

LESSON 2 • LISTENING SKILLS

ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors: M2, M6, SMS2, SMS4, SS1, SS9

Materials Needed: Mudra Card: *Plug into the Earth*, speaker, age-appropriate songs, and a puppet or stuffed animal

Learning Objectives:

- I can identify listening skills.
- I understand why listening skills are important.
- I can demonstrate listening skills.

LESSON

1 • **Opening:** Sensory Check-In

“We are going to begin class by checking in with your senses. What are your senses? Can you name any of them?”

- + Prompt students to name the five senses and give them clues if necessary.
 - Sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing

- + Demonstrate and explain how to take a deep breath.

“When getting ready to take a deep breath, first make sure your feet are flat on the floor. You may need to move forward in your chair so your feet can touch the floor. When your feet are on the floor, you will feel safer in your chair. Next, sit up nice and tall. You can do this by rolling your shoulders back. Now your body is ready for a deep breath.”

“When you take a deep breath, breathe in through your nose and out through your nose. When you breathe in, fill your lungs with air and your stomach will rise. When you breathe out, the air leaves your lungs and your stomach falls.”

- + Give students the option to close their eyes or keep them open while practicing the breath.

“Bring your attention to your breath. Notice how your breath is coming in and out through your nose. As you breathe in and out, can you pick up any smells coming in through your nose? Think about it to yourself.”



“Next, bring your attention to your sense of touch. What do your clothes feel like on your body? Notice what your hands are touching; how does it feel to your fingers?”

“Bring your attention to what you can see. If your eyes are closed, what do the back of your eyelids look like? If your eyes are open, what is right in front of you? What colors do you see?”

“Bring your attention to your mouth. What can you taste on your tongue?”

“Finally, bring your attention to what you hear. Listen to what your breath sounds like and what noises you notice in the room. Know that when you work on listening, it is easier to hear when you are not making any noises.”

“Take one last deep breath in through your nose and out through your nose. When you are ready, you can start to blink your eyes open if they are closed, or look up.”

2 • **Introduction:** Listening Skills

“Today we are going to talk about listening skills and why they are so important to use in every part of your life. Listening skills are skills that you can use for the rest of your life; whether it be at home, school, with friends, or in your community.”

3 • **Activity:** “Smart Mind, Kind Heart, Calm Body”

Kind Hearts

- + Engage the class in a discussion regarding their ideas of listening skills.
- + Explain to the students that they can use their kind hearts, smart minds and calm bodies to be good listeners.

“Your voice is off, your body is quiet, and you are respectful of the speaker. When you are quiet when someone else is talking, it shows others your kind heart. You are being respectful and responsible.”

- + Practice zipping lips, or a signal you prefer, for demonstrating voices off.
- + Practice sitting with voices off for a few seconds, giving students positive feedback for sitting quietly.



“Sometimes it can be difficult to show your kind heart when you are trying to listen. You might feel the need to talk to a friend or shout out when your teacher is talking. When those things happen, they can be distracting to the person who is talking and to others who are trying to listen. You might need to put your finger to your lips to remind yourself not to talk while someone else is talking.”

Smart Minds

“When you are using your smart mind, your eyes and brain are focused on the speaker while you are listening to what they are saying. When your eyes and brain are focused on the speaker, you are practicing being the best learner you can be.”

- + Demonstrate how to focus on the speaker:
 - Use a signal or saying you prefer to help students remember this skill.
 - Example: Use two fingers to point to your eyes then their eyes or make binoculars with their fingers around their eyes.
- + Practice focusing on the speaker.
 - Tell students you know they are using their smart minds to focus because their voices are off and they are looking at you, the speaker.

“Sometimes things around you may distract your mind. You are all human and this may happen. Your brain may be focused on what is going on around the room instead of what the speaker is saying. When this happens, you need to help yourself focus. You can do this by breathing in while thinking the word ‘focus,’ and then breath out while thinking the word ‘distractions.’”

“Let’s practice together. Breathe in and think about filling your body full of focus. Breathe out all distractions that are keeping you from focusing.”

Calm Bodies

“To show that you are ready to learn, make sure your body is calm, your hands are to yourself, and you are sitting still.”

“Having a calm body shows your teacher and your classmates that you are ready to learn. Having a calm body also allows your classmates to focus on learning. It helps your mind feel calm and focus on what the teacher or speaker is saying.”



- + Demonstrate how to have a calm body.
 - Show a signal or use a saying to help the students remember to use their calm bodies. Suggest students put their hands in their laps or another preferred action.
 - Invite students to demonstrate their calm bodies and give them positive feedback on their stillness.
 - Example: “Crisscross yogi-sauce, spoons in the bowls.”

“Sometimes your body may feel more wiggly than usual and sitting still may seem extra difficult. When you feel like sitting still is difficult, you can do a mudra called ‘Plug into the Earth.’ This mudra helps calm your wiggly body and busy mind to help you focus on who is speaking.”

- + Practice breathing with the mudra following the guidelines outlined in Lesson 1.

4 • **Activity:** “Musical Listening Skills”

- + Play music and randomly pause. When you pause the music, ask students to demonstrate their listening skills by giving them a new direction.
 - Example: “I can see you are all listening by the way your voices are off, your eyes are on me, and your bodies are calm. The next time the music stops, I want you to show me your listening skills while you place your hands on your head. Think in your mind ‘I will show my listening skills and place my hands on my head the next time the music stops.’”
- + This activity connects listening skills to direction-following skills. Explain to the students how they use listening skills to follow directions and learn.
- + Suggestions for directions:
 - Kneel instead of sitting with legs crossed
 - Stay standing
 - Lay down
 - Sit down with legs straight out in front of them
 - Choose a yoga pose

5 • **Activity:** “Skill Review”

- + Use the puppet or stuffed animal to demonstrate each listening skill:
 - Have the puppet wiggle. Then ask the students to identify how to help the puppet have a “calm body.” Then practice Earth Mudra.



- Have the puppet talk and pretend to poke someone. Then ask the students to identify how to help the puppet have a “kind heart.” Then practice one of the tools they identify.
- Have the puppet look around the room and then stare off into the distance. Then ask the students to identify how to help the puppet have a “smart mind.” Practice your signal with the class and have them show you their “smart minds.”

6 • Wrap Up

“Practice using your listening skills throughout the day. Notice how practicing your listening skills helps you understand what is going on around you and makes it easier to follow directions. Listening skills take practice, so be kind to yourself if you are not always a perfect listener.”

