



Strategies For Improving Comprehension Skills Listening

Primary School

All About You (In Reverse)

Students work in pairs; each student needs a piece of paper and pen/pencil. After folding and unfolding their paper into four squares, students take turns listening to their partner, who describes four things he/she likes or likes doing, and drawing what the partner says.

Challenges

Use this activity to review vocabulary and grammar and give students listening practice. Create a series of level-appropriate challenge cards which you can add to after you introduce new language. At the beginning or end of each lesson, hold a few challenges, calling on different students each time to draw a challenge from the pack and try to answer the question/do the task. Keep track of how many challenges each student succeeds in doing on a chart, and give a prize to the most successful student at the end of the camp. **Example challenges:** *Name three colours/animals/foods, etc. Count to.../What's this?/How old are you? Have you got a brother or sister? What's 25 plus 25?*

Follow the Directions

Give each student (or pairs/groups of students) a street map. Make a route and choose an arrival point, then read instructions for the student to follow (*Start at the.../Go straight two blocks./Turn right, etc.*), having them trace the route on the map. With practice, students can also take turns in pairs or groups with the speaking role.

Four Squares

Divide an open space into four imaginary squares, and show students the demarcations. Choose four related vocabulary words that can be mimed (the seasons, adjectives, action verbs, emotions), and assign one vocabulary word to each square. Make a statement. Students listen and infer where they should stand. For example, if the theme is the four seasons, you might say: "I'm swimming in the sea." Students who understand will put themselves in the 'summer' square and should mime the action. After a few rounds, you can change the vocabulary set and also add elimination. **Example statements:** a) *It's snowing. You're wearing a big jacket. Which season is it? [Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter]* b) *You*



are going to Euro Disney this summer. How do you feel? [Sad/Happy/Tired/Anxious] c) You are in the park with your friends. You are very tired. What are you doing? [Playing basketball/Sitting down/Sleeping/Doing your homework]

Graphic Organizers

There are many different types of graphic organizers which you can find online or create, depending on the topic and listening (and reading) skills students need to practice. They are an effective tool for assessing comprehension as well as aids to memory.

Information Relay

Choose a level-appropriate text, and prepare a set of questions about the text. Write these questions on the board where all of the students can read them before the activity starts. Then divide the students into teams and designate one person in each team to be the writer. Have the teams line up behind their writer. Opposite them paste a copy of the text. In relay fashion, one student from each team runs to read the text and report back some of the information in order to answer the questions; the writer can specify which questions have not been answered yet. The first team to correctly answer all of the questions wins.

Noun Meets Verb

Prepare a set of cards with nouns for half of the class and a set of cards with verbs for the other half. Keep a list of the nouns and verbs so that you can call them off easily during the game. Distribute the cards, one per student, and have the students stand in a circle. When you call out a noun + verb, students who have those cards go to the center of the circle and mime the scenario. As the activity becomes easier for the students, you can call out more than one noun + verb combination. Make sure all students have a turn, but you can also repeat nouns or verbs in different combinations to keep the students on their toes and listening carefully.