

# Do You See What I'm Saying?

*Using Active Listening to Make Sure You Get the Picture*



## BIG IDEAS

- › The goal of listening to another person is to understand what they are saying.
- › Active listening requires effort. It is a skill which can be learned and practiced.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- › Use active listening to carry out a drawing based on another student's directions.
- › Reflect on their use of active listening in everyday conversations.



## VOCABULARY

**Active listening** › a listening technique in which you give feedback to the person speaking to make sure you understand what they are telling you



## CHARACTER CONNECTION

Students gain skills that help them take **responsibility** for being good listeners.

## THEME

Resolving Conflicts Respectfully

## GRADE LEVEL

4-8

## TIME

30 minutes

## MATERIALS

Drawing paper, pencils/pens



## Directions

1. Write the term 'active listening' on the board. Have students pair up and give them 1 minute to discuss with their partner what they think 'active listening' means. After having students share out, clarify the definition of 'active listening' (see sidebar).
2. Have students sit back-to-back with their partners, each with a writing surface in front of them. Give students two minutes to draw a picture. It doesn't matter what the picture is of, and it is not supposed to be a great work of art. It can be anything from a stick figure to a landscape. When time is up and all students have drawn a picture, the students will work with their partner to do the listening exercise.
3. In each pair, one student will be Student A and the other student will be Student B. Student A will go first. Student A describes their drawing to Student B, and Student B attempts to draw the same picture on their own



## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

**Common Core Language Arts**

## CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.4-5.1.B › Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

**PA Student Interpersonal Skills**

16.2.8.C › Analyze factors that impact communication.

**NJ 21st Century Life & Careers**

9.1.4-8.D.1 › Use effective oral and written communication in face-to-face and online interactions and when presenting to an audience.

paper, based only on the description they are hearing, without asking any questions.

- › Student A must not show their drawing to Student B. No peeking!
  - › Student B cannot interrupt or ask questions of Student A.
  - › Student B should do their best to draw exactly what Student A is describing, but let students know you don't expect their drawing to be perfect!
4. Students will probably find this task frustrating, as they will want to ask questions to clarify what they are supposed to draw. Let this go on for about a minute, and then have students stop and put their pencils down. Ask for volunteers from among the Student Bs (the students who were listening) to share what this experience was like.
  5. Now have each pair try again, but this time Student B can ask questions of Student A as they draw. Give them a few minutes to complete the drawing. When they are finished, have each pair compare their drawings. What was this experience like for students? Have students share out, making sure to hear from someone who was listening and someone who was describing.
  6. Student A in each pair might think they could have done a better job if the roles had been reversed, even without asking questions. So that all students can have the experience, now partners will switch roles. Student B will describe their original drawing to Student A, while Student A tries to draw what is being described. On the first try, no questions are allowed. Then after a minute, allow Student A to ask clarifying questions as they complete the drawing.

**WRAP-UP**

7. What was this experience like for students, now that they have tried it from both sides?
  - › **How did you feel when you were not allowed to ask questions? How did things change once you were allowed?**
  - › **What questions were helpful?**
  - › **When you have a conversation with someone, how often do you ask questions to make sure you understand what they are saying?**

**Extension**

Have students repeat the activity at home with their family members and share their experiences in class.