

Lesson 3.10: Listening and I-Messages

Unit: Unit 3, Growing Up, Getting Along (Human Development and Relationships) **Topic:** 3.3 Communication, Conflict, Relationships **Grade:** 6 to 8 (written at grade 7; see Differentiation for the grade 6 support and grade 8 stretch) **Days:** 1 class period of 40 minutes **Room:** Either (classroom or FACS lab with tables; no kitchen needed)

Standards

- NYS module line: NYS HDR 4. Human Relationships c) Discuss strategies for strengthening human relationships
- NYS module line: NYS HDR 2. Self-Concept and Self-Image d) Describe ways personal image is projected to others through physical appearance, verbal and nonverbal communication, behavior, and action
- CTE theme line: CTE CIR 2. Listening b) Distinguish between hearing and listening
- CTE theme line: CTE CIR 2. Listening c) Show understanding of active listening and feedback techniques
- CTE theme line: CTE CIR 1. Communication f) Demonstrate personal development of communication skills through practice of these skills in a variety of classroom applications
- NYS FACS Learning Standard 2 (Intermediate), Key Idea: Students will know the basic principles of home and community safety. They can demonstrate the skills necessary to maintain their homes and workplaces in a safe and comfortable condition. They can provide a safe and nurturing environment for themselves and others.; Performance Indicator: none of the three Standard 2 indicators names communication. The state assigns only Standard 2 to this module, so this lesson cites the key idea's last sentence (a nurturing environment for others) and no PI.
- CDOS Standard 3a Universal Foundation Skills: Interpersonal Skills
- National FCS 3.0: 13.3.3 Show how to listen well and give useful feedback.
- National FCS 3.0: 13.3.2 Show the spoken and unspoken behaviors and attitudes that make communication work.

Enduring understanding and essential question

Big idea: Hearing is what your ears do. Listening is what you do. Most arguments start because somebody felt unheard, and most of them end when somebody says what they feel without blaming. **Essential question:** Can you be a good communicator if you never say anything, or if you never stop talking?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. (Low) Given the four parts of active listening (eyes, body, restate, ask), list all four and describe what each one looks like in a real conversation.

2. (Mid) Given a blaming “you” statement, rewrite it as an I-message using the frame (I feel ... when ... because ... I need ...).
3. (High) In a two-minute partner exchange, deliver an I-message and respond to a partner’s I-message using all four active listening moves, then judge from a partner’s checklist which move was weakest and state one fix.

Vocabulary

Tier 2 (general academic): restate, blame, feedback, respond Tier 3 (FACS): active listening, I-message, you-statement, nonverbal, tone. See the unit vocabulary list (Vocabulary 03.md) for Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Materials and setup

- Handout, one per student: Handout 03.10 - Listening Checklist and I-Message Frame.md (the listening checklist, the I-message frame, ten you-statements to rewrite, and two Draw/See/Hear picture cards printed once per pair and cut apart)
- Slides: Slides 03.10 - Listening and I-Messages
- A timer visible to the class
- Scrap paper for the Draw/See/Hear round, one sheet per pair
- Setup notes: pair students across the table before the bell (a seating slide works). Cut the picture cards ahead of time and put one pair of cards face down at each pair’s seat. Nothing else to set up. No allergy check needed today.

Pre-assessment

Lesson 0.2’s Draw/See/Hear observation checklist told you who describes clearly and who asks questions. Today’s do now asks students to define “listening” in their own words; count how many mention anything beyond “being quiet.” That count tells you whether Step 1 needs the full five minutes or three.

Do now and hook (Time: 5 min)

On the board: “Write the difference between hearing someone and listening to someone. One or two sentences. Then write the name of a person (no names of students in this room) who you think is a great listener and one thing that person does.”

Debrief: cold call three students for the “one thing that person does.” Write the actions on the board (looks at me, does not interrupt, asks questions). Then the hook: “Everyone in here has been talked at by someone who was not listening. You are going to feel it again in two minutes. Then you are going to learn to never do it to someone else.”

