**THEME: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

**EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS**

**Activity:** “See me, hear me!”

**Objective:** to help the children become aware of the importance of listening and developing their listening skills (to develop the ability of real understanding of the person they communicate with and their subject of communication)

**Learning Outcomes**: ‘By the end of this activity, I will be able to listen to others carefully, to really hear and understand the person I am speaking with.”

**Age group 3-5 (4-6)?? (PRESCHOOL):**

**Level: Basic**

Materials needed: a chair for each child and a mat on which the children can sit in a circle, a blindfold, a few non see-through bottles with different content (marbles, gravel, sand, rice, coins, etc.), a stopwatch

1. Invite the children to sit in a circle and announce the “Introduction game”. Each child will say their name, but they will also have to repeat the name of the child before them. You start first by telling them your name and the game you like most. For example, the child after you will say: “This is Tea and her favourite game is Memory, and my name is Petar and my favourite game is Garage.” Following the same principle, you can repeat the game using themes such as their favourite meals, favourite colours etc.
2. Invite the children to sit in a circle. Tell them that they will be playing a game called “Voice”. Explain to them that the game needs complete silence. Choose a child which will sit in the middle of the circle and blindfold them. You move around the other children and touch one child in the circle. That child has to talk to the child in the middle by saying some sentence. The task of the child in the middle is to guess who talked to them. Once they guess, the child which voice has been recognized sits in the middle and they become the guesser. You touch another child. The game continues until all children had their chance to be in the middle.
3. Tell the children that you have a few bottles with different contents. Tell them that you will shake each bottle and that their task is to guess what is in the bottles. After the guessing ask the children what different sounds remind them of, if the sounds could be happy or say etc.
4. Divide the children in pairs so that every other child turns to the child sitting on their right. Tell them that they have a task to speak to each other as if they were journalists for three minutes and as if one is preparing the story about the other and vice versa. Help them by suggesting some question they might ask: “How old are you?”, “Do you have a brother or a sister?”, “Which is your favourite TV show, game, toy, animal, colour?”, “Which is your favourite meal?” etc.
5. After everybody has finished their task, each child presents the child that they interviewed in first person (e.g. if Maja interviewed Ana, Maja says: “My name is Ana. I have a brother and his name is Ivan...”) After each presentation, the group encourages every presenter with an applause. Ask the presented child if they are happy with the way they have been presented.
6. Ask the children how they felt while playing the previous games. Encourage them to tell if it was fun, if the games were difficult, interesting etc. Ask them what they needed to successfully contribute to the game. Encourage them to recognize that they had to listen carefully, watch, know how to play their role, to be ready etc. Then ask the children how they know if someone is listening to them carefully, why listening is important, if they listen to others and how do they show their interest in what others have to say. Help the children express themselves by asking them subquestions, by paraphrasing, reflecting and summarizing their answers.

Extra activities (art, music, drama, physical, etc.)

**Level: Intermediate**

Materials needed: a chair for each child, a stopwatch

1. Divide the children into two groups. Tell them that they will be playing a game called “Nice words open all doors”. One group forms a circle. That is a fortress. The children from the other group stand in the middle of the circle. Their task is to exit the fortress through the door. Every member of the first group represents one door. It is possible to exit through the door if the child which represents the door is told something nice about them. The children which represent the doors can open the door to the children who wish to exit the fortress after the first statement, or they can ask to hear something nice about them twice more. When the door is open, the child who represents them turns their back to the centre of the circle and it is not possible to exit that door again. The children which exit the fortress form a new circle and the game continues with swapped roles. The game is finished once all children have played both parts.
2. Invite the children to sit in a circle. Tell them: “We will now tell what bothers us when we talk to them, what we dislike hearing or we do not like to when somebody does to us.” Each child will start their sentence with the following words: ”I dislike when someone...” and continue with telling what bothers them when they talk to somebody. The teacher helps the children by giving them examples (I dislike when someone interrupts me while I speak, I dislike when someone shouts at me etc.). Once all children had their go, the teacher asks them what they usually do when someone talks to them in a way they dislike. The given answers are discussed and divided into groups according to their success. Encourage the children to conclude on the traits of a careful listener (they do not interrupt, they look their interlocutor in the eye, is patient etc.).
3. Tell the children that they will be playing a game called “Listen carefully”. Invite a child to tell the others about their favourite experience in 2 minutes. The other children in the group have the task to listen carefully. After that, one of the children who listened has the task to repeat the other child’s experience. The other children add the things that the child forgot to mention. The game is repeated until a few stories have been told (3-4).
4. Divide the children into groups of 5-6 children. Tell them to make their own story on the given theme so that one child starts a sentence, the other continues and so on until the story is finished. Let them create a sad story, a dangerous story, a scary story, a yellow story etc.
5. *Extra activity:* Form “A Listening corner” in some separated part of the room. Let it be there for a while (at least two weeks). Put two chairs in the corner. Each chair has to be marked with signs “the chair for someone who would like to tell something” and “the chair for someone who would like to be a listener”. At the beginning, you should sit periodically on a chair to motivate the children on using the possibility of speaking and listening.

