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Teaching and Assessing Middle-Years Students' Speaking and Listening Skills

Tammy Jung, Heidi Osterwalder and David Wipf

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Research Coordinator
Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation
2317 Arlington Avenue
Saskatoon SK S7J 2H8
Telephone: 1-800-667-7762 or (306) 373-1660

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Executive Summary

This action research study was conducted by two middle-years teachers and the principal of a small urban elementary school in Saskatoon. The principal research questions were:

1. How can middle-years teachers effectively develop and enhance the acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills?
2. What techniques are effective for assessing acquisition of middle-years students' speaking and listening skills?

An initial review of academic, instructional and curricular resources was conducted to provide direction to the study. After, a list of qualities of thoughtful listeners and speakers was developed. A rubric was created to assist teachers in assessing these areas. The researchers also developed a "mini" unit of instruction suitable to introduce students to listening and speaking skills. Each of the activities was field tested, albeit on a very limited basis.

Key results of this study are:

1. The development of a framework for teaching listening and speaking skills.
2. The development of activities and assessment strategies for teaching and evaluating listening and speaking skills.
3. The development of a mini unit of instruction to introduce these skills to middle-years students.

Key findings of this study are:

1. Providing students with reasons why speaking and listening skills are important for life long learning and a common language about the requisite skills improves students' speaking and listening abilities.
2. When teachers develop an initial focus on teaching these skills, more ways are found to include these two strands of into all units of study in Language Arts.
3. This process of action research is an extension of reflective practice and has tremendous positive impact on the researcher's professional development.
4. It is quite clear that these skills need to be referred to over and over again. Without explicit direction from the teacher, students may not apply the skills they have learned.
5. It is impossible to evaluate all aspects of listening and speaking skills in a short time. Effective evaluation occurs on a frequent and ongoing basis throughout the year and with a variety of listening and speaking activities.
6. The development of criteria for "Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners" (Appendix B) and "Qualities of Effective Speakers" (Appendix A) is of great value in assisting teachers to integrate these strands across the curriculum.

The work we have accomplished is only a starting point in addressing the speaking and listening needs of middle-years students. Most of our work was conducted during Language Arts classes. Developing ways to integrate speaking and listening skills across the curriculum is necessary but beyond the scope of this study.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Problem and Rationale

The nucleus of the idea for this study was conceived through teacher discussion and reflection about teaching speaking and listening skills to middle-years students. Although Saskatchewan Education guidelines for grade 6-9 Language Arts state that 30–40 percent of the time devoted to this subject should focus on development of students' speaking and listening skills, it was our belief that teachers have access to very few instructional strategies or activities that mesh with the curriculum. Furthermore, the teachers involved in this study felt that some of the suggested activities were impractical for use with middle-years students and many were impractical to evaluate. Another problem identified was that there are few (if any) assessment tools to assist teachers in evaluating these critical areas.

To attempt to alleviate these concerns and improve our ability to teach speaking and listening skills the following research questions were developed:

1. How can middle-years teachers effectively develop and enhance the acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills?
2. What techniques are effective for assessing acquisition of middle-years students' speaking and listening skills?

In short, the purpose of this research project was to begin to identify instructional strategies and activities that support the development of students' speaking and listening skills. Secondly, since our initial search for strategies and/or assessment tools to evaluate speaking and listening came up empty-handed, we wanted to develop and evaluate the practicality of assessment techniques that could assist teachers in the process of evaluating students' speaking and listening abilities.

The research questions led to the outgrowth of five primary objectives to guide us in setting up and conducting our research plans:

1. Review current research to gather possible ideas for teaching strategies and activities that teachers can use to develop speaking and listening skills.
2. Apply instructional strategies in the day-to-day teaching of Language Arts.
3. Evaluate the usefulness of the activities from both a teacher's and a student's perspective.
4. Identify techniques for the assessment of speaking and listening skills (such as rubrics or check lists) and evaluate the usefulness of these techniques.
5. Present the findings of the activities to teachers through professional development presentations (such as the annual Teachers' Institute) and subsequent development of a resource package to support the teaching of these strands.

Description of the Study

Calhoun (1994) describes action research as studying what's happening in a school, deciding if improvement in instruction is needed, examining the effects of what was tried, and then beginning the process again. This aptly describes the process we utilized in the following study. At the heart of this process was a sincere desire to improve our ability to teach speaking and listening skills and contribute some practical ways other teachers could do the same.

The context for the study was Montgomery School in the Saskatoon Public School Division. Montgomery School is a K-8 elementary school with a student population of about 245 students. It is located in a unique suburban area in the extreme southwest corner of the city.

Limitations and Delimitations

Montgomery School is a small elementary school. The principal researchers worked with their homerooms (grade 6-7 and grade 8). The strategies and materials developed for this project have only been used in their entirety with these classes. Consequently, we do not expect that the results found are generalizable to the larger population of middle-year students, nor that all teachers may view the materials as worthwhile. Although we believe our work will be positively received, a more widespread "field testing" of what we have produced is necessary.

The work we have accomplished is only a starting point in addressing the speaking and listening needs of middle-years students. Most of our work was conducted during Language Arts classes. Developing ways to integrate speaking and listening skills across the curriculum is necessary but beyond the scope of this study.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Each principal researcher was assigned an area of professional print and non-print resources to study to help us set direction for this project. David Wipf conducted an academic literature review, Tammy Jung explored existing curricula in Saskatchewan and Alberta and Heidi Osterwalder examined available instructional resources. The individual reports follow. Please note it was decided to write these sections using an informal first person voice.

Academic Literature Review (David Wipf)

This section is not intended to be an exhaustive literature review, rather, I limited the search to information that was specifically related to or could be adapted for the purposes of this study.

Lundsteen (1979) provided us with a solid definition of listening, namely, “the process by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind” (p. 1). Conversely, speaking is converting meaning in the mind to spoken language. The idea of listening as meaning or “sense making” readily fit with the needs of the study and seemed to be well understood by middle-years students. Further, Lundsteen’s work generated a framework of questions that could be used to evaluate teaching-learning materials that we would develop. Lundsteen suggests that listening skills are the foundation for speaking, reading and writing skills, but that listening skills are generally not widely taught. Lundsteen also provides evidence that specific instruction in listening positively contributes to improved listening skills and to the improvement of related areas like reading.

In Listening Skills Schoolwide, Devine (1982) presents a scope and sequence for listening skills. This information was essential for our lesson development in listening. This framework was also useful for comparative purposes in examination of Saskatchewan Education’s Saskatchewan Listening and Speaking Assessment.

Specific strategies for improving listening comprehension or information processing were outlined by Lasky (1985). Of particular interest to this study were:

1. Verbal Mediation – overt and covert talking, explaining, ordering or instructing oneself.
2. Rehearsal – active/aloud or silent.
3. Paraphrasing – message is transformed into the child’s own words and integrated with information presented.
4. Visual Imagery – drawing or describing a mental picture to portray the ideas or information presented.
5. Analysis of key ideas and networking – identify important words or concepts and relate them to familiar concepts. The student then elaborates and builds networks or bridges from stored ideas to new concepts.
6. Systematic retrieval strategy – ideas are elaborated on verbally and related to previously known ideas. These elaborations are understanding, thinking about and retrieval of the material to be remembered. Self-questioning and interrogative strategies are used.

The above suggestions were very useful in that they provided concrete direction and ideas to be used in the development of lesson plans for listening and speaking. Laskey’s work, however, did not present sample activities for application of these strategies within the context of the middle-years classroom.

Reed (1989) provided an example of speaking and listening assessment checklists. It also presented a Likert-type rating scale that could be used to generally gather data on student’s listening and speaking behaviors. Although this was the only assessment instrument I found that was practical for the classroom, it was not comprehensive enough to be used with middle-years students. The checklists were helpful in providing us with one way of structuring an assessment tool.

The above information provided us with much thought for discussion and assisted us in developing the necessary direction with which to begin the study.

