

# Teaching Young Learners' Listening Skills with Advantageous Activities

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**Abstract:** This research deals with advantageous activities for teaching listening skill of young learners. "Young learners" includes ages from 7 to 12 years old and if they are under 7 years old are named "Very young learners". So this article surely helps teachers who are teaching ages from 5 to 12 years old. The article provides variety of practical advises and activities based on listening skill of children for teaching young learners.

**Key words:** Listen and do: "Put up your hand", "Mime stories" activities, Listen for information: "Listening for mistakes", "Putting things in order" "Listen and color", "Filling in missing information" activities

Nobody spends an entire lesson on listening, and none of the skills are taught or learned in isolation. The division into four skills is simply a practical and systematic method of teaching. What we are referring to in this article are activities that focus on listening skills. It is obvious that listening is the first skill that children learn, especially if they have not yet learned to read. When children begin to learn a foreign language, it is primarily through their ears, and what they hear is their primary source of the language. Of course, teachers try to provide as much visual support as possible through facial expression, movement, mime, and pictures. It is also crucial to remember that once something is said, it has gone. If you are reading, you can go back and double-check, or you can re-read something you are not sure about. This is not possible when you are listening, so when we are talking and the children are listening, we must speak clearly and repeat. When telling a story, for example, you do not have to tell it from start to finish without breaks. As you go along, you can retell it again and again. Because listeners cannot re-listen in the same way that readers can, if you are a listener, you cannot choose how quickly you work. As a result, when listening, you must concentrate very hard. As previously stated, young learners have a very short attention span. For most children, this improves with age, and children aged eight to ten can sit still and listen for longer periods of time. However, when working on listening skills with children, it is critical not to overload them.

## "Listen and Do" activities

Giving genuine instructions is the most obvious 'listen and do' activity that we can and should use from the start of English lessons. The majority of classroom language is a 'listen and do' activity. Communication is two-way, and you can easily see whether or not your students understood the message. There are also many 'listen and do' exercises you can do with your children to get them to do the physical activities they necessitate. Children require exercise and movement and should get it whenever possible. Along with moving around activities related to doing ordinary things in the classroom, you can ask students to do all sorts of crazy things, such as 'stand on your left foot' or 'hop on your right foot five times'. The more language the children learn, the more you can ask them to do, such as 'count up to ten and then walk to the blackboard and back'. The benefit of this type of activity is that you can tell right away if the children have understood. You can test classroom vocabulary, movement words, counting, spelling, and other skills. Children learn from one another. If they do not understand the first time, they can still do the activity by watching the others. As the gain proficiency in the language, you can delegate the role of 'instructor' to them – they are excellent at it.

"Put up your hand". You will almost certainly be required to use the "Put up your hand" type exercise at some point. When the pupils are learning the vowels and consonants, for example, you could ask them to raise their hands when they hear vowels. You might also want them to raise their hands when they hear a

specific word. To calm them down, whisper the numbers one through twenty and ask them to raise their hands when you miss a number. The “Put up your hand” exercise can be used for a variety of purposes. Teacher may use it related to the theme.

“Mime stories”. In a mime story, the teacher tells the story while the learners and teacher perform the actions. It provides physical movement once more and allows the teacher to play along with the learners. Here is a very simple examples of a mime story that I can recommend for very young learners. “Listen and draw” could be a popular and favorite listening activity in almost every class, but keep in mind that drawing takes time, so keep the pictures simple. In “Listen and draw” activities, the teacher or one of the learners instructs the others on what to draw. You can make up a picture or describe one you already have. This activity is especially beneficial for practicing object vocabulary, prepositions, colors, and numbers.

### “Listen for information” activities

“Listen for information” is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of listening activities and could have been the title of this article. However, we interpret it to mean listening for specific information. These activities are frequently used to assess students' knowledge, but they can also be used to provide new information. The most fruitful “Listen for information” activities which I could suggest are identifying exercises, listen for mistake, putting things in order, questionnaire, listen and color, filling in missing information,

