

ACADEMIC STUDIES

ENGLISH

**Support Materials and Exercises
for**

SPEAKING & LISTENING



SPRING 1999

SPEAKING & LISTENING
ACADEMIC ENGLISH

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following persons have contributed to the development of this learning material:

Content and Structure:

Curriculum Developer(s)

Leslie Childs English Curriculum Content Expert
New Brunswick Community College Bathurst

Project Supervision/Co-ordination:

Angela Acott-Smith Project Co-ordinator
New Brunswick Community College Woodstock

Kay Curtis Literacy Co-ordinator
New Brunswick Community College Woodstock

This document is available full-text on the World Wide Web thanks to
the National Adult Literacy Database.

<http://www.nald.ca/CLR/search/>

The financial support for this learning materials project was provided by
the [National Literacy Secretariat](#) of [Human Resources Development Canada](#).

Spring 1999

This support module may be used with BAU-ENG 5.1, Listening Skills; BAU-ENG 5.2, Following Oral Instructions; BAU-ENG 5.3, Speaking Skills; IAU-ENG 4.1, Speaking Skills, and IAU-ENG 4.2, Listening Skills.

BAU-ENG 5.1	LISTENING SKILLS
--------------------	-------------------------

OBJECTIVE

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. Take good notes from classroom discussions.
2. Take brief notes from an oral presentation.
3. Demonstrate active listening behaviour.

TEACHING POINTS

Level

Active Listening	1	importance of active listening	5/6
	2	be interested	5/6
	3	think about topic beforehand if possible	5/6
	4	think about kind of information that might be given	5/6
	5	demonstrate attending behaviours	5/6
	6	avoid distracting behaviours	5/6
	7	block out distractions	5/6
	8	take brief notes: single words or point form	5/6
	9	summarize afterwards if necessary	5/6

Developing listening skills is an ongoing process. Although this material is presented at level 5/6, all learners, no matter what their level, can benefit from participating in listening activities. Listening skills can be improved when learners understand that reading comprehension skills can be applied to listening tasks (context, inference, etc.,). Listening to (and watching) news broadcasts, informational programming, and even situation comedies will develop listening skills, notetaking skills, and general knowledge.

OBJECTIVE

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. Follow oral instructions and produce results.

TEACHING POINTS			Level
Following Oral Instructions	1	use listening skills when following instructions	3/4
	2	take notes if possible	3/4
	3	ask questions to clarify information	3/4
	4	ask for specific details: e.g., street names, directions	3/4
	5	repeat instructions to confirm interpretation	3/4
	6	follow instructions sequentially	3/4

OBJECTIVE

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. express ideas and information orally.

TEACHING POINTS			Level
Speaking Skills	1	importance of complete sentences	3-6
	2	correct posture	3-6
	3	eye contact	3-6
	4	good pronunciation	3-6
	5	appropriate auditory levels	3-6
	6	discuss body language, gestures, etc.	3-6
	7	personal space	3-6

Because public speaking is perceived as such a “dangerous” venture for most upgrading students, it should be handled as quietly and non-stressfully as possible. Every learner needs to *work towards* a “stand up” oral presentation. Learners at the BAU level can begin to develop confidence in speaking in public by contributing in class discussions, interpersonal exchanges, asking and answering questions orally, making and receiving phone calls, asking directions, role playing, etc. Learners should be given every opportunity to build their confidence levels and to speak aloud without placing them in a situation where they feel threatened. Learners at BAU level do not need to make a formal speech unless they feel ready.

OBJECTIVE

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1.create and deliver a variety of short informal presentations

TEACHING POINTS			Level
Skills	1	Use the writing process	7
	2	Strong purpose stated early, good audience assessment	7
	3	Voice control (tone, pitch, rate)	7
	4	Eye contact (constant and varied)	7
	5	Avoid mannerisms	7
	6	Effective gestures and posture	7
	7	Frequent repetition	7
	8	Clearer order	7
	9	Stronger and more frequent transitions than essays	7
	10	Frequent summaries than essays	7
	11	Vary speed to keep audience attention	7
	12	Numbered lists	7
Graphics	13	Overheads, posters, props	7
	14	Charts, graphs, videos	7
Types of Delivery	15	Memorized	7
	16	Read	7
	17	Extemporaneous	7
	18	Strengths and weaknesses of the above	7

Learners at all levels should regularly make oral presentations. See note in curriculum plan for suggested activities at each level.

OBJECTIVE

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. listen effectively and attentively to an oral presentation of moderate length (20-30 minutes).
2. listen to and interpret instructions.
3. take notes and ask appropriate questions.

TEACHING POINTS**Level**

Types	1	Marginal	7
	2	Attentive	7
	3	Critical	7
	4	Appreciative	7
Strategies	5	Ask questions	7
	6	Identify parts of an assignment	7
	7	Isolate: purpose	7
	8	main idea	7
	9	transitions and signals	7
	10	summaries	7
	11	conclusions	7
	12	Take notes (develop personal short hand)	7
	13	Prepare to listen: listen with a purpose	7
	14	think about topic beforehand	7
	15	do some research ahead of time	7
	16	Formulate questions that you think speaker can answer	7
	17	Visualize what you hear	7
	18	Review what you hear as you go along	7
	19	Arrive early, be comfortable, don't eat big lunch	7
	20	Differentiate between fact and opinion	7
	21	Use tape recorder if you have permission	7

Listening in a variety of situations should be practised regularly at all levels.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING AND LISTENING	2
SPEAKING SKILLS	3
PREPARING A FORMAL ORAL PRESENTATION	11
What Your Audience Sees	20
What Your Audience Hears	22
Summary	24
LISTENING SKILLS	26
WHAT IS LISTENING?	27
TYPES OF LISTENING	31
DECIDING HOW TO LISTEN	36
STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING	37
CONCLUSION	44
ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SAMPLE EVALUATION SHEET	48
EXERCISES AND ANSWER KEY	49
BAU PRE-TEST	57
ANSWER KEY FOR BAU PRE-TEST	58
IAU PRE-TEST	59
ANSWER KEY FOR IAU PRE-TEST	60
ORAL PRESENTATIONS: EVALUATION SHEET	62
FEEDBACK FORM	32

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

INTRODUCTION*

Every English course you will ever take is really about how to communicate effectively. Communication is a multi-step process¹ that requires at least two people who have something to “say” to each other. In order to be successful, each communication requires (1) someone to send the message; (2) the message itself; and (3) someone to receive it. When people want to exchange ideas, they have only three ways to do it.

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS requires		
A SENDER who	A MESSAGE which	A RECEIVER who
writes the message	uses words	reads the message
uses body language to send a message	uses actions : gestures, facial expressions, body language	views the non-verbal message
speaks the message	uses words and actions	listens to the message

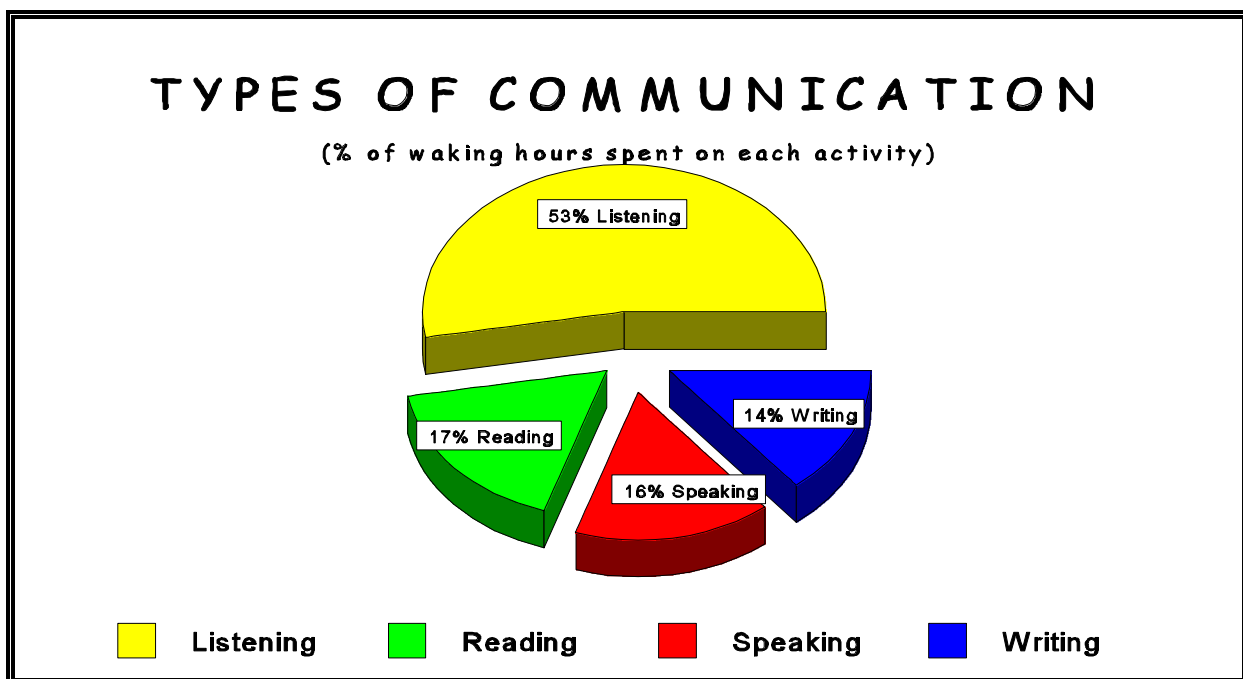
All communication is incomplete until someone has received and correctly understood the sender’s ideas. Would you accomplish anything if you wrote a complaint letter and never mailed it, or talked into a disconnected telephone?

English courses focus most on building writing and reading skills. The two other ways of communicating are also important, yet they are seldom taught. This module focuses on the information you need to make oral communications (speaking and listening) useful tools in your everyday life, at home, at work, and in the community.

¹ For more detailed information on the communication process, see the module Writing Paragraphs in this series.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING AND LISTENING*

Speaking and listening make up 69% of our total communicating time each day. One study showed that college students spent about 53% of their time listening and 16% speaking, but only 14% writing and 17% reading². It's not just college students who spend large portions of their time listening either. Another study showed that most employees in North America spend about 60% of their day listening to each other.³



Since most of our time is spent speaking and listening, it is not surprising that these two areas are often the source of misunderstandings between people. Marriage counsellors report that many clients say that their partner doesn't listen to them; however, some misunderstandings may come from the fact that speakers often don't say what they mean clearly enough.

² L. Barker, R. Edwards, C. Gaines, K. Gladney, and F. Holley, "An Investigation of Proportional Time Spent in Various Communication Activities by College Students" *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 8 (1981): 101-109.

³ Research summarized in A.D. Wolvin and C.G. Coakley, "A Survey of the Status of Listening Training in Some *Fortune* 500 Corporations," *Communication Education* 40 (1991): 152-164.

It is a myth⁴ that speaking and listening are natural activities (like breathing) that we all do well without any training. It is true, however, that most people can become better at both. Surprisingly, little time is given to teaching these very important skills despite the large part they play in everyday learning and communication. The following table⁵ shows just how important it is to take this opportunity to improve your oral communications skills.

Comparison of Communication Activities				
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Learned	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Used	Most	Next to most	Next to Least	Least
Taught	Least	Next to least	Next to Most	Most

SPEAKING SKILLS*

Human beings use their voices from the moment they are born to communicate with the world around them. Babies cry to tell their parents they are hungry, cold, or frightened, and they make happy noises when they are content. No matter how vocal babies are however, they cannot tell the care giver *exactly* what they want. At about 12 months of age, toddlers begin to develop spoken language skills that make their needs and moods clearer. Slowly they begin to speak by imitating the language they hear around them every day. By age five, they usually speak in clear, mostly correct grammatical sentences. After that, they continue to build their vocabulary and learn how to use words to (1) share information or (2) persuade those around them. What could be more persuasive than a sixteen-year-old asking for the car keys on the day after he/she gets a driver's licence? Children (and adults) talk to each other all the time: they make plans together, exchange ideas, discuss friends, rehash sports events, and resolve disputes.



⁴ An untrue story or idea that most people believe.

⁵ Ronald B. Adler, George Rodman, "Understanding Human Communication". Toronto: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997.

