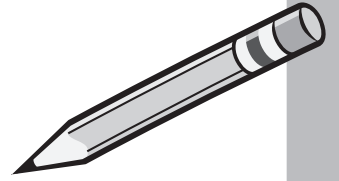


Check Your Listening

Take this self-test about your listening skills.
For each statement:



Check the box if it is **true most of the time**.

If a statement is **usually not true** for you, leave the box blank.

- 1. I make eye contact with the person who is speaking.
- 2. I wait until the other person is finished before I start talking.
- 3. I focus on what the other person is saying instead of just thinking about what I'm going to say.
- 4. I let the other person speak without taking over the conversation and making it about me.
- 5. I care about what the other person has to say.
- 6. I try to understand what the other person is feeling.
- 7. When I have a conflict with someone, I try to listen to his or her side of the story.
- 8. I work on being a good listener in all my conversations.

How did you do?

If you checked at least 4 of the statements, you already have some good listening skills.

If not, you are not alone. Many people have not yet learned how to listen. The good news is that everyone can learn to be a better listener. It just takes practice. Be part of the solution by really listening to what other people have to say!



Scripts About Conflict Habits

Script for Leader 1

Habits are things we're used to doing. For example, we might brush our teeth at a set time, study in the same way each night, or even treat people in certain ways. Habits can be harmful or helpful. A helpful habit I have is _____

What helpful habits do you have? *(Call on students to answer this question.)*

One habit I would like to change is _____.

What habits would you like to change? *(Call on students. Discuss.)*

Script for Leader 2

Helpful habits make life better. Eating healthy foods, getting to bed on time, and finishing homework are helpful habits that improve our lives. Harmful habits make life more difficult. Harmful habits like arguing and fighting, not studying for tests, and being disrespectful can cause problems and make our lives more difficult.

The way we react to conflict is a habit, too. Here's what one fifth grader said about a habit he has when he's angry: "When someone gets me mad, I lose my temper. It's what I've always done. I don't know any other way." How many of you can identify with this? *(Discuss briefly.)*

This boy's habit of losing his temper is a harmful conflict habit. A harmful conflict habit I have is: _____

What harmful conflict habits do you have? *(Discuss with other students.)*



Scripts About Conflict Habits (continued)

Script for Leader 3

The good news is that habits can be changed! We can let go of harmful habits, and we can develop new healthy habits. Here's one student's story of success in turning a harmful conflict habit into a helpful one:

"I always used to yell and scream and curse if someone made me mad. I got in trouble a lot, and my friends didn't want to be with me. I decided to change. Now I try to take everything step-by-step. I try to find out the real story instead of flying off the handle. When I control my anger and talk out problems, I feel better inside. It's like I feel stronger."

This student succeeded in turning a harmful conflict habit to a helpful one. Now she feels better about herself. Her confidence is growing. She realizes that she has the power to change a negative conflict habit into a positive one.

Think about what you can do to change a harmful conflict habit into a helpful one. *(Discuss with other students.)*

Staying Out of Fights

A middle school boy discovered that he could keep himself out of fights by using the same saying that's used in fire prevention: "Stop, Drop, and Roll." This is what the boy recommends:

Here's what I realized after I got suspended for fighting: If someone tries to tempt you to fight, don't do it. There's no realistic point to fighting. If somebody's picking on you, that person might have a troubled life. Their problems might lead them to act differently than they should. What I like to do when someone tries to get me to fight is stop, drop, and roll.

STOP to think about it.

DROP whatever you want to say or do that's not respectful.

ROLL on over to what you're going to do next.

Instead of getting pulled into fights, focus on your schoolwork. That's what I do. Many a day, people try to get me involved in fights. If someone intentionally throws things at me, I don't let it get to me. People will egg me on and try to get me to hit the other person. I just try to let their words go and do what I know is right.

I learned my lesson when I was in sixth grade. This kid was throwing things at me. We just came back from an assembly. So I pushed him and he pushed me back. We got sent to the office and we started kicking each other. It was a mistake. I could have just let it go, something stupid like that, but I didn't. We both ended up getting suspended. Now I know better.

Think About It

Is there a place in your life where you can Stop, Drop, and Roll to stay out of an argument or a fight?

Don't Get Hooked

Do you ever walk around with somebody's put-down taking up space in your brain? Do you ever spend time focusing on getting even?



Walking around with your head full of angry thoughts about getting even can drain your energy and make you feel worse. It's like walking around covered with a glob of slime. But you don't have to stay hooked that way. Here are four things to help you unhook and release the angry thoughts and feelings. They will enable you to leave that glob of slime on the ground where it belongs, and walk away with your own power in place:

1. Give yourself 30 minutes to stew. Take some time alone and be as mad as you want for those 30 minutes. On paper, write down what you're mad about. This is just for you, so don't show what you wrote to anyone else. When you're done, tear up the paper and throw it away. Once the feelings are out on paper, they won't clog up your brain as much.

2. Keep repeating your calming statement silently and do something that helps you chill out. If you're at school, wash your face and get a drink. If you're home, try exercising or listening to music. When angry thoughts pop back up, replace them with your calming statement so your mind doesn't get trapped in bad thoughts.

3. Talk to a trusted person. Make this confidential. Do this to get bad feelings out of your system—not to get even or get the person in trouble. It won't help to start gossiping about the person who made you mad—that will only make things worse. Come up with a plan of action. For example, you might plan to talk directly to the person who upset you, or to ignore the person. You might decide to ask for more help from a counselor, a teacher, or another adult for help.

4. Do something constructive (something useful and healthy). Help someone else, or get involved in a project. Helping others is one of the best ways to help yourself feel better. It turns the energy of anger and hurt feelings into something useful. This is a good step to take any time you feel sad, mad, or worried.



Make a conscious choice *not* to get hooked by someone else's negative words. Hold onto your power instead of giving it away. As one student said, "I refuse to let *their* words ruin *my* day."



Don't Get Hooked (continued)

My Tools for Unhooking

My calming statement is: _____

My Peace Shield looks like this: (Draw and describe it here):

Three things on my list of ways to chill out are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Two assertive comebacks I can use are:

1. _____
2. _____

A trusted person I can talk to is:

If that person is not available, another trusted person is:
