

LifeSkills

ACTIVE LISTENING

- Stop what you're doing and focus on the speaker.
- Use verbal and non-verbal techniques to show you are listening.
- Respond to what you have heard.

A Look at these pictures of people talking to each other. Write the phrases from the box in the correct column.

eye contact 'open' body language (e.g. arms aren't folded) bored facial expression
no eye contact 'interested' facial expression 'closed' body language (e.g. arms are folded)



A Good active listening	B Poor active listening

B Read the information about active listening. Then read the sentences and choose T (true) or F (false).

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Most people are good at active listening. | T / F |
| 2 | We remember most of what we hear. | T / F |
| 3 | Good listeners use verbal and non-verbal techniques. | T / F |

Active listening is one of the most important skills you can develop. It is important at work and at home. Unfortunately, most people are not very good at listening actively. Studies have shown that we remember only about 25–50% of what we hear. This means that in a ten-minute conversation with your boss, parents or friends, they really listen to you for only two and a half to five minutes. Similarly, when we are receiving directions or obtaining information, we don't listen to everything, so it is easy to miss important details.

Good listeners have a number of things in common. They use 'interested' body language. This means that they look at the speaker's eyes, they show interest with their facial expressions and they often lean a little bit towards the speaker. Good listeners also use verbal techniques to indicate that they are interested in what the other person is saying. They ask questions, and they use words and expressions like 'How interesting!' or 'That's amazing!' Becoming an active listener can help your social relationships and it can also help you remember important information.

Self and Society

Work and Career

Study and Learning



C **19** Listen to a conversation between two friends. Choose the words and phrases the listener uses to show that he is listening actively.

You're joking! That's great! Uh huh? Really?
Brilliant! Wow! That's amazing! Oh, how nice!

D Work in groups of three: Students A, B and C. Read your instructions below and do your tasks. Then switch roles twice, so you all take turns speaking, listening and evaluating.

Student A: you are going to talk about one of the topics below. If you like, you can make notes to help you remember what to say.

- an important change that you have made in your life recently
- an amazing experience
- a lucky occurrence
- an unlucky or bad experience

- 1 Make eye contact.
- 2 Use 'open' body language.
- 3 Have an interested facial expression.
- 4 Use expressions of interest.

Student B: you are going to listen to Student A and practise the active listening techniques opposite.

Student C: you are going to watch Student A and Student B and evaluate Student B's listening skills using the form on the right.

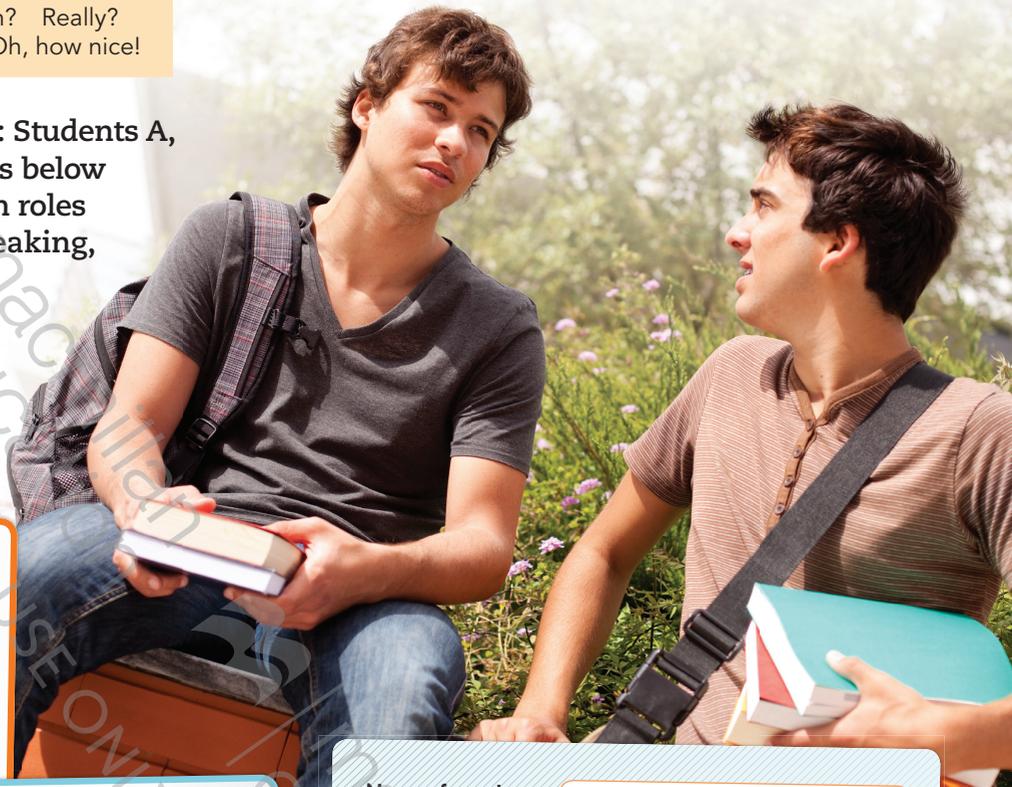
A: I went on an amazing trip recently.

B: Oh yeah? Where did you go?

A: New Zealand. It's really, really beautiful.

B: Oh, wow! I've never been there, but I've heard that it's fantastic.

E In your groups, share your evaluation forms. Answer any questions and make any appropriate suggestions.



Name of speaker:

Name of listener:

The listener made eye contact. yes no

The listener used 'open' body language. yes no

The listener had an interested facial expression. yes no

The listener used expressions of interest. yes no

The listener asked questions. yes no

I give (name) a score of out of 10 for his/her active listening techniques.



REFLECT ... How can the skill of active listening be useful to you in **Work and Career** and **Study and Learning**?