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A curriculum for the teaching of listening skills to kindergarten students

Virginia McCarthy

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California State College
San Bernardino

A CURRICULUM FOR THE TEACHING OF LISTENING SKILLS
TO KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

A Project Submitted to
The Faculty of the School of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirement of the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Education: Elementary Option

By
Virginia McCarthy
1978

APPROVED BY:

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USA
Learning to read develops in a natural progression. It begins with listening, moves on to speaking, continues with the writing and reading of one's own language and culminates with the reading of material written by other authors. It all begins with listening yet listening is not an area that is naturally developed. Most research over the years has concluded that developing skills in comprehending what is heard does contribute to comprehending what is read. However, admonitions to "pay attention" and a short period of training for reading readiness, devoted to discrimination between similar sounds, is often the extent of training for listening in the kindergarten.

Often first-grade teachers will make the comment to kindergarten teachers, "If only you'd teach those kids to listen!" The author realizes they probably mean to pay attention but it is possible to use skill builders to cultivate listening habits in the children that enable them to hear much that really interests them that they might otherwise "tune out." It is the teacher's job to offer motivation to help a child get past the bottleneck of short-term memory into long-term memory and have the "Sounds of School" not go in one ear and out the other.

After reviewing the literature on the teaching of
listening during the last few years, the author of this project came to the conclusion that emphasis does need to be placed on the teaching of listening as a necessary language skill to be developed in the classroom. Children do listen more effectively when they are given a purpose for listening and they are motivated to listen. Listening should be a pleasurable, not threatening, experience. It should be planned so that the amount is not too long or overpowering. Listening should not be just to the teacher!

This curriculum was developed to formulate an extensive set of activities, experiences, skill builders and suggestions to provide a comprehensive guide for kindergarten teachers to use in teaching the very important skills of listening. The teaching of listening involves setting the proper conditions so effective listening can take place. Some conditions are natural. The teacher makes almost no preparation because the motivation is so high that the children all listen immediately. Some conditions, on the other hand, have to be contrived where the teacher plans, constructs or utilizes materials, situations or gimmicks to motivate the children. Listening experiences, to be valuable, must be adapted to the children's attention and interest span. The curriculum can be tailored to meet the desirability of "individualization." Unfortunately this guide does not include skills to cover listening for pleasure, (this too can be learned), listening for appreciation, listening
manners, or listening for colorful language, sound imagery, and voice intensity and pitch.

Even though many of these games and activities are overlapping in the skills they enforce, the author has cut them apart, affixed each one to a file card, and placed them in a file box for quick reference for short-time fillers and/or valuable additions to structured lesson plans.

The author hopes the teacher reading this curriculum guide will use these suggestions and add creative ideas of her/his own.
DEDICATION

To my family, without whose love, cooperation and positive reinforcement this project would never have been finished.
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INTRODUCTION

"Oral language pervades all human activity, crosses all academic disciplines, and underlies all learning. Only those who develop the ability to listen and comprehend, and respond appropriately, will be able to deal effectively with their environment" (Riverside County Course of Study, 1976-78).

Many children today are growing up in a world of noise where the tendency is to shut the mind, if not the ears, to nearly all sounds—to classify them as general noise—and to ignore even the pleasant and familiar sounds. Therefore it is quite understandable that many children seldom isolate and identify any one sound or ever really hear or learn to interpret the interesting little sounds around them. "Really hearing" a sound means isolating it, becoming conscious of it, and listening to it attentively; most boys and girls need experiences in learning to really hear sounds in the world around them (Nichols, 1966).

Anyone who has worked with or been around young children knows that because a child hears does not necessarily mean he listens. Ask any mother. Ask any teacher. Listening is an active process—a fastening of attention on what is heard. It involves remembering and responding to what is heard. It is the base on which much of a child's formal
education is built (Slepian, 1968). Listening is the act of hearing and making sense out of spoken symbols. Children hear television, parents, teachers, neighbors, record-players, radios, machinery, indoors and outdoors, and lots of other things, but they do not always listen. Students need to learn to listen, to think about what has been heard and to respond. Hearing can be passive but listening must be an active process.

When one views listening from the more technical aspect of learning to speak and to read, the importance of systematic ear training is clear. A child who learns to discriminate the sounds of our language is more ready to reproduce them articulately. It is through careful listening that the child learns the syntactic patterns of the language which becomes so critical in effective reading. A child who learns to discriminate the sounds of our language is more ready to take the sophisticated steps of translating these sounds into the twenty-six letters and of learning to read. Yet like some poor relation, acknowledged but hardly encouraged, ear training is left largely to chance, to maturation, and to the skill of the individual teacher. This is not always so today because some educators do recognize that selective listening and auditory discrimination are highly important speech and reading-readiness skills that can and should be taught (Slepian, 1968).

"An N.C.T.E. report by the Commission of the English
Curriculum in 1956 noted: 'Today children, adolescents, and adults rely more and more on the spoken word for information about their local, national, and world communities. Their economic concepts, political ideals, and ethical standards are influenced, if not largely determined, by their listening. Attitudes toward marriage and family relationships, principles of nutrition and habits of food selection and consumption, understanding of human motives, and notions of personal habits are increasingly left to the tutelage of the radio, talking pictures, and television" (Devine, 1978). This was written twenty-two years ago! Research has consistently shown that pupils spend more time in listening than in any other language arts activity but there is a serious lack of programs which develop listening skills in most elementary schools. Wilt found in 1958 that elementary school children in his sample spent 57.5% of their time in listening in school (Devine, 1978).

All individuals lose out on gaining important ideas due to poor listening. Teachers can help pupils by trying to teach this skill as most research concludes it can, and should, be taught. Of the hundreds of studies done in listening, many, if not most, have investigated the possibility and effectiveness of instruction and evidence supports rather strongly the belief that listening can be taught.

