



Date: _____
Series: Fitting In and Finding Friends
Fall Year 1, Lesson 20

Real Friends Really Listen

Take Home Point: *Real friends really listen like God listens to us.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: James 1:19, Psalm 116:1-2

Key Verse: James 1:19a: "Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak..."

We will help kids know:

- Listening is a vital ingredient in friendships. Friends feel understood and valued when listened to.
- God listens to us as an attentive Father. This is because through Christ, we are his children.
- We can listen to what God says in his word and can do what he wants.




We will help kids feel:

- Discounted when not listened to.
- Honored when listened to.

We will help kids do:

- Investigate what the Bible says about listening to each other and listening to God.
- Play simulation games in which kids experience poor listening skills and quality listening skills.
- Identify and practice quality listening skills.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Kids play “Now You’re Talking” BINGO, filling in a BINGO card based upon their ability to talk 15 seconds on a topic while someone else is listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 13 printed on Avery 5160 labels. One label for each student • “Now You’re Talking” Bingo card for each student (<i>page 12</i>) • pencils
Large Group 	4 7 8 9	Overview Mr(s). Thinkendo’s Classroom: “Let’s Listen” Ms. Thinkendo asks for volunteers to guess what their labels say and to share how they felt as others responded to their talking in small group application. Teaching Session: What does it mean to give your attention to someone else? When you give your attention to someone, you show you are interested in him or her. “Jackie is Troubled About School”: Illustrated story to show what listening is all about. A dialogue between Jennifer and Jackie illustrate how people can listen like a mirror or listen like a windowpane.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stage set to look like a classroom (<i>see lesson 17</i>) • unique clothes for an outlandish teacher look (<i>as in lesson 17</i>) • seven chairs • white board, flip chart, or overhead projector and transparency • writing utensil for one of the above • candy reward • two actors (optional) • script for actors (<i>p. 9-11</i>)
Small Group Application 	4	Play “Now You’re Listening” BINGO as a group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now You’re Listening” BINGO sheet for group (<i>page 14</i>) • 36 tokens • two dice (one red, one white)

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction! Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.*

As kids gather: *Listen to memory verses from last week and give coupons for memory verses, remembering to bring your Bible, and bringing a guest.*

Begin: *Review the group covenant signed by all. This can be as simple as reading it and reminding all that they have signed it. (See lesson 16.) Welcome new kids and invite them to sign the covenant.*

"Now You Are Talking" BINGO

Play a simulated BINGO game that lets kids experience the effects of other kids listening attentively to them or feel what it is like when others listen poorly.

The purpose is to help kids identify poor listening skills and encourage them to listen actively. This can be a large group experience in which several of the small groups meet together to complete this, or it can be done within one small group.

Supplies needed: a preprinted label and a "Now You're Talking" Bingo card for each student, pencils

DIRECTIONS: Explain to kids that they are to fill in the BINGO card based upon their ability to talk 15 seconds on a topic while someone else is listening. They find a partner and start talking about the question in a square of their choosing. When 15 seconds is up, have their partner sign that square. Let the other person in the pair share for 15 seconds and then find new partners. Kids cannot have the same person sign their card two times in a row.

Before starting, stick a label on each kid's forehead without him reading his own label. The label explains how the other kids are to respond to the individual talking. After all foreheads are labeled, the game begins. Signal kids every 15 seconds.

After the game is over, gather your group together, having kids keep their labels on their foreheads for large group. Don't let the kids tell each other what the labels say. Compare BINGO cards to see who had the best score in your group.

Today we will learn what real friends do and that **real friends really listen like God listens to us.*

Go to large group with the kids still wearing the labels on their foreheads.

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible Event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Mr(s). Thinkendo's Classroom: "Let's Listen"

Ms. Thinkendo asks for volunteers to guess what their labels say and to share how they felt as others responded to their talking in small group application.

Teaching Session: What does it mean to give your attention to someone else? When you give your attention to someone, you show you are interested in him or her.

"Jackie is Troubled About School": Illustrated story to show what listening is all about. A dialogue between Jennifer and Jackie illustrate how people can listen like a mirror or listen like a windowpane.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion, but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What does it say?

Have kids use their Bibles to answer these questions. The following scripture verses are suggestions. Do not feel like you have to read them all.

What does the Bible say about God listening to us in these verses?

