

EnglishConnect 3: Strategy Instruction

Listening

1. Be an active listener:

Simply allowing words to enter your ears does not improve your listening ability. To become a better listener, you must listen actively, or listen with a purpose. Listening with a purpose means you should have a goal in mind as you listen. You should focus on and try to understand something specific, for example:

- Listen for main ideas. Do not focus on every detail that is said. Think about the topic. What is the main point the speaker is trying to say? What is the speaker's goal? What does the speaker want to communicate to you? The main idea is usually not one specific sentence from the passage. It is a theme that connects all of the ideas in the passage together.
 - Learn about listening for main ideas:
<http://study.com/academy/lesson/listening-for-the-main-point.html#lesson>
- Listen for answers to specific questions. Good listeners think about the information they need to get from the speaker, and they focus on finding it. They do not focus on every detail that is said. Good listeners think about and listen for the specific information they are trying to understand.
 - Listen for answers to specific questions:
<http://www.esl-lounge.com/student/listening/2L2-dianas-new-job.php>
- Make predictions. Good listeners think about and guess what the speaker will say next. They do not know what the speaker will say, but they use the information they do know to guess what the speaker will say. This is called making a prediction. Good listeners make predictions before they listen, and as they listen. To be a good listener, think about what the speaker is saying, and try to guess what he will say next.
 - Practice making predictions:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDi_SKEsahU&t=7s

Active Listener Example:

Mary is listening to a passage about healthy food choices. Mary is an active listener. Before she listens, Mary asks herself questions like: What do I think the main idea of this passage will be? Why is this passage important to me, in my life? What do I already know about healthy foods? What English words do I know that describe healthy foods? As she listens to the passage, Mary searches for answers to these questions.

2. Summarize:

Good listeners summarize as they listen, and after they listen. Summaries are short descriptions of the main idea or topic, and examples from the passage that help the listener to understand the main idea or topic. Details are not included in summaries. A summary should not copy exact sentences or phrases from the passage. Summaries are your words, describing the speaker's ideas.

In order to summarize well, many listeners like to take notes with a paper and pencil as they listen. When taking notes, do not try to write every word you hear. Write main ideas, topics, and key (important) words that help you remember what you heard. Then, as you summarize, use the notes you wrote to describe in your own words what the listening passage was about. Remember, do not try to repeat exactly what you heard. Summaries should be short, and should focus on the main topics.

Summaries can be made in many ways, for example:

- Journaling. Write summaries down on a paper or in a notebook.
- Peer discussion. Talk to a classmate or friend, summarizing what you heard.
- Speaking aloud. If you are studying alone, you can speak summaries out loud, practicing saying what you heard and understood.
- Mentally summarizing. You can summarize what you heard in your mind. This can be done both after hearing a listening passage, and as you listen to a passage. Be sure you don't try to mentally repeat every word the speaker says. Simply say the main ideas to yourself as you listen.

How to make a summary:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGWO1ldEhtQ>

Summary practice:

1. <http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/exwrirep.htm>
2. <http://www.txkisd.net/curriculum/focusplans/Reading-English-Language%20Arts-Writing/9-Reading/1.7G%20Animal%20Farm%20Epitomes/Handout%201%20Summarizing%20Practice.pdf>

Summarizing Example:

John listens to a passage about the importance of sleeping enough. The passage explains that we should sleep for 7-8 hours each night. The passage says that sleeping for this length of time is important for both our mental and physical health. As he listens to this passage, John writes in his own words what the topic is ("it is important to sleep enough"), and the main supporting ideas ("healthy for your mind, healthy for your body"). After the passage is over, John turns to his classmate and summarizes the passage vocally: "This passage says we should need to sleep for seven to eight hours every night. When we sleep for seven to eight hours, we will be

healthier in our minds and our bodies.” John does not talk about the details in the passage; he only summarizes the main ideas.

3. Make Connections:

Good listeners connect what they hear to their own life, knowledge and experiences. Making connections can be done before, during, and after listening to a passage. To make connections, ask yourself questions like:

- What do I already know about this topic?
- How is this topic important in my life?
- Do I have any experiences with this topic?
- Do I have any ideas about this topic?
- Do I agree or disagree with what the speaker is saying?

Listening Practice: Listen to the passages on the website below. Before you listen, as you listen, and after you listen, ask yourself the questions listed above.

<http://www.esl-lab.com/>

Making Connections Example:

Fred is listening to a passage about why it is healthy to play soccer. Before he starts listening, Fred thinks about soccer in his own life. Fred enjoys playing soccer. Fred asks himself what he knows about soccer. He thinks about how he feels when he plays soccer, and how soccer helps him to be healthy. As he listens, Fred pays attention to the examples the speaker gives about how playing soccer is healthy. Fred asks himself if he has had any similar experiences, and if he agrees or disagrees with the things the speaker says. After he finishes listening, Fred thinks about what he heard. He thinks about his opinion of the passage. Does he agree with the things he heard? Has he had any similar experiences as those the speaker described? By thinking of these things, Fred is able to connect the listening passage to his own life, and understand what he hears better.

4. Make inferences:

Good listeners make inferences as they listen. Making an inference means you use the information you understand and know to make conclusions about information you don't know. For example, if your friend comes into class wearing a coat and carrying an umbrella, you can make an inference: it is probably cold and wet outside. You know this about the weather even if your friend did not tell you. You used the information you knew (coat, umbrella) to make the conclusion that the weather is cold and wet. This is an inference.

As you listen, you should make inferences about:

- Missing information. Speakers often do not tell their listeners every detail. They want their listeners to think and make conclusions on their own. Good listeners make inferences about information that speakers do not say.
- What a speaker actually means. Sometimes, the words we say are not exactly what we mean. For example, you can say “This is great” in two different ways. You can say it to mean that something really is great. Or you can say it sarcastically to mean the opposite, that something is really not great. Good listeners can infer the real meaning of what speakers say, even when the meaning does not exactly match the words they say.
- Speakers’ attitudes and opinions. Good listeners pay attention to how a speaker feels and thinks about the topic. A speaker may not always say how he feels or what he thinks about a topic. His feelings and thoughts must be inferred using his tone of voice, and the information he gives.
- The meaning of new words. You will almost always hear new words as you listen. People speak quickly. They do not stop for you to translate the words you don’t understand. To be a good listener, you need to listen to the words that you can understand, and use them to help you infer the meaning of the words that you don’t know.

How to make inferences:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=to30AJm2epQ>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7szJbRv9Hc>

Making inferences examples:

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCmTIK_rb0U

Practice making inferences:

1. http://highereducation.mheducation.com/sites/0072982772/student_view0/part7/making_inferences_quiz.html
2. https://www.ccsf.edu/dam/Organizational_Assets/Department/ESL/CLAD/infer.pdf

Inferring the meaning of new words:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm5d7c0xGt0>

Making Inferences Example:

Jane is listening to her friend, Jen, talk about her kids. Jen says:

“My kids misbehaved today. They made a big mess, they broke the window, and they were unkind to their grandma!”

Jane does not know what “misbehaved” means. But Jane understands that making messes, breaking things, and being unkind are bad things to do. She makes an inference, and concludes that “misbehaved” means doing bad things.