Fawcett provided listening exercises to an experimental group of 322 pupils in grades four, five, and six for twenty-
five minutes a day, three days a week, for fourteen weeks. Their pre- and post-experimental scores on the S.T.E.P. Listening Test were compared with the scores of 316 students in a matched control group which received no special instruction in developing listening skills. It was found that "students who receive listening instruction evidence significant improvement in listening ability . . . . Listening ability is a skill which can be improved through instruction," (Fawcett, 1966).

Trivette studied a group of six fifth-grade classes that was provided with daily listening exercises in an effort to determine the effect of definite training in listening for specific purposes. Their pre- and post-experiment scores were compared and it was found that training in specific listening skills was effective for most students included in this study (Trivette, 1961).

Canfield provided direct instruction, designed to improve pupils' listening through practice in listening skills and through discussions of the qualities of a good listener, to a group of fifth graders for twelve lessons. Indirect instruction, which was designed to improve listening by the systematic use of listening in the social studies, was provided to another group of fifth graders. Both groups' pre- and post-scores on S.T.E.P. Listening Tests were compared with the scores of a control group of fifth graders who were given no special instruction to improve listening skills with the
result that both the direct and indirect instructed groups did better than the control group and the direct-method group did better than the indirect-method group (Canfield, 1961).

Studies such as these have been replicated so often that it is possible to answer affirmatively the question, "Can listening be taught?" The real problem in the area of listening skills seems to be that even though the evidence from research indicates strongly that listening instruction works, textbooks show little evidence that the writers feel responsibility for teaching listening (Landry, 1969). Listening is not accepted generally as part of the standard school curriculum and surveys show that little time is devoted to direct instruction for listening skills in actual classroom situations (Devine, 1978).

Review of the Literature

A survey of recent literature indicates that listening is increasingly being recognized as an indispensable part of the language arts. More and more research is being conducted in an effort to determine how listening skills and habits can be better developed (Wagner, 1975).

If we judge educators' interest in, and respect for, listening by their statements about its importance, we might conclude that there is a high degree of respect for listening as a means of learning. In the last two decades there has been more research on listening, and more writing about
listening, than in the previous half-century. A recent review of a number of curriculum guides and bulletins used at the elementary level indicates a high degree of respect for listening. However, studies indicate that the schools, through their textbooks and teachers' books, do relatively little to help improve the listening abilities of pupils (Heilman, 1967).

Kellogg selected fifty San Diego County teachers, chosen as typical of the best elementary teachers across the nation and also chosen because of their teaching competency utilizing the traditional-method language arts program and the experience-approach language arts program, and he found they included little direct instruction in listening skill development (Kellogg, 1967).

Brown analyzed fourteen language arts series and found that even though authorities claim that listening is the language arts medium children use most frequently, it was rarely stressed in these texts (Brown, 1967). Despite its importance, listening is probably the most neglected skill in actual classroom instruction. Teachers are aware of the need to do something about listening, yet too few take advantage of the opportunities occurring daily for such teaching.

Yvonne Gold writes of several studies and expository articles that were identified by Sam Duker in his Listening Bibliography of 1964 as being concerned with the teaching of listening: in 1951 Heilman developed a series of training
lessons for improving student listening, one devoted to listening habits that make a difference between good and poor listeners; in 1953, Marsden found that fifth and sixth grade students who were instructed with a systematic approach to listening did better than students not instructed; and in 1958, Kelly felt the need for a comprehensive approach to teaching listening through giving the students a wide variety of experiences, practice sessions carefully planned, and regular exercises in listening with a purpose (Gold, 1975).

Gold indicates that a child can learn to listen more adequately and that the example set by the teacher is a great factor in learning listening skills. The teacher must analyze her own listening habits by making a frank analysis of how she listens to the students, by giving a thoughtful study to the listening situation in the classroom, and by fostering concern in the children for the development of their own listening competence. A good listening-improvement program includes involvement by both the teacher and the pupils. Gold also found that there is considerable agreement among all of the researchers that as listening skills can be taught, the results of such teaching can be measured. The need for teaching listening is apparent from studies in a review of the research but the methods of teaching listening need further research, study and planning. Gold believes that teachers are not doing the job of teaching improvement in listening skills (Gold, 1975).
Research in listening goes back fifty years. What do we really know about listening after all these years of research and theorizing? Can we generalize to enable us to develop a more valid curriculum and more effective lessons? By reviewing the literature, Thomas G. Devine answers some questions that need to be looked at in developing a rationale for teaching listening and additional research.

1. Can listening be defined? It has not been defined by research results but it is more than just hearing. The best working definition to date comes from Lundsteen in 1971, "Listening is the process by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind" (Devine, 1978).

2. Can listening be measured? Research literature is full of instruments and descriptions of instruments to measure listening and enough evidence exists to say that listening seems to be measurable.

3. Can listening be taught? Dozens of studies are done each year that replicate the early works by Hallow and Irwin (Devine, 1978) with the same conclusion that listening abilities do improve with direct instruction.

4. Research alone cannot answer if it should be taught but we must think about the enormous amount of time that is spent by children, and adults, in listening each day.

5. Research since Rankin in 1926 enables us to conclude that listening depends upon something besides intelligence as the variance in scores on tests for the two cannot
be accounted for by the elements common to both.

7. Is there a scope and sequence for listening programs? There are some but none seem to be based on actual research designed to discover which skill comes before another in terms of learning effectiveness of economy of teaching time.

8. In what way is listening related to reading? Listening and reading are two different communication processes that are alike as they both have a "thinking base," and both are concerned with the intake half of communication.

9. Is listening simply thinking? There are no clear cut answers to this question from research. Listening, at its simplest, probably involves minimal thinking activity; in its high forms—that is, in the listening skills most often taught in a few school programs that try to improve them—listening certainly involves a good deal of high level mental activity (Devine, 1978).

