

BUILD A LISTENING AND LEARNING SKILL IN YOUR YOUNG CHILDREN

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Listening and Learning both are interrelated.
When we listen we will able to learn.

“Listen to Me” –Teachers tell the students.

“Will you **listen to** what I am saying”-Husband to wife-Wife to husband.

“Did you **listen** to what I told you”-Parents to younger children some times
Children to parents & elders.

“I have told you many times not to fight with each other but you don’t **listen** to me-
Now see both of you got hurt”—From mom to siblings when they fight.

“Listen carefully –its very important”-common anywhere.

So we hear the word **“Listen”** almost everyday, in our day to day life.

This is the Article about building listening and learning skill in our young children, particularly good listening skills do not simply develop naturally-they must be taught and practiced.

Listening is predominantly essential to read and write. Numerous Studies have found that problems with listening predict difficulties with reading later on.

If we build listening skill it will create learning, Then learning will give empathetically excellent life for our children.

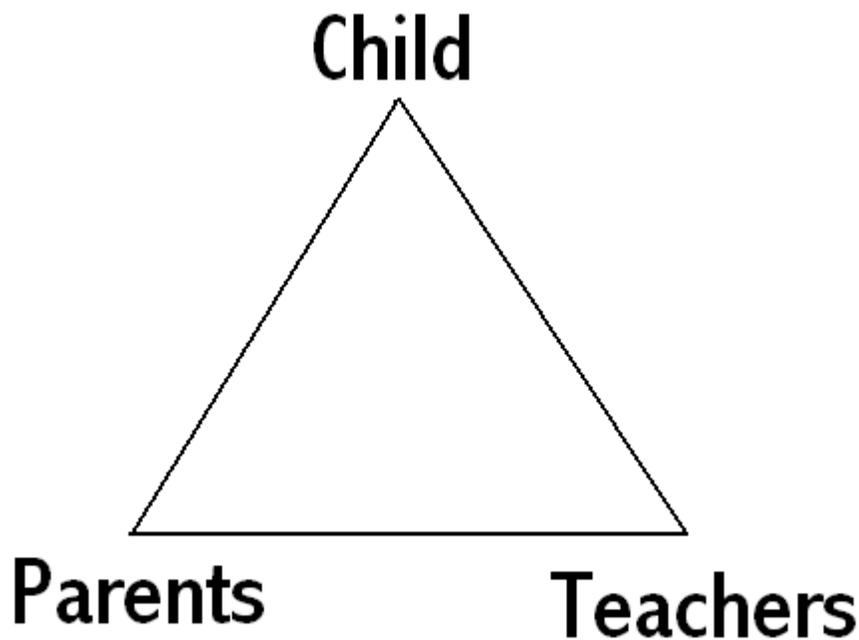
Of all the language skills that young children develop, listening is the one of the earliest development and it’s practiced more frequently (it has been proved in our epics when child in the womb of its mother can listen to good music, stories and all), Starting Pre.K.G to 12th Std, a student get 14 years of formal training in writing, 12 years in reading, 1-2 years in speaking, but

just a half or less a year in listening. Throughout a child's basic education, only about 8 percent of instructional time is dedicated to teaching listening skills.

Attention given to listening skills must be more than that given for education, because once we build the skill of listening. Children will learn attentively; learning will develop their further skills such as intellectual (reading, writing and other academic Skills) social and emotional development.

Research tells us that listening with empathy is the basis for a host of important workplace skills and strategies-assessing situations, making rational decisions, generating connections between theory and practice, arriving at deeper understandings about beliefs, adapting to new perspectives, informing instructional decisions, challenging traditions, improving teaching and learning and validating ideals.

Early childhood period is the paramount stage to learn more than any other period of our life. Now we come to know how much it is important to teach the listening skill to our younger children, here are some guidelines which will help you to create this listening skill to our young children in their day to day life.



(Note: Parent and teachers are foundation of the child development.)

School is not the only place to impart the listening and learning skills but also, at home we develop their listening skill during regular activities.