Procedure

Step	Teacher will	Students will	Time
1. Learning activity: Draw/See/Hear, listening round	Run one round of the Unit 0 game with a twist. The	Play the round. Compare. On the handout, write one	7 min

	describer describes the picture card in words only. The drawer draws, but for the first 45 seconds the drawer is not allowed to ask a single question. At 45 seconds, call “questions open” and let the drawer ask. Two minutes total. Then pairs compare the drawing to the card. Ask: “What changed when questions opened?” Take three answers. Land the point: asking is listening.	thing that got better after questions opened.	
2. Direct instruction: the four listening moves	Show the four moves with one slide each: eyes (look at the speaker, put the phone face down), body (turn toward them, nod, do not fold arms or turn away), restate (“So you are saying ...”), ask (“What happened next?” “What do you need?”). Model each with a student volunteer: the volunteer tells you about their morning; you do everything wrong first (phone, turned away, interrupting), then everything right. Ask the class	Watch both versions. Name the four moves. Copy the four onto the handout checklist header.	7 min

	to name the four moves they saw the second time. Tie to HDR 2. d): your face and body send a message before your mouth does.		
3. Direct instruction: the I-message	Put a you-statement on the slide: “You always take my stuff without asking.” Ask: “What does the other person do when they hear ‘you always’?” (They defend, they argue back.) Show the frame: I feel [feeling] when [what happened] because [why it matters] and I need [one specific thing]. Rewrite the example together: “I feel frustrated when my charger gets taken without asking because then my phone is dead by lunch, and I need you to ask first.” Show the two traps: a fake I-message (“I feel like you are a thief”) and a vague need (“I need you to be better”). Do a second one as a class from the handout.	Copy the frame. Rewrite example 2 on the handout with the class.	6 min
4. Practice pairs: I-messages and listening	Pairs take turns. Partner A picks a you-statement from the handout list,	Rewrite, deliver, listen, check off, switch. Write the two I-messages they	11 min

	rewrites it as an I-message, and says it out loud to Partner B. Partner B listens using all four moves and answers with a restate and one question. Partner A checks off which moves B used on the checklist. Switch. Two rounds each if time allows. Circulate with the clipboard (see Check for understanding).	delivered on the handout.	
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Questions to ask

Monitor understanding:

- What are the four listening moves? Which one is the hardest to fake?
- Is “I feel like you never listen to me” an I-message? Why not?
- What is the “need” in the charger example? Why does it have to be specific?

Deepen learning:

- In Draw/See/Hear, the drawer could not ask questions for 45 seconds. When in real life are you not allowed to ask questions? How does that feel?
- Why do people argue back when they hear “you always”? What happens in your body when someone says that to you?
- If you say a perfect I-message and the other person still yells, was the I-message a failure? What did it do anyway?

Check for understanding

Clipboard checklist during Step 4: for each pair, a yes or no on “the I-message has all four parts,” “the need is one specific thing,” and “the listener restated before asking.” A pair with three yeses on the first round moves to a harder you-statement (numbers 8 to 10 on the handout). A pair with a no on “the need is specific” gets the question “what exactly do you want them to do tomorrow?”

Closure (Time: 4 min)

3-2-1 exit card on the bottom of the handout: 3 of the four listening moves from memory, 2 parts of the I-message frame, 1 person outside this room you could use an I-message with

this week (a role, not a name: “my brother,” “my coach”). Three students read their “1” aloud. Sort cards into “got it” and “needs more.” The “needs more” pile decides whether Lesson 3.11 opens with a two-minute I-message review.