They do it without fear or hesitation, almost automatically and often feel lonely if they go for any period of time without someone to talk to. Conversations, sometimes called *interpersonal communications*, are an enjoyable part of everyday life.

EXERCISE 1*

Survey your own interpersonal communications by answering these questions.

- 1) Count the number of different conversations you have in one hour.
- 2) Who spoke first? You? Or the other person?
- 2) How long does each one last?
- 3) What was the purpose and topic of each exchange?
- 4) What emotions did you feel during each conversation?
- 5) How many times do you answer the phone in a day?
- 6) What words or phrases do you use when answering the phone?
- 7) How can you tell when someone isn't listening to you? What do you do to make them pay attention?
- 8) How many different people do you speak to in a day? In a week? Do you speak to everyone the same way? What are the differences?
- 9) Estimate how many minutes you spent speaking yesterday?

Examine your attitudes about talking to friends and family by answering these questions.

- 1) Who do you look forward to talking to most? Least? Why?
- 2) What topics are likely to make you angry? Bored? Laugh?
- 3) How do you respond to a speaker when you feel angry? Bored? Amused?
- 4) How much time do you spend in conversation in an average day?
- 5) How much of this is face to face? On the telephone? On the Internet?
- 6) When do you generally not want to talk to someone?
- 7) How do you feel about telephone salespeople? Survey takers?
- 8) What telephone habit of others makes you most impatient?
- 9) Do you plan what you are going to say before you speak? If yes, under what circumstances?

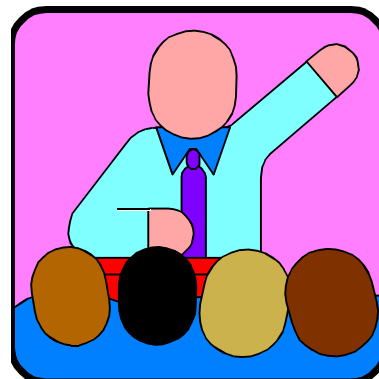
Think about how you feel when speaking to strangers.

- 1) Have you ever answered the phone and spoken to someone you didn't know? How did you feel?
- 2) Do you feel embarrassed, scared, uncomfortable when you meet new

people? Why? Why not?

- 3) When was the last time you asked someone a question? How did you feel?
- 4) Do you ever ask directions when you are travelling?
- 5) Do you usually make an effort to speak to new people in your class?
Why? Why not?
- 6) Have you ever explained something to a classmate? What was it? How did you feel afterwards?

If you have done any of these things, you have spoken in public. Why do so many people feel frightened by the idea of speaking to a group? Think about it. What makes a speech so much more difficult than talking to a three or four of your friends or family? Some people may answer, "Everyone is watching me." That's true, but people always watch each other when they speak, even when ordering a cup of coffee or thanking someone for holding a door. It's something we've all been taught to do when we listen. It's polite; it shows we are listening; it helps us use the facial expressions and gestures that are part of every spoken message. Other people say, "I'm really afraid I'll make a mistake." Of course, this is a concern. No one wants to make mistakes, but they happen regularly to everyone and most of the time listeners don't even notice them. If you are well prepared, any mistakes you make will be so small that people won't even notice. Still others say, "What if I say the wrong thing? People will think I'm stupid." The point of giving a speech is to give the audience information it doesn't have. If you match your topic to the listeners' information needs, know your subject well and have done good research, your facts will be correct and you will likely know more about the subject than your audience.



EXERCISE 2*

Analyze how you feel about speaking in public by answering these questions.

- 1) Have you ever spoken in public? When? How often? What was the occasion?
- 2) Were you scared? Did you have “stage fright”? Why do you think you felt that way?
- 3) Have you ever made a “speech”? When? What was the situation? How and why did you make yourself go through with it?
- 4) How well do you think you did?
- 5) Did anyone compliment you on your speaking?
- 6) Did anyone make fun of you?
- 7) Did anyone criticize what you said or how you said it?
- 8) When was the last time you listened to someone make a speech? How did you behave as a listener?

The most common reasons people give for feeling uncomfortable with public speaking relate to the *audience*. An audience is little different from the people you chat with over coffee or visit with at home; they are all really just *listeners* who need or want information. One of the best ways to make yourself feel more comfortable with the idea of making a speech is to think about how you listen. When you listen to a speech, do you laugh and point if the speaker forgets what he/she wants to say? Do you think the person is stupid just because you can't hear him/her or the overhead projector doesn't work? You would probably never do anything to make the speaker feel uncomfortable, so why should you think anyone would do it to you? In fact, audiences show patience and sympathy for a speaker when things are going wrong. And, believe it or not, despite the speaker's worst fears, most things usually go right in an oral presentation.

Public speaking only seems threatening to you because it is a new experience. You may have felt nervous the first time you asked a question in class, but once you had done it a few times you realize that nothing terrible happened. Soon, you asked questions without thinking about it. The same is true for public speaking. The more experience you get, the easier it becomes. No matter how skilled at public speaking, no one ever completely loses his/her stage fright, and most speakers agree that a little bit of nervousness makes for a better presentation.

When you follow the guidelines in this module, you will develop a skill that many people wish they had. You will be able to speak in public to small groups and

large audiences. Often the ability to speak well is the key to success at work. Many people are so terrified of public speaking that they refuse to do it. As a result, employers are always glad to find someone who can promote their products or services effectively. Good public speaking skills, like writing skills, are always in demand and having them can often make the difference between being laid off and kept on, or being promoted or passed over.

If you are new to upgrading, no one expects you to make a speech right away. You will always have a chance to work up to it. There are many aspects of public speaking that you can practice every day without having to stand up at the front of the room or speak into a microphone.

EXERCISE 3*

Make an effort to do some or all of the following activities.

1. Ask the facilitator questions about your work. Think about what you need to know and exactly what information you need before you ask the question. Make sure you give the listener enough information so he/she can respond to your request. Don't just say, "I can't do this." Instead say, "I'm having trouble finding the subject (or verb, or adjective, etc.) in sentence number 4. Could you help me?" or "Could you show me how to divide fractions again? I can't remember which part to invert."
2. Participate in coffee break discussions. Listen carefully until you get the main idea. Then add your opinion or ask a question to get more information. People always like to explain things they know about.
3. Help plan a class activity. Many classrooms have pot luck suppers or hold raffles to raise money. Share your ideas whenever possible.
4. Ask questions of guest speakers. Asking a question, no matter how simple, makes the speaker feel that you were interested in the topic and liked their presentation. It also gives them an opportunity to talk even more about something that is important to them.
5. Contribute to classroom discussions. Don't always be a listener. You have an opinions, and they are just as good as anyone else's. Share them with your classmates. They may not always agree with you, but at least you've had your say. Classroom discussions are an important part of the learning and remembering because they allow you to review what you've already learned, organize facts into new patterns, and learn more about a subject.
6. Answer a classmate's questions. When someone wonders about a fact, look

up the information and then report your findings to the group. You don't have to stand up and make a formal speech. Just sit in your seat and share the information you found.

7. Answer the telephone in the classroom. If you don't already feel comfortable doing this, think up a good greeting. Write it down and leave it near the phone so you can read it after you pick up the phone. You might choose to say, "Good morning, adult upgrading." or "Adult upgrading. How may I help you?" or "CASP classroom. This is Martha speaking." Think about what kind of voice you would like to hear if you were thinking about coming back to school and finally got the courage to make that first phone call.
8. Make phone calls relating to your own or class business. Perhaps you need to order supplies, ask for donations for a fundraiser, or arrange a time for a guest speaker
9. Interview people in your community about upcoming events or local history. You'll make them feel good about themselves, and you'll be practicing public speaking. At the same time, you will probably learn some interesting facts you didn't know before.
10. Be one of the first to speak to a new student on his/her first day. Think about how you were greeted and what you wanted to know on your first day, and then act accordingly.

EXERCISE 4*

Do a mini-research project and share what you found with the rest of the class. You might be curious about a famous person born in your town, or interested in a recipe for home-made wine, or want to know more about a person, place or thing you have read about.

Here are some suggested topics that you can report on in a few sentences while sitting at your desk.

1. Who was Bonar Law? Where in New Brunswick would you go to see his boyhood home?
2. Who was "Boss" Gibson? What is his connection with the Fredericton area?
3. What are the rules and/or laws covering salmon fishing in New Brunswick?
4. How long is the Miramichi River? Where does it begin?
5. Where was Fort Cumberland (Beauséjour)? Why was the name changed?

6. Who was Nicholas Denys? Why did he move around so much?
7. Where is Madawaska? What does its flag look like? Why?
8. What is New Brunswick's provincial flower? Bird?
9. How many litres make a gallon? Centimetres in an inch? Kilograms in a pound? Kilometres in a mile? What mnemonic might help you remember?
10. How many Canadian dollars would it take to buy \$100 American? How much Canadian money would you get if you changed an American \$100 bill at the bank?
11. What is the current mortgage rate? Car loan rate? Personal loan rate?
12. Where do kiwi fruit come from?
13. Name three kinds of clouds and describe what each looks like.
14. What is a platypus? Where does it come from? What does it look like?
15. What is a phoenix?

Doing any of these activities is a good way to start building your confidence about speaking in public. When you are working in your own classroom, or someplace where you feel comfortable, you will feel more relaxed about oral presentations. Everyone has to start somewhere, and a single word dropped into a conversation at coffee break is as good a place to start as any. As you become more relaxed, progress towards a more formal situation, by standing beside your desk as you speak. Eventually, you will be ready to stand at the front of the room, or even use a microphone. Think about this. What, if anything, is the real difference between sitting at your desk while you tell a story and standing at the front of the room doing the same thing? Do one thing that frightens you every day, and you will be surprised at the difference it makes in your life.



EXERCISE 5*

Do any **seven** of the following informal speaking activities.

1. Say "thank you" warmly to a stranger who opens a door for you. Watch that person's face as you speak. What did you observe?
2. Call a local store and ask about the availability and cost of a product you might need. Tell someone in your group what you found out.
3. Research one of the following topics and report (in four or five sentences) to the class while standing at your desk.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A) Mackenzie River | E) Loyalists in New Brunswick |
| B) Nunavut | F) A Local Figure |
| C) Lester Bowles Pearson | G) The Early Days in Your Town |
| D) K.C. Irving | H) A Topic of Your Choice |

4. Participate in a class discussion by clearly stating your opinion (with reasons).
5. Create a polite way to answer the telephone for your CASP classroom. If possible, take responsibility for answering the phone for a week.
6. Plan and lead a game in your classroom or at some social function.
7. Create a survey of three or four questions. Then conduct the survey both in your classroom and in some public place. Report your results to the class.
8. Volunteer to sell tickets or do some volunteer work that includes speaking to people.
9. Think up a class activity, field trip, or fund raiser. Then briefly present your ideas to the group.
10. Call in to a radio talk show or request line.
11. Ask someone in your community how to get to a specific location.
12. Call an 800 (toll free) information line with a question, comment, compliment or complaint about a product.

As your language skills grow and you develop more confidence, you will be moving toward making a formal oral presentation. Your instructor will help you decide when you are ready to start work on your formal speech. You will learn more and make much better progress if you make many short speeches rather than doing just one long one, so begin with a series of short presentations, perhaps once a week. At first, they can be less than a minute in length. Later, you can prepare more material that might take two or three minutes, five minutes, and finally about ten minutes.

EXERCISE 6 (BAU optional)

Here are some topics you can do in a short time while standing beside your desk. These are informal speaking situations. Do several of them until you start to feel comfortable speaking in casual situations.

1. Bring a special item from home and tell where you got it and why it's important to you.
2. If you play an instrument, do a song and tell why you like it.
3. If you don't play an instrument, play a tape of your favourite song and then talk about it.
4. Bring the ingredients for a simple recipe and show the class how to make it. Then share the results at lunch or coffee break.
5. Read a short article and comment on it.
6. Find a big picture or poster and describe what it means to you and why you like it.
7. Organize a spelling bee (or similar contest) and supervise it.
8. Demonstrate your hobby.
9. Research a famous person and report your findings (two minutes). Be sure to tell why you think that person is important to you, or your community, or the world.
10. Bring your pet and tell what you know or describe some of the funny, clever things it can do.
11. Any topic of your choice.