Talk with your child often, as you do your regular activity such as shop for groceries, walk in the morning/evening, while you do gardening, cleaning the house. Whenever whatever you are doing you can talk about that, if you have older children you can discuss the regular family issues and ask their opinions.

Whatever you believe is an important message for your child or whatever behavior you feel that they have to learn, or when you want to get your child's attention, first you look into their eyes then have your conversation clearly and slowly Psychologically **eye to eye** contact will have more impact on the listening skill.

You can start teaching from infant stage, Infant can't talk but they can listen and respond to many sounds, so you can talk with your infants, sing lullaby, play some soft music and use your body and facial gestures to get their attention, use high and low voice and stretch and pause in your conversation.

Preschoolers imitate what others do and this is the crucial stage of brain development as well as language and we can say this is the fore art of how are they going to be when they grown up.

From this age there are several methods to improve their listening skill:

- **Be a role model of careful listening and learning for your child:**

Children spend more time with parents so they are listening to what the parent do and say, so they tend to imitate them. So parents should be a good role model to teach listening and learning skills. If parents listen to their children, children will listen to their parent. So give your child your undivided attention whenever possible, try to stop whatever you are doing and truly listen when he/she talks.

When you listen and observe your child, you can understand your child and what he/she needs, and this understanding helps you to build relationships by revealing the uniqueness of your child including the child's strengths, weakness, personality, work style and preferred mode of expression.

Optimistic connection between children and parents are foundation for children's exploration of and learning within the home, As children build up confidence in their parents they become more likely to take on new challenges, continue trying, and ask questions when confused. All of these develop learning. So listen your child, will create

positive relationships with parents that will lead to more engaged learners and higher levels of achievement.

- **Story Time (Book Reading):**

Regularly fix a story time for your child, Studies substantiate who ever practiced 20 mints reading, they will become a good reader and in school they will be a successful student.

Here I am mentioning the book reading is not only the subject book, but also good magazines, newspaper and anything that age appropriate material will help them to develop their learning skill.

When you read the Story for your children if they are younger children make them to sit on your lap or snuggled nest to you, if elder children make them to sit next to you, so that he/she feels close and safe. And show the pictures in the book that, you are reading for them. You point to them in a lively way what the pictures are and use the sound of the animal which you are seeing as picture on the book and talk about little more, such as, if you see a duck in the book say how the duck makes sounds? Quack..... Quack..... and what colour it is? Where do the duck live? How do we call a baby duck?-Duckling. And ask the child to make a sound like a duck, these types of questions and conversation will help you to make the child listen the story.

If the child is tired or restless, stop reading a book. Usually choose quiet and comfortable time and place for reading a book. Regularly bed time will suit for story reading, but make sure to go to the bed early to read a story.

Very young child doesn't sit quietly and listen to the stories from start to end. It's not that he/she won't have interest towards reading; initially they couldn't sit and listen for long period of time, so slowly increase the time depends upon their age.

For older children choose a time and place where there will be minimal distractions and interruptions secure your child's attention first by calling out her name, telling her to look at you and bringing her close. Before you start reading the book talk about the author and illustrations, point out the theme of the story, both while listening to the text and during the conversation that accompanies the reading. Most of all make sure that reading stays fun for both of you.

What are the benefits of story time?

1. Reading habits enable them to study their school subjects easily.
2. If we read books regularly in early years, reading difficulties that can arise later in their lives can be prevented.
3. Listening to the stories will improve the child's listening comprehension, an essential pre-reading skill; and it develops their mental imaging ability, a skill necessary for reading and writing.
4. Asking children to retell a familiar story is a good way to their understanding of and emerging ideas about the concept of plot.
5. Story time will help oral, literacy development and creativity, when you read the story, if you are asking open-ended questions like following;
 - What do you think might happen next?
 - What happened before?
 - What is the solution for this problem?
 - Why this solution, why not any other?
 - What do you remember in this story?
 - Why do you remember especially this part of the story?
 - What's your conclusion of this story?

