



I Hear You! Effective Listening Instruction for Adult Learners

Andrea Echelberger



Workshop Overview



- Why teach listening?
- Research-backed listening approaches
- Set listening instruction goals

Why teach listening?



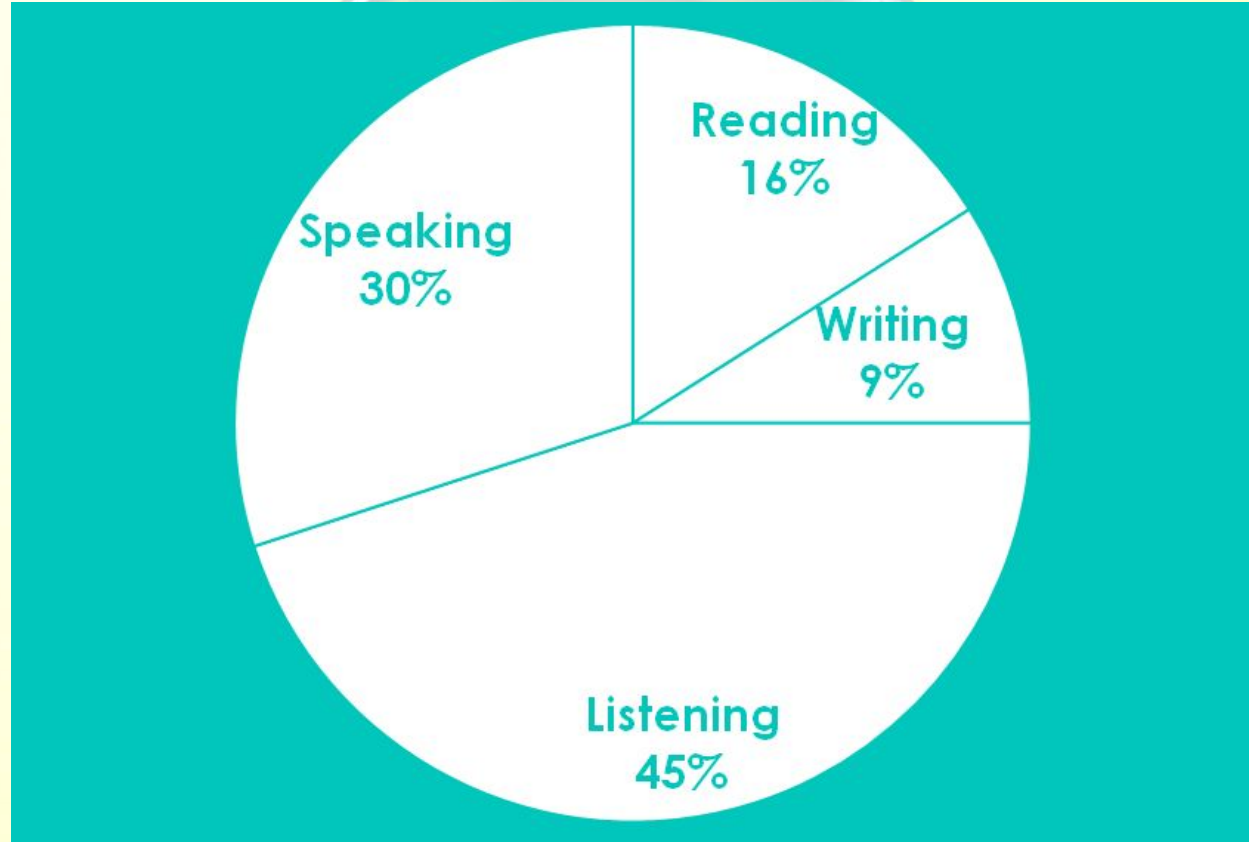
What is listening?

Consists of decoding and comprehension

- Speech comes at the listener in an unbroken stream
- Listeners must:
 - Break the stream into groups of sounds
 - Recognize the groups of words
 - Recognize the meanings of words
 - Understand how the words are related to each other
 - Use their knowledge of the language, the world, and the immediate context to clear up ambiguities
 - The immediate context (conversation up to that point) helps the learner guess words in context and influences the interpretation of mispronounced words and words with multiple meanings

Outside of the classroom, how much time do you spend...