PREPARING A FORMAL ORAL PRESENTATION

The first stages of preparation of an oral presentation are very similar to writing a longer essay or informal report. The prewriting, researching, and planning steps and stages are the same. If you need to review these, look at the modules Writing Longer Essays and Writing Informal Reports. With your instructor's permission, you may even be able to adapt the topic of the essay or report you wrote (or vice versa). You need to have something to say before you can move on to deciding how you want to present your ideas.

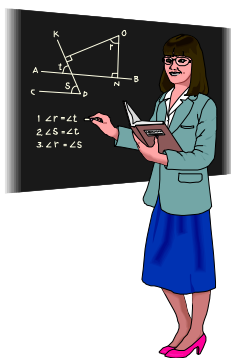
It is important to remember, however, that a speech is quite different from a written essay. Speeches are usually less formal than essays so the sentences are shorter and the language a little easier. Exact words are really important in a speech because the listener needs to form a mind picture of what you are talking about.

He/she can't reread a sentence that is fuzzy; as a result, your words have to be very clear the first time.

Because listeners can't reread or review the material, they need strong introductions that state the main idea clearly and summarize the major headings that will be covered. Your material must be organized in a consistent and logical way so the listener can follow your train of thought. In addition, much stronger and more frequent transitions help to remind listeners of where you are in your presentation.

Listening to a speech means that the audience has to work harder to remember what has been said, so it is a good idea to repeat details, ideas, and opinions more often than you would in an essay. Numbered lists, repetition, and frequent reviews of facts and major headings make it easier for your listener to understand and remember your message. Formal presentations also need stronger conclusions that summarize the main points.

One last item can make the difference between an average speech and an exceptional one. **Graphics**, such as pictures, visual aids, and charts are really useful in helping the audience stay focused on the message as well as understand exactly what you are talking about. For instance, in a speech about early ship building, provide large pictures of the kinds of ships you are describing. Always check to make sure that the pictures are large enough and clear enough to be seen easily from every corner of the room. Charts and graphs should be kept simple so they can be easily understood. If you talk about sails, bring a piece of sailcloth to use as a **"prop"** which can be passed around. Use "pass-arounds" carefully because the audience will focus their attention on what they are handling and stop listening to you.



Once you have lost their attention, it will be difficult to get it back. To explain comparisons, use large (at least the size of a piece of poster board) charts and graphs with lots of bright colours. Sometimes, actual demonstrations of difficult techniques or part of an audio or video tape will make your point clearer. Use graphics and props in almost every speech you make.

DELIVERING AN ORAL PRESENTATION

Writing, revising, and proofreading are essential steps in preparing an essay or

report, but writing out the words you want to say may not be the best way to get ready to deliver a speech. There are four basic ways to deliver an oral presentation.

Extemporaneous
Impromptu
Manuscript
Memorized

Each type of delivery requires slightly different kinds of preparation and has a different effect on the audience. As part of your planning process, you need to decide which method is going to be most effective and most appropriate for the *specific audience* you will be addressing. Although a speech may use a variety of methods of delivery, it's easier to learn about each type separately.

1. Extemporaneous Speeches

This is a long word and you may need to add it to your spelling list, but it is not difficult to understand. An extemporaneous speech is thoroughly planned but it is delivered in a spontaneous way and sounds much like a conversation. Your audience will feel that you are talking honestly to each one of them individually. Extemporaneous speeches are easy and enjoyable to listen to.

Just because extemporaneous speeches sound like they are made up as the speaker goes along doesn't mean that they aren't carefully planned and practiced. They create the illusion of being brand-new, never-before spoken words. They are **never** memorized; the **exact** wording is never planned or written down!



So how do you prepare for an extemporaneous speech. First, know your material well. The best topics for extemporaneous speeches are those you are really familiar with and have been involved with for some time. For example, if you are into organic gardening, you probably know most of the things you want to say because you use the information yourself every day. All you need to do is decide on three or four areas you want to present: perhaps soil types, fertilizers, mulch, and pest control. These general topics form the skeleton plan of your speech. Write each one in large, easily readable letters, on a series of cards that are small enough to fit in your hand or on a podium⁶. Next, think

⁶ A small elevated table used by speakers to hold their notes.

of subheadings you want to cover for each section. Under soil types, you might want to talk about sandy soil, clay soil, and loam as well as ways to enrich each one. Write each soil type on a separate card along with one or two words to remind you of the facts you need to cover. When you have done this for each subheading, arrange the cards in the most logical order and you are ready to stand in front of a group of five friends or five hundred gardeners and talk about your theories of organic gardening. Using your cards as a guide, you simply tell what you know.

You might also want to prepare cards that carry *new facts* you found in your research, *quotes* you want to use in your speech, and *numbers* or *statistics* that you want to be sure and get right. It's alright to read these, but the rest of your speech should sound spontaneous.

Remember to clearly indicate each change of subtopic and review important ideas as you go along. For example the first card in each subsection might carry phrases like this:

I

5

The **FIRST** thing organic gardeners need to think about is **SOIL TYPE**.

II

14

The **SECOND** major concern right after **soil type** is **FERTILIZER**.

IV

#19

Even though you've looked after **soil types, fertilizers, and mulches**, the **LAST** and **MOST IMPORTANT** concern for organic gardeners is how to **CONTROL PESTS** without using chemicals.

Extemporaneous speeches are generally the most effective way to present information to an audience, and they are also the most common type, particularly in the workplace. Because you have very little down on paper, you will need to practice delivering your speech from your cards several times until each section and idea follow one another automatically in your mind. Some speakers practice in front of a mirror so they can get an idea of what kind of gestures and movements will make their speech more interesting and effective.

This type of delivery does have some disadvantages. It is harder to stay within strict time limits if you are “talking” your material. As well, it is almost impossible to get the wording exactly right (for quotes and important details, however, you can read from your cards), and you may make a few grammar mistakes or leave out minor details.

If your speech is going to be taped, televised, or reproduced for use with other groups, the extemporaneous speech may not be the most appropriate method of delivery as your mistakes and omissions will be recorded and replayed over and over.

2. *Impromptu Speeches*

You may not always have the time to prepare an extemporaneous speech. When you don't, you find yourself talking about a topic “off the top of your head”. This kind of oral presentation is called an impromptu speech and can be pretty frightening if you don't know how to handle it. At work, you may be asked to speak to a meeting because the scheduled speaker is sick or forgot to come. In volunteer organizations, speakers are notorious⁷ for forgetting to show up. The chairperson of the meeting sees you in the audience and realizes that you know something about the topic so he/she won't have to “do his stand-up comedy routine after all”. Suddenly, you may be the one who is filling a few minutes in the program. The impromptu speech is truly spontaneous, while the extemporaneous speech only sounds that way.

Although impromptu speeches are always challenging, they do have their benefits. First, you usually don't have to speak for long. Second, your audience will

⁷ Well known

understand that you weren't really prepared, and likely respond positively. Third, learning to do impromptu speeches is really useful because it teaches you to stand up at a business or community meeting and make your opinions heard on the spur of the moment. Your boss will love you because you filled in an embarrassing moment for him/her. Lastly, practicing speaking in impromptu situations teaches you two valuable skills: thinking on your feet and organize your thoughts logically. Here are some hints for creating a good impromptu speech.

1. Take advantage of the time between being asked to speak and actually speaking, even if it is only a minute to brainstorm for ideas, just like in the prewriting process. You could do a quick cluster, or perhaps use the *classification method of development*. In other words, think of two or three categories under which the topic could be discussed. For example at a provincial literacy meeting, you are asked to speak about the problems facing adult students returning to school that administrators need to take into account. Quickly, you scribble three topics on the back of a napkin: money, time, and transportation. (After all, everyone has trouble with these.) Under each one you list some specific problems. Your rough notes might look like this.

money: no income, growing children cost more, mortgage, taxes
 no money for extra books like dictionaries or other school supplies
 no money for proper nutrition or good job hunting clothes
 need part time job just to keep food on table

time: hard to do homework, part time job sometimes interferes.
 have family/home responsibilities
 takes a long time to get the skills you missed the first time around
 classes should be more hours a week
 need access to teacher or tutor on weekends

transportation: no reliable vehicle, especially in winter
 have to rely on friend for rides

2. Don't be afraid to be original. Rely on personal experiences which you know well and can talk about easily. Since you are only "filling in", you can probably be more entertaining than informative, so anecdotes⁸ may be appropriate.
3. Consider simply answering the questions *who, what, when, where, why, and how* in your speech.

⁸ Short narrative stories, often based on real life experiences.

4. Use something an earlier speaker said and respond to it. Whether you agree or disagree with them may not be all that important
5. Always be positive. Don't whine and complain about the situation. Smile lots. Humour often gets you through tough situations.
6. You don't have to be "too up tight". The audience understands the situation and will be very sympathetic.
7. Keep your comments brief. Do not be tempted to retell your life story in detail. If you finish early, or on the schedule, the audience will be delighted with a longer coffee break or an earlier finish to the day.

3. *Manuscript Speeches*

This is just a fancy way of saying that the speaker is reading a prepared text. This kind of delivery is best if your speech is being recorded or if you are presenting a lot of numbers and details that the audience needs to use later. When it's essential that you get things absolutely correct, use a manuscript. Politicians, lawyers, and executives often read prepared statements, especially at press conferences because they need complete control over what they say. If something is televised, the manuscript reader may use a Teleprompter. This is a device like a television screen that displays the words in large type and scrolls through the whole speech slowly enough so it can be read easily. When a Teleprompter is used, the audience feels that the speech is spontaneous because the speaker appears to be looking directly into the camera and into the viewers' eyes. Often manuscripts are written by someone other than the person reading them. As well, they often include stage directions, like "LOOK AT THE AUDIENCE", "PAUSE AND SMILE", "S-L-O-W-L-Y"

Written speeches are difficult to write because every word counts and the person delivering it will be held accountable for every word, fact, and opinion. If you should have to write one, here are some guidelines.



1. A written speech is not just an essay that you read out loud. Generally, they are less formal and use shorter sentences and simpler words. Because they should sound as spontaneous as possible, use conversational phrases like "as you can see", or "if you remember", or "Well, when you consider this".
2. Short paragraphs make it easier for the reader to find his/her place in the text.
3. Use large letters and dark type so it's easy to read.

4. Double space the lines so the reader won't lose his/her place.
5. Include "stage directions" where needed.
6. Underline words (or type them in capitals) that you want to emphasize.
7. Use heavy paper so it won't rustle when shuffled.
8. Be sure to number the pages clearly so that they are easy to reassemble if they are dropped.
9. Practice the speech many times until the words come naturally.
10. Practice in front of a mirror so you can get the gestures right...and in the right place.
11. Understand what you are reading so you can change your tone of voice in the right places.
12. Be sure to change your speed as you read so it won't sound boring.
13. Change your volume to keep the audience's attention.
14. Look up and have eye contact with the audience regularly.

4. *Memorized Speeches*

Memorized speeches may seem like the best way to present your material, particularly if you are nervous. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Memorized speeches usually sound stiff and formal. The audience knows that the words are memorized and often feels that the speaker is, therefore, not sincere. One of the biggest hazards of a memorized speech is that you will forget what comes next. If this happens, you may be so confused and embarrassed you can't recover. Your presentation stops there and then; the message is left incomplete.

There are only a few occasions when a memorized speech is appropriate. Sometimes, organizations have rituals that are performed regularly that use the same words every time. Public speaking contests often have rules that a speech must be delivered without notes, and occasionally public events require speeches "for the record" that must have very precise wording. If you find yourself in one of these situations, the only rule is to practice it over and over until you not only know it thoroughly but can also make it sound natural.

EXERCISE 7

Decide what kind of delivery would be most appropriate in each of the following cases. Support your choice with reasons.

1. You have been asked to say grace at a dinner meeting.
2. As treasurer, you must make a monthly report to the membership.
3. Your special interest is Winston Churchill. You are the guest speaker at your sister's monthly club meeting.
4. Your boss is away on a business trip when a serious accident happens in the plant where you work. You must give a press conference.
5. You've just returned from a literacy conference, paid for by your group. They have just asked for a report on you learned and what happened there.
6. You own a local camera shop and have been asked to speak to the Photography Club at the high school on a new kind of camera.
7. Your cousin is running for public office and you have agreed to help him get ready to speak at a televised all candidates meeting.
8. You have been asked to say thank you to a guest speaker in your classroom.
9. You are accepting an award at an annual banquet. You learned about the award a week ago.
10. You are asked to comment on the value of the CASP classroom to your community when a newspaper reporter pays a surprise visit.

