

The Active Speaker and Listener -

How parents, carers and mentors can help

Before Speaking and Listening you can:

- Decide on a topic that the speaker is interested in talking about
- Decide on who the audience will be (you can obviously pretend!) It could be a teacher, a friend, a child, a police officer... Then make judgement about how formal or informal the talk should be. Think about what actions would be fitting for this – what facial expressions or body language might you need to use?

What kind of talk do you want to do?

- Talking to other people
- Talking with other people
- Talking in role play or drama
- Talking about talk
- Find talk given by others – from a film, TV show or on the radio to listen to and discuss.
- Choose and invite others to take part in group talk. It would be beneficial to sometimes create small groups of 3-4 and also larger groups of more than 4 when possible. This could work with other parents, carers and mentors and young speakers and listeners.
- If they are talking *to* you, ask them to jot down a plan of what they are going to say – the order should be well thought out and deliberate in order to interest you and make their meanings clear.
- Look up or think of words to create a word bank which is appropriate to their talk and which will have an effect on the listener.

During Speaking and Listening you can:

- Listen to them and ask any questions so they have to speak in more detail or clarify what they have said. When it is their turn to talk, they should be able to *express and explain relevant ideas and feelings in detail* and make their meaning explicit. If they do not, encourage them to say *exactly* what they mean. This may mean offering language to help them.
- Write down the order they have spoken in to discuss afterwards. Their structure should be evident to you, help you follow what is being said and make their talk engaging.
- Make a list of any key words which were suited to the topic and audience or words that were not.
- Talk with them, taking turns in conversations, allowing time for them to respond.
- Make sure they understand what is being said and how it is being presented through questioning.
- Model good listening by making eye contact, nodding, make encouraging noises to show agreement or interest.
- Play a supporting character or act out a scenario with the young person.
- Model confidence in your speaking and encourage them in theirs.

- If you are both listening to talk – on the television, radio or live – talk through or ask how the people are talking, what kind of language, gestures or movements they are using and why this might be. They should be able to *work out meanings even when they are not stated explicitly* from clues from the above.
- Notice what role they play in groups. What do they do in order to lead, support or challenge others? Are they able to sustain this throughout? Can they shape the direction of a talk through their contributions?
- If they are acting out a role or scenario, pay attention to their gestures, movements and language to discuss afterwards; these should show a *deep understanding* of a character or situation.
- Show you are interested and enjoying the tasks as your enthusiasm will be contagious.

After Speaking and Listening you can:

- Ask them to *explain* the features of their own language use to show *they understand the effect this produced* on the listeners and how it was fitting to their purpose and situation. Can they do the same for another person's language use?
- Discuss other techniques you both used to get your meanings across. Could any of these been improved? What kind of body language, facial expressions and gestures were used? Were they successful?
- In role play and drama how did they show *deep understanding* of a character or situation by how they spoke, the language they used and how they moved?
- Revisit the role they played in group discussion- did they sustain their role? Were they effective in this role? Were they able to shape the direction of the talk through their contributions?
- Discuss how they felt during the exercise.
- Praise them for taking part and give any points for improvements.