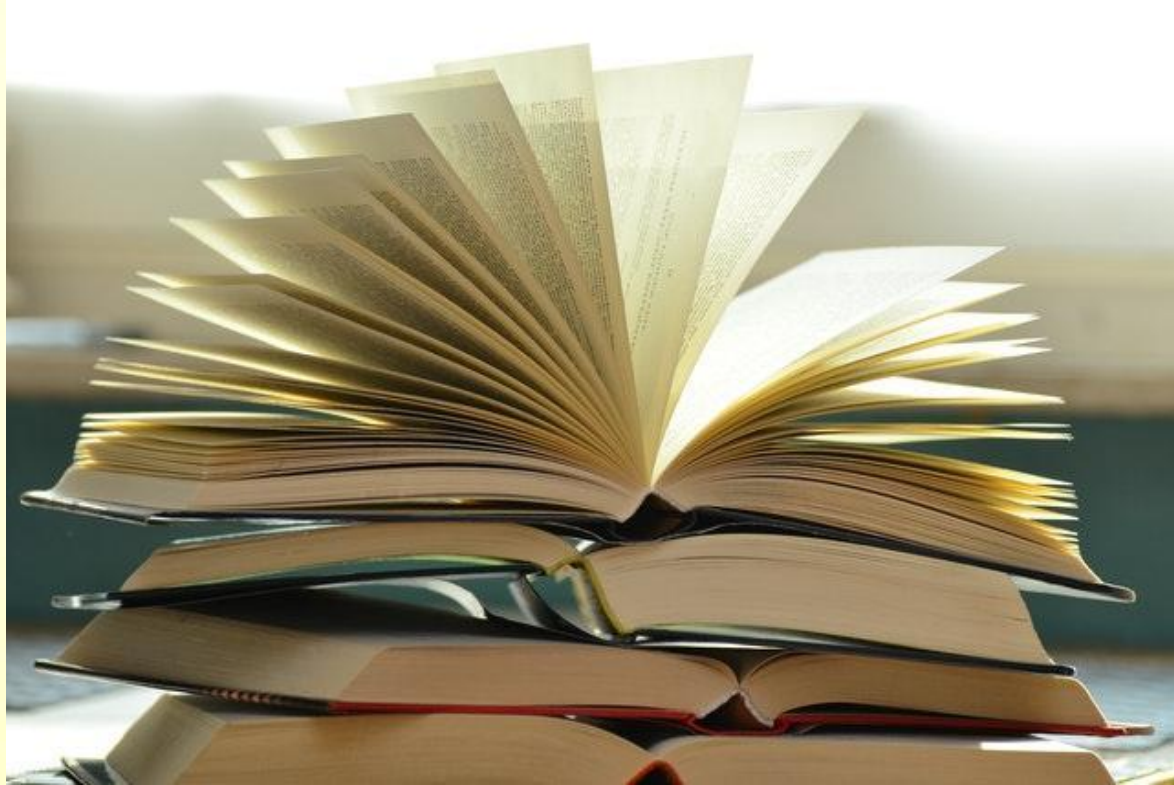
- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking



Language Acquisition



Research-Backed Listening Approaches



A good approach to teaching listening...

Teach listening strategies,
don't just test listening comprehension.



Employ metacognition prior to listening

General Listening Strategy	What does the strategy look or sound like?	Instructional strategy or tool for direct instruction and/or practice with this strategy
Listen with a purpose*	□ Self-question <i>"What do I want to/need to know?"</i> □ Review the listening task or worksheet	• Show a visual related to the spoken text and post or ask the question <i>"What do you see? What do you know about this? How do you know?"</i> • Do a think aloud with the instructions or the worksheet articulating how you identify the purpose.
Plan which strategies to use	□ Select from a (mental) checklist of strategies □ Select from a variety of graphic organizers for note-taking	• Prior to listening to spoken text, help learners use the purpose and listening worksheet or task to identify what strategies they could use. • Help learners identify the purpose of two or three different graphic organizer types (T-chart, Venn, Flowchart) and then model how to use the appropriate one for the first spoken text example.