FINE-TUNING YOUR DELIVERY

Once you have planned your speech and practiced your material, you are ready for an audience. Remember that the people you are speaking to are really just *the receivers* of your message. Because you are speaking to them rather than writing, they can receive your communication through both their eyes and their ears. This means that in addition to preparing a clear message to send, you need to consider what your audience will see and hear during your speech.

WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE SEES*

1. *Your Appearance**

Your appearance is important because an audience judges you first by what they see. Although some textbooks suggest new clothes and a fresh haircut, the most important thing is to be clean and neat. Audiences like speakers who are like themselves, so they don't respond well to radical or trendy fashions. Even though they may wear these things themselves, they are likely to find you less believable if you look too flashy. You are asking your audience to pay special attention to you, so you should pay special attention to how you look.

2. *Your Posture**

Your posture is part of your appearance. Remember that you want your speech to sound spontaneous and relaxed so you don't have to stand perfectly straight like a soldier at attention. On the other hand, don't slouch. Slouching or standing on one hip may suggest that you are lazy and unreliable. Sometimes if you are particularly nervous, you may grip the podium until your knuckles are white. Don't worry about this too much at first. It's a natural reaction to a stressful situation, but work towards a more relaxed stance. The real secret to successful speaking is to be as natural as possible.

3. *Nervous Habits**

Another visual aspect of delivery that can distract your audience and reduce your effectiveness are nervous habits. Some speakers jingle the change in their pockets, play with pens, rub their nose, or curl strands of hair around their fingers. These are all behaviours related to nervousness. Ask a friend in the audience to make note of any nervous behaviours you use. Then you can work on eliminating them one at a time. Beginning speakers often use vocal sounds like "errrr" or "umm" to fill the silence as they think of what to say next. These are also habits that

you should get rid of. It won't happen all at once but as you speak more often in public, most of them will naturally disappear.

4. *Your Movements*

The way you move around as you approach the podium and as you speak are very important as they send a non-verbal message about your confidence, expertise, and enthusiasm. There is no need to stand absolutely still like a statue. Move when you feel the need to move. If you tremble and twitch from nervousness, changing your position or walking a few steps will often reduce these. Moving around also helps to keep the audience's attention focused on you. People feel more involved the closer they are to the speaker, so if it is appropriate, move around the audience area, to include as many people as possible in your presentation.

Be relaxed with your movements. Use them to emphasize what you are saying. Think about how you tell about an exciting event when you are sitting around at break. Do you wave your hands, stamp your feet, point your finger? Whatever you would do in a casual conversation is probably acceptable in a speech. By moving around, you will use up most of the nervous energy that might otherwise make you tremble and shake.

5. *Facial Expression**

No spoken message goes without some facial expression. The way you move your face sends a message to your audience that is probably stronger than any words you use. Listener always watch faces to get a clearer idea of what the speaker means. Smiling makes you more believable, makes your audience more comfortable, and, therefore, makes your message more acceptable. Raising an eyebrow can indicate a questions, while a frown will emphasize confusion or disagreement on your part. Use your facial expressions to underline your message and guide your audience through the emotions you want them to understand.

6. *Eye Contact**

Eye contact is always important. Looking someone in the eye is essential in even the most casual spoken communication in our culture, from a quick greeting to a detailed question. People who don't give "good" eye contact are often judged to be suspicious, deceitful, or bored. Our culture insists that speaker and audience must look at each other from time to time. Try it out in a casual conversation. When someone is speaking to you, don't look at them; look over their shoulder instead, or at the floor. How do they respond? Do they speak louder, repeat themselves, get

angry, touch you to get your attention? Now, ask a friend not to look at you as you tell them about something important that happened to you. How do you feel? Even though you know that they are doing it because you told them to, you will still feel uncomfortable and impatient.

Looking at your listeners forces them to look at you and this, in turn, makes them pay attention to what you are saying. Move your eyes around your audience all the time. Try not to focus on one section more than another. If you have to focus on one area, make it the back of the room where the most uninterested people sit. This way you can bring those bored people into your speech. Those at the front are probably there because they are already anxious to hear what you have to say; so you can probably get away with giving them less attention. But even they will start daydreaming if you forget to give them regular eye contact.

WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE HEARS*

Your voice is like a musical instrument and you can control it to get and keep an audience's attention. When you learned to speak as a child, you probably imitated someone around you so your volume, pitch, rate, and pronunciation are probably like someone in your family. Some voices are easier to understand and more pleasant to listen to than others. Have you ever listened to TV news anchors? Many of them sound alike despite the fact that they grew up in different parts of the country with different regional accents. These people have been taught to adjust their voices so that what they are saying is more believable and effective. With practice, you can learn to control your voice too.

1. *Volume**

Volume refers to the loudness of your voice. You adjust the loudness of your voice by controlling the amount of air you use as you speak. The loudness of your voice will depend on the circumstances. You should speak loudly enough so that your listeners can hear you clearly, but not so loudly that those close to you feel like you are shouting at them.

Beginning speakers often speak too softly and often let their voices fade out at the end of a sentence or a paragraph. This makes it hard for the audience to follow the message so they give up trying, get bored, and daydream. Sometimes speakers start to raise their voice when they think people are bored or don't understand. "Argument weak? Raise voice!" is definitely not an effective speaking (or interpersonal communication) strategy.

2. **Pitch***

Pitch, another way you can adjust your voice similar to singing high or low notes, is controlled by how fast the vocal cords vibrate. If you are nervous, your vocal cords will be tight and the sound they produce will be higher. In general, the lower your voice, the easier it is to listen to and the more persuasive it is. Voices which are higher pitched tend to sound “whiny” and are often described as “grating and annoying”. You can experiment with different pitches as you speak casually.

3. **Rate***

The rate at which you speak words is often influenced by your culture or the area in which you live. Some people speak more quickly than others, but the average rate is about 120-150 words a minute. If you speak too slowly, people may get bored or impatient, and if you speak too fast, listeners may have trouble understanding your words or following your ideas. It is, therefore, important to practice until you get the speed just right for your audience. In general, it is a good idea to vary your speed. This helps to keep the audience’s attention. Speak slowly when you are explaining something complicated and speed up when you are delivering material that is less important.

4. **Pronunciation***

When speaking to a group you want to be understood by everyone so it is important to pronounce every word correctly and completely. In conversation with friends, you may leave off the ending of word. For example, *going* becomes *goin’* and *sliding* becomes *slidin’*. At other times parts of words are mispronounced as when *this*, *that* become *dis* and *dat*, *Indian* changes to *Injun* and *butter* becomes *budder*. Another careless mistake in pronunciation is adding syllables to words and it can make your message hard to understand. Words like *film*, *athletic*, *oriented* end up sounding like *filum*, *athaletic*, *orientated*.

Slurring your words together is probably the most common problem for beginning public speakers, especially if they are nervous and are trying to rush through the presentation just to get it finished. Here are some examples.

I codupwid him at noon.
Jeetyet?
Nodju?

caught up with
 Did you eat yet?
 No, did you?

People judge you by how you sound as well as how you look, so when you

Speak try to make your voice pleasing to listen to and your words easy to understand.

SUMMARY*

People make judgements about you every day based on how you speak, whether it's answering the phone, greeting a friend, asking questions, or speaking to a crowd of strangers. All speaking is really public speaking because it always requires a listener -- someone to receive, understand, and respond to your message. Good communicators work on their speaking skills all the time, and this doesn't mean just building skills at making speeches. Whenever you have something important to communicate, be sure to plan, organize, and rehearse it (e.g., job interviews, telephone complaints, etc.).

Public speaking may have seemed like a huge challenge when you began this module, but it is something that everyone can do. It can become one of your strongest personal assets if you work up to it slowly and practice regularly. Invest your time and energy in building this really useful skill.

EXERCISE 8

Now that you've read and practiced some of the strategies used in oral presentations, it's time to try them out. The best way to improve your speaking skills is to speak. Choose topics you're already familiar with, do whatever research is necessary, and then present your material *extemporaneously*, standing in front of the class. Use a podium, if possible, and be sure to include visuals and/or graphics. If you have access to a microphone, try it out.

If you are having trouble finding topics of your own, here are some ideas to get you started.

1. Music (classical, rap, punk, blues)
2. A breed of dog
3. Herbs and health
4. A trip you've taken
5. Biography of your favourite person (a relative, a celebrity, a friend)
6. Gardening and landscaping
7. A medical condition and its treatment
8. Crafts for kids
9. Fishing (recreational or commercial)
10. History of your town or province
11. Collecting (stamps, coins, dolls, teapots, fossils, etc.)

12. A local industry
13. Trivia
14. A true event (scary, funny, happy, exciting, etc.)
15. Biography of a famous person, living or dead

LISTENING SKILLS*

Every successful communication requires a sender and a receiver. When a message is spoken, it is received by listening. In other words, listening is the other half of speaking; the two activities belong together. As the chart below shows, listening makes up 53% of all communicating time.



Infants listen from the moment, they are born. They listen to the world around them and then begin to experiment with speech by imitating what they hear. By age two, they are quite good at both speaking and listening. Throughout the rest of their lives, they will continue to use listening as a way of gathering information.

Are you an effective listener? If you are like most adults, you probably answered “yes”. How would you rate your listening skills?

excellent
 very good
 good
 average
 not very good
 poor

Studies show that most people think of themselves as “good” or “very good” listeners. When asked to rate others, however, the same people often say those around them have “weak” listening skills. Clearly, these studies show that most people don’t listen as effectively as they think they do. Other studies show that people who are good listeners usually do well at work, and vice versa.

Have you ever felt that people just weren’t listening to you when you were

trying to tell them something?

YES

NO

SOMETIMES

Do you find your mind wandering when you should be listening to something?
Do you have trouble paying attention when someone speaks for any length of time?

YES

NO

SOMETIMES

Do you have trouble remembering things you've been told, like how to get
someplace? Or how to do something?

YES

NO

SOMETIMES

If you answered “yes” or “sometimes” to any of these questions, you are like most other people. Some of your difficulty may come from the fact that you are not an *auditory learner*, but chances are the reason is a lot simpler. You have never had the chance to learn how to listen or to develop your listening skills. Listening skills are rarely taught, perhaps because it is so difficult to instruct people on what to do inside their heads, but there are definitely strategies you can use to improve your listening ability.

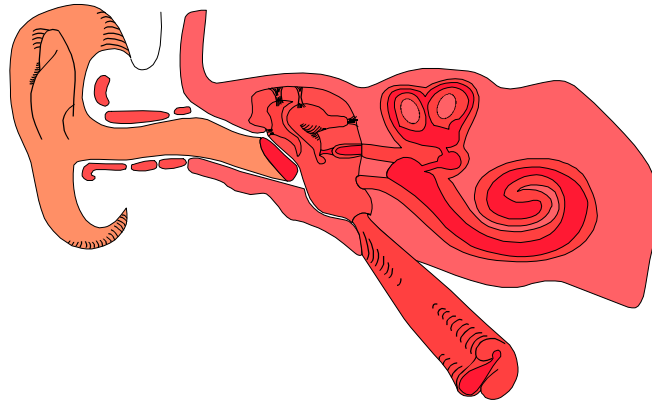
The rest of this module will suggest ways for you to develop your listening skills. With good listening skills, your life will be easier at home, at school, or in the workplace.

What Is Listening?*

A good place to start learning about listening is to find out what it is and how it works. English has two words that describe this “receiving” activity: hearing and listening. Hearing and listening⁹ are quite different. *Hearing* happens every time sound waves strike your ear drum and nerves transmit the vibrations to the brain. It is an automatic thing that you can't really control. Invisible sound waves enter the ear canal and make the ear drum vibrate. These vibrations then make the tiny bones in your ear vibrate too. The nerves in your ear send signals to your brain. You can't stop *hearing* something, but you can, and often do, stop *listening*. **Listening**

⁹ Hearing and listening are steps 4-6 of the seven step communication process. For more information, read the section on Communications in the module titled Writing Paragraphs.

happens after *hearing* and refers to the decoding of sound waves in your brain into meaningful words and messages. You can learn to control and improve your listening.



