

11th Grade Team Mini Lesson on Active Listening (Written up by Jake Lynn)

To begin the introduction to active listening for the class, we asked the students to think of a time when they felt listened to or “heard”. This was to get the students instantly engaged and thinking deeply about the topic. Once the time was up, a few people would popcorn share about their experience, saying things such as: the person listening was making eye contact, they were nodding and repeating things I was saying to me, they were able to paraphrase things I was saying, they weren’t multitasking, etc.

After this popcorn share, the students stood up to play telephone, which is supposed to get them in the mindset of listening carefully. If the students got the phrase around the circle, the teacher could come up with a more complex phrase, or do the opposite if the students are struggling.

The students are then asked to turn to a partner next to them, and talk about something for a minute each while the other partner is actively listening. The example we used to day was: “What language would you learn and why?” This could easily be altered for content specific to different classes. The partners are then told to paraphrase what they heard from their partner to another pair.

After this exercise, to reflect, the teacher will ask probing questions such as: What helped you to listen actively and paraphrase your partner? How could you tell your partner was listening? What were you listening for? After a short popcorn share from some groups, the teacher will move on to ask for a definition of active listening, and fill in any missing parts the students don't come up with.

ALWAYS DEBRIEF- WHY DID WE DO THIS ACTIVITY?

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON

This is just an outline, feel free to polish any way you see fit.