Listen selectively

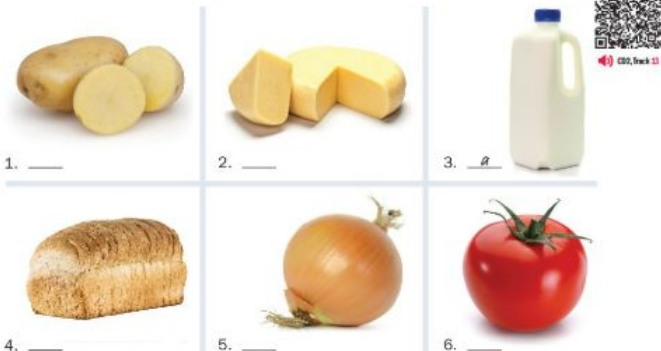
General Listening Strategy	What does the listening strategy look or sound like?	Instructional strategy or tool for direct instruction and/or practice with this strategy
Listen selectively to glean dates, times, locations names prices, etc.	Listen for words and phrases that typically introduce the key information: <i>arrives at, departs at</i> <i>due by, costs, starts on</i> <i>ends on, payable to,</i>	□ Use a spoken text that has key information that learners know embedded in information with which they're not entirely familiar. Establish what essential information learners will be listening for in a spoken text. □ Brainstorm the words or phrases that usually introduce the information they're listening for.

UNIT GOALS

Identify food items. Make a shopping list.
Interpret information in a supermarket ad.

2 Listen

A Listen. Write the letter of the conversation.



1. _____ 2. _____ 3. a

4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____



CD2, Track 13

B Listen again to the conversations. Write the price that you hear.

A. \$ 2.69 C. \$ _____ / lb. E. _____ ¢ / lb.
B. _____ ¢ each D. \$ _____ / lb. F. \$ _____



CD2, Track 13

Listen again. Check your answers.

3 After you listen

Add the prices of all the items. What is the total?

Sales Receipt		
bananas	3 lb	\$1.98
apples	2 lb	\$2.98
bread	2	\$7.58
cheese	1/2 lb	\$3.50
potatoes	3 lb	\$2.97
milk	2	\$5.38
Total		_____

USEFUL LANGUAGE

69¢ / lb. =
sixty-nine cents a pound

\$1.98 = one ninety-eight
OR
one dollar and ninety-eight cents

- Listen with a purpose
- Set expectations based on known discourse
- Self-questioning
- Listen selectively

client

elderly

cleaning

daily

disabilities

cooking

full-time

medications

group homes

part-time



Use background knowledge and context

Predict content of conversation, lecture or other spoken text.	Predict content by looking at ○ speaker's visuals (e.g. opening slides, tear sheets) ○ speaker's attire ○ environmental clues	Engage learners' prediction strategies by asking questions about the visuals on a worksheet or the speaker in a video.
Use background knowledge to help increase understanding.	Self-questioning " <i>What do I know about this?</i> "	• Have learners brainstorm what they know about the topic or listening situation. • Help learners relate the known to a new context, i.e., relate a previous lesson's content to the spoken text they'll hear.

Job Title:



Where do they work?	When do they work?	What do they do?
Do you like this job? Why or why not?		



<https://storycorps.org/stories/lawrence-and-simeon-cumberbatch/>

STORIES DISCOVER *Story Corps* PARTICIPATE ABOUT



▶ "WE WALKED EVERY DAY FROM SUNUP TO SUNSET."

2:38

A good approach to teaching listening...