Like writing, listening is also a process, It has four stages.

1. **Attending**
2. **Understanding**
3. **Responding**
4. **Remembering**

The listening process begins with ***attending***. This simply means telling your brain to (1) *make a commitment* to listen and (2) *pay attention* to what it hears. For example, if someone has a sure-fire method of picking lottery numbers, you will probably pay close attention. If, on the other hand, you are really hungry, you may not pay attention to the teacher’s lesson, but you will definitely hear the bell on the ice cream truck down the street. You can and do choose which sounds you will ***attend*** to, so with practice you can teach your brain to attend “on command”.

Because speakers use body language, gestures, and facial expressions as well as words to make their meaning clear, a large part of attending involves paying attention to these as well. Experts agree that you can often tell more about what a people mean from their actions as they speak than you can from the words they use.

The next step in the listening process is ***understanding***. How well you understand depends on a lot of factors. Here are some of them:

- Is the message in a language you can understand?
- Do you understand the words (vocabulary)?
- Do you have a need for the information you are hearing?
- Is the message something you care about?
- Is the person speaking believable?
- Do you want to know what that person is saying?
- Do you agree with the person speaking?
- Do you have the same values as the person speaking?

Understanding only happens when the message your brain creates is very similar to the message that the speaker intended to send.

For example, you are angry when a friend tells you that “John got a new car.” John owes you \$500 and you think he should have paid you back before he went off and bought a brand new flashy sports car. Later, you discover that the “new car” was really his family’s old car, which they gave to him. Obviously your friend meant “new to John” not “new from the dealer”. Where did the misunderstanding come from? How could you (or the speaker) have avoided it¹⁰?

Because communication is a two-way street, with messages going back and forth between the sender and receiver, your *response* to the speaker is also part of listening. Speakers use a listener’s response (feedback) to judge how accurately their message is being received. Feedback includes smiling, nodding, gesturing, leaning forward as well as asking questions to show your level of interest and understanding. It lets the speaker know that you are paying attention and whether you understand. When listeners look puzzled, a good speaker will repeat or rephrase the message until their faces show understanding. If listeners slouch and look bored, they show the speaker that they are not attending to the message or that they don’t care about it. When this happens, speakers often become angry or impatient, so they give up and part of the message goes unsent. These are the times when communications *break down* and misunderstandings (particularly in relationships) begin. The receiver must “work” to understand the message, and avoid misunderstandings.

One research study suggests that “people listen more attentively and courteously to

¹⁰ The speaker could have chosen better words. The listener could have asked questions.

strangers than to their spouses.”¹¹

EXERCISE 9*

Experiment with the listening process by doing each of the following:

1. Listen to something new or unfamiliar like a science program or world news broadcast. Try your best to understand. Then write down three things you remember, even if you didn't understand them.
2. Listen to a piece of classical (or some unfamiliar form) music. Can you hear individual notes? What emotions did you feel? What message did you receive? What do you think the composer intended you to feel?
3. Listen to a foreign language broadcast. Can you hear individual sounds? Can you hear words that sound like English words? What words did you hear? How long were you able to listen before you felt your attention drifting away?
4. Watch a video of a movie but start towards the end. Can you feel yourself “stretching” to grasp the meaning? What clues did you use to decide who the “good guys” were or to understand the relationship between two characters?
5. Go to coffee break or lunch with friends. Don't say anything...just listen. What did you observe? How did you feel? Did your friends notice you weren't talking? How did they react?
6.
 - a) After listening to anything for 5 minutes, write down what you remember.
 - b) Listen for another 5 minutes, but wait 2 or 3 hours before trying to write anything down.
 - c) Right after you finish part (b), go back and read your notes from part (a). Write down anything else you “just” remembered.
 - d) What conclusions can you come to about listening?

The last piece of the listening process has to do with **remembering** the message so that it will remain useful to you over time. In general, people remember only about half of what they have heard, even right after the message has been received. Within eight hours of receiving a message, only about 35% of it is remembered, and that amount drops to 25% after two months, even for good listeners.¹²

¹¹ R.B. Adler, George Rodman, *Understanding Human Communication* (Sixth edition). Toronto: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997. 115

¹² R.G. Nichols, “Factors in Listening Comprehension,” *Speech Monographs* 15 (1948): 154-163.

Listening requires effort; it doesn't just happen. Listeners must do something to transfer information into long term memory if they want it available later. How the listener chooses to remember depends on his/her learning style and specific needs.

Types of Listening*

In a normal day, you can spend up to 5 hours listening to friends, teachers, salespeople, and others. Another 3 and a half hours are often spent watching TV, listening to CDs or the radio. Listening with full attention to all these sounds is not only impossible, it's a bad idea. There is just too much information out there to pay full attention to all of it. Effective listeners need to choose what type of listening is best for each situation.

- A Non-listening**
- B Marginal Listening**
- C Attentive Listening**
- D Critical Listening**
- E Appreciative Listening**

A Non-listening

Non-listening takes place when receivers consciously or unconsciously decides not to "hear" anything at all. Their brains seem to simply stop processing sound waves and little or no meaning gets through. A friend could tell them the winning lottery numbers an hour before the draw, and it wouldn't "register". Non-listening has its uses, but far too often it is a "bad" habit that people fall into without meaning to. It happens when people stop listening for the wrong reasons. Here are some of the reasons why people "tune-out" when they should be listening.

- The speaker is hard to understand. He/she slurs, mumbles, or has a speech problem.
- The speaker is not believable.
- The speaker is disorganized. The listener has found the ideas hard to follow.
- The speaker's words don't meet the listener's needs.
- The listener doesn't understand the vocabulary. The speaker uses too many unfamiliar or technical words.
- The listener doesn't understand the language well. The speaker is not using the listener's first language.

- The listener is afraid of what he/she may hear.
- The listener is narrow-minded. The speaker's words threatens a personal opinion.
- The listener is lazy or tired. Listening takes as much effort as physical activity.
- The listener is focused on him/herself and isn't interested in anything else.

EXERCISE 10*

1. List three situations when non-listening is a good idea.
2. List three situations when non-listening will get you in trouble.
3. Under what circumstances are you most likely to non-listen?
4. How would you get a non-listener's attention?
5. Intentionally non-listen when a friend speaks. What happens?

Marginal Listening

Marginal listening is a little like skim reading. Listeners pay only enough attention to the sounds around them to “tune-in” when the messages are important and “tune-out” when that aren't.

You need to “tune out” sounds that don't affect you. For example, if you live near a railway track or under an airport approach, do you hear every train or plane that passes? When you are listening to the radio, do you listen to all the commercials or all of the news items? As a parent, do you focus on every sound your children make, or are you more likely to pay attention only to the silences, which usually signal that they are into something they should be doing?

When you work in a busy office or when you are studying, you need to block out distractions like children playing, TVs roaring, tires squealing, or fire sirens blaring, but you may need to hear the phone ring so you can find out when to pick up your spouse. You probably already do a lot of marginal listening without thinking about it.

Marginal listening means “keeping your ears open” for key words or sounds that will tell you when to start listening and paying attention. For instance, although parents always hear their child crying, they often only pay attention to crying that signals pain or fear. You may not hear what is on the radio until the station plays a particular tune or sounds to signal the start of news and/or weather reports. Effective listeners adapt these natural “filtering” skills until they are able to “filter” out what

they don't need and accurately identify what they want to attend to.

As well, they know how to focus their attention and listen even when

they don't agree with the speaker's opinion?

they are tired? hungry? frustrated? angry?

their personal problems overwhelm you?

they think something will be too difficult for them?

they encounter new ideas?

they think a topic, like history, classical music, etc. is boring or "stupid"?

Good listeners (and learners) never tune out automatically. They always make sure that the messages they *decide* to ignore are only those that are not important to them.

EXERCISE 11*

1. When is marginal listening a good idea? A bad idea?
2. If you were listening marginally to someone, what would you do to make him/her think that you were really paying careful attention? Is it a good idea to pretend to listen? Why? Why not?
3. Listen to the radio for at least half an hour while you are doing something else. Does your attention fade in and out? What made you start listening carefully? When did you tune out? How might know this help you learn to study better?
4. What do you do to make yourself pay attention to the radio (TV), when it's really important?
5. Play the TV while you are doing something else. Count the number of commercials in half an hour. Count the number of different characters who appear in a half hour.
6. How many times in a day do you find yourself listening marginally?

Attentive Listening

Attentive listening means listening with a purpose. This is the kind of listening to do when you have decided to pay attention because you need the information.

Perhaps you are at a lecture on how to use the Internet, or maybe you are

listening to a friend tell you how to get to someplace special. Once you have decided that the message is important to you, you focus your attention fully on everything the speaker says and does. Attentive listening is really just concentrating on the what you hear and using all your energy to understand the message. It takes place when you are listening to instructions, lectures, explanations, directions, or anything you need to remember.

EXERCISE 12*

Arrange to watch or listen to a half hour news broadcast at the same time every day for at least two weeks. Try to concentrate and stay tuned-in for the whole time. Every time your mind wanders put a check mark on a piece of paper and then tell yourself to refocus and start paying attention. Keep a separate record for each day. After a week, tally the results and prepare a bar chart. Did your attention span increase over the week? Make another chart after two weeks. Did you see any improvement? Why?

Critical Listening

Critical¹³ listening is really a part of attentive listening. It takes place when you are looking for correct and accurate information. Not everything you hear or everyone you listen to provides accurate messages, so the listener has to *judge* or *evaluate* both the speaker and the message before deciding to accept or reject it. Good listeners need to develop strategies to help them evaluate what they listen to.

Critical listening skills are helpful many times during every day. When you are shopping for a new car, you need to decide how much of what the salesperson tells you is fact, what is opinion, what is exaggerated, and which details are not being presented. When a friend tells you that your blind date has a terrific personality, you need to judge his/her words. Is it his/her way of saying the person doesn't look like a magazine model? Is it true because your friend knows that personality is important to you? When someone is talking about a co-worker or classmate, you need to decide how much is true, how much is wishful thinking, or how much is revenge or jealousy. You even need to listen critically to the information you hear in class. Does what you are hearing match what you have read/heard somewhere else? Does it seem realistic and sensible?

¹³ The word "critical" does not necessarily mean finding fault with something. It means evaluating the speaker and the message to see if it is a true message and one that applies to you.

Much of what you listen to every day is designed to persuade you to change your mind or act in a certain way. Commercials coax you to buy a new laundry detergent or try a particular brand of soft drink. Motivational speakers try to get you to change the way you live or to buy into a “guaranteed” money-making scheme. Friends present arguments to make you join their church, move to a different location, or participate in a group activity. You need to listen critically so you can separate the facts from the persuasion.

Persuasion is often the speaker’s goal. As a listener, it is your responsibility to evaluate the speaker’s truthfulness and motivation as well as understand and evaluate the accuracy of his/her message before you act.

To be a critical listener, you should

1. Decide whether the speaker has the experience and knowledge to give the correct information.
2. Decide whether the speaker is impartial.
3. Decide if the speaker’s sources and facts are reliable.
4. Decide whether there is enough information to make a good decision.
5. Decide whether the speaker’s reasoning is accurate and logical.

For more information on how to judge the reliability of a message, consult the module on Clear Thinking.

EXERCISE 13

1. Listen to at least three commercials. List the facts you hear. List all the persuasive words and images in the commercial. (You may want to tape the commercials so that you can watch them several times.)
2. Listen to a coffee break conversation. How much of it is fact? How much is opinion? How important is it to the speaker that you agree with him/her?
3. Create a situation where a professional salesman is trying to sell you something. Listen critically to his/her sales pitch. How much is fact? How much is exaggerated? How much is opinion? How much of the pitch is based on getting you emotionally involved?

Appreciative Listening

The word *appreciate* means to grasp the quality or significance of something and is often used to mean the ability to understand, enjoy or admire the excellence of

something. Often appreciative listening relates to music or literature. It involves both attentive and critical listening as well as open-mindedness. When you are listening to appreciate something, you are really cooperating with the person presenting the message and allowing their words (or music) to create a mood or image they have in their heads enter your mind.

