

Y5

LESSON 5
YOUTH
V.1



social

ACTIVE LISTENING

HEAR MY VOICE, BE MY VOICE

YOUTH LESSON 5: SOCIAL PEACE 2

TIME REQUIRED

1 1/2 hours

TEACHER PREPARATION

To prepare for this lesson...

- Read the “[5 Spheres of Peace](#)” NPA Framework focusing on the social peace sphere
- Read the [Teacher’s Guide](#) for preparation and reflection questions

MATERIALS

- paper
- pencils

LEARNING GOALS

- Students will experience processes of active listening that can be used to help understand other’s thoughts, feelings, emotions and opinions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will play an active listening game
- Students will ask clarifying questions and summarize the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of their partner
- Students will reflect on the process of active listening as a strategy for building peace in the social sphere

INTRODUCTION

Many conflicts arise over miscommunication, not understanding someone else’s perspective, feelings, or intentions. Miscommunication can occur for many different reasons. Sometimes we have too many external or internal distractions to be a good listener. Sometimes we do not clarify what others say and misinterpret their intentions. Often we are not aware of how our statements impact the feelings of those around us. The process of active listening can be an important tool helping students communicate their wants, needs, and opinions effectively with others. Differences in opinions can become a catalyst for deepening their relationships rather than creating conflict. There are many different ways to practice active listening. Two essential steps are taking turns while listening or speaking and clarifying what others have said. The active listening game described in this lesson gives students the opportunity to practice active listening skills in a non-confrontational environment. This practice can strengthen these skills for use in everyday communication as well as during the conflict resolution process.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What makes a good listener?
- How do you know when someone is listening to you?
- How do you know when someone understands what you are feeling?
- Do you think being a good listener is important to building peace between people? Why?

OPENING DISCUSSION

Begin by asking students the guiding questions above. Take time to listen to student responses. Explain to students that many different skills can be learned to become an effective listener. One process is taking turns listening and speaking. Listening to someone without interrupting signals to that person that you want to hear what they have to say and you are thinking about their feelings and opinions. You do not have to agree with someone to make them feel you value their thoughts. The second is the processes of clarifying and/or summarizing what the other person said. This process involves asking questions to clarify someone's intentions. Asking questions about what was said can deepen your understanding of why a person has certain thoughts and feelings.

Asking some clarifying questions might help you understand a person's perspective; other clarifying questions might provide more information or give the chance for the other person to expand on their ideas. Write the following questions on a large piece of paper or board for students to reference.

If you want to understand the other person's perspective:

- How do you feel about . . . ?
- What is the most important . . . ?
- Where do you think your idea/opinion comes from?
- Do you have any experience in this area?
- Is there a value you have that underlies this issue?

If you want the other person to expand on their ideas:

- Why do you think . . . ? (Example: Why do you think school uniforms should be banned? Why do you think uniforms are restrictive?)
- What if "x" were changed? (Example: What if uniforms were changed to include ways of individualizing the clothing?)

RESOURCES

- ["Active Listening Games" by Lily Mae, eHow Mom](#)
- ["Active Listening Games" by Mukulika Mukherjee, Buzzle.com](#)

ACTIVITY 1: CLARIFYING PRACTICE

1. Ask the students to turn to a partner in the class. Tell them their first job is to practice taking turns speaking and listening. When each person has spoken the other will ask a clarifying question. Give students one of the following topics or a topic you feel is appropriate for your class to practice these skills.

Share what you think about gun control. Should it be outlawed? Should the laws be more relaxed?

What do you think about wearing uniforms to school? Is it good or bad and why?

Share what you think about the legal drinking age. Should it be changed?

What do you think about the death penalty?

2. Once both partners had a chance to speak and ask a clarifying question, ask the students to share their clarifying questions with the group. Add any new questions to the clarifying list you introduced to students. Ask students if clarifying was helpful to learning more about the ideas of the other person. Ask students how taking turns listening and speaking was helpful in building peace within the communication.

