

SESSION 7
Listening (Introduction)
Example activities for YLs bullets on strategies

Talking points teaching listening:

- Children are not only learning to listen, they are listening to learn.
- “On average, we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write.” (Morley, 2001).
- It is important to make sure all listening in the English language classroom is ACTIVE.

Suggested video: https://youtu.be/J6CRdmQEt_Q

This video is about Keep Listening Active. It was produced at George Mason University for the Teaching English to Young Learners online course. This course is part of the AE E-Teacher Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and administered by FHI 360. [CC BY 4.0](#)

Listen and... Activities

In order to keep listening active, always give your young learners a task before or during listening. Then check their comprehension afterwards.

Often language teachers use:

- Listen and repeat (orally)
- Listen and write (dictation)

These are useful activities, but they are not meaningful and do not mean that students actually understand what they are saying or writing. They are good to practice pronunciation or spelling, but they need to be used in conjunction with more meaningful activities.

Textbook usually provide activities that check comprehension of new language. Some typical “Listen and...” activities that you can find in textbooks are:

- Listen and circle the correct picture
- Listen and match
- Listen and circle
- Listen and mark multiple choice
- Listen and mark true or false
- Listen and label
- Listen and fill in the blanks

These are good activities to check comprehension, but they may get boring after a while, so it is good to find more active ways to engage young learners in active listening.

You can engage young learners in other kinds of fun activities that involve listening and showing comprehension in various ways. The following are some suggestions from *Teaching Young Learners English: From Theory to Practice* by Joan Kang Shin and Jodi Crandall (2014).

- **Listen and point:** Students point to correct picture or object.

Example: Show students the cover of your storybook. *"Point to Daddy Bear. Point to Mommy Bear. Point to Baby Bear..."*

- **Listen and move:** Students respond by moving their body, i.e., Total Physical Response. Example: Practice animal vocabulary by asking student to mime different animals. *"Show me an elephant! Show me a tiger!..."*
- **Listen and do:** Students complete a simple task, like putting a sticker or placing an object in the correct place. Example: Teach prepositions by asking students to take out their classroom objects and put them on their desk. *"Put your pencil on your notebook. Put your eraser next to your pencil..."*
- **Listen and raise your hand:** Teachers can cue students to raise their hand if they agree, then raise it if they disagree; or if a particular word is heard. Example: Student listen to a song about different family members. *"Listen to song. Raise your hand when you hear a member of your family...."*
- **Listen and color:** Students respond by following instructions and coloring a picture correctly. Example: The teacher gives students a picture of a family. S/he gives instructions, such as *"Color the father's hair brown. Color his shirt red. Color his pants blue..."*
- **Listen and draw:** The teacher gives students a piece of paper, and they have to draw a picture according to her instructions. Example: Students listen to the teacher describe a picture of a house and have to draw it correctly. *"There are two windows. One is on the left side. The other is on the right side. The door is in the middle."*
- **Listen and swat:** To get students up and moving around, you can use a fly swatter. Put pictures of vocabulary words on the board and tell students to swat the correct picture or word. They can compete against each other to swat the picture or word first.
- **Listen and sequence pictures:** After the teacher tells a story, she could put large pictures on the board or a series of pictures on a handout. Students have to put the pictures in the correct order.
- **Listen and detect mistakes in a picture:** Students listen and pick out the mistakes in the picture that was described. For example, if the description is of an outdoor scene, the teacher could say *"There are trees behind the house"* when the trees are behind the field. After doing a full description, students have to pick up 5 mistakes in the picture.
- **Listen and follow a map:** Students are given a map and draw a line on the map showing they can follow directions from point A to point B.
- **Listen and fill out a form:** Students can listen to instructions and fill out a form with their personal information, such as registering for a library card or filling out the form at the doctor's office.