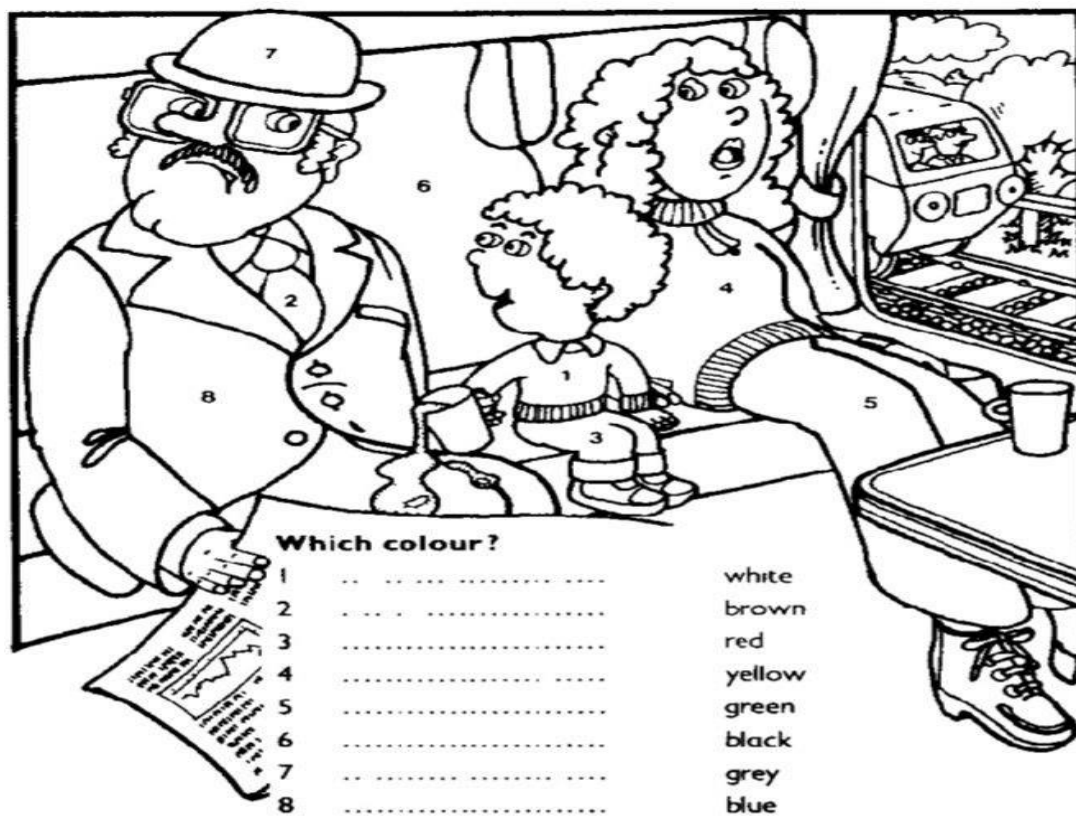
You can make very simple identifying exercises like this one: ‘Has anyone seen this boy? He has dark hair and big ears. He is wearing rubber boots and carrying a football. He has a striped jersey and short trousers. Put a cross by the right picture.’ (this example is from Margaret Bautz’s ‘Better English in the classroom’)



“Listening for mistakes” is also a practical activity for youngsters. You can use the image in your book but make mistakes in the text you read so that pupils must listen for errors. The same thing can be done with the correct text and the incorrect images, but it takes a little more time to prepare.

“Putting things in the order”. Pupils are presented with a number of images that illustrate a text. The images are not in the correct order. Pupils listen to the text and arrange the pictures in the order they think is correct.

“Listen and color”. Children enjoy coloring pictures, which can easily be turned into a listening activity. We can use any image that the learners have in their activity. We can use any image that the students have in their workbook. Instead of just letting them color it, turn it into a language activity. Here's one with both numbers and colors: Tapescript: The girl's trousers are brown, and she is dressed in a yellow sweater. Her son is dressed in a white sweater and green trousers. The man reading the newspaper is dressed in a grey suit, blue tie, and black hat. (This example is from ‘Are you listening by Wendy Scott)



“Filling in missing information”. Pupils can fill in the missing words of a song or a text or a timetable, like this one: The tape tells the pupils about someone’s school timetable, and they fill in the missing subjects on their worksheets. This surely suitable to their level as well.

There are many, different types of exercises which could be mentioned here. It is worth remembering that pupils are very good at making up this kind of exercise themselves. Getting pupils in one group to make up a listening task for the rest of the class or the members of another group is an excellent language activity. Make full use the tape recorder and any other visual aids which you have available. Do not forget that sometimes we just want pupils to listen for the sake of listening – music and poetry or a short anecdote or story all have a role play in the classroom. Try to introduce as many different voices into the classroom as you can, and remember that pupils need to hear many varieties of language. The more they hear, the better they will be able to speak and write.

When we are talking to someone who is saying something in everyday life, we usually understand what they are saying and say so – we nod, we comment, or we show in some other way that we understand what they are saying. If we don't understand something, we usually say so right away. We almost never wait until the end of a conversation, a story, or an announcement before answering questions about what we have heard. The activities in this chapter attempt to ask for understanding as children listen rather than checking for understanding at the end of the exercise. Some listening activities will wake up your learners, cause them to move around, create movement, and noise. Others will calm them down, force them to focus on what is in front of them, and create a peaceful environment. Sometimes you want a nice quiet environment, and other times you want your children to move around, and listening activities can help you with both.

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