

Preparing to Listen

If you prepare to listen to a story, you may be able to understand it better. Two ways to get ready to listen are to learn vocabulary and to discuss the pictures that illustrate a story before you hear it.

A. Read the words and phrases. (You may want to pronounce them and discuss the meanings.)

Nouns

boss
expression

Adjectives

impatient

Verbs

talk
listen
interrupt
finish
explain
speak

Expressions/Idioms

changes the subject
paper clips
best friend
pays close attention
stay on the subject

What do you think is happening in the pictures? To prepare to listen, make up a story about them with some of the above vocabulary.



Getting the Main Ideas

The first time you listen to a story, you should listen for the main ideas—the most important thoughts. To get these main points, you don't need to understand every word or detail.



B. Listen to the story. Then circle the letter of the one main idea.

- The speaker is always changing the subject when her best friend needs to talk to her.
- The speaker's boss is a poor listener, but the speaker's best friend is a good listener.
- The speaker's boss never interrupts his workers when they ask questions or begin sentences.

Making Inferences

Instead of clearly stating the point (the essential meaning) of a story, a speaker may just indicate it indirectly. Then the listeners have to infer (figure out) the point for themselves.

C. To express the point of the story, write the missing words in this sentence:

_____ listeners act differently than _____ listeners do.



D. Understanding Details—In the story, the speaker describes the characteristics of poor and good listeners. Listen to the story again and write *a* or *b* on each line.

a = characteristics of poor listeners

b = characteristics of good listeners

- a They're often thinking about other things, not the conversation.
- _____ They're impatient.
- _____ They look at the speaker.
- _____ They pay close attention.
- _____ They show they're listening by the expression on their faces.
- _____ They change the subject and don't answer questions.
- _____ They play with something during the conversation.
- _____ They help the other speaker stay on the subject.

E. Telling Your Story—In small groups, discuss your answers to these questions. Then summarize your discussion for the class. (Tell what you talked about in a few sentences.)

- In your opinion, do you listen well during a conversation? Why or why not?
- How could you improve your listening skills?

TAPESCRIPT

INTRODUCTION / LEARNING TO LISTEN

■ p. 3, Exercise B

Styles of Listening

My boss is often thinking about other things when I try to talk to him, so he doesn't really listen to me very well. He's impatient, too, and always interrupts or finishes my sentences for me. Sometimes he changes the subject or doesn't answer questions, and he's always playing with something—a pen or pencil or paper clips—when I want him to listen. I don't like trying to talk to my boss.

But my best friend isn't like that at all. She looks at me when I'm speaking and pays close attention. She doesn't interrupt, and I know she's listening and thinking from the expression on her face. She helps me to stay on the subject until I finish my thoughts. I love talking to my best friend.

CHAPTER 1 / MEETING PEOPLE

PART ONE / LEARNING TO LISTEN

■ p. 6, Exercise B

Meeting Strangers

I'm not usually a shy person. In my job as a salesman in my country, I could talk easily to customers. I actually like giving speeches in my native language, too, and I can speak easily to large groups of people. What I can't do, however, is talk to American women. I get really nervous about my English. I just don't know what to say.

Some time ago I watched my best friend approach an attractive woman in a hotel where we were staying. She was clearly alone, and he'd been wanting to talk to her for several days. Finally, he wrote her a charming note, put it in a blank envelope, and walked over to her. "Excuse me," he said in careful, polite English, as if he worked for the hotel. "I believe this letter is for you. Your name is..." He pretended that he was trying to read the name on the envelope.

"Johnson," she said, smiling. "My name is Kathy Johnson."

"Yes, of course," my friend said seriously. Then as she watched, he got out a pen, wrote her name on the front of the envelope, and handed her the letter.

They were married six months later.

Today I finally got up the nerve to speak to a woman in a restaurant. I prepared a terrific speech and practiced it in my mind several times. Then I took courage, walked over to the woman, and gave my speech in what I thought was almost perfect English.

In my native language, with an accent from my part of the country, she looked at me coldly and said, "Get lost."

I guess I shouldn't complain. The next time I want to meet someone, I'll just introduce myself and start a conversation to see what we have in common.

PART TWO / PRONUNCIATION THROUGH ROLE-PLAY

■ p. 8, Exercise A

A. Listen to this conversation. Then complete the items that follow.

Frank: I'd love to meet that woman over there, but I'm shy. What if she doesn't want to talk to me?

Frank's friend: Oh, it's easy for me to make a good impression on women. Tell her you're a millionaire. Say you're a movie producer. Talk about her beautiful eyes and hair. Ask her if she's a model. Just flatter her. Tell her that...

Frank: Thanks, but you can keep your "lines." I think I'll try it my own way.... Hi, I'm Frank. You look like a really nice person. Would you like to talk?

Woman: What an honest introduction—no lies, no tricks, no lines.... Shall we go to a quieter place?

Frank's friend: How did he do that?

■ p. 9, Exercises B, C, and D

B. Listen to these words. An accent mark indicates syllable stress.

one syllable: job, talk, friend, wrote

two syllables: coun try, lan guage, po lite, fi nal ly

three syllables: en vel ope, res taur ant, at trac tive, pro duc er

four syllables: A mer i can, se ri ous ly, in tro duc tion, in t(e)r est ing