

Listening Comprehension

Use some of the following techniques to develop effective listening comprehension skills.

1. At the beginning of a reading lesson or dialog, having already introduced key vocabulary words, slowly read the text aloud to your students before having them open their books. Then ask general comprehension questions. At the end of the reading lesson, dialogue or follow-up review exercise, read the text again, this time at normal speed. The students should not be allowed to read along; they should concentrate on listening.
2. Give frequent short dictations (see section on dictation).
3. When doing drills or question-and-answer exercises, have students cue one another whenever possible. This forces them to listen to each other and get used to different accents.
4. Direct students work in pairs and groups so that they can listen and respond to one another on a more personal level. (See section on pairing and grouping.)
5. When practicing dialogues or role-playing, occasionally have pairs of students stand back-to-back so that they must understand each other without the aid of non-verbal cues.
6. Invite a guest speaker to be interviewed in class (the principal, the school nurse, a police officer, etc.) so that the students can hear other accents and intonations. Before allowing the students to interview the speaker, prime the class by discussing the kinds of questions they will ask. By practicing the questions beforehand, students will be less embarrassed about asking questions or making mistakes.
7. Give the students the opportunity to listen to different examples of spoken English through music, games, movies, CDs, Internet, etc.

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