Celia Lavatelli disagrees with the theory that lessons in listening produce good listeners. She says their transfer value is doubtful. Children do listen when they are motivated to do so. The problem of the classroom teacher is to provide that motivation. "The present trends in elementary classroom organization toward giving students more initiative in planning and selection their own learning experiences may reduce the burden placed upon listening as an avenue to learning. In open classrooms where children more actively participate
in learning, the problems associated with listening in the traditional classroom may not exist" (Lavatelli, 1972).
PROBLEM

It is a fact that adults spend 74% of their time in listening-speaking activities, elementary school children spend about 57.5% of their time in school listening, and high school students may spend 90% of their time in some classes listening. But are they listening (Rubin, 1977)? "Listening cannot be considered as an area which is naturally developed" (Landry, 1969). How can a teacher teach the pupils how to listen?
STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The objective in developing a reasonable rationale for curriculum development and teaching-learning strategies in a listening program for Kindergarten pupils at Cathedral City Elementary School is:

To develop a good listening program with strong involvement by the teacher as a model and with a set of scope and sequence lessons for the improvement of listening skills.
PROCEDURES

The development of listening skills is important for learning and thinking. The problem is that children are not listening effectively. This project is to prepare a curriculum guide with cognitive objectives applicable to the kindergarten child. This will include suggestions, activities, experiences, skill builders and lessons.

The teacher should carry the primary role at the beginning by being a good listener when taking part in oral communication. She or he has to recognize the impact of her/his inadvertent behavior in the classroom since unplanned or unintentional messages that convey inattentiveness are a signal that the listener is not interested in what is being expressed. Children pick up on very subtle teacher behaviors, verbal and nonverbal. This analysis and training will be a part of the in-service instruction for the four teachers involved in this program that is being developed.

The fact that pupils do not listen carefully may account for much waste of time and some inefficiency in learning and emphasizes the necessity of teaching listening (Mackintosh, 1964). The teacher in the class setting should provide a variety of interesting, meaningful and purposeful listening experiences for learners. Through a cognitive approach to teaching listening to students, a teacher must
establish clearly in her mind the kind of listening she expects of the children. The she must set the purpose for this listening in advance of the listening, communicate this to the learner, and give positive reinforcement for responses.

For this program, discrimination—an auditory process in which the ear and the brain determine likenesses and differences in sound, nuances, pitch, rhythm and volume—and comprehension—what teachers mean when they ask how they can teach their students to listen—will be stressed. The heavy emphasis will be on comprehension. Children comprehend at different cognitive levels: 1) literal comprehension which is factual recall, the child can repeat what was heard, both facts and/or ideas; 2) interpretation which means the child knows what was meant by what was said and the implications thereof; and 3) critical listening which is the highest level of comprehension, but this will not be a concern in this program for kindergartners.

A sequential program in listening, as well as in reading, is important and listening skills are to be taught as a developmental process; hearing, which is purely physical and cannot be taught; listening, which involves hearing and concentration; and auding, which is concentration plus comprehension.

The cognitive objectives and the experiences, suggestions and activities of the program to be developed will be based on the skills of:
I. Listening to identify common sounds.
II. Listening to follow directions.
III. Listening for recognition of the main idea.
IV. Listening for recall of detail.
V. Listening for recall of the sequence of events.
VI. Listening for beginning sound of words.
VII. Listening for rhyming words.
VIII. Listening for predicting outcomes and drawing conclusions, taking risks.

The goals for the teaching of this program include the development of a listener who not only knows how to listen, but actually does listen, and a listener who is skillful, selective, attentive and retentive, courteous and curious.
CURRICULUM GUIDE
I. Skill: Listening to Identify Sounds

Objective: After listening to a sound, the children will be able to recognize the sound, identify it, respond to it and/or describe it.

Activities:

1. Have children listen for sounds around. Working with a small group of children, direct one child at a time to close his eyes for fifteen seconds and report one sound which has been heard. The next child would be asked to listen for a different sound until each child has a turn. Later have children listen for the purpose of reporting all the sounds they hear during a specified time.

2. Have the children close their eyes. Choose one child to bounce a ball. Instruct the children to hold up as many fingers as the number of bounces they heard.

3. Have the children march to music, stomping when the music is loud and walking quietly or tiptoeing when the music is soft.

4. Show the children objects which produce different sounds when struck (bell, glass, box) and then tell them to close their eyes. Strike one of the objects and have the children identify it.

5. Strike two notes on the piano or tone bells, far apart. Ask which was high or low; or to introduce more activity, have the children stand tall at the high note and squat (or sit down) for the low note. Gradually make the notes closer together. Use the terms high and low to describe the sounds.

6. Stand behind the children and tap on a desk or chalkboard, etc. The children then repeat the kind of taps heard and how many; loud, soft, once, twice, quick, slow, etc.

7. Play "Find the Thimble." When a child is out of the room, hide a thimble (or other small object) in plain sight but in an unexpected place. Direct the location of the hidden object (a chalk board eraser...
is good in object and softly when he goes away.

8. Take home a tape recorder and make a recording of kitchen noises (water dripping, water running in the sink, refrigerator door closing, dishes being washed, setting the table, scraping the vegetables, turning on the mixer of pop-up toaster, starting the washing machine; living-room noises (the vacuum cleaner, turning on the T.V., turning on a light, slamming door); or outdoor noises. Play the tape to a group of children, with a pause after each sound. "Listen carefully and identify the sound you hear. It is not a noise you hear at school, it is a common sound you might hear at home in the kitchen. Put your finger on your ear when you recognize the sound."

9. Have the children make "Listening Ears" by each child pasting ears that are cut from construction paper onto a headband and decorating with any kind of material he wishes, making each as different as possible. Seashells, sequins and glitter, beads, pipe cleaners and crepe paper, and tissue paper, along with any other creative stimuli, can be utilized. These ears are to be worn when listening is compulsory (instructions for a fire-alarm drill or for beginning a new total class activity are required listening) and while they are being worn, it should be the rule that all mouths have to close until the children hear what the teacher has to say.

