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ABSTRACT

A workshop was developed to address what needs to be taught about listening and how students can be taught to listen effectively. The workshop suggests that listening must be taught as a skill, and presents a model that serves as a basis for understanding and teaching listening as a skill. Deciding how to teach listening can be based on examining the use of listening abilities, and/or examining listening through literature. Students can become more aware of listening through exploring when and where they use the skill of listening. A checklist of listening in the classroom for teachers and students, a form to evaluate language arts programs, an outline of listening concepts, a listing of listening opportunities in the curriculum, an outline of instructional issues about listening to be raised in literature, a listing of initiators for units, projects, and lesson involving listening, and a poem about listening are attached. (RS)

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# FINDING NATURAL OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO LISTEN:

A Workshop

by

Charles H. Swanson and Barbara J. Swanson

## *An Introduction*

Discovering that listening is crucial in most learning and that listening can be taught, teachers soon find that textbook information and instructional materials are scarce. Unfortunately much of the available information about listening is too general for concrete skill instruction. Consequently, teachers struggle to find some means of instruction beyond "Pay attention" and "Listen carefully."

Believing that teachers know best what and how their students can learn, we designed this workshop to address two basic concerns. First, what about listening needs to be taught? And second, how, by what means, can students be taught to listen effectively?

Addressing the issue of what about listening needs to be taught, this workshop suggests that listening must be taught as a skill. Confronting the ambiguity of the word, *skill*, the P.A.T. model presents a basis for understanding and teaching listening as a skill. This model assumes that any skill is composed of specific components that, when practiced sufficiently, will take on the necessary condition of *automaticity*, using a skill automatically without thought.

Deciding how to teach listening can be based on examining the use of listening abilities, and/or examining listening through literature. Students can become more aware of listening through exploring when and where they use the skill of listening. Once the context for listening becomes conscious, applications of the various components follow. In addition, literature provides an excellent source for revealing listening, its applications and values. Once the door to listening is opened, students can be involved in understanding how and why this vital skill is employed.

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***FINDING NATURAL  
OPPORTUNITIES  
TO TEACH STUDENTS  
HOW TO LISTEN***

A Workshop  
presented by

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Presented at the  
annual convention of the  
**International Listening Association**  
in  
Little Rock, Arkansas  
March 11, 1995

# INVITATION

*If you are a dreamer, come in,  
If you are a dreamer, a wisher, a liar,  
A hope-er, a pray-er, a magic bean buyer...  
If you're a pretender, come sit by my fire  
For we have some flax-golden tales to spin.  
Come in!  
Come in!*

*(Shel Silverstein: Where the Sidewalk Ends)*

## LISTENING IN YOUR CLASSROOM

### THE TEACHER:

1. On a scale of 10, how do you rate yourself as a listener? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who taught you to listen? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How often do you create opportunities to listen to each individual student?  
Frequently \_\_\_\_\_ Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_
4. How well can you distinguish between listening and non-listening behaviors?  
Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many courses have you taken containing teaching how to listen?  
Whole listening courses? \_\_\_\_\_ Listening units \_\_\_\_\_ Listening lessons? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many courses have you taken containing instruction in how to teach listening?  
Whole listening courses? \_\_\_\_\_ Listening units \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many articles or audiovisual materials about listening have you studied?
8. How many books about listening have you read? \_\_\_\_\_

### THE STUDENTS:

1. Only students with hearing disabilities cannot listen. (True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_)
2. The ability to listen is natural at birth. (True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_)
3. Listening ability develops naturally with maturation. (True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_)
4. Since children have to listen so much, they don't need instruction.  
(True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_)
5. The percentage of children whose parents model effective listening behaviors is about: 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ 10% \_\_\_
6. The percentage of youngster receiving explicit instruction in how to listen prior to my class is about: 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ 10% \_\_\_
7. The percentage of classtime given to explicitly teaching my students how to listen is about: 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ 10% \_\_\_
8. If listening is not in the curriculum guide, it is not important. (T \_\_\_ F \_\_\_)
9. If students do not know how to listen before they get to my class, they will never know. (True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_)
10. Students in my class(es) must listen about \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the average class hour. 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ 10% \_\_\_
11. Students in my class(es) are expected to learn \_\_\_\_\_ percent of what they listen to. 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ zero% \_\_\_
12. The percentage of students able to pass my class without being able to listening is about. 100% \_\_\_ 75% \_\_\_ 50% \_\_\_ 25% \_\_\_ zero% \_\_\_

