

## Listening & Respect

### Overview

In this activity, students will learn how attentive listening demonstrates respect.

### Grades

Any

### Activity Type

Whole group

### Materials

None

### Duration

15 minutes

### Instructions

1. Ask for three volunteers in the class. Instruct the volunteers to step just outside the door of the classroom and be thinking about their favorite vacation or favorite activity during summer vacation. They are going to be asked to come into the classroom one at a time and tell the class about their vacation or activity. (Alternatively, teachers can instruct students to speak on a different topic that relates to class or another discussion topic connecting to what students have been doing.)
2. After the volunteers have stepped outside the classroom, have the remaining students count off from one to three. Tell them that they are going to respond to each of the volunteers in the following ways when he/she comes to speak:
  - Students in group 1: Do not talk to or look at this person. Totally ignore him/her. You may read, write, draw, doodle; the teacher may also want to designate a few students in this group to get up and walk across the room, sharpen a pencil, etc.
  - Students in group 2: Feel free to talk to your other classmates. Do not pay any attention to the volunteer speaking.
  - Students in group 3: Give this volunteer your total attention. Listen attentively and ask questions about his or her vacation or activity.
3. Invite students in one at a time to share their favorite vacation. Once a student has shared their experience, have the student sit with the rest of the class.
4. Thank the volunteers for assisting and ask class to give them “a hand” for being such good sports.
5. Guide students through the following processing questions:

- Who can explain to our brave volunteers what I asked you to do while they were out of the room?
  - How do you think student volunteer #1 felt? Why?
  - Student volunteer #1, tell the class what you were thinking and feeling during this activity.
  - How do you think student volunteer #2 felt? Why?
  - Student volunteer #2, tell the class what you were thinking and feeling during this activity.
  - How do you think student volunteer #3 felt? Why?
  - Student volunteer #3, tell the class what you were thinking and feeling during this activity.
  - Have any of you in this class ever been in these kinds of situations before, where you felt like you were not being listened to?
  - Why is it important to be a good listener? How can this skill help you in school? In your relationships? In your future career?
  - What behaviors can you model while someone is speaking that demonstrate active listening and respect? (Discuss body language and cues, such as looking at them, turning your body towards them, nodding your head, saying “uh-huh” occasionally, etc.)
6. Discuss with students: All of you will be in a public speaking role sometime either in this class, in a department meeting, in a classroom, or as president or CEO of your company — maybe even as president of the United States. It is the responsibility of the speaker to share his or her knowledge and expertise in a way that is effective and interesting. It is the responsibility of the listener to respond in a way that conveys to the speaker that he or she hears what is being said and has an interest in learning more. When both the speaker and listener do their parts, the result is a much more enjoyable experience. Remember, being bored – whether in the classroom or in the company boardroom — may have more to do with not doing your part than with the presenter not doing his or her part.