



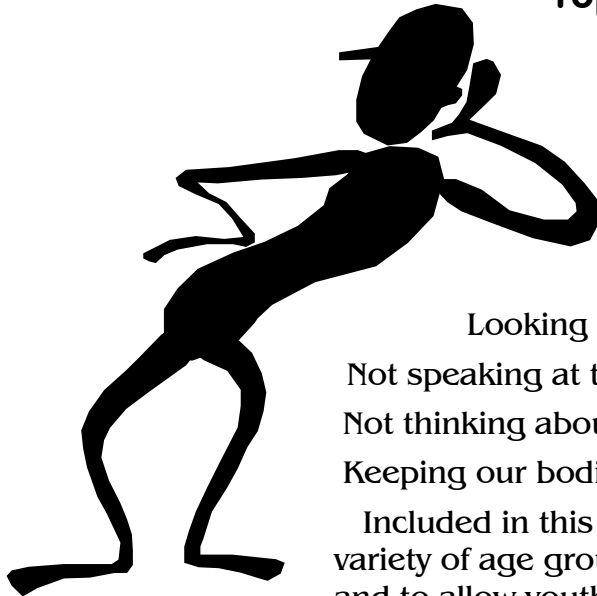
Listening Skills

New Hampshire's 4-H Communication Series for Leaders

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Topics for discussion with members:



In communicating, listening is as important as speaking.

About half the time we spend communicating is spent listening.

Paying attention is important. The ways we pay attention are:

Looking at the speaker

Not speaking at the same time

Not thinking about something else

Keeping our bodies still

Included in this publication are several activities for a variety of age groups. These activities are designed to be fun and to allow youth to practice their listening skills.

* * * * * **Activities** * * * * *

The Whisper Game 1

Materials Needed:

Blank paper or 3"x 5" file cards and pencils

Give each member a file card or paper and a pencil; allow time for members to write a slogan, song title, or motto on their card.

Give completed cards to leader. Let members place chairs in a line and get seated. The first person will draw a file card/paper from the box, read it to himself/herself, lay the card face down. Then whisper the message to the next

person, so no one else can see or hear the message. Each person repeats the message to the person next to him or her only once. The last person repeats the message out loud.

Reflect with group: How did the message change? What do you think caused the message to change? Can you think of times when messages get changed in daily life?



The Whisper Game 2

Prepare a written message of about 10-15 words.

Gather together the group who will be playing. It could be your family or a group of friends from school or a 4-H club.

The first person should whisper the message to the next person so no one else can see or hear the message.

Each person repeats the message to the person next to him or her.

The last person should repeat the message aloud.

Reflect with group:

How did the message change? What do you think caused the message to change? Can you think of times when messages get changed in daily life?



The Echo Game

Have members find partners.

Give a topic to discuss, such as "Why I Joined 4-H", "My Favorite 4-H Project", "My Hobby" or "My Pet".

One person says a sentence or two. The second person must repeat exactly what was said. When he or she repeats it correctly, he or she becomes the speaker.

Repeat.

Listening Together

Here's an activity to do in pairs (with a helper).

Select and listen to a speech, demonstration or public meeting together. When you go to listen, take a notebook along, and during the presentation, write down something you learned or thought was important. Outline the main points.

After the speech or presentation is over, write down two or more things you would like to know about the topic. See if you can write a question. Share what you wrote in your notebook with your partner.

Interpreting: Discuss what you and your partner listened to, and if the ideas you each noted were different. Why do you think they were different? What things did you both think were important? What things did you want to learn more about? How could you make up questions from things you wanted to know?



Is My Line Busy?

Do this activity with a partner.

Read the paragraph on the right and discuss with your partner.

Interpreting: Discuss if this is true for you sometimes. How do you think the other person feels? Are there things you could do when you listen to others so that your line won't be busy?

Sometimes when people phone me, I say hello with my mouth, but my mind is busy. I do not really hear what the other person is saying. I am too busy thinking about other things I have to do or the things I like or don't like about the person calling. When I meet a person and he or she starts telling me something, I sometimes look like I am interested and listening while my mind is wandering. If they ask me a question, both of us soon discover that my line is busy.

Fortunately, my line is not always busy. There have been times when people want to share concerns. Somehow I manage to listen them. In most cases, I didn't have an answer to the problems, but my listening serves as a kind of mirror to help them to see themselves in their situations. And to solve, at least in part, their own problems.

Unfortunately, most of us have a busy line, sometimes. Even when we get calls from those who are special to us we somehow take them for granted. Then one day we wonder why they are no longer willing to talk with us and to share with us. We feel left out, hurt and ask, "how did it happen?" Maybe it is because our *lines were "busy"*.

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