10. Take a walking field trip around the school grounds and have the children listen to the many different sounds they hear. Talk about these sounds that are heard and even imitate them. These can be the sounds of animals, machines, and people doing various things.

11. Have one child stand behind a screen and shake a rattle or turn an egg beater or sweep the floor with a broom. The other children guess from the sound what he is doing. Work toward getting many responses. Ask the children what else the noise sounds like—motor, machine, sports car, and so forth. Other possibilities for distinguishing various sounds: using a pencil sharpener, crushing a piece of paper, pouring water out of a bottle into a glass, popping a balloon, blowing a whistle, tooting a horn, sawing a piece of wood, hammering a nail, ringing a bell. Have the children close their eyes and listen. Ask them what picture a particular sound brings to mind.

12. Show the devices needed to do each of the following:
clap hands, drop a pencil, turn on the drinking fountain and hit two blocks together. Then ask two or three children to turn their backs to the group. Make one of the sounds and ask one of the three to tell what he thinks produced the sound.

13. Ask the children to close their eyes. Walk around the room and touch one child gently on the shoulder. He mews and the other children guess who made the "kitten" sound. Substitute other animal sounds. Early in the year, the children may need to practice making the animal sounds.

14. Count backwards slowly, letting the voice grow softer and softer until it is barely audible. Stop and ask a child to tell the last number that was heard.

15. Display a tennis shoe, a button, a crayon and a block. Chose a child to be the sleeping giant who sits in a chair placed in front of the class so that the child's back is toward the group. The "giant" pretends to be asleep. Distribute the objects to members of the group. At a signal from the teacher, a child tiptoes behind the giant as the children chant:
   "There is someone coming near
   Giant, giant, do you hear?"
The chosen child drops an object on the floor, then the "giant" identifies which object made the sound.

16. Have a child ring a bell in one section of the room, then tiptoe back to his place and sit down.
   "Giant, giant, do you hear?
   Was that sound from far or near?"
The giant must tell specifically where the sound came from as: "It came from the playhouse, the science table, the teacher's desk, the back door, by the listening center." If he cannot say exactly, the second child remains the bell ringer in a different place, and a new child takes the first child's place.

17. Have children close their eyes while one child recites a jingle. Others try to guess who spoke by recognizing his voice.

18. Select two children, a "mother" and a "baby kitty," to lie on the floor in the center of an informal grouping or circle. Tell the story:
   Mother kitty and baby kitty are fast asleep.
   Baby kitty wakes up and runs away and hides.
   Mother kitty wakes up and finds baby kitty gone and she calls "Meow." Baby kitty answers
"Mew."
The children in the group repeat the story, and the "baby kitty" and the "mother kitty" dramatize the story as it is told. "Mother kitty" and "baby kitty" supply the "Meow" and the "Mew," and the mother goes to find her baby. Game may be played with 1, 2, 3 and 4 "kittens."

19. Substitute animals such as monkeys, koala bears, tigers or elephants for the Mother kitty and the baby kitty. Best of all, try prehistoric animals. It is amazing to note the fascination the dinosaur family holds for kindergarten children!
Mother tyrannosaurus and baby tyrannosaurus were fast asleep. Baby tyrannosaurus woke up and lumbered off to hide. When mother tyrannosaurus woke up and found baby tyrannosaurus gone, she thumped her tail, THUMP--THUMP--THUMP! And baby tyrannosaurus thumped his tail. THUMP THUMP THUMP. Then mother tyrannosaurus lumbered off to find baby tyrannosaurus.

20. Have the children identify rhythm-band instruments with their eyes closed.

21. Have the children sit in a circle with their eyes closed. Touch one child, who says, "Who am I?" The others are to guess who he is. The children can sit with their backs to the center of the circle. To make it more difficult, have the child disguise his voice.

22. Select one child to be Little Tommy Tittlemouse. He sits with his back to the group or possibly behind a screen of some sort. Choose another child to knock gently on Little Tommy Tittlemouse's door while this verse is repeated by the group:
Little Tommy Tittlemouse
Lives in a little house.
Someone's knocking, me oh my,
Someone's calling, "It is I."
"It is I" is said only by the child who is knocking. Tommy Tittlemouse tries to guess who is knocking by identifying his voice. The number of guesses Tommy can have can be predetermined by the group.

23. Have the front of the classroom be the "road." One child is selected to "cross the road." The other children sit with eyes closed and heads on the tables. The leader chooses either to hop on one foot across the road, walk, run, jump, or skip. When he has
crossed the road, the other children raise their heads and the leader asks, "How did I get across the road?" From among the children who answered correctly, the leader chooses the next one to cross the road.
II. Skill: Listening to Follow Directions

Objective: After considerable practice building the ability to follow directions, the children will understand and follow oral directions and spoken information.

Activities:

1. Give 1-, 2-, and 3-step directions orally. Then call on a child to execute the job.
   a. Stand up.
   b. Sit down and fold your hands.
   c. Go to the chalkboard, make a line, and then erase it.
   d. etc.

2. Explain and demonstrate how to make a toy.

3. Teaching right and left discrimination is a good tool. Let children raise right hand or turn left, etc. on direction, to train them to listen carefully.

4. The use of small individual chalkboards are helpful aids in teaching young children to follow directions. For this exercise mark off quadrants on the chalkboards. Then the teacher directs: Listen carefully for the instructions and then mark on your board what is asked for in the story. Your chalkboard is marked into four parts to help you. After every story, we'll stop and show our chalkboard answer and talk about the story. Ready? Listen.
   a. Make an X in the top right-hand side of your chalkboard. Think and then make your X. Everybody show.
   b. Now let's pretend your chalkboard is a playground divided into four parts. Two Xs are playing in the bottom right-hand side of the playground. Show on your chalkboard where the two Xs are playing.
   c. Three Os are jumping rope in the bottom left-hand side of the playground. Mark these three Os in
their spot.

d. The teacher was standing right in the middle of the playground. With an X, mark where the teacher was standing.