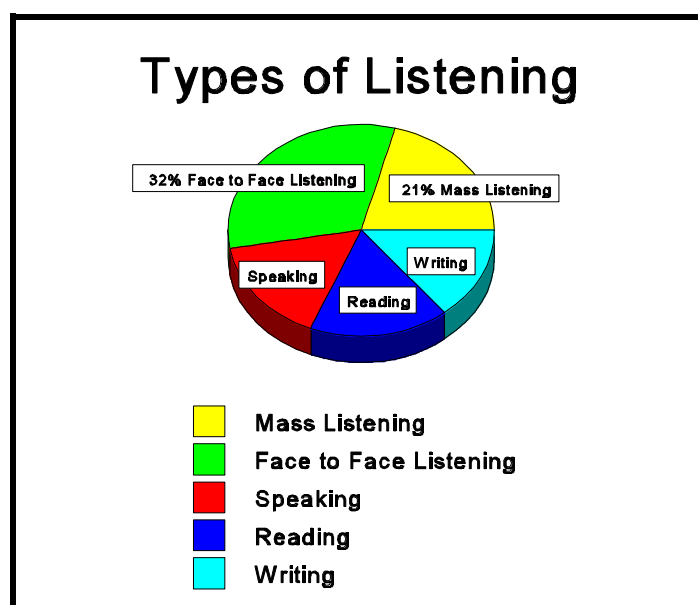
Deciding How to Listen*

A good listener decides beforehand how he/she will listen and controls the kind of listening he/she does. The kind of listening depends on the listener's needs and circumstances. There are only two different situations for listening.

Mass listening

Face to face listening

Mass listening is often passive; that is, it doesn't require any feedback from the listener. For example, when you watch/listen to television or sit in a lecture, you have little opportunity to respond to the speaker. The second type of listening is the **face to face listening** you do in a conversation. It can be as simple as a quick "hello" or a few sentences at coffee break. At other times, face to face listening means trying to understand how someone else with a personal problem feels. Almost one third of the listening you do every day is face to face with family, friends, or at work.



Strategies for Effective Listening*

1. **Have a positive attitude about what you are going to hear.**

In general, attentive listening is easy if you are interested in, or need, the information. If, however, you decide it will be too difficult, boring, or doesn't relate to you, listening attentively will be difficult. The first step to listening attentively is to talk yourself into a positive attitude before you start listening. Your brain is both your best ally and worst enemy. If you have a negative attitude, your brain will automatically pay less attention. No matter how hard you try to listen, your brain will actually prevent you from absorbing and understanding. On the other hand, if you are positive, your brain will help you listen with less effort and remembering will be easier. If you have a "yes, I can" attitude, your brain will make sure you do listen and learn

2. **Make a commitment to listen attentively.**

Just as in other kinds of learning, you must decide that you are going to listen carefully and focus on the speaker's words. If you have even a whisper of a doubt in your mind about whether you are going to listen, you will find your mind wandering and you will end up doing marginal listening instead of paying full attention.

3. **Be physically fit.** Listening is actually a physical activity just like running, walking, or exercising. When you listen attentively your heart rate increases, your respiration speeds up, and your temperature rises. You can increase your listening abilities by simply making sure that you are physically fit.

4. **Be Alert.** If you are tired, your body simply doesn't have the resources to listen and understand effectively. When there is something you want to know or learn, make sure to get a good night's sleep before you expose yourself to the information.

5. **Eat Smart.** Eat a little bit before you go into a listening session from which you need to get information. If you try to listen right after a big meal, your body will be diverting energy to digestion and leaving little for concentration. After a big meal, your body naturally wants to sleep, so you may fall asleep in class after a big meal with lots of sweets? On the other hand, make sure you are not hungry. Hunger will also distract you and keep you from paying full attention.

6. **Be comfortable.** Find a seat that is comfortable to sit in. Don't be too warm or too cold. Sit where you can hear well and see the speaker clearly. In a classroom or lecture situation, sit in the front of the room. The closer you are to the speaker, the more likely you are to pay attention because you feel that the speaker can see you and will notice if you fall asleep or if your attention wanders. Those people who sit in the back have usually already made a decision that they aren't really interested and don't intend to listen. They may talk, eat, fidget...all things that will distract your attention.
7. **Be an active listener.** Make regular eye contact with the speaker. This helps you pay attention and concentrate. It also gives the speaker the feedback he/she needs. Sit up straight and even lean forward a little. This is part of making a commitment to listen. With this posture, you are telling *yourself* and the speaker that you intend to listen. It also means that you are more likely to remember.
8. **Listen to the Whole Message Before Making a Judgement**
Don't jump to conclusions. Listen critically to everything the speaker says before making an decisions or taking any actions.
9. **Paraphrase** As you listen, put the speaker's ideas into your own words. This makes sure that you understand what is being said. It also makes the ideas your own. If you can paraphrase what a speaker says it means you understand. Your brain can only use and store information that makes sense to you in your own words.
10. **Concentrate** Focus on the details you are hearing and work to keep your mind from wandering by simply telling yourself "listen to this". Concentrating 100% of the time is difficult for anyone, but you can work to increase your concentration. As you listen to something, simply place a check mark on a piece of scrap paper every time you find your attention has wandered. At the end of the presentation, count the number of check marks. Just making a check mark acts as a reminder to listen and refocus on the message. Soon, your brain will catch itself daydreaming and, through practice, will automatically put you back on track.
Concentrating means listening to the whole message before you act. When you are trying to follow oral instructions, it is often tempting to try to do each step as it is given. This rarely works because you have to shift your attention

away from the words you are hearing to the activities you are trying to perform. Listen to the whole set of instructions first

11. Remove Distractions.

Small things can eat away at your ability to concentrate: a ticking clock, a pile of unfinished laundry, the telephone, a wobbly desk. When you find your attention wandering, identify the thing that distracted your attention and do something about it.

12. Learn to Block Out Distractions

Some distractions can't be removed, so you must learn to live with them. With practice and a commitment to listen, you can learn to block out the unimportant sounds around you just as easily as you block out the sounds of heavy traffic or household noises.

The next group of listening strategies can make your mass listening experiences more effective. Use them when listening to lectures and classroom lessons.(BAU optional)

13. Be Prepared.

In a formal listening situation, prepare yourself to listen by reading and thinking about the topic before you arrive. Do as much as you can to learn specific vocabulary and concepts before you start to listen, so that you don't have to waste time and energy understanding the basics.

14. Listen for Main Ideas

Well-prepared lectures, lessons, and oral presentations are designed to make listening easier. The introduction should contain the main idea and purpose in a clear thesis statement. For instance, “**Spousal abuse**, whether it is **physical** or **psychological**, robs everyone involved. Its **effects** fan out from the act itself like ripples in a pond causing **lasting harm** to everything and everyone it touches. **Understanding** its widespread effects is the first step to **eliminating** it.” Listen for these and focus on them. The main idea will probably be restated several times during the presentation. Each time you hear it, use it to refocus your attention.

15. Listen for major headings

The introduction of an oral presentation will also probably include a “blueprint” statement which clearly outlines the major points the speaker will cover. Here's an example: “Spousal abuse reaches out and changes forever the life of not only the **abused individual**, but also those of the **abuser**, the **immediate family**, the **extended family**, and the **whole community**.” Remember these major headings as you listen, and mentally tick them off as the speaker deals with each one in turn.

16. Listen for numbered lists

Effective speakers understand that listening can be more challenging than reading, so they use strategies to help the listeners keep track of the information they are presenting. In the presentation on spousal abuse, the speaker might say, “Spousal abuse strikes at least **FIVE** targets. The **FIRST** and most obvious is....” A **SECOND** major loser in this domestic tragedy is....” “Perhaps the **MOST TRAGIC CASUALTIES** in these situations are the children.” “**THE FOURTH IMPORTANT GROUP** of victims are....”

“**THE FIFTH AND LAST**, but by no means least affected, is”

12. Listen for repetition.

One thing that makes listening more difficult than reading is the fact that the listener can't go back and review or reread the material. For this reason, a good speaker includes lots of repetition of the main points and important details. When introducing major headings, the speaker may actually say, “The **abuser** and the **abused** are definitely victims, but perhaps the most **tragic victims** in these situations are the **children.**” Listening for these repetitions not only helps you remember the major points, but also helps the listener keep track of where the speaker is in his/her overall speech.

13. Listen for transitions and other structural devices.

Transitions like “however”, “in addition”, or “on the other hand” act like sign posts to show the listener where the speaker is going next. Sections of an oral presentation can be highlighted with words like “Let's review what we know so far.” or “Before continuing, an investigation of some side issues is in order.” or “In conclusion”.

14. Pay attention to visuals.

Charts, graphs, overheads, props or anything you can see have an important place in oral presentations. They help you understand the main ideas and visualize the importance of details like statistics. As well, they can act as a mnemonic that will make it easier for you to remember. Visuals are included to help you understand. Be sure to make full use of them as you listen or speak.

15. Pay attention to the speaker's voice*.

Speakers use their voices to underline important words, phrases, or sections of their presentation. The voice sends about 30% of the actual message. When the speaker speaks slowly, the information is usually important. Pauses allow the listeners to gather their thoughts and review what has been said. As well, presenters add emotion to their speeches with pitch and tone. It is particularly important to pay attention to these when the presentation is persuasive. Be aware that the speaker may use his/her voice to get an emotional response from you and to make you more open to persuasion.

16. Watch the speaker's body language, gestures, facial expressions*.

Textbooks on communications suggest that as much as 50% of any oral message is sent with body language. Learn to watch for gestures, facial expressions, and posture as you listen. They cannot only tell you a lot about the speaker's truthfulness, enthusiasm, and expertise, but they can also act as a memory aid. In other words, "listen between the lines" to get the full meaning.

17. Ask Questions*.

To listen successfully, the listener needs to understand the message being sent clearly. If you don't understand, or even if you just feel "fuzzy", ask the speaker for more information or clarification. Don't give up until YOU do understand. Some people feel uncomfortable asking questions, particularly in a group situation, for fear they may look "stupid". Work to get rid of this notion! There is no such thing as a "stupid" question. If you have a question, it's probably because the speaker didn't meet your learning needs. Think of yourself first and ask for the information YOU need. You will soon discover that in most cases, many people had the same need for information or clarification that you did, but they were just afraid to ask, so you will be doing everyone a service.

18. Listen critically.

Select what is important in any message. Filter out your own (or the speaker's) anger, hostility, fatigue. Evaluate the believability and accuracy of the message by thinking about the speaker's experience, knowledge, and motives as well as the logic, supports, and statistics of the content. Keep an open mind and don't jump to conclusions or make a final judgement until you've listened to the whole presentation. Pay attention to what is left out as well as what is included. Sometimes people are persuasive because they omit the negative details.

19. Make Notes*

Taking notes while someone is speaking is a skill that requires lots of practice because it is easy to get so involved in writing that you stop listening for minutes at a time. When you finally do tune-in again, you may have missed some really important facts or concepts. Here are some tips:

Don't try to write every word. Record mostly main ideas, major headings, important supports, dates, and statistics.

Use the "empty" moments to make your notes. Speakers deliver words at

about 120 words a minute, but your brain works two or three times faster than that. Often you can predict what the speaker will say next, so once you're sure where the speaker is going with a thought, you can make a quick note. If some of the material is familiar to you or you already grasp a concept well, use these moments for recording other important ideas.

Develop your own short hand symbols like \$ for dollars or money; + for positive or good; ! for important; → for future, toward, to, direction; ← for past, yesterday, from; ✎ for now, today. For words that you write often create your own symbols like ¶ for paragraph; R for required, necessary; È for with; W for what; N for not, never, don't.

Use short forms where possible and develop your own abbreviations like "imp" for important; "ing" for ingredients; "ss" for small; "bb" for big, large.

Rewrite your notes immediately after a presentation. Because you are using short forms and abbreviations, your notes may be next to meaningless if you leave them in this form too long. Rewrite them in longer form while your memory of the presentation is still clear. Add details, facts and explanations to your point form lists as soon as possible. Rewriting your notes in greater detail serves several purposes. First, it ensures that your notes will be meaningful days or weeks later. Second, it takes advantage of your short term memory. Third, writing is an effective way for many people to learn new materials. Fourth, it acts as a review and helps place the information in your long term memory.

20. **Review What You've Listened to within 2 to 3 hours...then daily or weekly*.**

Listening is like any other form of learning: "Use it, or lose it." To be useful, review information regularly so all of it will be available when you want it.

