

Speaking & Listening Activity

Directions

An effective speaking and listening activity involves asking students to vote on whether or not they agree with a particular statement. YES or NO to the following: (Examples)

- _____ 1) *I believe in capital punishment.*
- _____ 2) *All students should be allowed to stop attending school if they want at age 13.*
- _____ 3) *Buying and selling guns should NOT be controlled in any way.*
- _____ 4) *No one should have to pay any taxes to the state or federal government.*
- _____ 5) *Health insurance should be given to everyone by the government.*
- _____ 6) *It should be OK to text during classes.*

Each student who voted on the 'yes' side of the argument is then paired up with a partner who voted on the 'no' side. The students then are to take turns to present their side of the argument to their partner. The habits of a good listener are important for students to practice during this exercise. (**maintains eye contact; gives appropriate nods; asks for clarification or restates occasionally; and avoids making any judgments or interrupting.**)

Being A Good Listener: Review

The teacher will brainstorm with the class all of the **habits of a good listener**. Ask students the following questions:

- *What does a good listener do?*
- *How do you know when somebody is a good listener?*
- *What are the qualities of a good listener?*

Record the student responses on a piece of chart paper, or on the board. Make sure that students record these items also in their notes. These can be used in a rubric and/or for review later to determine the qualities of a good listener. (Rubrics are also available as SW A in this file.)

SW C- A Speaking and Listening Activity (cont'd)

Activity: Students will take turns in a role-playing situation to determine how effective they are at listening. Each student will tell the partner-student about **one of his/her favorite holidays**. The student doing the talking will be taking notes to see if the listener **maintains eye contact, gives appropriate nods** for understanding, **asks for clarification** by using the speaker's name, **restating occasionally** if necessary, and **avoids making any judgments or interrupting**. After that, the students will change places.

After each student listened to the other, they are then asked to summarize the main points that their partner was trying to get across. The purpose is not to agree or disagree, but to try to **understand the meaning** behind what was being said.

Finally, the students are asked to think about the ways in which they could have improved their own argument to get their meaning across more clearly, and also anything that they could have used to improve their understanding of what their partner said.