

Habits of Mind



Listening with Understanding and Empathy

Students' Handouts

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Listening with Understanding and Empathy

*"Listening is the beginning of understanding...
Wisdom is the reward for a lifetime of listening."*

Proverbs 1:5

"If there is any secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from his angle as well as from your own."

Henry Ford

"Empathy: the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of..."

Webster's Dictionary

To listen is to devote oneself and one's energy to someone else. To listen fully means to pay close attention to what is being said beneath the words. We spend 55% of our lives listening yet it is one of the least taught skills in schools. People often say they listen but they are actually rehearsing in their heads what they are going to say next when the speaker is finished. Students often laugh at or put down other student's ideas. They interrupt or are unable to use or consider the merits of another person's ideas. We should learn to devote our mental energies to another person and invest ourselves in other peoples' ideas.

We need to learn to hold in abeyance our own values, judgments, opinions and prejudices in order to listen to and entertain another person's thoughts. This requires the listener to monitor his own thoughts while, at the same time, attending to the speaker's words. A good listener tries to understand what the other person is saying. In the end he may disagree strongly, but he wants to know what he is disagreeing with.

Some psychologists believe that the ability to listen to another person, to empathize with, and to understand their point of view is one of the highest forms of intelligent behaviour.

LESSON 1

Activity 1

1. Identify the sounds that you hear and complete the table below.

No.	Sound
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

2. Place a tick in the column if the sound is pleasurable and describe briefly any feeling or emotion, if any, that the sound produces in you.

No.	Pleasurable (√)	Feeling or Emotion
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

3. Which sound appeals to you the most? Why?

Activity 2

How do you feel towards the statement that has been read in three different tones to you?

Tone #1	
Tone #2	
Tone #3	

Reflection

1. Is emotion expressed in what you heard in *Activity 1*?

Y / N

2. Is emotion expressed in what you heard in *Activity 2*?

Y / N

3. Why do you think there is a difference?

Activity 3

Draw as you listen to what your teacher is instructing, in the space below.



Some notes ...**Listening with Understanding and Empathy****Means**

- Understanding
- Listening
- Eye-contact
- "Don't talk, listen"
- Knowing what they are going through
- Helping them by knowing how they feel
- Listening to what they have to say.

Indicators of Listening with Understanding and Empathy

1. Body language that indicates engaged listening.
 - head turned toward the speaker
 - eye contact
 - nodding
 - facial expressions that show congruence with speaker's words,
 - posture(leaning forward or sitting upright)
2. Paraphrasing to put the speaker's thoughts into the listener's own words.
3. Asking probing questions to clarify meaning.
4. Empathizing by relating to the feelings, ideas and perspectives of the speaker.
5. Asking the speaker to repeat something when the listener's mind wanders.
6. Not interrupting the speaker

Lesson 2

How often do you do the following when you listen to a speaker?

Checklist of Good Listening Skills Behaviour (Habit of Mind): Listening			
Indicators	1	2	3
Head turned toward speaker			
Nodding			
Body Language			
Facial expressions (congruent with speaker's message and tone)			
Questioning (probing) for clarity			
Paraphrasing			
Take turns speaking			
1= Often 2= Sometimes 3= Never			

**Listening with Understanding and Empathy
Student Self Assessment**

Name _____ () Class _____

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate column.

Behaviour	Often	Sometimes	Never
Verbal			
Restate or rephrase a person's idea before offering my own opinion			
Ask questions to make sure I understand another person's ideas or concepts			
Express empathy for others' feelings or emotions			
Express personal regard and interest			
Non-verbal			
Face the person who is speaking			
Establish eye-contact if appropriate			
Nod head			
Show facial expressions similar to speaker's emotional message			
Mirror speaker's gestures			
Mirror speaker's posture			