Extra activities (art, music, drama, physical, etc.)

**Age group 6-8 (7-9)?? (EARLY PRIMARY):**

**Level: Basic**

Materials needed: a blackboard and chalk or a flipchart and a marker, a blank paper and a pen for each pupil

1. Invite the pupils to stand in a circle. Explain to them that they are going to play a game called “Collaborative storm”. Tell them that the main goal of the game is collaborative work in an imitation of the sounds of storm. Ask the pupils to think how they would feel if they were in a beneficial summer rainstorm for one minute. Then ask them to imagine that they are in the middle of a downpour and that they are deafened by the sound of the storm. Ask them how they are feeling now.
2. Start the game by rubbing your hands together in front of one pupil in the circle. His task is to imitate this action. The pupil who stands on his right side should imitate the same action and the next pupil should immediately do the same, until all of the pupils in the circle are rubbing their hands. Then, stand in the front of another pupil and snap your fingers. This pupil has to stop rubbing his hands and start to snap his fingers. The action continues in the same order, until all pupils are snapping their fingers. According to the same principle, start to loudly clap your thighs, and then bang your feet on the floor. After that, calm the storm by initiating actions in the reverse order (from pounding on the floor switch to clapping yours thighs, then snap your fingers and the hand rub), all until complete silence.
3. Ask the pupils which communication skills they were need for successful creation of the sounds of a storm (listen to each other, follow the leader, know how to play their role, to be prepared, wait the turn, be concentrated on the common goal etc.). Write the responses down on the blackboard. Ask the pupils what makes cooperation in their class resemble to the rainstorm (sometimes we lead, sometimes we follow, sometimes we listen, sometimes we talk, follow the same goal, etc.). Write the responses down on the blackboard.
4. Share a piece of a paper and a pen with each pupil. Ask them to complete the incomplete sentence on the paper: „I am a good interlocutor because …..“ and „In conversation, I would like to be able to ……” The pupils show their sentence to their pair (the pupil on their right side) and they compare them.
5. Homework: The pupils should recognize and write down at least 3 communication situations in which they showed their good communication skills during the weekend.

Extra activities (art, music, drama, physical, etc.)

**Level: Intermediate**

Materials needed: a blackboard and chalk or a flipchart and a marker, a soft small ball

1. Tell the pupils to form pairs. Remind them on their homework and ask them to retell one communication situation which they have written and in which they were good listeners.
2. Explain to the pupils that they are going to play a “Role playing game”. One pupil in the pair chooses the role of the speaker, and another one the role of the listener. The speaker has to talk about the theme “My best friend” for around 2 minutes, while the listener has the task to listen carefully. After two minutes, invite the pupils to form a circle so that every listener can retell to others what he heard from his interlocutor. After each retelling, ask the speaker if they are satisfied with the way the listener retold their thoughts.
3. Repeat the game with modified roles (now the listeners are speakers and vice versa). The topics for discussion should be different (eg. My favourite birthday).
4. Talk about communication skills which helped and which harmed the quality of the communication in a circle. Write answers on the blackboard (or flipchart) in two columns: SKILLS WHICH HELP and SKILLS WHICH HARM GOOD COMMUNICATION.
5. End the activity with the game „ Feelings echo “. Start the game by completing the sentence: „I know that someone listens to me carefully when....”. Then throw the soft ball to a pupil in the circle who should also complete that sentence. This pupil throws the ball to another pupil and the game continues until all pupils have completed the sentence.
6. Homework: The pupils should recognize and write down at least 3 communication situations in which they were listening carefully their teacher, parents, friends, peers during the week.

Extra activities (art, music, drama, physical, etc.)

**Level: Advanced**

Materials needed: a blackboard and chalk or a flipchart and a marker, larger paper and markers for each group of pupils

1. Invite pupils to form pairs. Remind them on their homework and ask them to retell one communication situation in which they were listening their interlocutor. Ask them how listening carefully was helpful.
2. Explain to the pupils that they are going to play the “Role playing game”, but with different rules. One pupil in the pair is the listener, and the other one is the speaker. While the speaker is talking, the listener needs to have closed eyes and he must not speak. A possible theme of the conversation is „My funniest event….“. The speaker can talk 3 minutes maximum.
3. After that the pupils switch roles, but the listener now has opened eyes and has to ask questions the speaker who is talking about their funniest event, like: „ Did I hear you right, you're …..“, „ If I understand you correctly, you thought ….“, raises additional questions, etc. The conversation should last around 5 minutes.
4. Break pupils into groups of 3 or 4 members. They have to talk about their feelings during the communication with the person which had closed eyes, and how they were feeling when the interlocutor asked questions. They have to talk about their feelings while their were listening with closes eyes and how they were feeling when they were allowed to participate in the conversation.
5. After the conversation, the pupils in each group should make a poster in which they will write what good listeners do and don’t do. (eg. a good listener does not interrupt, looks in the eyes of the interlocutor, listens patiently, accepts what you say, asks questions, shows interest ...).
6. The pupils hang the posters in a prominent place in the classroom and each group presents their poster to the other pupils.

Extra activities (art, music, drama, physical, etc.)