Curriculum Resources (Tammy Jung)

After reviewing the [Saskatchewan English Language Arts Curriculum Guide](#) for grades 6-9, I began to realize that this resource provided very little direction for teachers. The curriculum guide for the listening and speaking strand of Language Arts was very vague in terms of activities and evaluation. The purposes for listening and speaking were fairly helpful and offered us some direction when coming up with our own qualities of Thoughtful speakers and listeners. The developmental stages of both speaking and listening were outlined as well to provide the teacher with direction in analyzing students' skills. Upon further evaluation I was introduced to speaking and listening activities to support instruction. The activities were valid and useful; however, the question was, "How and where do I use these activities within the thematic units of study?" Another shortcoming of the curriculum was in the area of evaluation. The curriculum indicates that listening and speaking should be at least 30-40 percent of the instruction in Language Arts. The curriculum does a poor job in providing evaluation tools in evaluating the listening and speaking activities. Some general assessment checklists are provided; however, most are very vague and cannot be translated into a percentage grade for reporting purposes.

I also reviewed the [English Language Arts Outcomes Kindergarten to Grade Nine Curriculum](#) created by Alberta Education and found it, too, to be very vague. The introduction provides a short paragraph about the benefits of listening and speaking for students. The curriculum does not divide Language Arts into the four strands of reading, writing, listening and speaking like Saskatchewan's curriculum does. There are very few activities provided in this area and no evaluative tools.

Instructional Resources (Heidi Osterwalder)

I was at first quite pleasantly surprised at the results of my search for current instructional resources that would support teachers in their efforts to incorporate speaking and listening into their Language Arts program. In scouring the University of Saskatchewan's Education Library, the STF's Stewart Resources Centre, Saskatoon Public Board of Education's libraries, and the Internet I uncovered several resources that looked promising. Under closer inspection, however, I realized that most of these resources would not fit our plans for various reasons. Some of the materials were intended for either younger or older audiences. The activities may have been adaptable, but at face value, they were not appropriate for the needs of middle-years students and teachers. Other resources were not designed to be incorporated into a streamlined Language Arts program: they were set up to be separate speaking and listening programs. Our curriculum demands that we integrate the teaching of the four strands as much as possible and these materials were not useful for our purposes.

A couple of gems did emerge from this mining process. [Speaking Our Minds: A Guide to Public Speaking for Canadians](#) (Barnard, 1996) became an indispensable resource in developing activities to teach the skills we outlined for speaking. Although the title suggests a focus on formal speaking, we adapted the activities to apply to skills needed for both formal and informal speech. The [Saskatchewan Listening and Speaking Assessment: Summary of Findings Grade 8](#) (Saskatchewan Education, 1999) became a key resource as we struggled to create a list of criteria for listening skills. These and other speaking and listening resources can be found in the reference section.

It became apparent to us that we would be creating the bulk of our resources either from scratch or adapting/modeling them after ideas we had found in our search. Initially, this appeared to be a daunting task. As we laboured through it, focuses emerged and slowly we found ourselves moving forward rather than just treading water!

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

The methodology was guided by the research questions, namely: 1) How can middle-years teachers effectively develop and enhance the acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills? and, 2) What techniques are effective for assessing acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills? We generated these research questions to give us focus, to guide our data gathering, and to provide a direction for each research meeting.

The ideas for our research came from our perception that the grade 6-9 Saskatchewan English Language Arts curriculum lacked instructional activities and evaluation/assessment strategies. Upon dialogue with other colleagues, we realized this view was shared. Again, given that it is recommended that thirty to forty percent of the curriculum focus on teaching listening and speaking, much more support in the form of instructional activities, resources and assessment techniques, in our view, were needed to do this teaching effectively. These issues were discussed at length and it became evident that solutions could only be found if the financial resources, such as could be provided by the McDowell Foundation, were available to examine the problems in a collaborative and detailed way.

In June 1999, when we found out that we had received the McDowell grant, we met as a team to decide a research strategy. We felt that it was first necessary to examine the current research and resources available in the area of listening and speaking. We decided to meet as a team in August 1999 to analyze materials and information gathered during the summer. We examined information from three areas: Academic Literature, Current Curriculum and Instructional Resources.

After examining these materials we decided that we first needed to create criteria outlining the qualities of Thoughtful speakers and listeners. With the help of Barb Elliott (Speech/Language Pathologist, Saskatoon Public School Division), we found examples of criteria lists and modified these to create our own unique list. This process took several meetings and resulted in the creation of The Qualities of Effective Speakers (Appendix A) and The Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners (Appendix B).

From this criteria list we then developed an action plan for the following meetings, which were held every second week for half of a teaching day. A complete list of our meeting dates can be seen in Appendix N. During these subsequent meetings, we gathered notes and made plans for direction in our research. After the qualities list for effective listeners and speakers was established, we found it necessary to find an outlet in order to teach these qualities to our students. We decided that we needed to come up with a Speaking and Listening Mini Unit (see Appendix C) to teach the students what each quality looked like in listening and speaking. We felt it was then necessary to actually teach this unit to see if the activities were effective in achieving their purpose. We also felt it was necessary to gain feedback from other colleagues on the Speaking and Listening Mini Unit and gave samples to individuals on the Saskatoon Public English Language Arts Curriculum Committee to try. We also provided other colleagues in the Saskatoon Public system the opportunity to offer their feedback by providing the unit for them at the annual Winter Institute.

The opportunity to meet every two weeks was certainly beneficial. We had sufficient time to think about our research questions and provide feedback to one another on what was working and what needed to be done for further research. Informal minutes were kept of these meetings to guide our actions, to keep track of individual duties and to set agendas for future meetings.

Upon the completion of the Speaking and Listening Mini Unit, we realized that the most successful way to evaluate listening and speaking skills was to create a generic rubric for all formal and informal speaking and listening opportunities. We thought it would be most productive for teachers to have a rubric to work with that would meet most of their assessment/evaluative needs. This was a challenging process; however, we were able to establish a rubric to coincide with the qualities of Thoughtful listeners (Appendix E) and speakers (see Appendix D).

The above process of data gathering was beneficial in that it was ongoing. Questions were generated from ongoing dialogue and resulted in further data gathering as the research progressed. The analysis of the data was progressive as well: we often started each meeting with informal analysis of the results of trying speaking and listening skills with students, or with personal reflection on the materials we created. Many people were also involved in analyzing the information or activities we created. Often these individuals were colleagues who served on the Language Arts Curriculum committee and were interested in our work. The students were involved in assessing the listening and speaking activities, which were taught in the activities and the Speaking and Listening Mini Unit. We also developed a Speaking and Listening General Student Evaluation Form to facilitate student feedback (Appendix K). Any colleagues who were interested were given the Mini Unit and rubrics and asked to try these with their classes and provide us with suggestions for improvement. Barb Elliott consistently provided us with constructive criticism on the qualities and criteria established to effectively assess speaking and listening skills. The provision of a perspective from the field of Speech/Language Pathology greatly contributed to the quality of the product.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

Our research questions imply a need for teachers to have resources at their fingertips to support the teaching and evaluation of speaking and listening skills in their classrooms. As stated earlier, during the research process we did not find any one existing resource that we could apply directly to our project. Materials containing ideas that we found helpful needed to be modified to varying degrees to fit our needs. To a large extent, we created our own materials for teaching and evaluating speaking and listening skills in middle-years classrooms.

Research Question #1

How can middle-years teachers effectively develop and enhance the acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills?

Before creating activities for teaching speaking and listening skills, we needed to identify exactly what skills were essential for students to acquire at this level. These lists of criteria became our “Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners” (Appendix B) and “Qualities of Effective Speakers” (Appendix A). “Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners” outlines six skills that students must focus on to become thoughtful listeners. Accompanying each skill is a suggested activity/assessment strategy for teaching and evaluating the skill. “Qualities of Thoughtful Speakers” highlights skills that students must be taught in order to develop and improve upon their speaking abilities.