Use **top-down** and **bottom-up** processing strategies

Top-down processing

Using prior knowledge and experiences to process and understand information

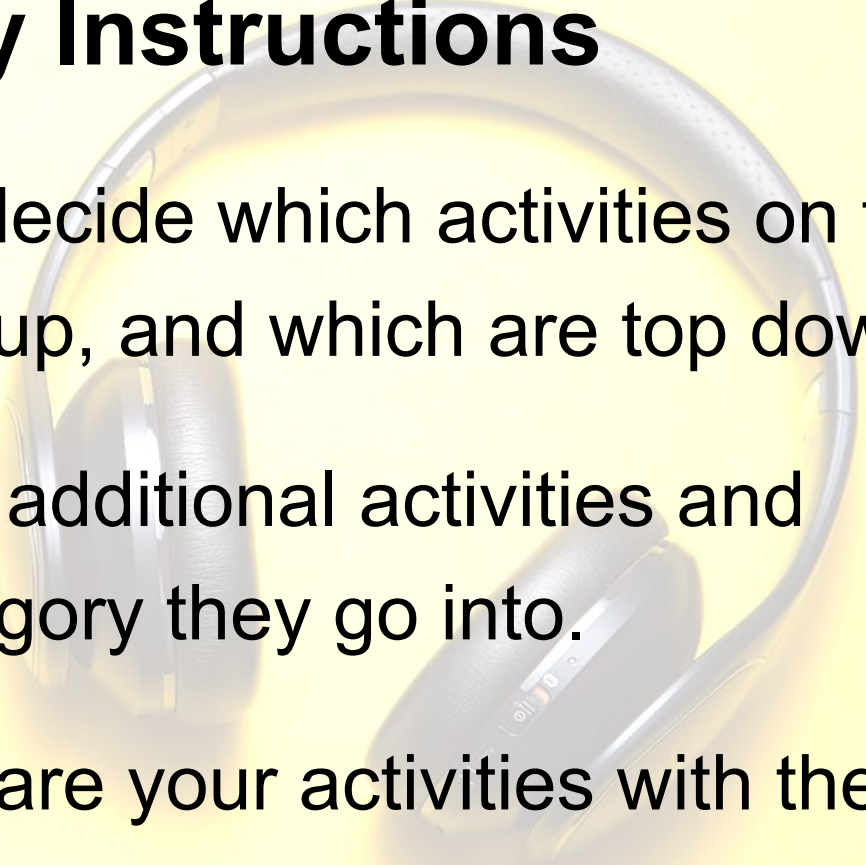
- Word association tasks
- Put a series of pictures or sequence of events in order as you listen
- How are the people in the listening text related?

Bottom-Up Processing

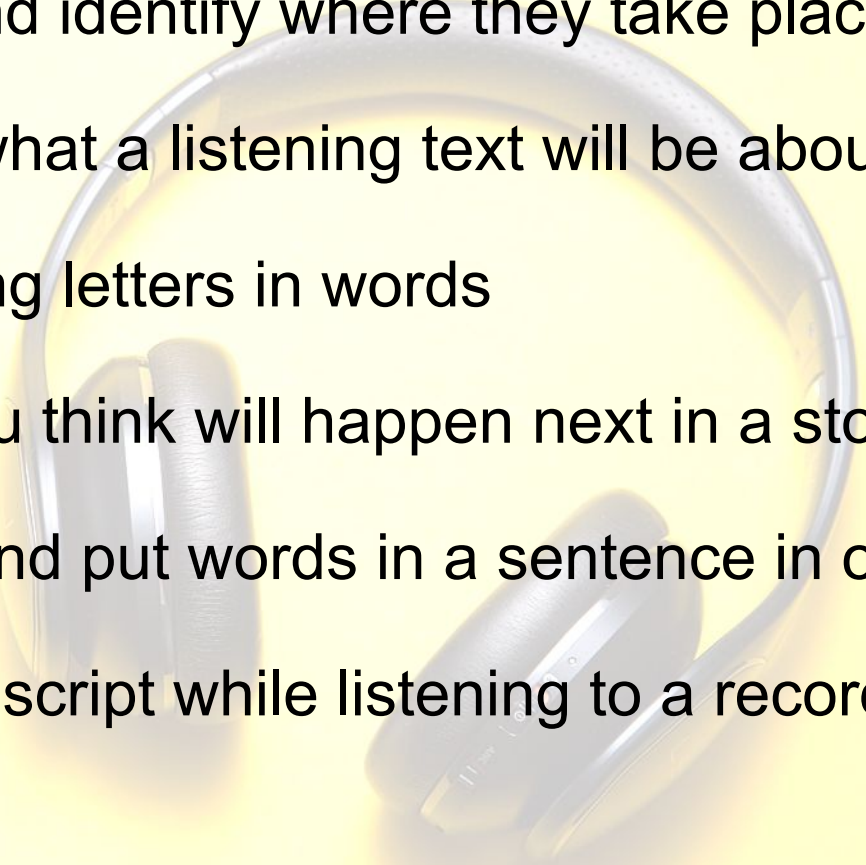
Using information about sounds, word meaning, and discourse markers (e.g. first, then, after that) to assemble knowledge of what is heard one step at a time

- Minimal pair activities
- Cloze activities
- Sorting words by stress pattern

Activity Instructions

A pair of black over-ear headphones is positioned in the background, centered behind the text. The headphones are slightly out of focus, with the ear cups and headband visible. The background is a solid light yellow color.