EXERCISE 14*

Find one information program (or video) to watch each week. Choose 2 or 3 different strategies to practice at each session.

EXERCISE 15*

Practice notetaking while listening by watching a short news broadcast (about 10 minutes) each day.

EXERCISE 16*

Listen attentively to the oral presentations made by your classmates. Ask questions

to clarify your understanding.

EXERCISE 17*

Conscientiously complete an evaluation sheet like the one at the end of this module for every formal speech presented in the class.

CONCLUSION

Good speaking and listening skills are essential to everyone's ability to function successfully every day, in every situation. Most people have never had the chance to learn how to improve their speaking and listening skills. As a result, they go through life with what amounts to a handicap that keeps them from communicating as effectively as they could. Developing speaking and listening skills take time, practice, and patience. Don't be too hard on yourself when you start learning. Accept the fact that you won't be perfect or even very good at it until you've had lots of practice. Seek out constructive criticism and advice from people you think already possess good skills. Force yourself to speak or listen at every opportunity.

LISTENING ACTIVITIES (BAU optional)

Have your instructor or a friend read the selections at the end of this module onto a tape recorder. Do **not** read them **before** you hear them. (For a more realistic situation, you could use a video camera.) If neither of these is available, have your instructor or a friend simply read them to you. Listen attentively to each passage separately and have a notebook open so are ready for the questions for each one.

Questions for Listening Selection # 1

1. What was the stated purpose of this passage?
2. What do you think the writer's real purpose was in writing this?
3. How many numbered instructions were there?
4. List for the rules given in the passage that you should follow when listening to directions.

Questions for Listening Selection # 2

The events in this story are listed below but not in the order in which they happened. Number the events below so they are in the right order.

- ___ Mrs. Fox tells Crow that he is beautiful and well fed
- ___ The farmer was eating his lunch.
- ___ The mother fox had her babies.
- ___ Mrs. Fox eats the cheese.
- ___ Mrs. Fox tells Crow that all the animals will listen with her.
- ___ The mother fox was hungry.
- ___ Mrs. Fox tells Crow that he is kind and clever
- ___ Mrs. Fox tells Crow why she wants the cheese.
- ___ Crow stole a piece of cheese.
- ___ Mrs. Fox tells Crow that he has a wonderful voice.
- ___ Crow decides to sing.
- ___ The farmer worked in his field.
- ___ Crow drops the cheese.

Questions for Listening Selection # 3

1. The phrase *predominantly upper class* means
 - A surprisingly *upper class*
 - B mostly *upper class*
 - C disgustingly *upper class*

2. The phrase *palatial homes* means
 - A castle-like *homes*
 - B reasonably priced *homes*
 - C well-build *homes*

3. The phrase *little enclave* means
 - A *little* street
 - B *little* present
 - C *little* area

4. The word *contradiction* means
 - A opposite ideas
 - B thoughts
 - C complete agreements

5. The phrase *Something was out of kilter* means
 - A everything is alright
 - B everything is foreign
 - C out of the right order

6. The phrase *lucrative assignment* means
 - A a dangerous *assignment*
 - B a profitable *assignment*
 - C a simple *assignment*

7. The phrase *the best French vintages* means
 - A *the best French* wines
 - B *the best French* waiters
 - C *the best French* food

Questions for Listening Selection # 4

1. What is the main idea in this article?
2. Why is theft such a threat to the small business man?
3. List two categories of theft that concern retailers?
4. What is pilfering?
5. What are three possible reasons for this new threat to business?
6. What does “retail shrinkage” mean?
7. What are “five finger bargains”?
8. Did the conclusion present a summary or a recommendation? Be specific.
9. After answering the first eight questions, listen to the passage again. This time take notes of the major headings and supporting details in each.

Questions for Listening Selection # 5

1. Have your facilitator check your point form notes to make sure you have all the statistics down correctly.
2. What is the main idea of this article?
3. What is the speaker’s purpose? How does she want the listening to react?
4. List as many examples as you can remember that support the speaker’s argument that much of the world’s water supply is contaminated.
5. This presentation needs critical listening skills before you act. What should you, as a critical listener, do as you listen to material like this?
6. List the proofs the speaker gives to show that there is a shortage of drinking

water in North America.

7. List the speaker's proofs that your drinking water is at risk today.
8. How did you react to what you heard? Were you persuaded?

ORAL PRESENTATIONS: SAMPLE EVALUATION SHEET

Presenter's Name and Topic:		1	2	3	4	5
Structure	Introduction: Opening immediately gets attention					
	Main idea clearly stated					
	Major headings clearly indicated					
	Body: Organization logical and appropriate					
	Major headings emphasized					
	Transitions adequate					
	Uses repetition, numbered lists, frequent review					
	Conclusion: summarizes content					
	Obvious and satisfying					
Content	Interesting					
	Well researched and/or accurate					
	Visuals used effectively					
	Acceptable grammar and pronunciation					
	Length appropriate to content					
Delivery	Eye contact					
	Voice: rate, tone, pitch					
	volume					
	emphasis					
	Facial expressions and gestures					
	Nervous habits and mannerisms					
Calculate total of each column		2	4	21	16	25
SUBTOTAL (Total of all columns divided by 2) $68 \div 2 =$		34 /50				
OVERALL IMPRESSION		40 /50				
FINAL MARK (subtotal + overall impression)		74 /100				

*Blank evaluation sheet provided on last page of this module.

SELECTION # 1

Believe it or not, listening is often important to writing standardized examinations like the GED. Each exam session usually begins with a supervisor reading a list of instructions for the candidates. Often exam writers are so nervous and anxious that they don't pay close enough attention to these and as a result they make serious mistakes which affect their overall performance on the test.

It's true that practice makes perfect so we're going to do a practice run-through so you'll know what to expect the next time you go to write a standardized test. Get ready to write.

1. Listen to all the following instructions before carrying out any of them.
2. Print your name at the top of your paper.
3. Write your home address, including postal code, below your name.
4. On the next line, write your facilitator's name and the name of your CASP group.
5. Then, leave a space and write today's date.
6. Do not do instructions 4 or 5.
7. Turn your paper upside down on your desk when you are finished.

How did you do? If you didn't follow these instructions correctly, it was probably because you didn't listen long enough to hear direction # 6. Were you paying attention to individual words? Did you print your name and write your address? When you were finished, did you turn your paper upside down?

Following oral instructions requires some special techniques. Watch the speaker as well as listen to the words. Concentrate. You will break your concentration if you look at other things or listen to background noises. Listen for specific instructions like "print", "write", or "use a pencil". Try to visualize yourself doing each step. When the instructions are complete, try to repeat them to yourself (make notes if it helps) before you begin to follow them.

Answers to Listening Selection # 1

1. The stated purpose of this passage was to help people get ready to write standardized exams.
2. The real purpose was to demonstrate the importance of listening to all the directions before trying to follow them.
3. 7
4. Listen to all the directions.
Watch the speaker as well as listen to the words.

- Listen for specific instruction words.
- Concentrate.
- Visualize yourself following the instructions.
- Repeat (review) the instructions to yourself before starting.

SELECTION # 2

This listening exercise is designed to help you follow a sequence of events as you listen, so pay attention to the order of the events that happen.

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful crow who lived in a forest not far from here. He was the largest bird in his family, and his feathers were so dark and glossy that they reflected the sunlight like a mirror. Listening to all the other birds admire and praise him made him feel special and important. Often he would sit at the top of the tallest tree in the woods all day long just waiting for the compliments that always surrounded him.

On a particularly hot summer day, he had been perched in the treetops for hours. His feathers were particularly beautiful that day, but he was getting very hungry because he hadn't eaten since morning. Suddenly, he spotted a farmer taking a break under a tree at the side of his field and eating his lunch of bread and cheese. The cheese looked wonderful, so when the farmer went for a drink from the nearby stream, the crow swooped down and stole a large piece of the bright orange cheese.

The farmer shouted and shook his fist, but the crow just flew off into the woods and landed on a sturdy branch. The cheese was such a wonderful prize that the crow just sat there enjoying its rich smell. He was very proud of himself.

Beneath the tree lived a mother fox and her litter of three cubs. She hadn't been hunting in a long time because she had to stay with her babies, so she was very thin and hungry. As soon as she saw the crow with his cheese, she was determined to have it. She said, "Crow, please give me some of your cheese. I'm starving and my babies are starving too."

The crow didn't answer.

"Mr. Crow, I know you are kind and clever. Just give me a little piece of your cheese. There will still be lots left for you," she pleaded.

Still the crow didn't answer. He was too big and too beautiful to listen to a little whining fox. "Besides," he thought, "it was my cleverness that found the cheese, so it's mine and I'm not going to share."

The fox said in her sweetest voice, "You are a big beautiful bird, and your feathers are so dark and shiny that you must be healthy and well fed. Surely, you could spare me just a morsel of that cheese."

The crow liked to hear about his beautiful feathers, so he turned towards the sun so they would shine even more brilliantly. But he didn't answer.

"Oh, wise and clever Crow," crooned the fox, "you have such a wonderful voice, I would love to hear your song even though you won't share your cheese. Your voice is like the babbling of a cool brook and your songs have the magic to sooth even my hunger. Everyone in the woods admires your singing. Sing me a song and all the animals in the woods will come to listen with me."

The crow was so pleased to hear about his wonderful voice that he couldn't resist showing it off, just a little bit. He opened his mouth and out came his best gravelly "gronk". Of course, the piece of cheese fell to the ground where the fox smiled slyly and quickly ate the it.

A famous storyteller named Aesop created this story to show that pride and flattery often contribute to personal loss.

Answers to Listening Selection # 2

8, 4, 1, 13, 10, 2, 7, 6, 5, 9, 11, 3, 12

Sequences are hardest remember when several events are similar, as in the three arguments Mrs. Fox gives Crow, one after the other. If you had events 6-10 out of order, listen to the story again, but this time create a mental picture of the events. This will help you remember which came first.

Not all events in a story are presented in chronological order or stated directly. Sometimes you have to think logically to put them in order. Learn to pay attention to specific details like "taking a break and eating". If the farmer was in his field and taking a break for lunch, he had obviously been working there.

SELECTION # 3

This listening activity includes some words and phrases that may be unfamiliar. Don't just ignore these words or else you may miss an important idea. Use the words you do know in a passage to help you make a good guess about the new words.

In this predominantly upper class area of the city, well known for its one acre treed lots and its palatial homes -- all valued at well over half a million dollars, Marcus was startled to find one street near the freeway where the residents would be lucky to be classified as lower middle class. Each tiny bungalow sat on a neatly trimmed 60 foot lot and was surrounded by mature trees, obviously planted when the houses were new. The real clue to the status of the home owners in this little

enclave, however, came from the fact that almost every house desperately needed a coat of paint and every car in every driveway was at least 15 years old.

How could someone as affluent and influential as Jack Drover live here? He thought about the contradiction for a full three minutes before giving up and slowly driving down Duckling Dell Road looking for number 17. Marcus rubbed the sweat out of his eyes and cranked the air conditioner up to his highest setting. Something was out of kilter here. What he had thought was going to be a simple, lucrative assignment that would net him enough for a three-week holiday some place cool was quickly becoming a problem. The cool sea breezes and endless glasses of red wine, the best French vintages of course, would probably have to wait a while.

Answers to Listening Selection # 3

B, A, C, A, C, B, A

SELECTION # 4

Successful listening means paying attention to the structure and organization of the presentation. Listen for main ideas and major supports as well as identifying transitions that signal the presentation of a new support for the speaker's central idea. Pay special attention to the conclusion as it often summarizes the passage or presents suggestions to solve a problem.

Many retailers are increasingly concerned about “retail shrinkage”, a term that covers thefts by both customers and staff. As competition gets tougher and profits decrease, businesses are discovering that they have to work longer and harder to make an even a reasonable living. With markups so low, owners have quickly realized that reducing theft may make the difference between staying in business or going under. As a result, many of them have started tracking every item in their inventory even more carefully.

At a recent conference on small business put on by the Canadian Retail Merchants Association, members agreed that, in most cases, modern security systems have reduced losses due to shoplifting to the lowest levels in fifteen years. Even so, profits continue to shrink alarmingly, but now it appears that staff pilfering is as responsible for the losses as customers looking for five finger bargains. In fact, this quiet crime is becoming a threat to even in large corporations.