Discussion

Explain to students the process of summarizing or rearticulating what another person has said can prevent misunderstandings, as it gives the other person a chance to explain their ideas a second time if they were not understood. One way this can be done is by saying, **"What I hear you saying is . . ."** and restate what you think the person is trying to articulate. Give the person a chance to affirm or clarify your statement.

ACTIVITY 2: SUMMARIZING PRACTICE

1. Tell students they will be given another statement to discuss. This time, as they take turns speaking and listening, they should try and summarize or restate the other person's ideas after each have shared using words such as "So what I hear you saying is . . . is that correct?"

In addition to being a clarifying process, when the listener attempts to express the speaker's words in their own words it demonstrates that they are seeking to understand. By seeking to understand, the learner demonstrates empathy and compassion.

2. Give students another statement/issue to discuss. Give the partners 5 to 7 minutes to take turns listening, speaking, and summarizing.

3. When students have completed their practice, ask if they felt the process of summarizing or restating what their partner said was helpful. Were there any cases where they had misinterpreted their partners' ideas the first time? Did they learn something new from summarizing? How did it feel when your partner summarized your thoughts? Did this help you feel understood? Can you think of an instance in your life where summarizing or restating another person's ideas would have been useful?

ACTIVITY 3: ALTOGETHER NOW

1. Arrange students into two circles of equal numbers. There will be one internal circle and one external circle. The internal circle should be comprised of students sitting in chairs facing outward. The external circle wraps around the internal with the students of both circles facing each other.

2. Explain to students that they are going to play a game using their active listening skills of turn taking, clarifying, and summarizing. During the game the students who are seated do not move. The students who are standing will move one person to the right after each round. In each round students will be asked a question.

They will be given three minutes to take turns speaking, listening, clarifying, and summarizing to understand as deeply as they can their partner's response to this question. (*You may wish to give students a warning to switch to the other partner after 1 1/2 minutes.) Once time is up, standing students will move to the right to face a new partner. They will then be given a new question. During each round, both partners must either ask a clarifying question or summarize and get a response from their partner.

Ask students if there are any questions before they start the game.

3. Give students the opportunity to arrange chairs in a circle and find a place on the internal or external circle.

4. Give students one of the questions below, or other questions you feel are appropriate for your students.

- If you found a thousand dollars (you can convert this to local currency) on the street, what would you do with it?
- Would you rather walk backwards for a day or have to hop wherever you go for a day?
- What would you say to the President (or your country's nation-state leader) if you met him/her for dinner?
- If you could invent something to change the world what would it be?

5. Once the students have answered a question, ask the standing students move one person to the right. The following question can then be asked. When multiple rounds of active listening have been completed students can answer the closing questions independently or as a group.

TEACHER TIPS

- As the facilitator you can change the questions to be as silly or serious as you think your group would enjoy. The important part of the exercise is that students practice the processes of listening, rephrasing and clarifying.
- If there are an uneven number of students in your group, act as a participant and join the circles to even up the numbers.

CLOSING

In closing, have students reflect on the following questions:

- Do you feel like your partners were actively listening to you?
- What actions did your partners take that made you feel like they were listening?
- Were there actions they took which made you think they were not listening?
- How do you think the processes of active listening can help build peace between two people?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

This game can be played again with questions that relate to science, social studies, or language arts curriculum you are learning about!

Students can practice active listening techniques by using silly questions from the board game “[Would you rather?](#)”

Integrate active listening into the conflict resolution process used in the classroom. When students “talk about it” or discuss what happened have them take turns listening, speaking, clarifying, and summarizing the other person’s feelings.

REGISTRATION, FEEDBACK & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Use of this curriculum is free – no registration is required. However, we encourage you to take 3-5 minutes to complete our [registration/feedback form](#) so we may know how and where the curriculum is being used, what is most effective, and how we can continue to improve it.

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