*Reading maketh man full,  
writing maketh him exact,  
and  
conference maketh him ready.*

*(from "On Reading" by Francis Bacon)*

## Language Arts Program Analysis

Directions: Under each of the four language arts skills, identify whether each component is a part of the English-Language Arts program in your school, your district or county, and your state. Mark an "X" in the space for each level when this aspect is present. Mark an "O" in the space for each level when this aspect of programming is not present. Mark a "?" (question mark) in the space for each level when this aspect of programming is not known to you.

Programmatic Component	Reading			Writing			Speaking			Listening		
	School	District or County	State	School	District or County	State	School	District or County	State	School	District or County	State
Published Objectives Or Outcomes												
Published Program Plans/ Curriculum Guides												
Testing Programs: 1. Diagnostic Tests (Pre-test/Post-test)												
2. Achievement Tests												
Prior In-service/ College Education Dedicated To Each Skill												
Dedicated/Scheduled Instructional Time For Each Skill												
Professional Resources/ Materials Available (Books, Audiovisual)												
Instructional Support Textbooks Used: # Of Pages Available												
# Of Pages Used												
Supplemental Texts: # Of Pages Available												
# Of Pages Used												
Achievement Cited On Reportcard												

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**We *write* a book a year;  
we *read* a book a month;  
we *speak* a book a week;  
and  
we *listen* a book a day.**

(Source unknown)

WHEN "PAY ATTENTION" OR "LISTEN CAREFULLY"  
ARE NOT ENOUGH.

**LISTENING CONCEPTS**

FOUNDATIONS: (THE P.A.T. MODEL)

CONCEPTS

SKILL

PRINCIPLES OF LISTENING:

TECHNIQUES:

PHYSICAL

EYES

FACE

BODY

MOUTH

ATTITUDES

MAKING COMMUNICATION WORK

SELFISH LISTENING

DIFFICUL LISTENING (VS. EASY LISTENING)

CHALLENGING YOURSELF (VS. AGREEABLE LISTENING)

THINKING

PREPARING TO LISTEN

RECOGNIZING NONVERBAL MESSAGES

IDENTIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

NOTETAKING

PURPOSES FOR LISTENING:

1. DISCRIMINATING SOUNDS
2. COMPREHENDING MESSAGES
3. APPRECIATING LITERATURE, MUSIC, AND OTHER EXPRESSIONS.
4. VISUALIZING IMAGES
5. EVALUATING / CRITICAL LISTENING

**PRACTICING LISTENING TECHNIQUES . . . (LIKE EVERY SKILL)**

1. SKILLS ARE ACQUIRED AND PERFECTED BY PRACTICE
2. LEARNING A SKILL OCCURS AS A "BREAKTHROUGH" (AH HA!) AFTER INDIVIDUALLY VARYING AMOUNTS OF PRACTICE
3. SKILL PERFORMERS, AT NO MATTER HOW HIGH A LEVEL, ALL RETURN TO POLISH THE BASICS OF THEIR SKILL(S) PERIODICALLY.

*I just heard about . . . .*

(Notes)

**A child is not *GOING* to be somebody;  
the child *ALREADY IS* somebody.**

(Emily Dunn)

## LISTENING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CURRICULUM

### LISTENING TO PEOPLE:

#### IN SCHOOL:

TO TEACHER(S)

TO PEERS

#### OUT OF SCHOOL:

TO PARENTS

TO SIBLINGS

TO FRIENDS

TO OTHERS

### LISTENING TO MATERIALS

#### IN SCHOOL:

TO STORIES

TO POETRY

TO LECTURES

TO DISCUSSIONS

#### OUT OF (OR, IN) SCHOOL:

##### TELEVISION:

NEWS

MUSIC

DRAMA

ADVERTISING (PROPAGANDA)

##### RADIO:

NEWS

MUSIC

DRAMA

ADVERTISING (PROPAGANDA)

### LISTENING TO SOUNDS:

#### IN SCHOOL

#### OUT OF SCHOOL

### LISTENING TO NONVERBALS:

#### IN SCHOOL

#### OUT OF SCHOOL

### LISTENING TO FEELINGS:

#### IN SCHOOL

#### OUT OF SCHOOL

### LISTENING FOR MEANINGS

### LISTENING FOR PATTERNS (ORGANIZATION)

### LISTENING IN SCIENCE

"LISTENING WITHOUT EARS" (FROGS, SNAKES, BUTTERFLIES, ...)