These criteria lists became a springboard for the development of a “Speaking and Listening Mini Unit” (Appendix C). We became increasingly aware that teachers need a starting point for teaching the skills we had outlined. We realized that students needed lessons and activities that would introduce them to the language and terminology associated with the skills they would be expected to learn. If our goal was to enable students to transfer their knowledge and apply it to everyday speaking and listening situations, teachers and students would need a solid base of common understanding regarding the skills they were working towards. In an effort to address these needs, we created the mini unit.

This package was designed to meet three objectives. The first objective was to make students aware of a need for continuing development of speaking and listening skills. Middle-years students are on a relentless quest to understand why they must learn things. We hope the “Speaking and Listening Mini Unit” initially provides them with some responses to their inquiries. The second component contains activities to teach each skill outlined in the “Qualities of Effective Speakers” (Appendix A) and “Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners” (Appendix B). This Mini Unit is just that: mini! It is not intended to be a panacea for speaking and listening instruction; rather, it is a starting point. Teachers can and should add to the activities and ideas included in this package. After teaching the skills, teachers should be regularly applying the learning to all curricular areas. In order for students to dutifully apply these skills, they must be assessed. Teachers must make it clear that effective speaking and listening skills are critical for life-long learning and outline why they are important. Whether we like it or not, giving students a mark on their speaking and listening is an effective way of communicating the importance of these areas! This led us to the next mountain in our research journey: assessment.

Research Question #2

What techniques are effective for assessing the acquisition of students' speaking and listening skills?

To assess students' speaking skills, we created a “Speaking Rubric” (Appendix D). The rubric contains criteria for evaluating each skill at levels one to four. It was designed for teachers to pick and choose the skills that they will evaluate. Trying to focus on all of the skills would exhaust both teacher and student! To facilitate ease of use, we designed a “Speaking Assessment: Rating Scale” (Appendix F). This form is to be used in conjunction with the rubric. The rubric gives the descriptors; the form provides teachers with a quick and easy way to communicate to students an evaluative grade. It should be mentioned that even though students would not necessarily be given the rubric each time they are assessed, they should be made aware of the descriptors for each level. To aid teachers in using this assessment tool, we have provided a cleverly titled document called “Using the Speaking Assessment Rating Scale” (Appendix G).

Assessment of listening skills follows a similar format. The “Listening Rubric” (Appendix E) has four levels and, again, includes too many features to use in one assessment. The teacher needs to let students know beforehand which areas are being assessed and focus specifically on them when evaluating the listener. Because suggestions for assessment strategies were included in “Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners” (Appendix B), writing a document on how to apply the rubric to the activities was unnecessary.

In addition to teacher assessments of students’ skills, we also created student self- assessments for both speaking (Appendix H) and listening (Appendix I). These documents are intended for use throughout the year as a way of focussing students on their growth as listeners and speakers. The teacher assessments noted above can also be adapted for use as both peer and self-assessment tools. It is imperative for students to become responsible for their own learning, especially at the middle-years level. They need to see themselves as active members of the learning process. Through involvement in evaluation, students can begin to see themselves and their skills more clearly. They are not victims at the mercy of the teacher’s red pen. Instead, they are encouraged to realistically assess their own skills and compare them with the teacher’s evaluation.

Finally, in an effort to get feedback on these activities and assessment tools, we created forms for teachers and students to evaluate our products, namely, the “Teacher and Student Assessment of Speaking and Listening Activities” (Appendix J) and “Speaking and Listening General Student Evaluation Form” (Appendix K).

At the date of this writing, we have not been able to get much feedback from classrooms outside our own. From our own experience and that of our students, we were able to make some general statements regarding the teaching and evaluation of speaking and listening skills this year. Students were able to articulate many of the skills needed in both speaking and listening on an evaluation form. It is quite clear that, like everything else, these skills need to be referred to over and over again. It would be interesting to somehow quantify and qualify the extent of student learning throughout the process of repetition and practice.

Another statement is related to the concept of repetition and practice of skills. Without explicit direction from the teacher, students may not apply the skills they have learned. For example, unless students are told that the teacher will be looking for a specific listening and/or speaking skill(s) during a Literature Circle meeting, many students may not speak and listen as effectively as they could. Accountability and regular practice are essential for the internalization of skills!

One last comment regarding the products we have created is that we have not “field-tested” them nearly as much as we would have liked. The “Speaking and Listening Mini Unit” (Appendix C) has been distributed to several teachers; some feedback has been received; and it is apparent that this document is generally sound, but it needs refinement. The rubrics have not been used outside of our school to our knowledge. We have passed them around to consultants and other colleagues for comment, but the rubrics have not been applied across a broad spectrum of middle-years classes; therefore, further reliability testing is necessary. We believe we have worthwhile and useful starting points for teachers to begin working toward achieving the goal of 30-40 percent of instruction and assessment being in the area of speaking and listening. Having said that, we are acutely aware of their rough and unrefined quality.

CHAPTER 5:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Benefits for the Researchers

The benefits of doing the research have been tremendous. On a personal level, we have each had the opportunity to work as a team and learn one process for action research. This process has been an extension of reflective practice. We have gained the time and resources to reflect on our initial questions and have learned how to do this productively. In the process of engaging in reflective practice, we have taken a difficult task and narrowed it down to a specific focus and direction. Upon completion of the research, we believe we have found meaningful answers to our questions. We feel the answers will provide a body of knowledge and starting point for teachers. This whole action research process has allowed us to gain confidence and encouraged us to take risks. This process has potential as a means to support instructional growth and change in schools. It has also motivated us to submit a proposal to the McDowell Foundation for a school-wide project for 2000-01.

Benefits for Teachers

Our team has developed a focus for listening and speaking in our teaching. We are making a more conscious effort to include these two strands of Language Arts into all our units. We also find the rubrics and assessments very useful. These evaluation tools help us give a grade and percentage to listening and speaking.

Benefits for Students

The students have also gained from our research. With the benefit of a more focused delivery of listening and speaking skills, the students have gained an understanding of what these skills should look like. They have transferred the knowledge acquired into other subject areas. They have gained more confidence in speaking in front of the class and are taking more risks in the area of speaking. We have provided the students with reasons why speaking and listening skills are important for life-long learning and ways to determine if they are making progress in the acquisition of these skills.

Benefits for the Teaching Profession

We have provided a support package for teaching speaking and listening skills that fills a perceived need. The teachers have access to teacher-developed resources that are teacher friendly. We have also provided a foundation for further research and research questions within the area of teaching speaking and listening skills.

Recommendations for Teachers

We suggest that teachers try the speaking and listening mini unit at the beginning of the year to introduce speaking and listening skills to the students. The students will then have the knowledge and language to transfer to other subjects. It is important for teachers to try to consciously incorporate the speaking and listening skills in their unit planning across the curriculum. This inclusion will support the 30-40 percent of the Language Arts curriculum that must focus on teaching speaking and listening skills. Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers should not try to focus on all the strategies for teaching speaking and listening at once. The strategies are too overwhelming to use in one day or in one unit.

Recommendations for Curriculum Renewal

We have suggestions for curriculum renewal that would help support the listening and speaking section of the current grade 6-9 Language Arts curriculum. We suggest that the strategies presented here, as well as others, be incorporated when teaching the qualities of speaking and listening. It is important to give teachers a means to teach what the qualities look like. We also recommend that a general rubric be included to evaluate both speaking and listening. This rubric should be used to evaluate all formal and informal listening and speaking activities.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following are some suggestions that we would make for further research in the area of speaking and listening activities and assessment.

1. We feel that the rubrics we have formulated should be submitted to reliability testing.
2. We believe research of how K-5 teachers are providing for instruction, assessment and evaluation of listening and speaking skills is necessary.
3. Further to the findings that such a study might uncover, the development of a continuum of skills and activities for teaching speaking and listening skills (from K-12) should be attempted.

4. The design and testing of pretests and post tests to assess the speaking and listening abilities of students would be an invaluable tool for teachers.
5. A final recommendation is to research whether or not Saskatchewan teachers are providing a 30-40 percent emphasis in their teaching in the areas of listening and speaking.

