

Activity 3:

Listening with your body

A fun game that demonstrates the importance of body language and how questions and reflective listening can manifest themselves differently for different people.

Description

- Divide the participants into two groups: Storytellers and listeners.
- Explain that each storyteller has three minutes to think of a two-minute story about something or someone that has inspired them and has had a big impact on their lives.
- Take the listeners outside the room or to the other side of the play area.
- Explain that when the storytellers begin telling their story you will call out steps (see below)
- After three minutes ask each storyteller to find a listener to partner with.
- Call out steps 1–4 allowing for 45–60 seconds between each step.
- After pairs have completed the task, ask everyone to sit together again. Lead a discussion, using the questions below as a guide.

Step 1, the listeners will:

- avoid eye contact
- fiddle with something they are wearing
- avoid making listening noises (e.g. “hmm” or “yes”)

Step 2, the listeners will:

- look their partner in the eye
- nod their heads
- look interested

Step 3, the listeners will:

- do all of the above but also make encouraging sounds (e.g. “yes” or “right”)

Step 4, the listeners will:

- do all of the above but also ask some questions to help partners develop their ideas
- Try to summarise what the other person is saying in order to validate their understanding.

Discussion questions

Reflect

How did you feel as a storyteller? How did you feel as a listener? For you, what do you look like when you are really listening?

Connect

Can you recall a time in your life when you felt like someone truly listened to you? What did he or she do?

Apply

When you are with others, how can you show that you are actively listening to them?

Facilitation notes

Emphasise the importance of listening with their body as it shows respect to others, builds trust and demonstrates appreciation and recognition. It also helps you learn more.

Number of Teachers or Coaches	1-2
Number of Students or Athletes	12-24
Typical Age Group	12+
Time Needed	30 minutes
Space Needed	Enough space for each pair to communicate
Materials Needed	Nothing
Activity Objective	To identify the importance of body language in listening to and communicating with others; to practice open-ended questions and reflective listening
Related Unit	Unit 2 and Unit 3
Related Learning Competences	Communication, active listening, respect and trust