1. With your group, decide which activities on the slides are bottom up, and which are top down.
2. Come up with 2-3 additional activities and decide which category they go into.
3. Be prepared to share your activities with the large group!



listen to conversations and identify where they take place

make predictions about what a listening text will be about

listen and fill in the missing letters in words

draw a picture of what you think will happen next in a story

do a sentence scramble and put words in a sentence in order

mark the pauses on a transcript while listening to a recording

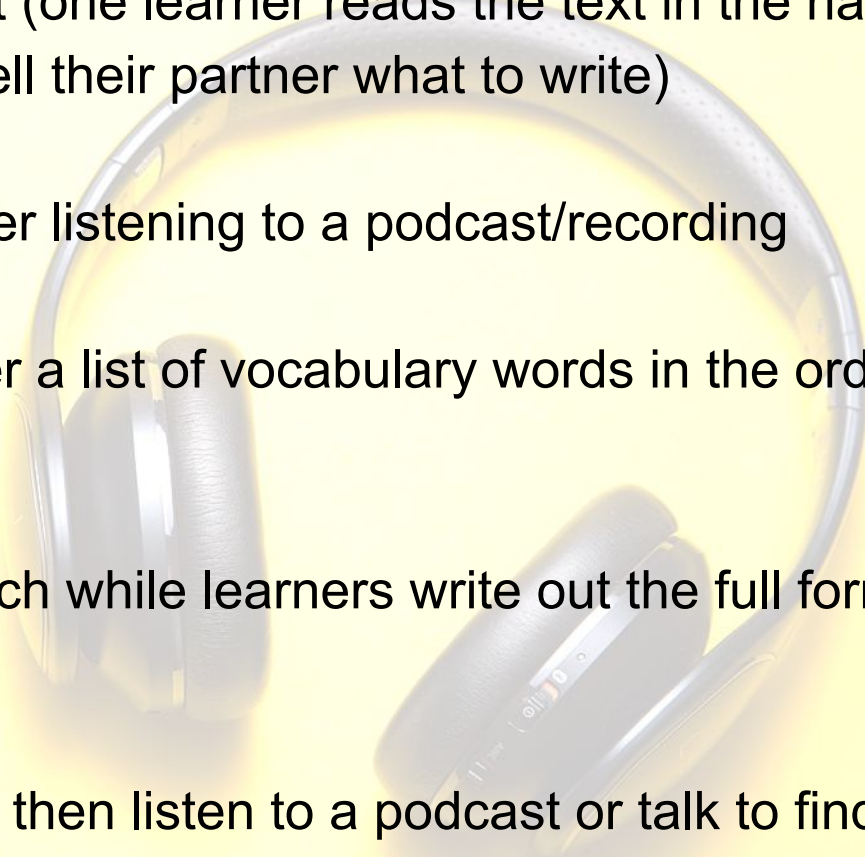
do a walking dictation of a text (one learner reads the text in the hallway, then comes into the room to tell their partner what to write)

summarize the main ideas after listening to a podcast/recording

listen to a podcast and number a list of vocabulary words in the order that you hear them

dictate reduced forms of speech while learners write out the full forms (e.g. going to/gonna)

read information about a topic then listen to a podcast or talk to find whether or not the same points are mentioned



A good approach to teaching listening...

Don't forget vocabulary!

Expressive Vocabulary:

6 years - 2,600-7,000

12 years - 50,000

Receptive Vocabulary:

6 years - 20,000-24,000

- Explicitly teach vocabulary, even at higher levels
- Teach how the word sounds in real life, not just the dictionary version
- Be prepared to do a lot of review! Even high level learners need to encounter the new vocabulary word in at least a dozen non-trivial, focused ways

Describe the picture

1



2



3



A good approach to teaching listening...

Always begin with a pre-listening activity

- Use top-down and bottom-up activities
- Keep the level and difficulty of the listening task in mind when selecting pre-listening activities (don't spend an hour preparing for a three-minute task)

5 Things to Do Before Listening

1. Look at the page. What's the topic?
2. Write five things you know about the topic.
3. Look at the word list. Check the words you know.
4. Look at the pictures. Write words for what you see.
5. Look at the answer choices you have. What's the most important word in each choice?