*Have you heard about . . . .*

(Notes)

**DISCOVERY:**

Questioning the answer;

Not answering the question.

The mind is not a vessel to be filled,  
but a fire to be kindled.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES ABOUT LISTENING  
TO BE RAISED IN LITERATURE**

IDENTIFYING MESSAGE SOURCES (WHERE DO MESSAGES COME FROM?)

WORDS  
SOUNDS  
SIGHTS

WHO LISTENS?

HOW DO THEY LISTEN?

BEHAVIORAL TECHNIQUES  
ATTITUDE TECHNIQUES  
THINKING TECHNIQUES

WHAT HAPPENS DURING LISTENING?

TO THE LISTENER?  
TO THE SPEAKER?  
TO OTHERS?

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF LISTENING

TO THE LISTENER?  
TO THE SPEAKER?  
TO OTHERS?

WHO SERVES AS A MODEL LISTENER?

TEACHERS  
FRIENDS  
FAMILY  
TOYS  
IMAGINARY FRIENDS

HOW DO LISTENERS LISTEN BEYOND WORDS?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN POOR LISTENING TAKES PLACE?

WHAT HAPPENS DURING POOR LISTENING?

WHAT HAPPENS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF POOR LISTENING?

WHO SERVES AS A MODEL OF POOR LISTENING?

FAMILY  
FRIENDS  
TEACHERS  
OTHER KIDS

WHEN AND HOW DO ANIMALS LISTEN? (ALL CREATURES DO NOT HAVE EARS)

HOW DO ANIMALS LISTEN?

HOW DO ANIMALS GIVE FEEDBACK?

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF LISTENING?

DISCOVERING HOW THE SPEAKER FEELS ABOUT

THE SUBJECT  
THE AUDIENCE  
HIM/HER SELF

*Listen to this . . . .*

(Notes)

Creative teachers are not born,  
they are made by the teacher next door.

*I hear, I forget.  
I see, I remember.  
I do, I understand.*  
(Chinese proverb)

***SPARKS/STARTERS/INITIATORS FOR  
UNITS, PROJECTS, AND LESSONS  
INVOLVING LISTENING  
(BUT, NOT LIMITED TO . . . .)***

**TOPICS:**

**RELATIONSHIPS  
FRIENDSHIP  
INNER LISTENING (WHEN WE TALK TO  
OURSELVES)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL LISTENING:  
MANMADE SOUNDS  
SOUNDS OF NATURE**

**LISTENING IN SCIENCE: (BUTTERFLIES DON'T  
HAVE EARS)**

**SUPPORTING DEVICES:**

**OPINION BOARD:**

**DIRECTED/GUIDED LISTENING:**

**EXAMINED/EVALUATING LISTENING**

*You really need to hear about . . . .*

(Notes)

**It's not what is poured into a student that counts . . . .**

**but what is planted**

(Source Unknown)

# LISTEN

When I ask you to listen to me,  
and you start giving me advice,  
you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me,  
and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way,  
you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me,  
and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem,  
you have failed me, strange as it may seem.

Listen! All I asked, was that you listen,  
not to talk or nag -- just hear me.

Advice is cheap: 35 cents will get you  
both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the newspaper.

And I can do for myself; I'm not helpless.  
Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me  
that I can and need to do for myself,  
you contribute to my fear and weakness.

But when you accept as a simple fact  
that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational,  
then I can quit trying to convince you  
and can get about the business of understanding  
what's behind this irrational feeling.

Irrational feelings make sense  
when we understand what's behind them.

So, please listen and hear me.  
and if you want to talk,  
wait a minute for your turn,  
and I'll listen to you.

Ray Houton, M.D.  
TEEN TIMES, (Nov /Dec., 1975)

The greatest source  
of energy  
is  
**PRIDE**  
in your work