5. To continue with the chalkboard games: Today we have some more chalkboard games to see what good listeners you are. I'll give you a short sentence that will tell you just exactly what to do with your chalk. Listen carefully.

a. Draw a line from the top left-hand corner of your chalkboard all the way across to the bottom right-hand corner of your chalkboard. Listen again: draw a line from the top left-hand corner all the way across the bottom right-hand corner. Ready? Everybody show.

b. Listen carefully for I am going to ask you to follow two directions. Make a capital A on the right-hand side of your chalkboard. Now make a B on the left-hand side of your chalkboard.

c. Here are three directions to follow. Put a C on the right-hand side of your chalkboard, and A on the left-hand side, and a B in between the A and the C.

6. Play "Simon says." The group of children follow the leader's spoken instructions only if the leader first says "Simon says" to do so. Eventually the leader will give a direction omitting "Simon says." When this happens, those who perform the motion must sit down.

7. Give each child the name of a fruit, or a vegetable. One child becomes "it." He calls the name of two or more fruits and the fruits exchange seats. "It" tries to get into one of the vacated seats. The person remaining without a seat is "It." This can be played using classmates names, the names of dinosaurs, zoo animal names or Halloween names, depending on the occasion or unit being studied.

8. Musical chairs is a good game to reinforce listening-for-direction skills.

9. Arrange a dozen small toys on a table. Have one child stand by the table to be the "clerk." Choose one child to call the "store" on the telephone and
say, "I want you to send me a red ball." The "clerk" brings the red ball to the "customer." Later the number of things ordered may be increased.

10. Give oral directions involving two commissions, then three, then four or five. "Put a pencil on the table, hop around the room, and then stand by the desk." "Walk to the back of the room; then skip back to the rug and sit down." The other children watch to see if the child does all the commissions; if he forgets one, other children try until one succeeds.

11. Begin by telling the children that each of them is going to be a "Curious Traveler." Then give the following directions and have the children act them out.

"The traveler stood up. (children stand) He looked to the right. He looked to the left. He looked up, he looked down. He then turned around and looked at the painting easels. Then the door, then the sink, then the flag. Then he stood on tiptoe to see over his neighbor's shoulder. He smiled at what he saw. And sat down.

The game is then repeated using modified directions. The children or the teacher may add or substitute other things for the traveler to do such as putting a pack on his back.

12. Teach the children a new singing-action game, for example "Looby Loo," by singing the melody and showing the action procedure, verse by verse. The children are to listen, perform the action as they listen and match the teacher's actions. Do this a few times before using the piano or record player. When the children have learned several singing-action games, give them choices of which ones to perform.

13. Attach several pictures to a chalkboard or draw them on the board. Give directions for one child at a time to follow. (A picture of a bicycle, one of an apple, and one of a doll). One set of directions might be "Draw a circle around the bicycle, then draw a line from the apple to the doll." Give the directions only once!
14. Play some lively music and encourage the children to move in some fashion to the music, whether it be just walking in time, swaying, or whatever rhythmic action they choose. Instruct them that when the music stops, they must stop or "freeze" and hold the position they are in until the music starts again.

15. The teacher and the children should discuss the "why" of fire drills and the necessity for order and quiet. Children need to be assured that many people have kept their safety in mind—the school designer, the builder, the principal, the teacher, the fire department, and others. Children will then listen to the teacher's directions for specifics in carrying out the drill.

16. Place a covered, empty box at least twelve inches wide in front of the group. Give an object, such as an eraser, to one of the children and ask him to place it on, under, over, behind, or in front of the box. If he does so correctly, he may ask another child to place the object in one of the positions mentioned. To make it more difficult, give two commands at one time. "Put the eraser in the box and then put it on the box." Two objects could be used with directions for placing them at two different locations.
III. Skill: Listening for the Main Idea

Objective: After participating in many experiences and activities to help children to focus on the most important point of a story, the children will begin to be able to recognize the main idea.

Activities:

1. Tell the children that you are going to read them a story but you will not tell them the name of the book before it is read. They are to listen and then tell what they think the story could be called. "What was the story about?"

2. Using a flannel board, place a cutout of a girl in a blue dress holding a doll and a girl holding a doll in a blue dress. Then say, "The girl in the blue dress is holding the doll." Ask a child to come up to the flannel board and move the picture that goes with the sentence just read. Have other imaginative combinations of words on hand also.

3. Have resource people visit and give a talk and then have the children talk about what was said and shown. A good inquiry technique is very useful at this time.

4. During Show 'n Tell, a child's ticket to talk is to tell what the main idea of the previous student's presentation.

5. Instructional activities designed to improve identification of a main idea will come through discussion of poems, other children's stories, and their own dictated stories, "What is the most important idea in your story?"
IV. Skill: Listening for Important Detail

Objective: To build ability to hear and recall supporting detail.

Activities:

1. After part of a story has been read, set a purpose for the rest of the story, as "While I read the rest of the story see if you can find out what happens to ________." 

2. Before reading Caps for Sale, by Slobodkina, help the children remember to listen for important details by asking, "See if you can remember the colors of the peddler's caps."

3. For Zoo unit have the children make-up a riddle on an animal and pupils then give the name required to answer the riddle. i.e. I am a very strong animal. I live in forests. I have beautiful stripes and am feared by most other jungle animals. Who am I?