The teacher is wrong!



What are some pre-listening activities you could use before this listening text?

Video #1294 - One Minute English

Gaew / Thailand 🇹🇭

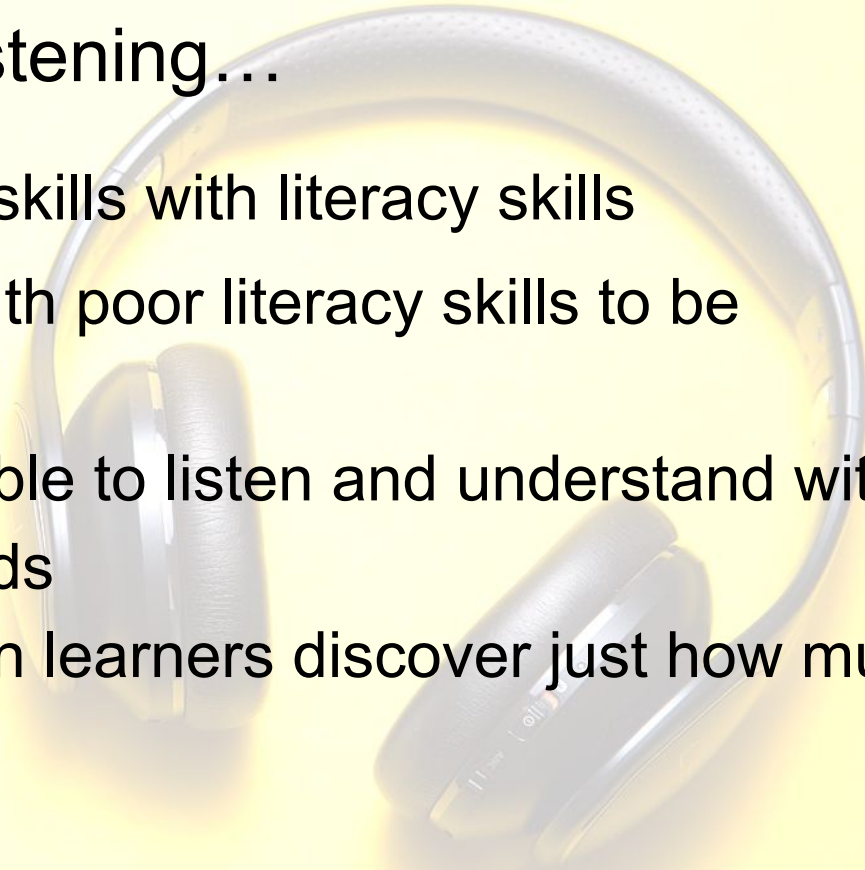
Can you cook well?



A good approach to listening...

Avoid confusing listening skills with literacy skills

- Don't want students with poor literacy skills to be disadvantaged
- Learners need to be able to listen and understand without seeing the written words
- Boost confidence when learners discover just how much they do understand



A Write four foods that you like. Write four foods that you don't like.

I LIKE ...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

I DON'T LIKE ...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



B Listen and complete.

Breakfast

Mike eats breakfast at 7:15.

Mike eats _____ and _____.

He drinks _____.

Lunch

Jenny eats lunch from _____ to _____.

Jenny eats _____ with Italian dressing.

She has _____, carrots
and _____ or shrimp on her salad.

She drinks _____.

For dessert, she has _____.

Dinner

Sara and her family eat dinner at _____.

Sara and her family eat _____
or _____.

She likes _____ for dessert.

She and her brother drink _____
or _____.