Psalm 116:1-2 says, *"I love the LORD because he hears my voice, my pleas for mercy. I will call on him as long as I live because he turns his ear toward me."* (The NLT says, *"...he bends down and listens..."*)

Psalm 94:9: *"God created ears. Do you think he can't hear? He formed eyes. Do you think he can't see?"*

Isaiah 65:24: *"Before they call, I will answer. While they're still speaking, I will hear."*

What does the Bible say about us listening to him?

Matthew 7:24: *"Therefore, everyone who hears what I say and obeys it will be like the wise person who built a house on rock. Rain poured, and floods came. Winds blew and beat against that house. But it did not collapse, because its foundation was on rock."*

Luke 8:15: *"The seeds that were planted on good ground are people who also hear the word. But they keep it in their good and honest hearts and produce what is good despite what life may bring."*

John 10:27: *"My sheep respond to my voice, and I know who they are. They follow me..."*

Hebrews 2:1: *"For this reason we must pay closer attention to what we have heard. Then we won't drift away from the truth."*

James 1:22-25: *"Do what God's word says. Don't merely listen to it...If someone listens to God's word but doesn't do what it says, he is like a person who looks at his face in a mirror, studies his features, goes away, and immediately forgets what he looks like. However, the person who continues to study God's perfect teachings that make people free and who remains committed to them will be blessed. People like that don't merely listen and forget; they actually do what God's teachings say."*

How are we to listen to others?

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Our key verse for today from James 1:19 says, *"Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak..."*

The opposite of being quick to listen and slow to speak is being quick to speak and slow to listen. What might happen to a relationship or a conversation when one person is quick to speak and slow to listen? What kinds of problems might result?

What might happen to a relationship or a conversation when both people are quick to speak and slow to listen? What kinds of problems might result?

What are ways we can give others attention? Who gives us the power to do this?

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Does God listen to us like a mirror or a windowpane? Why do you think so?

How does God want us to listen to his words?

Application Activity:

Supplies needed: "Now You're Listening" BINGO sheet for group, 36 tokens, two dice (one red, one white)

Have kids take turns rolling the dice and answering the corresponding question. After a student has rolled both dice, have him answer the question on the BINGO sheet that corresponds with the numbers on the dice and place a token on that box. For example, if the red die is a two and the white die is a two, the student would answer the question and place a token on the box that reads, *"Tell about a time you felt lonely or left out."*

If a student rolls and the question has already been answered or he is having a hard time answering a question, let him pick a question that hasn't been answered and place a token on that box.

Ask:

How does James 1:19: *"Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak..."* reinforce the take home point for the day: **Real friends really listen like God listens to us?*

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for his friendship with us because of Jesus and for listening with attention to us. Ask him to teach us how to be good listeners of his word and listeners to our friends.

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Large Group Presentation

Mr(s). Thinkendo's Classroom "Let's Listen"

The stage should be prepared in advance to look like a classroom (see Lesson 17). The large group presenter now becomes the teacher, Mr(s). Thinkendo. She/he does this by donning a few simple props such as wearing a frumpy, outdated dress, an outlandish tie or coat, a pocket protector, pens, and a coach's whistle.

Supplies: seven chairs set up; white board, flip chart, or overhead projector and transparency; writing utensil for one of the above; and candy reward

Ms. Thinkendo gathers the class and asks for seven volunteers in the following way:

Class, please keep your labels on your foreheads.

Then continue with:

Students, I noticed there was a lot of conversation—some of it was most peculiar—as I heard you talking to each other. I'm sure you would like to know what the labels on your foreheads say.

Could I have seven volunteers willing to come forward and guess what is on their label? I would like these volunteers to also say a sentence or two about how they felt when people listened to them the way they did. Please raise your hand if you would like to make a guess and share your feelings.

Ms. Thinkendo selects volunteers that each have a different label and has them come forward. Have them sit in a row of chairs. One at a time, have volunteers step up to the microphone to speak.

Now you may guess. What was written on the sign on your forehead? You may pull it off to check to see if you are correct. Now tell us very briefly how you felt when people listened to you that way.

As the children talk, go to the white board, flipchart, or overhead and write the following. At the top write, "Listening equals giving your _____ to someone else." Then make two columns. Label one, "Good Listening" and label the other, "Poor Listening". As the kids describe some of the listening practices they encountered, write them as examples of either good listening or poor listening. (*Option:* If in a setting where others can see easily, take the labels from the kids talking and affix them under the appropriate headings.)