4. Hearing and rejecting nonessential information is a good listening experience. Explain to the children that you will read them some paragraphs and that in each one there is a sentence that does not keep to the topic. Direct the children to listen for that sentence. "Most children would like to have an animal as a pet. The most common pets are cats and dogs, but sometimes a guinna pig or a snake can be a pet. Birthdays are fun. Hamsters and rabbits also make good pets."

5. A fun way of teaching listening is to use another kind of riddle, "Find my Picture." Pictures of the children are placed on a chalkboard ledge. The teacher reads a description of some child and they try to locate the right picture.

6. Tell a story and let a child draw a picture of some details in the story with colored chalk on the chalkboard.

7. Today I'm going to read a short story to you about Jim and Mike who went to a carnival. Everyone gets
hungry and thirsty at a carnival. As I'm reading, listen for the things the boys ate and drank so that we can talk about all the different tastes the boys had that day. "As Jim and Mike walked down the midway at the carnival, they realized they were thirsty. Mike stopped by a stand and said, 'Hey, Jim, let's get an orange drink.' Jim said, 'I want a hot dog.'"

8. Say a series of four words while the children are looking at a picture. One of the words could not be logically associated with the picture. Children are then asked to identify the word which does not belong.

9. Say to the children, "Listen carefully. I am going to say some words and when I am through, I want you to repeat them exactly the way I have said them. The words have to be in the same order as I have said them. I will state the words only once. Do not say them until I am finished. I'll start with two words and then I'll keep adding one word. Let's do the first one together. Apple/nail." The listener repeats and the speaker says good if it is correct.

Set 1 - can/dog, red/map, play/watch
Set 2 - mail/milk/book, cake/pen/sad, jump/men/cook
Set 3 - sad/none/in/may, every/help/two/six, rope/saw/child/bang

Most kindergartners should be able to repeat a set of three words.

10. Give occasional opportunities for retelling a story that has been read.

11. Encourage your class to listen carefully as one child retells an episode from a popular television, such as Happy Days, Good Times, Spiderman or The Brady Bunch. Remind the children to listen carefully to make sure the details are in the proper sequence. Then ask the listeners to add any omitted details. Give everyone a chance to be a storyteller.

12. Tell a short story and ask the children to listen for specific details. For example:

"Listen to find out what the fireman did when he heard an alarm at the fire station. Once there was a funny fireman in a funny firehouse, and when the alarm sounded, he put his boots on the wrong feet, put his coat on inside out, his hat on backward,
and stood on his head in the fire truck."

"Listen for three things this little boy did when he got up one morning. Once there was a little boy just like some of you. One day he was sound asleep in bed when all at once a bird sang and woke him up. He got out of bed, put on his jeans, put on his tee shirt, combed his hair, brushed his teeth, and said, 'Hi, Mom,' to his mother. Then he ate his breakfast."

"Listen for some things a mother bird does for her babies. Once a mother bird gathered some grass, and string, and twigs, and mud and built a nest in an apple tree. Then she laid three eggs. She kept the eggs warm until they hatched. Then she fed the babies worms and bugs until they were old enough to fly."

13. Here is a story about a boy named Michael who started out for school one morning. As I read this story, listen carefully for one sentence that couldn't possibly make sense. Remember that sentence so that you can tell what it is after the story is finished.

Bill had many things in his hands and pockets as he walked to school on Monday morning. His milk money jingled in his pocket along with his three favorite match-box cars. In one hand, Michael carried his grandfather's house. In the other hand, he carried a box where he kept his pet frog, Tiny.
V. Skill: Listening for Sequence of Events

Objective: After listening to a story, for instance, the children will demonstrate the ability to recall the sequence of and retell the story.

Activities:

1. To help children remember to listen for the order of events in a story, before reading The Gingerbread Man ask them to see if they can remember who ran after the Gingerbread Man first and last.

2. Give time for dramatization of a story once in awhile.

3. Read a story to your group. Ask the children to relate the details and sequence out loud. Then reread the story, deliberately skipping a line. Do students notice anything missing or different?

4. After listening to a story of not more than 60 seconds, see if a child can place a series of up to six pictures in correct sequence.

5. Color wheels can be used often and they are simple to make. Just paste color segments on six-inch circles. A layer of clear Contact paper smoothed over the top will give them longer life. Attach an arrow to each circle with a paper fastener. For the first experience, use only four colors. "Here is a story about Joe, who was buying a new pair of shoes. Keep your color wheel close to you. I'm going to have you use it to show what color the shoes were that Joe bought. 'Going shopping is bad enough,' thought Joe, 'but trying on shoes is the worst thing yet.' The shoe salesman measured his feet and his mother said he could have any color sneaker he wanted. The salesman brought out three boxes of shoes in Joe's size. First Joe tried on black sneakers, but they looked too much like his winter shoes and here it was almost summer. Then the salesman had Joe try on some blue sneakers. Joe asked the man what color shoes were in the last box. These were white. Joe decided those would be dirty all the time. Joe looked at his mother and said, 'I think I'd like to have the second pair of shoes I tried on. How about it, Mom?' Turn the arrow of
your color wheel to the color of sneakers Joe liked best. Think now, the second pair of shoes he tried on. Show your color wheels."

6. Use a series of pictures which describe an event or a process such as frosting a cake, making a Valentine, carving a jack-o-lantern, etc. Tell about the picture but omit one of the steps and have the children find the step omitted.

7. Tap out an irregular sequence of three to five taps and have the children imitate the series: tap-tap-rest-tap-tap. For a variation, have the children form in a circle or informal grouping. Then, using hands, rhythm sticks, a tom-tom, or drum, tap out a pattern. If the child called on can clap back the same pattern, he may remain standing. If he fails to clap back the same pattern, he must sit down.

8. Teach the children the song "Old McDonald had a Farm."

9. Tell a simple story of two or three sentences. Have a child retell it as accurately as possible.

10. Have the children play many singing and musical games. The memorization that takes places is valuable practice for sequencing.