Business analysts and security companies are at a loss to explain why employees are turning to crime. Some experts suggest it's the loss of morals caused by the diminishing importance of religion in society today. People just don't see theft of small items as a sin. Somehow, dollar value has become attached to the

definition of wrong doing.

Others look to the decrease in disposable income (money available for spending). This, of course, leads to a reduced standard of living in a country where almost everyone has become so accustomed to affluence that doing without luxuries seems a cruel and unfair punishment. As employees become more and more resentful of their shrinking dollar's buying power, they see the theft of a few minor domestic items as their due, something their employer really owes them anyway. So, into the pocket or purse go tubes of toothpaste and packages of cookies. "Who'll notice," they reason, "when there are so many cases in the back room?"

Yet another group of experts suggest that employee theft is more related to the inability of people to think of anything other than today's pleasures. When caught and questioned, dishonest employees say they never thought about the fact that their acts could result in their employer's bankruptcy and their subsequent loss of a job.

Whatever the causes of this new trend in the marketplace, shopkeepers agree something has to be done or they will end up unemployed and hungry too. Participants at the conference say that they are looking at beefing up their security including electronic surveillance, searching personnel as they leave work, scanners, or even withholding part of pay cheques to be used to cover losses. These are extreme measures for what store owners say is a growing threat to their continued existence.

A conference spokesperson said, "Surely with education, we can make our employees see that their actions might mean the end of their employer's business and their own jobs. I would hate to have to resort to such severe measures as some of my colleagues have suggested here today."

Answers to Listening Selection # 4

1. The main idea of the article is that theft is having a major impact on small business today.
2. Competition is high and profits are low, so any theft can threaten the small business person with bankruptcy.
3. Shop lifting and staff pilfering are of concern to small businesses.
4. Pilfering is small repeated thefts.
5. The reasons given for employees stealing from their employers are that religion is less of a deterrent, decrease in disposable income, and people thinking only of today.
6. Retail shrinkage means any kind of theft from store that is not robbery.
7. Five finger bargains are things that people shoplift.
8. The conclusion presents a recommendation that showing employees how their actions could contribute to their job loss might stop them from stealing.

9. Answers will vary.

SELECTION # 5

Listening for details is particularly important in the classroom or when attending lectures or seminars. Taking notes as you listen is a particularly good strategy when you need to remember numbers, dates, facts, and opinions. Take point form notes as you listen to the next passage.

“Water, water everywhere, / Nor any drop to drink.”¹⁴

Water is essential to all life. Without food, you can live for about a month; without water, you will die in under a week.

These are frightening facts, but surely none of us need to worry about a lack of water. It’s all around us every day and it flows reliably out of the tap with just a flick of the wrist. No problem, right?

Wrong.

About 97% of all the water in the world is not available for drinking, for agriculture or for industry because it is salt water from the sea. Of the remaining 3%, all fresh water in the world, only about 1% is available for human use because the rest is frozen into glaciers or hidden deep below ground. When you think about all the water in the world, 1% seems like quite a lot, yet much of it is contaminated, polluted, and undrinkable.

Just how contaminated do you think the world water supply is? In the United States 1,200 people die each year from drinking tap water! In Pakistan, farmers waste about half their fertilizer, so it ends up in ground water where it will later be tapped for drinking water. In the Indian subcontinent, millions of people are drinking water with heavy concentrations of arsenic. Thousands are already sick with arsenic poisoning. Acid rain has been linked to the death of moose in Sweden, and raw sewage is still being dumped directly into lakes and rivers in Canada and all over the world.

Add to all this two facts: first, that water treatment and water delivery systems in North America, many built before WW I, are old and falling apart; second; world population is exploding, particularly in the third world. What does all this have to do with you and your family? It suggests that clean drinking water could soon be in short supply and the price of it could rise to astronomical levels. After all, supply

¹⁴ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Ancient Mariner*.

and demand rule the cost of everything. The smaller the supply; the higher the price.

So what can you do about it? There are some obvious answers like conserving water at home, educating farmers all over the world on the proper use of pesticides and fertilizers, and promoting population control everywhere. On the other hand, if you are an entrepreneur, you probably should consider investing money in companies who are getting into a variety of water distribution schemes. Selling drinking water is already big business. What would happen if you controlled most of the water used in your area? How could you help but make money when water is becoming so precious?

On the other hand, perhaps you should start to lobby for continued public ownership of water resources before it's too late. In many parts of the world, even the U.S., water is being bought and sold by private corporations who control how much they release and what it costs.

Water ownership is generally covered by "riparian rights" which means that if you own the land, you own the water. In the United States, west of the 100th meridian, water is governed by the "prior appropriation doctrine". This is based on the old European idea of "first in time; first in rights". Under this doctrine, you can own water without owning the land, so water can be diverted and sold to the highest bidder, leaving those living down stream parched and dry. Think what this could mean to the farmers in California who produce so much of our fruits and vegetables. Think what this could mean to the cost and availability of fresh food.

Have you ever thought of this problem? Do you think governments are thinking about the possibility of a permanent water global water shortage? Perhaps it's time you considered this problem and told your government how you feel about it.

Answers to Listening Selection # 5

2. Drinking water is threatened all over the world.
3. The speaker's purpose is to persuade you to agree with his opinion that the world is facing a water crisis. As well, the writer want to frighten you so much that you will lobby your government representatives to do something about the problem.
4. In the United States 1,200 people die each year from drinking tap water! In Pakistan, farmers waste about half their fertilizer, so it ends up in ground water where it will later be tapped for drinking water. In the Indian subcontinent, millions of people are drinking water with heavy concentrations of arsenic. Thousands are already sick with arsenic poisoning. Acid rain has been linked to the death of moose in Sweden, and raw sewage is still being dumped directly into lakes and rivers in Canada and all over the world.

5. Anytime someone tries to persuade you this enthusiastically to do something, you need to spend time thinking about the several things:

Is the speaker an expert on the subject?

What is the source of the speaker's facts?

Are the statistics reliable, up-to-date, provable?

Does the speaker have a particular motive for wanting me to act in a certain way?

How much of what I am hearing is fact and how much is opinion?

Has the speaker used words fairly or does she choose words that are "guaranteed" to get an emotional reaction from the listener?

6. There is no proof provided.
7. There is no proof.
8. Answers will vary.

BAU PRE-TEST

1. What three things are needed to make a successful communication?
2. What percentage of time does an average person spend speaking and listening every day?
3. List four times during every day when people speak in public.
4. What is the difference between “hearing” and “listening”?
5. Explain any three of the following terms that are related to speaking
 - A) rate
 - B) pitch
 - C) volume
 - D) pronunciation
 - E) eye contact
 - F) posture
6. What three things can you do to become a better listener?
7. Why is “non-listening” a bad idea?
8. What is marginal listening?
9. Explain how asking questions is an important part of listening?
10. What three suggestions could you give to someone who wants to learn how to take notes while listening?
11. What are the benefits of improving your listening skills?

ANSWERS TO BAU PRE-TEST

1. A sender, a message, a receiver
2. Average people spend 69% of their time speaking and listening.
3. Answers may vary....answering telephone, greeting friends, asking directions, etc.
4. Listening takes place when the brain translates sound waves into meaning.
Hearing is the physical activity of receiving sound waves which you can't control.
5.

Rate	speed you say words
Pitch	high or low voice
Volume	loud or soft voice
Pronunciation	how you say the sounds in a word
Eye contact	looking directly into a person's eyes
Posture	how you stand or sit
6.
 - Have a positive attitude
 - Make a commitment to listen
 - Be physically fit
 - Be alert
 - Eat smart
 - Be comfortable
 - Listen actively
 - Listen to the whole message
 - Paraphrase
 - Concentrate
 - Remove distractions
 - Block out distractions
7. You may miss important ideas and information.
8. Marginal listening means tuning-in what you want to listen to and tuning-out distractions and unimportant sounds.
9. Asking questions shows the speaker you are paying attention and care about the topic, helps organize your thoughts, helps listener get full understanding.
10.
 - Don't write every word
 - Write main ideas and numbers
 - Use short forms and abbreviations
 - Rewrite notes immediately
11. Answers may vary.

Better understanding	More successful at work
Learn better and faster	More successful in relationships

IAU PRE-TEST

1. In a brief paragraph explain the three ways that humans can exchange ideas.
2. Give at least four ways a speech is different from an essay?
3. Discuss the use of visual aids in an oral presentation.
4. What is one disadvantage of “pass-around” materials in a speech?
5. What does the term “extemporaneous deliver” mean?
6. When might you deliver an impromptu speech?
7. When would it be a good idea to read your speech?
8. Listen and explain the four stages of the listening process.
9. What is the difference between marginal and attentive listening?
10. How do you listen critically?
11. List six things that could keep you from listening effectively at a lecture.
12. When an audience is getting bored, what could you do to get their attention back?
13. What are the advantages of rewriting your notes right after taking them?
14. How can good speaking and listening skills help you every day?

ANSWERS TO IAU PRE-TEST

1. Writing.....reading
Speaking....listening
Non-verbal.....observing
2. A speech is less formal, has shorter sentences, easier language, exact words, stronger organization, more transitions, more repetition, more review.
3. Visual aids include pictures, posters, charts, graphs, props, pass-arounds. Pictures, posters, charts and graphs should be large enough to be easily seen at the back of the room. They should be simple enough for easy understanding. Visual aids make speeches more interesting and meaningful.
4. Pass-arounds can divert audience attention from the speaker.
5. Extemporaneous deliverysounds just like talking
is well-prepared,organized, and rehearsed.
speaker uses cards to remember points
exact words and sentences never written
6. An impromptu speechno chance to prepare any material.
spur of the moment
generally short
informal
7. Read a speech word for word when it is important that you get every word and fact just right, when material broadcast and will be used over and over. Used for press conferences, political statements when speaker may be held responsible for his/her words.
8. Attending focus, concentration, exclude distractions
Understanding when message received matches intended message sent
Responding feedback to show understanding
Remembering transferring information to long term memory
9. Marginal listening tune-in to needed information
tune-out noise, distractions, unimportant material
Attentive listening focused, complete concentration on understanding
needed information
10. Critical listening attentive listening, evaluate speaker's expertise,
motives, and credibility
evaluate reliability of information
don't prejudge or jump to conclusions
11. Answers may vary. Negative attitude, no commitment, uncomfortable, too hungry, overeating, distractions, etc.

12. Move around audience, change rate, pitch, volume of voice, use eye contact, ask question, etc.,
13. Memory is best right after listening, rewriting helps memory, fill in details you didn't have time to write, acts as a review, suggests questions that need to be answered, later you may forget what certain short forms and abbreviations meant.
14. Answers may vary.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS: EVALUATION SHEET

Presenter's Name and Topic:		1	2	3	4	5
Structure	Introduction: Opening immediately gets attention					
	Main idea clearly stated					
	Major headings clearly indicated					
	Body: Organization logical and appropriate					
	Major headings emphasized					
	Transitions adequate					
	Uses repetition, numbered lists, frequent review					
	Conclusion: summarizes content					
	Obvious and satisfying					
Content	Interesting					
	Well researched and/or accurate					
	Visuals used effectively					
	Acceptable grammar and pronunciation					
	Length appropriate to content					
Delivery	Eye contact					
	Voice: rate, tone, pitch					
	volume					
	emphasis					
	Facial expressions and gestures					
	Nervous habits and mannerisms					
Calculate total of each column						
SUBTOTAL (Total of all columns divided by 2)					/50	
OVERALL IMPRESSION					/50	
FINAL MARK (subtotal + overall impression)					/100	

FEEDBACK PROCESS

For feedback, please forward your comments to:

New Brunswick Community College - Woodstock
100 Broadway Street
Woodstock, NB
E7M 5C5
Attention: Kay Curtis
Tel.: 506-325-4866 Fax.: 506-328-8426

- * In case of errors due to typing, spelling, punctuation or any proofreading errors, please use the enclosed page to make the proposed correction using red ink and send it to us.

- * For feedback regarding the following items, please use the form below:
 - insufficient explanations;
 - insufficient examples;
 - ambiguity or wordiness of text;
 - relevancy of the provided examples;
 - others...

Page number	Nature of the problem	Proposed solution (include your text if possible)

