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**FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS**

**Introduce the concept of active listening**

Show the class the following clip from Disney’s *Inside Out*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t685WM5R6aM>

Ask them why they think Sadness is demonstrating a really good way of supporting Bing Bong? What was it that she was doing that meant Bing Bong (the elephant) felt heard - in contrast to what Happiness was attempting?

* Refer pupils to the ***Active Listening Worksheet*** and the definition of active listening. Discuss pages 1 and 2.

**ACTIVITY 1: What makes a good active listener?**

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| **\*\*Guidance to teachers:** Please note that some of the below YouTube clips reference absent fathers and family break-ups that some young people might find upsetting. You may want to just give prior warning about this or choose not to show them. We’ve added a star against these so you can plan accordingly. |

Play the following YouTube clips for the class.

Ask them to write some notes about how the characters respond to the person communicating. They might note down any time they see good non-verbal body language; mirrored body language, reflecting and clarifying, signs of encouragement; pausing; withholding judgement, summarising, or demonstrating empathy.

Clip 1: [**https://www.youtube.com/shorts/2tmnIVVi2d8**](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/2tmnIVVi2d8) **\*\***Clip 2:[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZGXCDJATDs**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZGXCDJATDs) **\*\***Clip 3:[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LtO3P7vRtU**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LtO3P7vRtU)from 14.14 - 17.00Clip 4:[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkTucawea-8**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkTucawea-8)from 1.17 onwardsClip 5**:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IaNR8YGdow&t=4s**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IaNR8YGdow&t=4s)Clip 6**:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ45EyEHIfA**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ45EyEHIfA)Clip 7: [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sNn7g99JEI**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sNn7g99JEI)

**ACTIVITY 2.** **Poor listening cards**

* Read page 3 of the ***Active Listening Worksheet*** which explains some of the things not to do!

Ask the students to divide into threes but don’t tell them what the game is about. Person 1 will take a card from the pile (cards are listed on the following page) without showing it to anyone else. Person 2 will then talk for one minute on the following topic:

1. **When they received a memorable gift**
2. **When a team they supported didn’t end up winning**
3. **What they did on their last holiday**
4. **Their first day of secondary school (or primary school)**

Person 1 then has to carry out the action written down on the card. Explain to Person 3 that the listener has a task to perform on the card - can they work out what it is?

**Poor listening cards:**

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| **Start lots of sentences  with “at least….”** e.g. “*At least you’ve made progress on your work - I don’t even know where to start!”  Or “At least you are still an A-grade student”  “At least you got to go away somewhere hot!”* | **Interrupt the speaker** |
| **You think they are taking too long to get to the point.   Sigh and make other gestures to express this and hurry  them along!** | **Keep looking out of  the window**  **(or turning to look at  something on the floor)** |
| **Keep checking your phone, watch or clock** | **Start every sentence with “I” or find another way to make everything about you** |
| **Start giving advice as  soon as possible** | **Keep making a mistake when you paraphrase or summarise what the speaker has said** |
| **All you do is repeat words  that they say**  E.g. Person 1: “*Last Tuesday I tried BMX for the first time - I was nervous  but it turned out to be such a thrill!” Person 2: “So you found it thrilling?”* | **Check your nails often** |
| **Try to distract them from their feelings - you’re terrified of talking about feelings!** | **Give your opinion - even when  it’s not wanted** |

**ACTIVITY 3: Talk about an activity and demonstrate good active listening skills**

Ask the students to get into pairs. Person A will talk about the following:

**A) An activity they tried for the first time   
(for example, this could be a sport / hobby / helping out around the house / trying something new such as baking a cake)**

Ask the person to talk about what the planned activity was supposed to be, what actually happened, the run-up to the event, what went well (or not so well) and what they enjoyed or didn’t enjoy about it. If they are comfortable, they can also talk about how this made them feel.

The other person is going to listen carefully, demonstrating active listening skills. At the end, they will summarise what they thought about the activity and recommend another activity the person might like to try. Then they can swap over.

**ACTIVITY 4: Asking open-ended questions**

Asking open-ended questions can be an important skill for active listening. This activity can be done in a group circle or as pairs.

Ask one student to get ready to talk about a subject and the other to ask open-ended questions. In their answer, they must repeat one key or important word that the other person has said in their previous response (e.g. nouns or adjectives not “if”, “but” and “which” etc!”).

Get the students into pairs. Ask Person 1 to think about any of the below topics. Again, they can be imaginary if they prefer!

1. **What they did at the weekend**
2. **The last time they practised a particular hobby**
3. **How they travelled to school that morning**

Person 1 begins with a statement about what they did including some key pieces of information - two sentences are ideal.

Explain to the second person that they need to ask an open-ended question that doesn’t result in a one-word or “yes/no” answer (or something else very short).

Here’s an example of good use of open-ended questions, following the game:

Person 1: “***Mum dropped me off in the car this morning. Normally we have to leave at***

***8am but today we were late.”***

Person 2: “***Why were you late this morning?”***

Person 1: “***We had to go back for my sports kit because I left it on the dining table.”***

Person 2: ***So you have sports today - do you prefer doing team or individual sports?***

Person 1: ***I think I like team sports because I’m less likely to get bored***

Person 2: ***If you could try any new team sport what would it be and why?***

Here’s an example of how using more closed questions can shut down the game:

Person 1: e.g: “***This weekend I went to the cinema with my friends***”

Person 2: ***“Ah you went to the cinema - what film did you see?”***

Person 1: “***I went to see Wicked”***

Person 2: ***“Was Wicked good?”***

Person 1: ***“Yes”***

At this point, Person 1 would be out because they elicited a one-word answer. It’s also very difficult to build another question just around the response “Yes.” A better thing to say might be “***What did you enjoy most about seeing Wicked?***”

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| **Extension:**  You could make this game harder by disallowing questions that prompt one-word answers as well as “yes/no” responses. |