11. Begin the game by saying, "Today I'm packing my picnic basket, and I'll need some help. I'll put in some cake. What will you put in, Ruth?" Ruth can say, "I'll put in some cake and a cheese sandwich." Each player repeats the articles already packed and adds his article. Continue until three or four children have had a turn and then start the packing over again. Kindergarten children will also enjoy filling a toy box or Santa's pack.

12. After the children have enjoyed an uninterrupted showing of the film, "Millions of Cats" by Wanda Gag, show it a second time. Then ask the children to listen for the refrain:

"Hundred of cats 
Thousands of cats
Millions and billions and trillions of cats," and say the refrain in chorus with the story-teller whenever they hear it. (Stories can be used in place of films).
VI. Skill: Listening for Beginning Sounds of Words

Objective: To build the ability to hear likenesses in the beginning sounds of words.

Activities:

1. Say pairs of words, some of which begin with the same sound; as mother, man; little, ball. The children are to tell which pairs begin with the same sound.

2. Say a list of words, most of which begin with the same sound; as mother, man, dew, many. Pause after each word, so that the children can tell the word which begins with a different sound from the rest.

3. Spread out a packet of five picture cards and look at each picture. Say the words to the pupils and have them say the words. Then say three words that all begin with the same sound. The students are then to look at the pictures on their cards and see if any of the pictures begin with the same sound. "Here are the first three words. Listen carefully. Boy--butter--bean. Do any of the pictures begin with the same sound as boy--butter--bean? If so, hold them up."

4. Prepare word cards using the pictures of items that may be obtained at a supermarket, e.g., bag, book, bottle, cake, corn, cookie, etc. (The children can help prepare these cards by cutting out the pictures from women's magazine advertisements). Duplicates are all right. The leader distributes several cards to each player. Then the leader says, "Who has bought something that begins with the same sound as banana?" The players whose cards answer the question raise their hands and as called upon, say "banana--bacon," "bottle--banana," or whatever, and put their "purchases" in a grocery bag held by the leader.

5. Make a large chart containing pictures of objects beginning with the same sound. Have the children point to each picture, naming it and listening for the beginning sound. The students can help make these charts by cutting out the pictures from magazines.
6. Name an object. Each student must find in the room another object whose name begins with the same sound as the object named.

7. Draw three trees about two feet high on the board, a maple, a pine, and a birch.

Cut from construction paper a squirrel about three inches high.
Say a word beginning with the letter m, p, or b, for example, "mother." The first player takes the squirrel home to the "maple" tree. If the leader says a word beginning with b, for example, "bear," the next player will take the squirrel home to the "birch" tree. Continue until all children have had turns taking the squirrel "home" to various trees. The same idea could be used with a bee in search of a flower home, "dandelion, rose, buttercup."

8. Have the children give orally another word that begins with the same sound as the one you say. Write these on the chalkboard, even though the children cannot read them.

9. Play the game "I Spy." Pupils guess what a child means when a statement is made like, "I spy something that begins with the same sound as Mary." The teacher can do the first few rounds of this game and at the beginning, broad hints will need to be given if a specific object is in mind. Ideally, the child will look around the room and say "I spy mud on Billy's shoe." Then he may have a turn making the "I spy" statement and choosing a classmate to guess an answer.

10. Ask the students to bring something from home whose name begins with a given sound. If it is decided that Tuesday is to be "banana day," then students might bring in things such as a bat, ball, bottle, bean bag, etc.
11. Give each child a "B Bag," a small lunch sack with a capital B and a small b printed on it, as well as the child's name. The student can be asked to take his "B Big" home and bring five things that begin with that sound to school to "Show 'n Tell" the class the next day. When the child has finished showing the objects to his classmates, staple the top of the bag so that none of the objects are lost and he can take them home again. It is also advisable to send a short letter of explanation to the parents with the "B Bag" (or whatever beginning sound is chosen).

12. Pair or group students whose names begin with the same sound. After as many children as possible have been matched, the others can try to find in the room some object whose name begins like theirs. Look through all the children's names in advance to make sure each child can find a match--either with another child or with an object in the room. However, if a name is impossible, be prepared to deal with that and make it a learning experience too. For example, say to Xavier, "Your name is so special that we can't find another thing in this room that begins the same. You can be in charge of the game today. You can help tell me if the other children have made the right match."

13. Make a set of cards for a beginning sounds game. Cut pictures from magazines and paste them on oaktag. (Children at the end of the Kindergarten year should be able to help make these for classroom use, to take home, or for the new Kindergartners coming to school in the fall). Use 25 or 30 cards for one game.

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boat, bat, bear
duck, doll, dog
house, horse, hand
mouse, man
whale, wheel
car, cow
goat, gate
shell, shower
flower, flag
zebra, zipper
yarn
rain
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Code the backs of the cards with colors and/or shapes so that the cards whose names begin alike also have matching backs. This makes the game self-correcting; students can check the accuracy of their own matching by turning the cards over.
VII. Skill: Listening for Rhyming Words

Objective: To build the ability to heard words that rhyme.

Activities:

1. Use very short rhymes for identification of rhyming words. Ask the children to supply the missing rhyming word in a couplet:

   "We traveled so far
   In Daddy's new ____.
   I have fun
   When I ____.

   "Mom will buy
   An apple ____.

2. Pronounce a list of words, one at a time. The children are to clap hands once when they hear a word that rhymes with the first one. "Car--man--star--cake--far."

3. Open a rhyming game with the riddle, "I rhyme with sled. You sleep in me. What am I?" Basal primer manuals often have such rhyming riddles.

4. For a listening experience of paying attention to a group of clues, explain to the children that riddles are something like puzzles in that clues (pieces) properly put together create a picture in the mind which gives the answer to the riddle: "I am a small animal. I am gray. I say 'Squeak! Squeak!' I rhyme with house. I'm a ________ (mouse)."