And Etc., "W" question will make your child think and make them involve more in the listening to the story.....
6. When children retell a story, it provides an indication into their higher-level cognitive processes, their representation of themselves, their understanding of the assignment, and their inferences about the listeners.
7. Since we have one first language and English is a second language, through reading both the language books help the children to develop their language art skill, which leads to their academic achievement in school.
8. Develop a desire to read.
9. Stories also provide models of acceptable behavior and positive social relationships. When exposed to a variety of characters, children learn that other people often feel the same way they do. They learn how people express their feelings; they become more understanding of others' needs.
10. Children learn the words that describe feelings and experiences they have. They learn to think about familiar situations in new ways. Stories invite children to explore things.

Appropriate books help you to develop that character in your child which you develop to, and which cannot be done through conversation.

- **Respect and appreciate Children in positive way:**

Every human being expect respect and appreciate when they do right thing for others, why don't we use positive reinforcement and rewarding towards our children to get new good behavior as well as the behaviors you want the child to repeat.

We love our children so much, but we miss to inform/convey to them that, we are care about them. This is a big mistake that most of the parents are doing without knowing it, we have to expose our love thru verbal by praise the child, non verbal such as like a smile, wink, or pat on the back, put the finger in the hair.

Children are listening and observing us, how we act with others matters, Since they will act in the same way with us later on. So be a good role model to give respect to others and appreciate in appropriate way. Immediate appreciation is more effective. Do not overuse praise. If you do, it will not be as effective.

When children are recognized that you respect their work, their discoveries, and their ideas; they will come to respect themselves. And also strengthens your relationship. You can convey your respect and appreciation to children in many ways; here are just a few:

- Listen and respond when children are asking questions or convey their own ideas, show children that you have time to listen and be with them. Sit down with a child instead of talking on the run.
- Show your interest on what they have done, and give your comments and suggestion improve their work and remember to appreciate whatever be the level of work they done, and then give your suggestion to change, but keep in mind of the appropriate age level out come. (some parents expect more from their children, like one day one of our L.K.G mom come to the school and said my daughter writes four lines at home perfectly, but see in the classroom what she has done, I looked the note, I didn't feel anything strange as per mom's facial expression, I said, what's the problem? See her letter 'l' doesn't touch the down line; see letter 'F' doesn't touch the upper line. See this is the way she writes in the classroom, (Note: here we have to remember the girl who just started writing practice in the four) that mom said I make her do perfectly at home, I said, L.K.G students just now they start writing process if the letter stays with in four line means we have to be happy, then slowly with in 15 days or 1 month of proper practice they will get the sense of line touching, at this moment we shouldn't expect more perfectly. That mom said no my daughter start writing practice at age of 3 from that age I am **forcing** her to write perfectly, not only this mom and most of the parents doing the same mistake, some parents are coming with the child handwriting note for L.K.G admission, see my child is start writing process so don't put him in pre.K.G put him for L.K.G they start teaching writing practice at home very early age, start writing practice very early not at all good for child nerve system, and age of 4-5 is the proper age to start writing process. For

writing practice, small muscle coordination and hand-eye coordination skills are needed before they are able to write. So instead of forcing your child to write, you can practice their prewriting skills through following activities. For developing small muscle coordination – hand eye coordination use play dough, clay, sand, building blocks, puzzles, finger paints, table blocks, small, wheeled toys, threading beads, buttons and button holes, painting, rubber stamps, magnetic letters, wooden letters, drawing, tracing copying cutting, and pasting.). Please parents respect their ability and don't drive them on your way.

- Speak in a calm, quiet, relaxed tone of voice. Children will listen to this type of voice. Save loud voices for emergencies. When you raise your voice, the children will also raise their voices. If parents raise voice during the normal course of day, children will become used to this level, they will also grow the same way.
- Be Positive, guide the children by telling them what to do, as opposed to what not to do. Children will feel more comfortable with positive comment. For example, instead of saying "Don't put that toy on the floor," say "put the toy in a toy box." This will remind the children of the rule that toys are used in a toy box.

"Do not put the toy on the floor"-----"Put the toy in a toy box."

"Do not run."-----"Please walk."

"Do not Shout."-----"Please use indoor voice."

"Do not rip the pages."-----"Turn the pages carefully."