Conclusion

We as a research team have valued the time and opportunity to complete this project. We learned that research, especially action research, can be very overwhelming at first. Once we had established specific guiding questions, the research gained the direction we needed. Working as a research team was very rewarding. We have gained the knowledge and insight from varying perspectives and have used this knowledge to answer our questions and develop our materials and activities. We have come to the conclusion that curriculum guides do not have all the answers for teachers. It is important to create materials to support the curriculum if the curriculum does not do justice to a certain area of learning. After doing our initial search of materials and resources for listening and speaking, we found that there was not a lot of support for our specific questions and that we needed to create our own materials. We are using the activities and speaking and listening language every day in our teaching and find that the students are positively responding to them. We are now making a conscious effort to integrate listening and speaking activities in all our Language Arts units and units from other disciplines. As a result, participation in this project, from its inception to completion, has not only been fun and rewarding, but it has also helped us become better teachers!

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APPENDIX A:

Qualities of Thoughtful Speakers

A. Form: How?

Good Speakers:

1. Use grammatically correct and complete sentences.

Check for:

- Pronoun usage
- Word order
- Verb tense agreement
- Plural formation
- Question formation
- Use of prefixes/suffixes
- Negative contractions

2. Use a variety of sentence types.

Check for:

- Affirmative/declarative statements
- Negative statements
- Interrogatives
- Sentences with clauses
- Adverbial discourse devices(e.g. therefore, in other words, so . . .)

3. Pronounce sounds correctly.

Check for:

- Articulation of problematic sounds such as /s/,/r/,/th/

B. Content: What?

Good Speakers:

1. Use appropriate vocabulary for the situation (audience).

Check for:

- Use of overly formal or informal language
- Vocabulary level that is too difficult or easy

2. Use specific word choices (so listener clearly understands meaning).

Check for:

- Use of unclear or confusing terminology
- Use of non-specific referents (e.g. “thing”, “stuff” . . .)
- Difficulty retrieving words

3. Organize their thoughts.

Check for:

- Did you provide clear evidence of a logical sequence for your topics/ideas?
- Did you explain your organizational framework in your introduction?
- Did you highlight key points clearly?
- Did you summarize key points at the end of your presentation?
- Were your ideas presented clearly and concisely, or did you tend to ramble or stray off topic?

4. Use appropriate humor.

Check for:

- Presence of humor
- Fit of humor with context

C. Voice: Delivery/Enunciation

Good Speakers:

1. Demonstrate effective verbal/voice characteristics.

Check for:

- Intonation(modulation of pitch)
- Loudness level
- Rate of speech
- Tempo/fluency of speech
- Overuse of filler words (e.g. like, um, uh, well, y' know . . .)

D. Overall Effectiveness (Details, Use)

Good speakers:

1. Demonstrate appropriate body language for the message.

Check for:

- Eye contact
- Physical stance/body posturing
- Hand movements/gestures
- Facial expressions
- Audience attentiveness

2. Pay attention to the non-verbal language of the listener.

Check for:

- Speaker awareness of the listener/audience
- How well the audience was engaged
- Awareness of time constraints

APPENDIX B:

Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners

Thoughtful listeners...

1. Prepare to Listen

a) They think about what they already know on the topic (prior knowledge) or ask relevant questions

Assessment strategy:

- Write or web what you know about this topic OR list several questions you would like to find answers to regarding this topic
- KWL strategy

b) They know why they are listening and try to understand the speaker's purpose in speaking

Assessment strategy:

- Write down the reason(s) that you are listening (e.g. for entertainment, information, details or main point; to distinguish fact from opinion, to evaluate a presentation, discussion...). What is the point of your listening?
- Write down the purpose(s) this speaker may have in talking (e.g. to persuade, to inform...for more purposes see Appendix L: Purposes and Formats for Speaking).

2. Stay Focused and Attentive

They look at the speaker and give the speaker their complete attention and ignore distractions

Assessment strategy:

- Appendix N: Stay Focused and Attentive Seating Plan Observation Form

3. Search for Meaning

They check their understanding of the message by evaluating and reflecting on the message, making connections, making inferences and making and confirming predictions.

Assessment strategy:

- Written: Stop in middle of presentation and ask the students to write down their questions, thoughts, predictions, connections, etc. relating to the topic.

4. Adjust Listening as Needed

a) They know whether close or cursory listening is required and can identify cues regarding the importance of information.

Assessment strategy

- Written response on own listening behaviour: e.g. " I knew I needed to listen closely when I heard the word "first"....when the speaker raised her voice".

b) They take useful notes which capture main points, using a variety of strategies such as outlining, mapping, categorizing, adding information of their own or questions for later study.

Assessment strategy

- Mark students' notes.

5. Respond to the Message, Presentation and Speaker

They are able to identify aspects of the message, the presentation and the speaker before forming an opinion or making evaluative statements.

Assessment strategy

- Written response based on some or all of the following questions:
- What are the key points of the message?
- What methods were used in the presentation? (e.g. visuals, cue words, handouts/outline, examples, involving audience...)
- What were the characteristics of the speaker? (e.g. loudness, pitch, rate, use of fillers, eye contact, body language, articulation...)

6. Evaluate the Message, Presentation, Speaker and Own Understanding

They can thoughtfully evaluate and give logical reasons for their opinions regarding the message, presentation, speaker and their own understanding.

Assessment strategy

- Written response based on some or all of the following questions:
- What is your opinion of the speaker and the presentation?
- Did you understand the main message? If yes, what is your opinion of this message? If no, what made it difficult for you to understand the message? (e.g. The vocabulary was too difficult, I couldn't hear the speaker...)

APPENDIX C:

Speaking and Listening Mini Unit

Introduction: Importance of Speaking and Listening in Communication

A. Speaking Activity: (see Mini Unit Appendix 1)

B. Listening Activity: Following Oral Directions (see Mini Unit Appendix 2)

- Quick Draw
- Scrambles Sentences
- Turn Around Numbers

C. Speaking and Listening Activity: Partner Activity (see Mini Unit Appendix 3)

- Speaking and Listening Skills

Debriefing discussion after each activity

Guiding questions:

- What made this activity difficult/easy?
- Effective Speaking and Listening Chart (see Mini Unit Appendix 14)

Speaking Skills

1. Overall Effectiveness

A. Eye Contact

- Teacher chooses a student who will demonstrate good eye contact and poor eye contact during a short improvisation speech (ie. hockey). The student will show good eye contact until the teacher gives the student a pre-arranged signal. Then he/she will display poor eye contact.
- Class discussion on importance of good eye contact during the delivery of a speech.

B. Body Stance

- Teacher distributes cue cards of improper body stances (see Mini Unit Appendix 4: Weird Postures)
- Students demonstrate the improper stance indicated on the card while giving a short improv speech.
- The audience tries to distinguish what type of body stance was displayed and why it was ineffective.

C. Gestures

- The best way to teach this concept is through a video depicting someone giving a speech. The students should pick out gestures used, overuse of gestures, underuse of gestures. The teacher could make this video by taping news, sports, or other documentary style programs. Another option is to use a video from another subject area that would fit for this activity (e.g. Michael Pritchard videos for Lifestyles—see Mini Unit Appendix 13 for list of titles).
- During video, students should take notes on gestures used, overuse of gestures, underuse of gestures.
- After viewing, discuss these three areas.

D. Facial Expression

- Use the same process as part C.
- Expressions wheel in “Performing” (see Mini Unit Appendix 5).

E. Audience Attentiveness

- A student will leave the room to prepare mentally a one-minute improv speech.
- The teacher will instruct the rest of the class to listen silently, display good eye contact and body language while the student speaks. At a cue (e.g. teacher snaps finger), the audience is to show poor eye contact, body language and start to whisper...
- The student will then come into the classroom and the activity will proceed as planned.
- Discussion should focus on:
 - How did the speaker feel at both levels of audience attentiveness?
 - As an audience, why is it important to be attentive to the speaker?
 - What are signs of audience inattentiveness?
 - How can you regain the audience's attention?

F. Overuse of Fillers

- Teacher reads a paragraph/speaks on a topic using fillers (ums, ahs, like, OK, hmm...). Students should identify the problem in this speech. Discuss common fillers and why they detract from a speech.