5. Make up poems or stories with obvious words missing and accept any logical rhyming words.

   Once there was a little mouse.  
   He lived in a little _______.  
   Every day he said, "Oh please,  
   May I have a piece of ______?"  
   "Cheese!" His mother then would cry,  
   "You will get some bye and _______.  
   Right now with me you'd better scat,  
   For down the street comes Tommy _____.

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6. Play verbal tennis with word families or other rhyming words. The children face each other in rows or across the tables. Give a word like "at." The first child rhymes it with "cat." The child across from him tries to think of another word in the "family" that rhymes, and so on down the line, back and forth, until they can think of no more. Then the teacher supplies another word, am, ad, red, cake, ring, etc. Points may be marked on the chalkboard to show which side thought of the greatest number of words.

7. Read some of the "Nonsense Alphabet Books" by Edward Lear. Children will enjoy hearing all the nonsensical rhyming words for each letter. They might want to try making up their own silly rhymes.

8. Play "I Had a Little - - -.

I had a little rhyme and I put it in a pail.
I had a little luck and it turned into a whale.
I had a little rhyme and I put it in a house.
I had a little luck and it turned into a mouse.
ring/king cake/snake nose/rose
sail/snail jeep/sheep car/star

9. Have a child choose a picture to paste on a card to take home. On the back, write all of the rhyming words he can think of below the name of the object in the picture.

10. Play "Did you ever See?" The teacher will say "Did you ever see a snail?" The children need to think of a rhyme (an action verb preferably but any word, nonsense or otherwise, will do) such as, "sail?"

Did you ever see a sheep? Sleep?
Did you ever see a crow? Row?
Cat/bat pig/jig
bag/sag frog/jog

11. Make a set of picture cards for a rhyming game. Cut pictures from magazines and paste them on oak-tag. Twenty-five cards make a satisfactory number for the game. There should be about eight or ten sets of rhyming words and also some words that do not rhyme with any other card in the deck.

A sample set: mat, hat, cat, bat horse
man, pan cow
duck, truck boat, goat
mouse, house  fish, dish
pail, tail, whale  car
wheel, seal  bug, rug
well, shell, bell

Note that the sample list of words contains some words with more than one rhyme and some with no rhyme at all. The student has to match the rhyming cards. Code the backs of the pictures that rhyme with the same color and/or shape. For example, the pail, tail, and whale cards could each have a green stripe on the back.

12. Pronounce a series of words that rhyme and include one word that does not rhyme. Have the students put their fingers on their noses when they hear the nonrhyming word. "Right, fight, light, sight, see, might." Sometimes a series will have to be presented twice.

13. Say a two-line verse. The student has to tell you whether or not the words at the ends of the lines rhyme.

Here are some examples:

Have you ever met Polly
Waiting for a trolley?

The three little kittens
Lost their stockings.

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I'd like to buy a car.
VIII. Skill: Listening to Draw Conclusions and Predict Outcome

Objective: To help children guess what might happen and why something might have happened, to take a risk.

Activities:

1. Read or tell a story up to a critical point and let several children tell what they think will happen.

2. Before reading The Three Billy Goats Gruff, "See if at the end of the story you can tell me why the littlest Billy Goat Gruff told the troll to wait for his bigger brother? Why did the biggest Billy Goat Gruff knock the troll to bits, body and bone?"

3. Today we have a short story about a boy named Bob. As you listen, try to find out if the time is day or night and the season winter or summer.

   "The clock in the town hall struck four. Bob pulled on his jacket and zipped up the front. The wind was getting colder. He hurried home as it was getting dark already and it was supposed to snow tonight."

4. Today you have a pack of picture cards before you. Spread them out and take a good look at them. I'll read a story sentence to you and leave out the last word. You pick the picture that best fits the sentence. Listen as I read the first sentence. Joe saw that it was raining when he looked out the _______ (window). Follow with additional sentences related to the picture cards, leaving adequate time for selection and discussion between the sentences.

5. Read short descriptive passages and ask the children to identify or draw a picture of what is described.

   a. I grow outdoors.
      I am tall.

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In summer I am full of leaves.
Birds sit on my branches and sing.
What am I?
Draw a picture of me.

b. People live in me.
I have windows and doors.
I come in many different sizes and colors.
Draw a picture of me.

6. Through familiarity with repetitive patterns and sentence patterns, and literary patterns, have the children practice predicting phrases and words.

7. The children stand by their chairs or in an open area of the classroom. The leader stands in front of the group and says, "The sparrow is flying." At the same time the leader moves his arms rapidly up and down. The other children move their arms up and down in response. Each succeeding time the leader changes the name of the bird, for instance, "The robin is flying." If the leader names any animal that does not fly, the children must not move their arms even though the leader does. When a child moves his arms at the wrong time, he takes his seat. The last child standing wins the game. The children can walk around the room as their arms move in a flying motion, but stop when something other than a bird is named. Names of fish can be substituted for the names of birds, and the motion then would be swimming.

8. Listen carefully to this story about a girl named May Ann and a little bird. See if you can find out what color the bird was. May Ann walked for three blocks along the snowy street. The white snow crunched under her feet and the wind whirled powdery snow all around. She pulled her red knitted hat down over her ears. Suddenly, she heard a bird singing. The sound on such a still, snowy afternoon made her stop and look all around. Again, the cheery bird's song could be heard. It seemed to come from one direction, but there was only an old brown oak tree where May Ann looked. The old tree had no leaves since winter had come. As May Ann stared at the tree, again the chirping sound was heard. Looking at all the bare branches, May Ann noticed a tiny bird moving about. That was the bird all right! No wonder the bird couldn't be seen very easily; he was about the same color as the old tree. With your color wheel, turn the
arrow to the color of the little bird. Think for awhile and we'll show our color wheels and talk about the story.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


