Active Listening Skills - Teacher Guide

To learn more about these activities, please read the Climate Mental Health Activities Introduction

Activity Summary
In this lesson, students will identify emotions they experience as they learn about the impacts of climate change. In pairs, students will practice active listening skills as one student describes their emotions to the partner who applies active listening skills. They then flip roles and the other student describes their emotions while the partner listens.

Note that it takes time to become comfortable with Active Listening, it might be helpful to include it as a regular practice in your teaching.

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<th>Instructional Overview</th>
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<td><strong>Grade Level</strong></td>
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| **Learning Objective** | ● To understand how the power of listening to others can create positive relationships with others and create empathy for others  
● To use active listening skills that support healthy relationships and classroom dynamics |
| **Social-Emotional Learning Focus** | ● Students identify their emotions, in a think-pair-share model students share their emotions while their partners use active listening techniques to understand their partner’s thinking and emotions (CASEL core competency: Relationship Skills) |
| **Strategies** | 1. **Self-care**  
3. **Listen and validate feelings**  
6. **Incorporate a trauma-informed approach**  
7. **Use social, emotional, and positive coping skills** |
| **Materials** | ❏ **Slide deck**  
❖ **Stopwatch** |
| **Sources and Research** | ● **Active Listening Technique**  
Climate Mental Health pages from CLEAN:  
● Strategies for managing climate change discourse for classrooms in which teaching climate change may be controversial:  
[https://cleanet.org/dev/clean/literacy/tools/controversy.html](https://cleanet.org/dev/clean/literacy/tools/controversy.html) |
Instructional Process

1) First, prompt students to think about climate change or follow up on a previous lesson focused on climate. Learning about the impacts of climate change causes many different feelings in all of us. On a piece of paper write down the emotions you feel as you are thinking about climate change/[or name the topic of the lesson].

2) Refer to the graph on slide 2 in the slide deck. Ask students to identify if the emotion they wrote down is listed in the graph and what percentage of youth describes similar feelings around climate change impacts.

3) Introduce Active Listening Skills using slide 3 in the slide deck, refer to the link in the speaker notes for instructions on the Active Listening skill steps.

4) Divide students into pairs. Let students know that they will share the emotions that each experiences when learning or hearing about climate change. Instruct the students to spend 2 min talking while the partner uses the Active Listening skills. Remind students to practice the six steps of active listening and let the partner speak uninterrupted while paying attention. Encourage students to use body language but don’t interrupt or respond. Set a timer for 2 min.

   Adaptation Suggestion: If any student is uncomfortable with describing their feelings to other students, they could instead i) tell a related story about someone else they have known or have heard or ii) a video they may have watched, or iii) speak in general terms about climate emotions by reflecting on the infographic in slide 2.

5) After 2 min, ask student pairs to switch and remind students of the active listening steps.

Closure

Debrief with the class classroom by asking how the Active Listening went or encourage students to share thoughts about the content they shared or heard.

Guided meditation or a physical activity (jumping jacks or stretching) will help students transition.

https://cires.colorado.edu/outreach/
Framing Environmental Issues and becoming a climate leader for mental empowerment

Marks et al., 2021

6 KEY ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

1. PAY ATTENTION. 2. WITHHOLD JUDGEMENT. 3. REFLECT. 4. CLARIFY. 5. SUMMARIZE. 6. SHARE.

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