someone that would make him or her a better listener?

Correct response: ask questions



Yes, asking questions about what the other person said shows that we were listening. What else does it do for us as listeners?

Correct response: ensures that we understood what the person said



That's right! We can ask questions to make sure we understood what the other person was saying. When we do so and then re-state it in our own words, this is called paraphrasing.

Hand out MS.39.AS.B.



This is a handout that will help you organize your thoughts on paraphrasing.

Place MS.39.TM.B on the overhead projector. Reveal each item on the transparency. Explain and have students write the information on their handout.<I>*

II. Paraphrasing

- A. Definition: **Paraphrasing**: restating in your own words
- B. Benefits
 - 1. Increases the accuracy of information
 - 2. Helps to build relationships
 - 3. Confirms your understanding
- C. Key ideas
 - 1. Don't be critical or judgmental.
 - 2. Repeat the speaker's message in your own words.
 - 3. Express your opinion after you've confirmed the message.
- D. Sample phrases
 - 1. "So what you mean is ..."
 - 2. "You're saying ..."
 - 3. "If I understand you correctly, ..."



Review/Summary

Repeat the interest approach activity using another leadership term and ask each student to use effective listening skills while the other person is talking. Then ask the rest of the class for feedback.





Okay, we've had a chance to improve our understanding of what it takes to be an effective listener by thinking, reading, talking, and writing. Now we're going to look back at our leadership traits and try out our new listening skills. When I call out another trait from handout MS.39.AS.A, get up and stand under the number that's the same as the one on your paper. Ready? Dependability!

Have students move to the appropriate numbers around the room.



I need a volunteer from the number one group to step forward. Thank you! And now I need a volunteer from the number five group. Thank you! Since you need to be good listeners and speakers, you two need to be closer together. Come and sit in the middle of the room.

Seat the two volunteers at desks or chairs in the middle or front of the room while the others wait at their numbers. Remember to use the SOFTEN model and try the paraphrasing techniques.



Number one gets to start this time. Number one, why did you rank dependability as the most important trait an effective leader can have?

Allow the student to explain his or her opinion. Then ask the other student to paraphrase first before he or she expresses his or her opinion.



Okay, now let's make sure we understand what our partner said before we express our own opinion. Remember to be neutral, not judgmental.

After speaker two has finished, ask speaker one to paraphrase what was said. Be sure each speaker feels like the other understood his or her message and allow each to respond for clarification if necessary. When the volunteers are finished, thank them for their help and ask everyone to give them a round of applause. Ask everyone to be seated. Then discuss their observations.



What signs of active listening did you see in our volunteers?

Anticipated responses: they leaned forward; they made eye contact; they nodded their heads



What signs of paraphrasing did we hear?

Anticipated response: so-and-so said, "So what you mean is..." or "If I understand you correctly, ..."

What did paraphrasing allow each speaker to do?

Anticipated responses: it let each speaker know that the listener understood what was said; it allowed them to make their opinions clear Repeat the activity as time allows for the other three traits.



Thank you for participating in today's lesson. We've used our listening, speaking, reading, thinking, writing, and observation skills to learn more about what it takes to be an effective listener. Now, we're going to take a little quiz to see how much of the information we can remember.

Hand out MS.39.Assess, and have students complete the quiz.





I am sure you all did great on the quiz. Let's be sure to try out our new skill before we meet again.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students rank the ten things that make up a good FFA chapter.

►FFA Activity:

Have students rank the ten most important chapter activities. Use this as an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses of the chapter or to set priorities for next year's Program of Activities.

►SAE Activity:

Have students apply effective listening skills in job interviews, project competition interviews, or when being interviewed during a showmanship class.



Evaluation

MS.39.Assess

Answers to Assessment:

1. Nodding
2. Smile
3. Two of the following: open-posture, face the speaker, or lean forward
4. Restating something in your own words
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. Smile
10. Open posture
11. Focus
12. Tilt forward
13. Eye contact
14. Nod



GOOD LISTENING HABITS

Answer the following questions:

1. Which non-verbal strategy shows the speaker you heard what was said.
2. Which non-verbal strategy shows the speaker you are open-minded and receptive.
3. Name two things you should do to position your body for the most effective listening.
4. Define paraphrasing.

Write “true” or “false” next to each statement:

- _____ 5. It’s better to sit with your arms crossed so you don’t fidget while you’re listening.
- _____ 6. The listener should always make sure he or she heard the speaker before expressing his or her own opinion.
- _____ 7. When you’re listening to someone’s opinion, you should lean back and get comfortable in case it’s a long conversation.
- _____ 8. Paraphrasing someone’s feelings or opinion will make that person feel understood.

List the “SOFTEN” strategies for effective listening.

- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.



6 NON-VERBAL HABITS OF AN EFFECTIVE LISTENER

- ◆ **S**mile
- ◆ **O**pen Posture
- ◆ **F**ocus
- ◆ **T**ilt Forward
- ◆ **E**ye Contact
- ◆ **N**od



PARAPHRASING

◆ Benefits

- ➔ Increases the accuracy of information
- ➔ Helps to build relationships
- ➔ Confirms your understanding

◆ Key ideas

- ➔ Don't be critical or judgmental.
- ➔ Repeat the speaker's message in your own words.
- ➔ Express your opinion after you've confirmed the mes-

sage.

◆ Sample phrases

- ➔ "So what you mean is ..."
- ➔ "You're saying ..."
- ➔ "If I understand you correctly, ..."



6 NON-VERBAL HABITS OF AN EFFECTIVE LISTENER

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PARAPHRASING

A. Definition

1.

B. Benefits

1.

2.

3.

C. Key ideas

1.

2.

3.

D. Sample phrases

1.

2.

3.



5 MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES OF AN OFFICER

Rank the traits in order of importance. 1 = most important 5 = least important

- _____ Dependability
- _____ Diligence
- _____ Speaking Skills
- _____ Friendliness
- _____ Enthusiasm