WORD PARTNERSHIPS

a slice of	cake
a piece of	pie
two slices of	pizza
three pieces of	toast

CULTURE NOTE

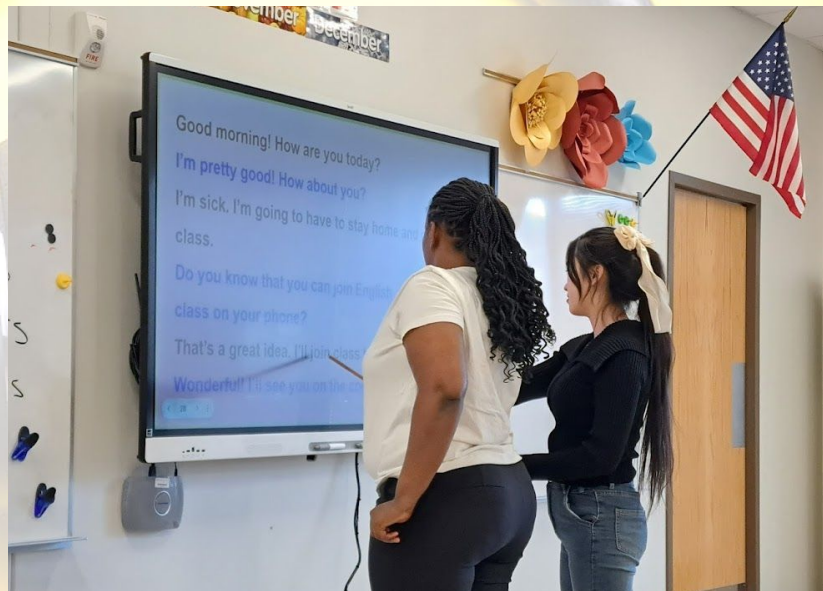
Americans usually eat three meals a day. The big meal is dinner.

What does this look like?



A good approach to listening...

- Teaches active listening for in-person interactions
- Treats learners as experts



A good approach to listening...

Use a variety of listening texts

- Genuine authentic text
- Altered authentic text
- Adapted authentic text
- Simulated authentic text
- Inauthentic text

Use a variety of listening tasks

- Genuine authentic task
- Simulated authentic task
- Pedagogical authentic task

Adapted from Listening Myths by Steven Brown

Example Altered Authentic Text

- *Simulated authentic task:* Make an emergency plan for your family's house and roleplay explaining it to a friend.
- *Pedagogical authentic task:* Answer prepared questions in partners about what to do in various scenarios.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5TiTfuvotc

Example Inauthentic Text

Bingo Caller's Card

does he?	hasn't she?	wasn't it?	isn't it?	will they?
weren't we?	did they?	can't he?	were you?	will he?
isn't she?	didn't you?	had we?	don't they?	is it?
haven't they?	shouldn't they?	has he?	won't you?	aren't I?
isn't there?	does it?	could you?	is it?	

myfreebingocards.com

Tag Questions BINGO Call Sheet (with answers)

Only read the beginning! Students have to find the question part (underlined) on their BINGO cards.

- 1) He doesn't have any children, does he?
- 2) She has been studying a lot recently, hasn't she?
- 3) It was cold yesterday, wasn't it?
- 4) This is Anna's pen, isn't it?
- 5) They won't be late, will they?
- 6) We were waiting at the station, weren't we?
- 7) They didn't go out last Sunday, did they?
- 8) He can help, can't he?
- 9) You weren't sleeping, were you?
- 10) He won't be joining us tonight, will he?
- 11) She's Italian, isn't she?
- 12) You used to go skating all the time, didn't you?
- 13) We hadn't been to Canada before, had we?
- 14) They live in London, don't they?
- 15) The bus isn't coming, is it?
- 16) They have been living in Japan, haven't they?
- 17) Frank and Jennifer should come to the theater, shouldn't they?
- 18) He hasn't been walking outside in this weather, has he?
- 19) You'll bring the other suitcase, won't you?
- 20) I'm on time, aren't I?
- 21) There is a lot of work to do today, isn't there?
- 22) It doesn't cost much money, does it?
- 23) You couldn't give me a ride, could you?
- 24) Dinner isn't ready yet, is it?

Listening Instructional Goal-Setting



Listening Action Plan

Describe three goals you have for continuing the integration of listening instruction beyond this session. Please be as specific as possible.

Goal	Existing Supports	Resources Needed	Timeline
I will integrate 2 listening activities each week that address 2-3 listening strategies	Speakers and internet in room, handout of listening strategies	Online listening text repositories, buy-in from learners why listening is as important as reading	In the next month
I will ask learners about situations where they struggle to understand spoken English and generate a list of situations that can be referenced during lesson plans	Informal conversations during break around challenges and successes	Help from an interpreter to ask lower-level learners in classroom	At the beginning of our Feb. unit

Questions?