Differentiation and supports

- ELL: the four listening moves have an icon each on the slides (an eye, a body turned, a speech bubble with an arrow back, a question mark) and the same icons on the handout; the I-message frame is printed with the four blanks in Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish on the handout (marked [check with a native speaker]); Draw/See/Hear can be played in a shared home language for the first round; sentence starter for the restate move: “So you are saying ____.”
- IEP and 504 (general): the you-statement list gives ten choices so a student can pick a short one; a student who does not want to speak an I-message aloud writes it and reads it to the teacher instead of a partner; the checklist uses checkboxes, not sentences; extended time means the second I-message can be finished at the start of Lesson 3.11.
- Grade 6 support: use the first five you-statements only (they are about objects and turns, not feelings between people). The I-message frame for grade 6 has three parts: I feel ... when ... I need ...; the “because” is optional.
- Grade 8 stretch: numbers 8 to 10 involve a group chat, a rumor, and a family rule. Grade 8 pairs also write a one-line answer to “what could the listener say back that would make this worse?” and then the opposite.
- UDL checkpoint used: multiple means of representation (the moves are shown wrong then right by a live model, printed as icons, and practiced) and multiple means of action and expression (a student can deliver the I-message aloud, in writing, or to the teacher).
- No-kitchen or no-machine alternative: none needed; this lesson runs in any room with pairs.

Assessment

Objective	Standards met	Learning task	Assessment (formative or summative; tool)
1. List and describe the four listening moves	CIR 2. b), c); National FCS 13.3.3	Step 2 model, checklist header	Formative; exit card “3” line, checked for four moves
2. Rewrite a you-statement as an I-message	HDR 4. c); HDR 2. d); National FCS 13.3.2	Step 3 class rewrite, Step 4 handout rewrites	Formative; clipboard checklist (“all four parts,” “specific need”); handout collected for daily work
3. Deliver and listen, then judge the	CIR 1. f); CDOS 3a Interpersonal Skills;	Step 4 practice pairs, partner	Formative; partner checklist plus the

weakest move	Std 2 KI	checklist	“one fix” line on the handout
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All three objectives are assessed summatively on the Communication Performance Task at the end of Lesson 3.13 Day 2, which requires an I-message and all four listening moves.

Homework

None. Optional: use one I-message at home this week and be ready to say what happened (no names needed).

Connections

Inside the building: the ELA teacher, who teaches speaking and listening standards, could use the same four listening moves during literature circles so students hear one language in two rooms. The counselor’s office can post the I-message frame; students who already know it from FACS can use it in a mediation. *[Sal: give the counselor a copy of the handout.]*

Sources

- NYS Middle Level CTE FACS Content Module 02, Human Development and Relationships (nyctecenter.org, June 2018), lines 4. c) and 2. d). Copy in 02 Standards/NYS Module PDFs/.
- NYS Middle Level CTE Theme Module, Communication and Interpersonal Relationships, lines 2. b), 2. c), and 1. f). Same folder.
- NYS Learning Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences (1996), Standard 2, Intermediate, FACS strand. Wording per 02 Standards/STANDARDS SOURCES - web research.md, section 2. *[Sal: confirm against the NYSED PDF.]*
- National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education 3.0 (LEAD FCS Education, 2018), competencies 13.3.2 and 13.3.3.
- Sal’s own materials: the Draw/See/Hear game as written up in Lesson 0.2 (Handout 00.02 - Draw See Hear Picture Cards and Room Map.md); his Brentwood Communication Styles packet (education_teachingwork_communication_styles_2026_04.docx) for the assertive, passive, and aggressive vocabulary and the listening-as-communication idea, rewritten here without the personal branding frame.

Teacher notes

- If time runs short, cut Step 4 to one round each and skip the switch to harder statements. Never cut the “wrong then right” model in Step 2; students remember the phone face down more than anything you say.
- Common mistake: the fake I-message. “I feel like you ...” is a you-statement wearing a costume. The test is whether the word after “I feel” is a feeling (frustrated, left out, worried, embarrassed). Keep a feelings word bank on the slide.
- The second common mistake is a vague need. “I need respect” cannot be done tomorrow. “I need you to ask before you take my charger” can.

- The Draw/See/Hear twist (no questions for 45 seconds) is new; the Unit 0 version let drawers ask from the start. Students who played it in September will notice the difference, which is the point.
- *[Sal: your Brentwood Communication Styles packet used four fictional friends with four styles. If you want the styles named (assertive, passive, aggressive), put them on one slide at the end of Step 3 as “an I-message is the assertive choice.” Keep it to one slide; Lesson 3.13 comes back to saying no assertively.]*