2. Vocal Delivery/Enunciation

A. Intonation

- Teacher demonstrates how the meaning of a phrase is changed by tone of voice by saying same phrase in several different tones and emphasizing different words.

“Are you going to be home for supper tonight?” (pleasant, caring voice; sarcastic, angry, bored, inquisitive, surprised)

“ARE you going to be home for supper tonight?”

“Are YOU going to be home for supper tonight?”

“Are you going to be HOME for supper tonight?”

“Are you going to be home for supper TONIGHT?”

- Have students make up their own sentences and say them to the class. Class tries to identify the emotion or intent conveyed.

B. Loudness/Rate/Fluency

- Teacher reads a paragraph/speaks on a topic using different volumes (quiet, yelling, ...), rates (slow, fast), fluency (too many pauses, smooth or choppy...). Students should identify the problem in this speech. Discuss common fillers and why they detract from a speech.

Listening Skills

1. Prepare to listen

Prior knowledge

Before engaging in a formal listening activity (e.g. presentation, speech, video...), try these activities to help students prepare to listen by considering their prior knowledge on the topic.

- KWL (see Mini Unit Appendix 6).
- Brainstorming/Mapping/Listing.
- Writing Questions: about what you want to know.

Purpose

These activities focus on the listener's purpose and the speaker's purpose.

- Learn about the speaker/topic ahead of time (research).
- Brainstorm possible purposes for listening.
- Show class the list of purposes for listening (see Mini Unit Appendix 7) and discuss possible listening situations that would apply for each purpose.
- Before each listening situation, have the class identify the purpose for listening.

2. Stay focused and attentive

- As a class, fill out the chart describing what staying focused and attentive looks like, does not look like, what it sounds like and does not sound like (see Mini Unit Appendix 9).

3. Search for meaning

- Questioning and predicting: Teacher reads a short story or news article to the class. In the middle, the teacher should stop and ask students to write down any questions or predictions they have at that moment.
- Connecting: After listening to formal or informal speaking, ask the students: How does this information apply to your life? To others' lives? Can you relate to what was said?

4. Adjust Listening

Cues

- Brainstorm cues that may be used by speakers to let listeners know when an important point is coming.
- Give students list of transition words/cues (see Mini Unit Appendix 10).
- Listen to a speech on video or audiotape (this can be taped from news, requested from CBC radio, made by a teacher, Michael Pritchard video...). Students should take notes on the cues that they heard.

Notetaking

- If you will be watching an informational video in any subject area, preview the video and prepare a fill in the blank, true/false sheet. As they listen to the video, they must record the information on the sheet (see Mini Unit Appendix 11).
- Teacher can show video or give a lecture in any subject area (ie. math, science, social...) making an effort to use cue words. Students should jot down points when they hear the cue words.
- Teach the split page method (see Mini Unit Appendix 12).
- While listening to a presentation, guest speaker, newspaper/magazine article being read (should be on a topic students could have an opinion), students write down key points in the left column of the sheet. After listening, students then write their opinions of those key points in the right hand column of the sheet.

5. Respond to the message, presentation, speaker

Often students will respond to a speaker, video, etc by saying it was simply good or bad without articulating reasons for their opinions. Also, they often tend to judge a presentation based on a few small things that bothered them (such as the speaker's hair or mannerisms) rather than considering all parts of the speaking: the message, the presentation, and the speaker. This activity is designed to help students make more articulate and reasonable responses to what they hear.

- Show a video in any subject. Students write three different responses:
 - What are the key points of the message?
 - What methods were used in the presentation (e.g. visuals, transition words, body language...)?
 - What were the characteristics of the speaker?

6. Evaluate the message, presentation, speaker and own understanding

This activity is similar to the one above. The only difference is that students are now asked to evaluate the three aspects of what they heard.

- Using the same video, students write two responses:
 - What is your opinion of the speaker and the presentation?
 - Do you understand the main message? If yes, what is your opinion of this message? If no, what made it difficult for you to understand the message (distractions, vocabulary, ...)?

APPENDICES FOR MINI UNIT

1. Speaking Activity
2. Following Directions activities (3)
3. Partner Speaking/Listening Activity
4. Body Stance: Weird Postures activity
5. Performing: speaking skills activities
6. KWL sheets
7. Purposes for Listening
8. Purposes and Activities for Listening
9. Staying Focused and Attentive Chart
10. Cue Words for Listening
11. Sample Video Note Taking Sheet (Climate Change)
12. Notetaking: Split Page form
13. Michael Pritchard Video List
14. Effective Speaking and Listening Chart

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 1

SPEAKING ACTIVITY

The following activity can be done with any reasonably sized class and can be structured using a jigsaw cooperative learning approach.

Divide the class into heterogeneous groups of four students. Provide a place for each group to work where they will not overhear the other groups. Place a 30 minute time limit on the first activity.

Phase 1:

During this 30 minute time frame, the group should invent a new spoken language. The language should include words for “Hello”, two or three sentences that refer to common human needs and an expression for “Goodbye”. It is critical that the new words for the above can be “fluently” spoken and known by each group member.

Phase 2:

Regroup the students so that every group has four new members – one from a different language group. Form pairs with this group. Each partner must now teach the new language to the other without using any written or spoken English. Allow 15 to 20 minutes for this activity.

Phase 3:

Debrief with the entire class. Each group can share their language for all to hear. Some guiding questions for follow up may be:

- How did you feel about teaching (or learning) the other person’s language.
- What helped you learn the language? What strategies did you use to teach the language?
- What barriers can you identify that made communication difficult?

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 2

Following Directions – 1

Turn Around Numbers

This number activity challenges students to listen carefully to and follow directions. It involves having students count backward and forward. Ask students to take out a piece of lined paper. Then give them a series of directions. (You can select any sequence of steps you wish, but should keep in mind your students' abilities.) Here's an example.

1. On the 12th line, write the number 86.
2. On the line underneath, count backward five numbers and write the new number.
3. Skip a line, count forward three numbers, and write the new number.
4. Count backward eight, forward two and write the new number on the next line.
5. On the next line, count forward nine and write the new number.
6. Count backward eight, count backward six, and write the new number on the next line.
7. Underline the new number. What is it?

Following Directions – 2

Quick Draw

You can use art as well as numbers to sharpen students' abilities to follow directions. Have each student take out a sheet of paper and a pencil. Explain to students that you are going to read a series of directions for them to follow. Then read these directions:

1. In the bottom left-hand corner of the paper, draw a square.
2. In the bottom right-hand corner of the paper, draw a square.
3. Draw a circle in the middle of each square.
4. Put a dot in the centre of each circle.
5. Draw a line connecting the two squares.
6. Draw four triangles an inch from the top of the page.
7. Put an X in the first triangle on the right.
8. Draw a circle inside the second triangle from the right.
9. Draw a square inside the circle.
10. Put a square in the third triangle from the right.
11. Color in the last triangle.
12. Draw a circle around that triangle.
13. Draw a line across the middle of the page.
14. Use that line as one side of a rectangle.
15. Write your full name in script in the rectangle.
16. Draw a square directly above the rectangle.
17. Divide the square in half.
18. Color in half of the square.

Following Directions – 3

Scrambled Sentences

Write this sentence on the board and have students copy it into their notebooks:

**O xwen o my zoct xand O saiz, "Zoct, O broked my arml in hr plaxces."
Hex saiz, "Wellp, tayl xout of th laces."**

Then tell students to follow your directions to unscramble the sentence.

1. Change all the Z's to D's.
2. Cross off all the X's.
3. Add a T to the end of the second word, the beginning of the third word, and the beginning of the fifteenth word.
4. Change the three capital O's to capital I's.
5. Add a P to the beginning of the last word.
6. Cross off the last letter in the eleventh, thirteenth, and nineteenth words.
7. Put an s on the front of the twentieth word and cross off the last letter.
8. Add an or at the end of the fifth and ninth word.
9. Add an ee at the end of the fifteenth word.
10. Add ose at the end of the next to last word.

