

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS



42. POWER LISTENING

- ▶ **WHAT?** Students conduct an engaging listening experiment in order to create a poster of active listening best practices and engage in a power listening protocol.
- ▶ **WHY?** Effective teams take active listening extremely seriously. They understand that this act creates trust and the psychological safety that allows members to take the necessary risks involved in the learning process. Becoming aware of our inner voice when listening allows us to dial it off when listening so that we are listening to understand, rather than reply.
- ▶ **WHEN?** Anytime students are involved in a pair share, group discussion, presentations, or class discussion.

MATERIALS

- ☐ One chart paper for creating a **Power Listening** anchor chart.

SEL FOCUS

- **Social Awareness:** Taking others' perspectives and demonstrating empathy and compassion
- **Relationship Skills:** Developing positive relationships, practicing teamwork, and communicating effectively

Launch Activity (13min+)

I. 3min- Listening activity:

- **Students form pairs** and members will be designated partner A and B. Take the Bs out of the room and ask them to wait outside.
- **Inform the As** that they are to speak to the Bs about an interest/hobby, a happy memory, their top 3 goals, or a proud accomplishment. They will talk for 2 minutes about it to partner B when they return. They can jot down some key ideas they'll share while you go outside and talk to the Bs.
- **Inform the Bs** that when they go back in the class, they will be listening to their partner and everytime their partner says something that triggers their 'inner voice' (they want to ask a question, make a personal connection, daydream, want to interrupt and share something, etc...), they tell their partner, "Sorry to interrupt you, but I just _____ (made a connection/daydreamed/remembered something/etc)." They will do this for the entire conversation. Bs are not allowed to interact with As, ask questions, show understanding, etc, or give away their designated instructions.
- **Ask Bs back into the room** and have As share their responses to Bs for 2 minutes.

II. **3min- Class Discussion:** Discuss the following: 1. How did you feel as partner A or as partner B? 2. When does our inner voice get triggered? 3. How might we calm this voice so that we are focused on the person talking? 4. **"Be interested, not interesting."** What does this quote mean to you and how does it connect to listening?

III. **1min: Introduce this listening tip:** When our mind wanders and we hear inner mental chatter, bring back the focus to the conversation and say, **"It's about them right now, not me"** and then visualize what they're saying. Each time we do this is like doing one bicep curl, squat, or bench press rep. The more we refocus, the more our active listening improves, and the more you'll remember what they're saying.

IV. **4min- Create a "Power Listening" anchor chart** as a class. Here is a sample one on the next page. Make sure to add examples of actions and language they use. (see sample chart on next page)

V. **2min:** Apply your active listening skills to this new exercise. Do the same activity as before but this time the listener can interact (ask clarifying questions, show support verbally and with body language and skills from the **Power Listening** anchor chart). Partners then switch (one minute/partner). Students can discuss how their second conversations compare to their first interrupted one.

42. POWER LISTENING

- Continued -

| POWER LISTENING | |
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| DO THIS | NOT THIS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't judge, keep an open mind • Focus on being interested • Be patient and don't interrupt • Paraphrase to ensure understanding: "So what I hear you saying is ____." "In other words..." "If I hear you correctly, ____." • Ask clarifying questions: "Can you clarify what you meant by ____." "Sorry, but can you say that again, please?" • Try to understand their point of view • Listen to their body language to see if there is a deeper meaning • Turn off all distractions physically and mentally • Place all your attention on the listener: eyes, ears, heart, and mind and showing that they are listening with their body language (nodding, facial gestures, leaning in, etc) • Listen with intention: What do you intend to learn or do with the information you'll learn? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be judgemental, close-minded • Focus on being interesting or impressive- "That happened to me too!" "I had it worse. Did you know that I ____." "What I would do if I were you is ____." "Let me tell you about ____." • Interrupt impatiently • Don't care about understanding and ask probing questions instead of paraphrasing. "Do you like sports?" "Why didn't you work out instead of going to sleep?" • Listen to reply with your own point of view • Listening to criticize, agree/disagree, or offer a winning argument • Listening to try to fix or give unsolicited advice. "What I would do." "Try this." "You should." "Why haven't you..." • Impatient listening because something else is on their mind or a physical distraction is present (phone, object, etc) • Listen without a purpose and thus are not fully present and are likely to forget |

SEL Routine (6min+)

1. **1min- Power Listening Instructions:** Ensure that the following 3 rules are enforced by a conversation monitor, the teacher, or the class: 1. Each person must face the speaker, without distractions, and show listening body language. 2. Each person will speak once before anyone can speak a second or third time. 3. If a question is asked, someone must answer it before another comment is made. When engaging in a pair share, group discussion, presentations, or class discussion, students will follow these steps:

| POWER LISTENING INSTRUCTIONS |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ 30sec -Step 1: One person responds to a teacher's prompt or comments on a topic as others actively listen. Students are encouraged to write down key points if there are multiple ideas. Teachers can even provide 10-20 seconds of private "think time" to support students in organizing their ideas and recalling what was just said. ❑ 30sec- Step 2: Someone else (volunteers or is randomly called to ensure equity) does one of the following in the following order or as needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ 1. Ask questions to clarify if needed. "Can you help me understand what you meant by ____?" "Can you clarify ____?" ❑ 2. Summarize what your peer said directly and seek confirmation. "So you're saying _____. Is that correct?" "Let me see if I understand what you're saying..." "Correct me if I'm wrong..." ❑ 3. Respond and extend "I <u>agree/respectfully disagree</u> with what you mentioned about ____." "I would also add that _____. I wonder _____. I might be wrong, but don't you think ____?" ❑ 2min- Step 3: Repeat steps 1 and 2 until everyone has spoken at least twice for a set amount of time. ❑ 2min- Step 4: The class, pair, or group will summarize the discussion key points with help from peers and locate patterns, themes, insights, roadblocks, solutions, and next steps. |

Extensions

1. **Using the Power Listening Anchor Chart:** Students can add new ideas to the chart throughout the year and use it to review at the start of all discussions, set listening intentions, monitor listening, evaluate their listening, and create next steps.