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## MODERN METHODS USED IN ENGLISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses modern methods of teaching listening comprehension. In order for senior students to become good listeners, teachers need to create a collection of listening activities. These activities should be planned based on how listening fits into the overall education process, the goals of the education process, and the different types of listening that are needed. Because students do a lot of work on their own, including listening, it is important to give them clear instructions and recommendations (a listening guide) for how to do this type of work.

### KEYWORDS

Listening comprehension, encompass, teaching listening, interpersonal activities, successful teaching, bank of tasks, place of listening, educational process, type of listening, independent work, recommendations, instructions, integration.

### INTRODUCTION

Effective, modern methods of teaching listening skills encompass everything from interactive exercises to multimedia resources. Listening skills are best learned through simple, engaging activities that focus more on the learning process than on the final product. Whether you are working with a large group of students or a small one, you can use any of the following examples to develop your own methods for teaching students how to listen well.

#### Interpersonal activities.

One effective and non-threatening way for students to develop stronger listening skills is through interpersonal activities, such as mock interviews and storytelling. Assign the students to small groups of two or three, and then give them a particular listening activity to accomplish. For example, you may have one student interview another for a job with a company or for an article in a newspaper. Even a storytelling activity, such as one that answers the question “What was your favorite movie from last year?” can give



students the opportunity to ask one another questions and then to practice active listening skills.

### **Group activities**

Larger group activities also serve as a helpful method for teaching listening skills to students. You can begin with a simple group activity. For the first part, divide students into groups of five or larger and instruct them to learn one hobby or interest of at least two other group members. Encourage them to ask clarifying questions during the activity, and you may allow them to take notes if helpful. However, as time passes and their skills grow, you should limit students to only writing notes after the completion of the first part of the group activity. For the second part, have the students sit in a large circle, and then have each individual student share the name and the hobby or interest of the group members that she or he met. This second part of the group activity can also lend itself to additional listening exercises. For example, you may ask students to name a number of the hobbies and interests identified during the sharing session.

### **Audio segments**

You can also teach listening skills through audio segments of radio programs, online podcasts, instructional lectures, and other audio messages. You should model this interactive listening process in class with your students, and then instruct them to repeat the exercise on their own. First, instruct students to prepare for listening by considering anything that they want to learn from the content of the audio segment. Once they have written down or shared these ideas, then play the audio segment, allowing the students to take notes if helpful. Once they have gained confidence and experience, repeat this activity but instruct students to not take notes until the completion of the audio segment. You can use shorter or longer audio segments, and you can choose more

accessible or more challenging material for this type of exercise.

Another helpful resource for teaching listening skills are video segments, including short sketches, news programs, documentary films, interview segments, and dramatic and comedic material. As with audio segments, select the portion and length of the video segment based on the skill level of your students. With your students, first watch the segment without any sound and discuss it together. Encourage the students to identify what they think will be the content of the segment. Then, watch the segment again, this time with sound, allowing students to take notes if helpful for their skill level. After the completion of the video segment, you can have students write a brief summary of the segment, or you can take time to discuss as a group how the segment compares with the students' expectations.

**Instructional tips** Whatever method you use for teaching listening, keep a few key instructional tips in mind that will help both you and your students navigate the learning process. One, keep your expectations simple, as even the most experienced listener would be unable to completely and accurately recall the entirety of a message. Two, keep your directions accessible and build in opportunities for students not only to ask clarifying questions, but also to make mistakes. Three, help students navigate their communication anxiety by developing activities appropriate to their skill and confidence level, and then strengthen their confidence by celebrating the ways in which they do improve, no matter how small.

Sequencing is an important skill required in all areas of learning at every age and grade level. Regular practice with sequencing in a variety of contexts can help children succeed in language arts, math, music and reading comprehension. Sequencing is also central to life skills such as time management and setting



priorities. Help your students become better learners by making sequence games and activities a regular part of your classroom routine. The basics of many sequence activities can be modified to suit a wide range of ages and abilities.

**Flashback** Tell your students a story (or play a segment of a radio or video program). To make this activity more difficult, choose a story that begins in the middle or one that consists of flashbacks, so that the events of the story are not told in chronological order. After the story, ask students to reconstruct the order of events. This activity can be an oral group exercise or a written individual one.

**Retelling**, Give students some time to think about the events of a particular day. Give them a graphic organizer with five or six large boxes to draw or write in. Direct students to describe (in pictures or words) five or six different events that occurred on that day. Tell students to describe these events in random order in preparation for the next part of the activity. After students complete their descriptions, ask them to pair up and switch papers. Each student will then try to guess the correct order of the other's activities. If time allows, ask for volunteers to tell their partner's story. This exercise works well for young children and for foreign language or ESL students.

**Story Pieces**, This game will get your students out of their chairs. It may even played outdoors on a nice day. Prepare a set of cards (enough to give each student one card). On the cards, write a portion of a short story or parable. Pass out one card to each student. Ask students to arrange themselves in a circle so that the pieces of the story are in order. Have the students read the story out loud and listen to see if their sequencing is correct. If you have a large class you may want to color-code the cards so that students with segments from the beginning or middle or end can easily find each other and get started. Then each group can link

with the next group. If done correctly, the story will be in order. If someone thinks a mistake has been made, have the students switch places and read it again, either from the beginning or from a few segments back. If you have more cards than students, pull out the first few cards and read the beginning of the story to the whole group before they proceed with the sequencing exercise.

**Fill the Gaps**, Provide a story, set of instructions or math problem with segments missing. Ask students to fill in the gaps with items that make sense. To make this a more active game, provide half the class with various handouts containing missing information. Provide the rest of the class with those missing pieces of information. Challenge students to pair up correctly.

**Origami**, the Japanese art of paper folding, is a great way to teach sequencing without relying on the traditional verbal and mathematical skills that dominate most classrooms. To create origami, students have to process directions and proceed according to a specific sequence.

To conclude, listening is a complex activity, and we can help students comprehend what they hear by activating their prior knowledge. The next section will consider another way teachers can help ease the difficulty of listening: training students in different types of listening.

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