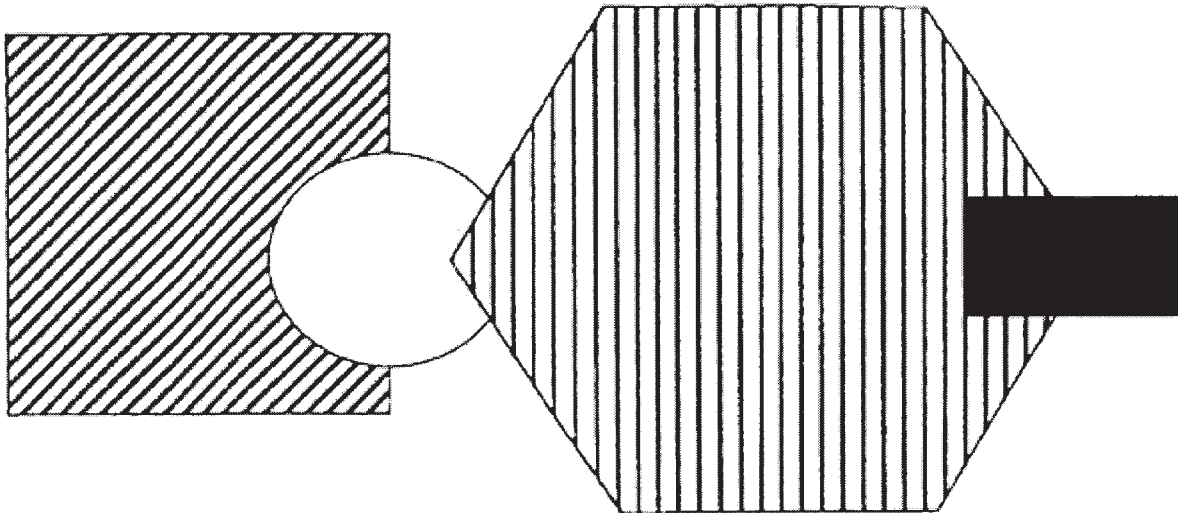
Corrected, the sentence reads:

**I went to my doctor and I said, "Doctor, I broke my arm in three places."
He said, "Well, stay out of those places."**

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 3

Courtesy of Linda Graves.

Speaking and Listening Skill: Partner Activity



Your job is to instruct your partners to draw this shape to the exact size of the drawing above. Use as many detailed instructions as possible. Your partners can ask you questions, but cannot show you their drawings until they are completed.

- When you are done, check to see if your partners used literal, interpretive and critical level listening skills.
- What made this assignment difficult?
- What made this assignment easy?
- What other factors might be helpful for your partners to know in completing this task?

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 4

Nervous Body Language – Body Actions to Avoid

1. With a class brainstorm examples of nervous behavior like posture, hand fidgeting, or jingling coins in a pocket.
2. Write the action on recipe cards that a nervous speaker might do.
3. Using a topic of your choice (eg. Favorite Bubblegum) exaggerate the action in a 30-second speech. The class must try to guess which of the actions is being portrayed.

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 5

Performing

For a complete description of preparing for a reader's theatre or other speaking performance refer to p. 57-65 of Readers Theatre: Performing the Text, by Susan Hill.

Prior to a Reading Performance:

- Read a selection out loud in a space by oneself
- Try singing the text to a favorite tune
- Highlight difficult words. Say them out loud clearly and slowly.
- If possible stand in an empty gym and project your voice so a fellow student at the back of the room can hear you
- Exaggerate expressions – overemphasize dramatic parts or change your voice to suit a particular character

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 6

KWL: Know, Want to Learn, Learn

As a pre-listening activity, you will only need to consider the K (what do I know?) and the W (what do I want to learn?). After listening, you will be able to identify the L (what did I learn?)

TOPIC: _____

What do I already KNOW about the topic?

What do I want to learn?

What have I learned?

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 7

Purposes for Listening

From Saskatchewan Middle Years Language Arts Curriculum Guide p. 85

Some purposes for listening are to:

- Gather knowledge and information
- Participate in discussion
- Form an opinion or make a judgement
- Empathize
- Share ideas, feelings and information
- Determine what is fact and what is opinion
- Determine bias, stereotyping or propaganda
- Follow directions
- Interpret and analyze information
- Appreciate or enjoy
- Clarify ideas
- State the main idea/theme and identify supporting details
- Select descriptive vocabulary

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 8

Purposes and Activities for Listening

PURPOSES ACTIVITIES:	LISTENING TO...
Gather knowledge and information	Teacher lecture, speaker on a topic, news
Follow direction	Directions for art activity, science lab...
Participate in discussion	Literature circles, book clubs, discussion in other subject areas
Interpret and analyze information	Videos, articles on an issue...
Form an opinion or make a judgement	Persuasive arguments, speeches, advertisements...
Appreciate and enjoy	Read aloud poems, stories, novels, storytelling
Empathize	Personal accounts, memoirs
Clarify ideas	Any speaker or presentation on a topic you already have some knowledge of (ie. veterans talking about war on remembrance day)
Share ideas, feelings and information	Talking circles, class meetings
State the main idea/theme and identify supporting details	Stories, speeches, articles, presentations
Determine what is fact and what is opinion	Persuasive speeches, news
Select descriptive vocabulary	Poems, descriptive paragraphs, analyzing any writing (during writer's workshop, too!)
Determine bias, stereotyping or propaganda	News, articles, advertising

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 9

Staying Focused and Attentive Charts

Staying Focused and Attentive looks like:

Staying Focused and Attentive sounds like:

Staying Focused and Attentive does not look like:

Staying Focused and Attentive does not sound like:

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 10

Cue Words for Listening

Cue words are used to grab the listener's attention and to indicate that something important will be stated. Listeners are cued to pay close attention to what is about to be said.

Words that can be used to emphasize a point:

Again	To repeat
For this reason	To emphasize
Truly	In fact

Words that can be used to conclude or summarize:

as a result	therefore
finally	in conclusion
in summary	to sum up
to wrap up	all in all
last	

Words that can be used to contrast things:

However	Yet
But	Although
On the other hand	Even though

Words that can be used to add information:

again	also
additionally	in addition
another	and
besides	for example
for instance	moreover
next	likewise
finally	as well
along with	equally important

Words that can be used to clarify:

In other words	For instance
That is	Put another way

Words that can be used to compare things:

In the same way	Similarly
Likewise	Like
As	Also

Words that can be used to indicate key points:

First, second, third...	Key
Important	Next

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 11

SAMPLE VIDEO NOTE-TAKING SHEET (GRADE SEVEN SCIENCE)

Climate Change

Video: The Greenhouse Effect

Dewey # 551.6 Gre

17 min. ©1990

(Available from most school system A/V libraries or through:

Scott Resource Inc.

PO Box 2121

Fort Collins, CO 80522

1-800-289-9299)

Any video could be used for this activity as long as a study guide is prepared beforehand.

1. Infrared radiation is _____ radiation given off by the earth.
2. The _____ means that heat is being kept close to the earth's surface.
3. We need this greenhouse effect. (True/False)
4. The more _____ gases there are, the more heat gets trapped near earth's surface. The result is a warmer _____.
5. A main greenhouse gas is _____.
6. Carbon dioxide helps keep heat near the earth. It also is critical to the _____ cycle.
7. The carbon cycle involves two things _____ and _____.
8. _____ are stored energy of ancient carbon cycles.
9. Since the eighteenth century (1700s), carbon dioxide has increased by _____ percent on earth.
10. This carbon dioxide being added is a result of burning _____.
11. A growing source of greenhouse gases in the destruction of _____.
12. Scientists think there were many cycles of warming and cooling of the climate in the past. (True/False)
13. Scientists use _____ to try to predict what the climate will do in the future.
14. Change in _____ can be related to warming of the climate.
15. Coastal flooding may be caused by warmer temperatures in _____ regions. Glaciers can melt and increase _____-levels.
16. Increased temperatures could cause shifts in _____.
17. All scientists agree with the prediction that greenhouse gases will warm out climate. (True/False)
18. To minimize risks of global warming, we could:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 12

Note-taking: Split Page Method

KEY POINT	MY OPINION/COMMENTS ON THIS POINT
1.	
2.	
3.	

