

# Classroom activity for Year 10

## Listening and responding

What makes a good listener?

<b>Duration</b>	20 minutes
<b>Learning intention</b>	Students will learn how to be effective listeners when having meaningful conversations. They will evaluate the types of responses that are helpful if someone is sharing that they are struggling.
<b>Activity focus</b>	When helping a friend who might be struggling, it is important that students know how to respond. Important communication skills, such as effective listening, need to be taught and practised to empower students to be effective help-givers. This lesson helps students identify the difference between helpful and unhelpful responses whilst developing listening skills.
<b>Resources required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Copy of scenario</li> <li>○ Copy of statements</li> <li>○ Materials to take notes</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum and wellbeing themes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Personal and social skills</li> <li>○ Help-giving</li> </ul>
<b>Success criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I can describe what it means to be a non-judgemental listener.</li> <li>○ I can tell the difference between a helpful and a non-helpful response.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity description</b>	<p><b>Discussion: what makes a good listener</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What makes a good listener?</li> <li>– Why is it important that we try and remain neutral when someone is telling a story, without showing anger or disappointment?</li> <li>– If we don't let someone finish what they are saying, before responding, what impact can this have?</li> <li>– Why is body language an important part to being a good listener? What are examples of positive body language?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>How to respond: Scenario practice</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the following scenario: <p><i>You have made the decision to ask a friend, 'Are you OK?' They have revealed that they have been feeling down lately and don't feel like doing any of the things they used to like doing. They are considering dropping out of school, as they are behind in all of their subjects and think they will probably fail anyway.</i></p> </li> <li>Put the following responses on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Response A: <i>That sounds difficult.</i></li> <li>– Response B: <i>You're really smart, you'll be fine.</i></li> <li>– Response C: <i>Is there anything I can do to help?</i></li> <li>– Response D: <i>So, what you're saying is that... (summarise what they have said in your own words)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>Talk about the pros or cons for each response in a class discussion. Key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Response A is a good example of showing empathy, letting someone know that you understand they are going through a difficult time, without judging them.</li> <li>– Response B seems encouraging, but saying something like this could make someone feel like you don't think their problem is a big deal.</li> <li>– Response C may lead you to try and solve the person's problems yourself, rather than listening deeply.</li> <li>– Response D is an example of active listening; summarising in your own words shows that you really are listening deeply and can remember what someone has said.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

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<b>Activity description (continued)</b>	<p><b>How to respond: 3 points</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each student writes three things they need to remember when they are responding to someone.</li> <li>2. Ask students to try and think about what they find challenging. For example not trying to solve their problem by telling them what to do.</li> <li>3. Ideas include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Don't try and solve their problems right away</li> <li>– Have an open mind</li> <li>– Don't rush them or interrupt them, let them speak in their own time</li> <li>– Encourage them to explain</li> <li>– Show you are listening by repeating back what you have heard</li> <li>– Ask open ended questions.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Differentiation</b>	<div> <div> <p>○ Support strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Perform the scenario verbally sharing the responses. These might include phrases like, 'things aren't really that bad' or 'that sounds tough'. Emphasise the way each response is being said, so that it is clear if the response is angry, supportive, sarcastic, etc. Ask students what they think of each response.</li> </ul> </div> <div> <p>○ Extension strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Students write a script showing different outcomes of the different responses.</li> </ul> </div> </div>
<b>Reflection question</b>	<p>What impact can the right response have on someone who is struggling?</p>