At the conclusion of the seven children's interviews, ask a question to the entire group:

Who can guess the blank in the title of today's exercise: "Listening equals giving your _____ to someone else." (The answer is "attention.")

Offer a candy reward for the person who can fill in the blank. Dismiss the students who volunteered to share their answers and continue with the teaching session.

Teaching Session

What does it mean to give your attention to someone else? When you give your attention to someone, you show you are interested in him or her. You listen attentively to them. Every person needs attention, and especially attention from friends.

Have you ever had a friend who spent his time talking about himself and never listened to you? That means your friend wasn't giving you attention. Remember, all people need attention, and friends can give it to each other.

Invite a kid forward to read the Bible verse, James 1:19a:

"Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak..."

To tell the following story, you will need a mirror and a windowpane. It would be ideal if both were similar in size, but that is not necessary.

Let me tell you a story of what it means to be quick to listen and slow to speak.

The following story is best told by having two characters dialogue the story with a narrator describing it. These characters are best played by adults and practiced ahead of time. Their parts need not be memorized but can be taped to their props so they can follow along and ad-libbed.

One character is Jennifer who holds up a handheld mirror every time she talks. This is symbolic of the fact that Jennifer does not listen well to others but mostly talks about herself.

Jackie, on the other hand, holds up a windowpane every time she speaks. She does this because she listens to others and sees into their world. In this sketch, Jackie is searching for answers and needs someone to look back through the windowpane into her life and listen to her. Unfortunately, she does not receive this attention from Jennifer.

“Jackie Is Troubled About School”

Jennifer	Jackie
	Jennifer, I'm kind of worried about school. I'm not doing so well because I'm having a hard time in math. What do you think I should do?
<p>Oh, but you know math is hard—especially fractions. That's okay because I sit next to Michelle who is very smart in math and she can help me with fractions.</p> <p>But she's not so smart in history. The teacher won't let me sit with her there because we talk too much.</p> <p>But that's the way teachers are. Well, not all teachers but at least our history teacher who is sooo strict. I just don't understand.</p> <p>So, now what were you saying?</p>	
	Oh, I was just talking about my problem.
Problems? I can help with problems. What kind of problems?	
	<p>Well, it's not really math that's bothering me. It's my parents. They're fighting a lot lately and I'm worried they might be separating. I'm really scared they might get divorced.</p> <p>I don't know what I should do or whom I should talk to...</p>
<p><i>(Interrupts.)</i> My parents don't fight. That's because my father never talks. He just sits on the couch and watches TV. That's okay because my mom talks all the time.</p> <p>I don't understand why moms talk so much. It's like all they do is yack, yack, yack. But maybe that's because my dad never does talk.</p> <p>I don't know. What do you think?</p>	

	I don't know. Maybe people talk more when they feel like they're being listened to. Do you think your dad feels like he's ever listened to?
Oh, I'm sorry. What did you say?	
	I said, do you think your dad feels like he's listened to?
<p>Maybe that's it. Sometimes he does yell at us when we're too loud and the ballgame is on. I listen to him when he yells, but who wants to watch an old ballgame anyway?</p> <p>Football is so boring to watch on TV, but I like going to the 6th grade boys' football games. Have you been to see Jason Carter play yet? He is sooo...</p>	
	<p><i>(Interrupts.)</i> Oh, I don't want to talk about football, I don't want to talk about Jason Carter. I just want to talk to someone who listens.</p> <p>I wonder if God even listens. I have asked him if he was so powerful, why doesn't he stop my mom and dad from arguing...</p>
<i>(Interrupts.)</i> I've asked the same question. I can't understand why God can't stop certain things from happening...because one time I asked him to not let my pet rabbit die when she was sick...but my rabbit died anyway. It's almost like God doesn't even care. I don't understand why he doesn't listen when I talk to him about things like that. It's almost like my rabbit wasn't very important.	
	<p>Give me a break! Now we're talking about your rabbit? I wish you would just listen to me for a change.</p> <p>Do you remember our Bible verse last week? James 1:19 says: <i>"Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak..."</i></p> <p>And I remember that our shepherd said, "Maybe that's why God gave us two ears but only one mouth."</p>

Two ears and one mouth...Yeah. But I was thinking about my mouth this week, and I think it's time we start wearing lipstick. What do you think?	
	Did you say lipstick? You're talking about lipstick now?
Of course, I'm talking about lipstick. Don't you listen? Wow! It's like no one listens anymore.	