"Do not grab the book."-----"Say please- to get the book."

Etc..., instead of use "Don't" use "Do". Be aware of your regular negative comments and try to replace them with positive comments. Negative comments usually produce negative behavior.

If you are a teacher, if you want to bring the child's negative behavior to their parents view, Make negative phrases into positive phrases, when you make the negative expressions into positive expressions, the parent also work in positive way.

Remember parents/teachers, children never want to show their negative behavior on purposely, they might see somewhere, maybe they don't know this is negative behavior or none of them notified that it's not acceptable behavior. By persuading you encourage children to act or behave in a certain way by appealing to their basic wants and needs. Always make suggestions positive. Lead children's thoughts and feelings in a desirable direction. persuade

Here we can see some of the converted negative expressions into positive expressions way:

Troublemaker-----Disturbs others at class time
 Below age-----Performs at his own level
 Lazy-----Is capable of doing more
 Stubborn-----Insistent in having his own way
 Mean-----Finds it difficult to get along with others
 Dumsy-----Is not physically well coordinated
 Selfish-----Needs to learn to share with others
 Show-off-----Tries to get other’s attention

- Children’s behavior can often be molded by rewarding positive behavior. This technique is called Positive reinforcement. For example, if you thank your child for carrying the grocery bag, the child will most likely carry the grocery bag again. You have provided a positive reinforcement of the child’s behavior. Positive message will encourage the child to repeat the behavior. Repeated positive reinforcement will result in repeated behavior.
- Praising involves recognizing children’s accomplishments, Young children thrive on praise. When you say “I like the way you helped dharshini,” you tell the child he/she is important.

Here we can see more ways to say

“Wonderful!”	“Marvelous.”	This is a form of verbal praise, but we can use non verbal praise successfully. A smile, wink, small pat on the body, put the finger into the hair, and display a child’s work. When you praising young children remember, make sure praise should be age appropriate. Don’t hesitate to praise
“I love it!”	“Thank you.”	
“Beautiful.”	“Lovely.”	
“Congratulations!”	“Perfect.”	
“Terrific!”	“Fantastic!”	
“Super.”	“Excellent”	
“Sensational!”	“Dynamite!”	
“Great!”	“Tremendous!”	
“Clever!”	“Wow!”	
“Good Work!”	“Superb!”	
“You have got it made.”	“That’s right.”	
“You’re on the right track now!”	“That’s Good!”	

“You are good at that.”	“You did very well”	immediately. It is most effective to praise children while they are still in the act. If you see the child spills her milk by accidentally and immediately wipe up the milk with sponge, say “I am happy to see you working like this.” When praising, always establish eye contact. Most important thing is don’t overuse
“That’s coming along nicely”	“You must have been practicing”	
“That’s much better”	“Your doing beautifully”	
“I’m happy to see you working like that	“Your really improving”	
“Your really working hard today”	“What a good job”	
“I’m proud of the way you worked today”	“Good remembering”	
“You’re doing a good job”	“Keep it up”	
“You’ve just about got it”	“You did a lot of work today”	
“I knew you could do it”	“Your doing fine”	

praise. If you do, it will not be as effective.

- Child, Youth, and adult all age group prefer affirmation, identification, labeling, and acknowledgement. When you see the positive behavior, affirmation helps the children by identifying and labeling positive behavior. When behaviors are affirmed, they are likely to be repeated.

As a parent we are playing an important role in making child a better listener and learner. Now a day we are so busy, we have so much to do, so little time to do it in. In our overloaded, fast-paced world, life style has been changed, In the past when we listened, we were generally face-to-face with the speaker, or at least were listening live. Now, however, much of our communication form of phone calls, emails, faxes, postal mail and interoffice mail, technology is changing. Whatever the change? How much we are busy? How much you success? How much you earn? How popular you are in? What ever the highest posting you are holding? Doesn’t matter, one thing is clear “Children you to care.” Do not say I don’t have time for my children. Since we brought them to this world, completely it’s our responsible to make grow them on right track.

We need extreme listening power to juggle this rapidly changing world, and more over it’s an important to teach these listening skills to our children to success their lives.