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 13

Michael Pritchard Video List

These videos are recommended for use in this unit for the following reasons:

- They can be integrated into Middle Years Lifestyles curriculum seamlessly.
- Much of the content is presented in a speech style rather than story format, which makes it useful for analyzing speaking skills and for teaching listening and notetaking strategies.
- The content is appropriate and interesting for students at this age level. Previewing by the teacher is imperative, nevertheless.
- The videos are readily accessible. The Audio Visual Library has all twelve titles; some schools have individual videos as well.

Titles:

- Raising Your Parents
- Communication With Your Parents
- Depression and Suicide
- Friendship and Dating
- Sex
- Drinking and Driving
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Coping With Pressures
- Self Esteem
- Acting on Your Values
- The Power of Choice

The Power of Choice (video) series with comedian Michael Pritchard – San Francisco: Live Wire Video Production, c 1987

Raising Your Parents	.....158.2 RAI
Communication with Parents	.....158.2 COM
Depression and Suicide	.....158.1 DEP
Friendship and Dating	.....158.2 FRI
Sex	.....158 SEX
Drinking & Driving	.....158.1 DRV
Drugs and Alcohol Part I & II	.....158.1 DRV
Coping with Pressures	.....155.9 COP
Self Esteem	.....158 SEL
Acting on Your Values	.....158 ACT
The Power of Choice	.....158 POW

Available through:

Live Wire Video Publishers
3315 Sacramento St.
San Francisco CA
94118

(415) 564-9500

MINI UNIT APPENDIX 14

Effective Speaking and Listening Charts

<i>Effective Listening looks like:</i>	<i>Effective Listening sounds like:</i>
<i>Effective listening does not look like:</i>	<i>Effective listening does not sound like:</i>

<i>Effective speaking looks like:</i>	<i>Effective speaking sounds like:</i>
<i>Effective speaking does not look like:</i>	<i>Effective speaking does not sound like:</i>

APPENDIX D: Speaking Rubric

Features	1	2	3	4
Uses grammatically correct and complete sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than six errors • Errors detract from message to the point where it is difficult to follow or is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-6 errors • Audience notices errors and is distracted from the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 errors • Audience may not notice • Errors do not affect message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No detectable errors
Uses a variety of sentence types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No variety evident • Monotonous sentence use • Audience tunes out due to lack of sentence variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of sentence variety 50% of the time • 4-6 obvious gaps in speech when audience is distracted by lack of sentence variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of sentence variety 75% of the time • 1-3 gaps in speech where sentence variety is not evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of sentence variety throughout speech
Pronounces sounds correctly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than six errors • Errors detract from message to the point where it is difficult to follow or is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-6 errors • Audience notices errors and is distracted from the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 errors • Audience may not notice • Errors do not affect message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No detectable errors
Uses appropriate vocabulary for the context and needs of audience (ie. slang, level of language sophistication)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language used is inappropriate to the point where the message is lost • Audience tunes out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated use of an inappropriate word/phrase • 11-15 inappropriate words/phrases • Audience is distracted from message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than ten words/phrases that are inappropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No apparent discrepancies between context and vocabulary used
Makes specific word choices to clearly communicate meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word choice is too vague and general for the message to be clear • Audience is confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one or two points understandable due to equivocal or ambiguous terms • Most of message is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning is fairly clear • Ambiguous or general terms are evident occasionally, evoking questions in the mind of the listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticeably articulate • Specific and descriptive language aids transfer of message • Minimal ambiguity

Features	1	2	3	4
Organizes thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No organization evident • Scattered thoughts • Message is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two key points evident • Message is fragmented and unclear • No cue words used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main points are evident but not logically ordered and/or emphasized • Cue words may or may not be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of major points is evident • Logical order • Cue words used to aid audience understanding
Uses appropriate humor (type and amount of humor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humor becomes the focus • No clear message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience struggles to maintain focus and understand the message 50% of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 noticeably inappropriate uses of humor • Audience able to maintain focus at least 75% of the time • Message retained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of humor supports and enhances message delivery • No detectable inappropriate uses of humor
Demonstrates effective verbal/voice characteristics (loudness, rate, use of fillers, pitch and fluency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors are noticed 75% of the time • Message is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems evident 50% of the time • Audience struggles to understand message 50% of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems evident 25% of the time • Message not seriously affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No detectable problems
Demonstrates appropriate body language for the situation (body posture, gestures, facial expression)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions detract from the message throughout speech • Bulk of message is lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-5 inappropriate actions • Audience notices inappropriate actions • Message is negatively affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 inappropriate actions that do not seriously affect message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body language supports and enhances message delivery • No detectable inappropriate actions
Pays attention to the non-verbal language of the listener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience is attentive less than 25% of the time • No attempts to regain attention • Speaker unaware of audience inattentiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience is inattentive more than 50% of the time • Weak or ineffective attempts to regain audience attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience is inattentive 75% of the time • 1-3 attempts (may be successful) at regaining audience attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds audience attention throughout speech • Makes adjustments to regain and maintain audience attention

APPENDIX E: Listening Rubric

Features	1	2	3	4
Prepare to listen a) Prior knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no effort (0-1 ideas) made to display prior knowledge on topic or to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some effort (2-4 ideas) made to display prior knowledge on topic or to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable effort (5-8 ideas) made to display prior knowledge on topic or to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive effort (nine or more ideas) made to display prior knowledge on topic or to ask questions
Prepare to listen b) Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No effort to consider own or speaker's purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a purpose for own listening or a purpose for the speaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a purpose for both self and the speaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies more than one purpose for both self and for the speaker
Stay focused and attentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than five* strikes against (episodes of displaying behaviour that is not focused and attentive • More than 75% of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4* strikes against • Is not focused and attentive 50% of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2* strikes against • Is not focused and attentive 25% of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No strikes against • Shows no evidence of being unfocused and inattentive
Search for meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes little or no effort to display understanding • 0-1* ideas written 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some understanding of and connection to the message • 2-3* ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a reasonable understanding of and connection to the message • 4-5* ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows indepth understanding of and connection to the message • Six or more* ideas
Adjust listening as needed a) Identifying cue words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies less than 25% of verbal cues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 50% of the cues given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 75% of cues given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies more than 75% of cues given
Adjust listening as needed b) Makes useful notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes captured 25% of the main points or less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes captured 50% of the main points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes captured 75% of the main points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes captured 100% of the main points
Respond to the message, presentation and speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 0-25% of the key points and/or methods and/or speaker's characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 50% of the key points and/or methods and/or speaker's characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 75% of the key points and/or methods and/or speaker's characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 75% or more of the key points and/or methods and/or speaker's characteristics
Evaluate the message, presentation, speaker and own understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superficial opinions and evaluation • No reasons stated for these opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General opinions and evaluation • 1-2* obvious reasons given for these statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear opinions and evaluation • 3-4* logical reasons given for statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mature opinions and evaluation • Five or more* indepth reasons given for statements

Note: Starred (*) items indicate that the teacher should take into consideration the length of time and the expectations for the listener during the listening activity. In many areas of the rubric percentages made more sense for a quantitative guide; in other areas, a general number seemed more logical. Please go with your "gut feeling" on these numbers. Remember, this rubric is meant to guide, not entrap!