Mr(s). Thinkendo takes the mirror and windowpane from the actors as they step down. She continues with:

In our conversations with others, do we interact with them like we have a mirror and only see ourselves, or do we listen like we have a windowpane where we see into another person's life?

As a true friend we should listen with a windowpane. What about God? How does he interact with us? Does he use a mirror or a windowpane? Does he look only at himself or does he look into our lives?

Psalm 116:1-2 says, *"I love the LORD because he hears my voice, my pleas for mercy. I will call on him as long as I live because he turns his ear toward me."* God uses a windowpane.

God is our true friend and listens with attention to us. He cares about every part of our life. He wants to hear from us. He even yearns for us to talk to him.

Now, how should we interact with God? Do we want to use a mirror and only think about ourselves? Or do we also look at God and listen to what he says? In other words, do we use a mirror or a windowpane? We want to use a windowpane. Remember, **Real friends really listen like God listens to us.*

You will get the chance to talk more about this in your small group. Thank you, boys and girls. Class dismissed!

“Now You’re Talking” BINGO

Small Group Warm-Up

If you can talk to someone else for 15 seconds on one of the topics below, then you can mark that square with an “X.” Have the person who listened to you put his initials in the box. Remember: You must speak 15 seconds to mark an “X.” The same person cannot sign your cards two times in a row.

“My favorite things to do after school are...”	Talk about your pet.	Describe the job you would like to have when you’re an adult.
Tell about what you like to do on Saturdays.	“My favorite three TV shows are...”	“If I could trade places with someone for a day, I would trade places with...”
“If I could spend a day with one person, I would spend it with...”	Tell about your favorite hobby and why you like it.	Tell about your first day of school this year.

Laugh at what I say.

**Please interrupt me
when I'm talking.**

**Look me in the eyes
when I talk to you.**

**Nod your head and
smile when I talk to
you.**

**Listen attentively to
what I say.**

**Look away from me
when I talk to you.**

**Look bored and
yawn when I talk to
you.**

**Walk away from me
when I talk to you.**

**Look down and
ignore me when I
talk to you.**

**When I talk, nod and
say, "That's
interesting."**

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“Now You’re Listening” BINGO

	RED 1	RED 2	RED 3	RED 4	RED 5	RED 6
WHITE 1	If Jesus visited your home today, how would you spend the time together?	Jesus was called “Teacher.” Who has been one of your greatest spiritual teachers?	Talk about one thing for which you are especially thankful.	About how many minutes a day do you pray? (Be honest!)	If someone asked you who Jesus is, what would you say?	David played his harp and sang a song to God. If you sang a song to God, what would it be about?
WHITE 2	When did Jesus first become real to you?	Tell about a time you felt lonely or left out.	If you have ever experienced a miracle, talk about it.	You may COMMENT on any box you choose.	Tell about a time when you felt far from God.	Jesus told Martha, “You worry and fuss about a lot of things. There’s only one thing you need. If Jesus said that to you, what would he mean?
WHITE 3	You may ask another player to QUESTION OR COMMENT on any box you choose.	If you knew you could ask God for 3 things and receive them right now, what would they be?	If you could change one family rule, what would it be?	Pretend you can change something about the way you look. What will you change?	Tell about something you don’t like about being older or bigger than last year.	If someone asked you to describe God, how would you do it?
WHITE 4	Tell about a time when God answered one of your prayers.	If you had the gift of healing, to whom would you minister today?	Name someone you miss that you haven’t seen for a while.	Which ability of Jesus would you most like to have? A) Teaching; B) Healing; C) Working miracles	You may ask a player one QUESTION OR COMMENT on any box you choose.	Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. How would you feel if Jesus washed your feet?
WHITE 5	Give 3 reasons why you think someone should become a Christian.	Tell about something you like to do with your whole family.	“Honor your father and your mother.” (Exodus 20:12) How do you honor your parents?	What do you think is the best thing about being an adult?	What do you suppose Jesus would do at your school?	God spoke to Moses through a burning bush. How does God speak to you?
WHITE 6	Who do you think is the funniest person in your family? Why?	You may COMMENT on any box you choose.	When do you feel closest to God?	If you had the courage of David when he killed Goliath, what giant would you like to slay in your life?	Jacob favored Joseph over his other sons, which made them very jealous. If you have felt jealousy, talk about it.	Complete the sentence: If God were to make an announcement to the world tomorrow, I wish it could be that _____.