APPENDIX F:

Speaking Assessment: Rating Scale

Speaker's Name: _____

Assessor's Names: _____

Rate each part of speaking by circling the appropriate number (1 is low, 4 is high)

A. Form

- Correct grammar 1 2 3 4
- Complete sentences 1 2 3 4
- Variety of sentence types 1 2 3 4

Comments:

B. Content

- Appropriate vocabulary 1 2 3 4
- Specific word choice 1 2 3 4
- Organization 1 2 3 4
- Appropriate humor 1 2 3 4

C. Overall Effectiveness

- Eye contact 1 2 3 4
- Body stance 1 2 3 4
- Gestures 1 2 3 4
- Facial expression 1 2 3 4
- Audience attentiveness 1 2 3 4
- Overuse of fillers 1 2 3 4

D. Vocal Delivery/Enunciation

- Intonation/pitch 1 2 3 4
- Loudness 1 2 3 4
- Rate 1 2 3 4
- Fluency 1 2 3 4

Total _____

APPENDIX G:

Using the Speaking Assessment Rating Scale

This assessment tool can be used for both formal and informal speaking situations and can be used by students and teachers alike. The teacher should select the items that are to be assessed beforehand (four or five at the most!).

Situations for Use

The following is a list of speaking situations that may arise in a classroom for which the speaking skills of individual students can be assessed:

- Formal speeches (demonstration, recitation, artifact, storytelling, persuasive, informative, ...)
- Literature Circle presentations
- Literature Circle meetings/discussions
- Book talks
- Oral reading (poems, paragraphs, ...)
- Oral reports
- Drama (improvisation, Reader's Theatre, monologues, roleplay, puppetry...)
- Storytelling
- Talking Circles

Saving Sanity:

1. Assigning marks: What is a "1"? What makes it a "4"?
 - The Speaking Rubric contains descriptors for each of the main areas on the assessment form. Use it to identify the level and affirm your gut feeling!
2. When students are assessing another student:
 - Students will find it easier to evaluate components C and D on the rating scale. The teacher should evaluate A and B.
 - Assign three or four students to assess the speaker, each filling out a form
 - Those students then must agree on a rating for each item and provide written comments and reasons for their assessments. The consensus must be recorded on a new form. The teacher receives only ONE form from the group.
3. When teacher is assessing informal speaking in a group situation:
 - Choose only one student to assess at a time; don't tell the students who it is!
 - If the same group will be meeting several times (ie. Literature Circles), you should be able to complete an assessment on each student
 - Have another person sit with the group and complete the assessment while you the teacher monitor the rest of the class! (Ask your teacher librarian, a parent volunteer, your principal...)

APPENDIX H:

Effective Speaking Self Assessment

Underline the word that best describes your behaviour when speaking:

4. I use correct grammar in my speech.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
5. I use a variety of sentences in my speech.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
6. I pronounce letter and word sounds correctly.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
7. I use appropriate vocabulary for the situation (audience).
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
8. I use specific word choices so the listener clearly understands my meaning.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
9. I organize my thoughts before I speak.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
10. I use appropriate humor in my speech.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
11. I demonstrate appropriate body language for the message.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
12. I pay attention to the non-verbal language of the listener.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
13. I demonstrate effective verbal/voice characteristics (like loudness, rate of speech, tempo, modulation and filler words).
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never

Reflecting on my speaking . . .

It is important that you be very honest with yourself when you complete the speaking rating scale. Look closely at the results, and then complete the following chart:

<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Explain why you rated yourself this way</i>	<i>How can you improve this part of being a good listener</i>

APPENDIX I:

Listening Self Assessment

Underline the word that best describes your behavior when listening:

1. I think about what I already know about a topic before I listen.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
2. I think of questions to ask before beginning a listening activity.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
3. I know why I listen.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
4. I understand what I hear.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
5. I pay attention to the speaker.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
6. I ignore distractions when I am listening.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
7. I think about what I hear.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
8. I ask questions about a topic during a presentation.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
9. I know several cues that tell me when I must listen carefully.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
10. I take notes about the main points of a presentation.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
11. I can identify the key points of the message.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
12. I try not to let personality issues get in the way of my listening.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never
13. I try to separate my evaluation of the speaker and the message.
 Always Sometimes Seldom Never

It is important that you be very honest with yourself when you complete the listening rating scale. Look closely at the results, then complete the following chart:

<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Explain why you rated yourself this way</i>	<i>How can you improve this part of being a good listener</i>

APPENDIX J:

Teacher and Student Assessment of Speaking and Listening Activities

1. Speaking Activities:

Eye Contact, Body Stance, Gestures, Facial Expressions, Audience Attentiveness, Overuse of Fillers, Intonation, Loudness/Rate/Fluency

A) What did you like about these activities?

B) What did you dislike?

C) What did you learn about speaking from participating in these activities?

2. Listening Activities:

Prior knowledge, Purpose, Focused and attentive, Search for meaning, Cues, Notetaking, Responding to the message, presentation and speaker, Evaluating

A) What did you like about the activities?

B) What did you dislike?

C) What did you learn about listening from participating in these activities?

3. Informal Speaking: (not evaluated) List the activity: _____

A) What did you like about the activity?

B) What did you dislike?

C) What did you learn about speaking?

4. Formal Speaking: (evaluated) List the activity: _____

A) What did you like about the activity?

B) What did you dislike?

C) What did you learn about speaking?

APPENDIX L:

Purposes and Formats for Speaking

From Middle Years English Language Arts Curriculum Guide p. 81

1. Some purposes for speaking are to:
 - Express personal feelings, ideas or viewpoints
 - Tell a story
 - Entertain or amuse
 - Describe
 - Inform or explain
 - Request
 - Inquire or question
 - Clarify thinking
 - Explore and experiment with a variety of ideas and formats
 - Converse and discuss

2. Some formats for speaking are:
 - Conversation
 - Discussion
 - Formal speech
 - Dramatic presentation
 - Monologue
 - Reader's Theatre

APPENDIX M:

Samples of Student Work: Listening Activities taken from Qualities of Thoughtful Listeners

OFFICE OF THE TREATY COMMISSIONER

Pre-Visit

Speaker's Purpose

1. What do you think the speaker's purpose will be in speaking to us? (What will she be trying to tell us or teach us? Why would she take the time to talk with us?)
 - **To let us know more about Treaties.**
 - **To let us understand Treaties better.**

My Purpose

2. What is my purpose in listening? (Why should I listen? What will I gain from this?)
 - **I will learn more.**
 - **It might be useful for a test/assignment.**
 - **If would be impolite not to listen.**

Prior Knowledge

3. What do I know about treaties?
 - **A contract between 2 nations/people where both sides agree for something in return.**
4. What questions do I have about treaties that I can ask the speaker?
 - **Why do the Indians get privileges that we don't?**
 - **Can they change the treaties today?**

Post-Visit

1. What were the key points of the message?
 - **not all Indian nations signed treaties (Lakota, Dakota)**
 - **# and location of Indian nations (72 main-6)**
 - **what a treaty is**
 - **what treaty we are in (#6)**
 - **what the symbol meant (logo! that's the word!)**
2. What methods did the speaker use to present the information to us?

• flip chart	• video	• questions
- info.	• pictures	• pamphlets
- quiz	• lecture	• tour (sort of)
3. What did you notice about the speaker's speaking skills?

<input type="checkbox"/> Loudness	<input type="checkbox"/> Rate
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of fillers - OK	<input type="checkbox"/> Eye contact
<input type="checkbox"/> Body stance - leaning on chair	
- OK	

Was there anything about the speaker that was particularly effective or ineffective/distracting?

- **water and pictures were distracting**
- **glasses for water too**

Question/Topics

Notes from Video

Your Personal Opinion on This

-
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. How do the Cree live off the land? What do they use to provide food, shelter and income? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• they hunt animals• they cut down trees for house |
| 2. How do the Cree show respect for the land and animals? How do they care for the resources and maintain a balanced ecosystem? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• rituals for killing and eating animals• kill different animals to balance |
| 3. What skills do the Cree need to live off the land? How are these skills learned? Which members of the family are involved? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• hunting• by family• male family members |
| 4. What changes have taken place in the Cree territory in the last 20 years? How have these affected the Cree people? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• build the dam• cutting down trees• destroying their land |
| 5. Identify different opinions expressed about the Quebec dams. (What are the views of the hunters, the Quebec Premier and the video?) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premier: yes, it's a good idea• Cree: no, it'll destroy our land |
| 6. What were the main items negotiated in the James Bay Agreement? (What did the government give the Cree in exchange?) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• money |

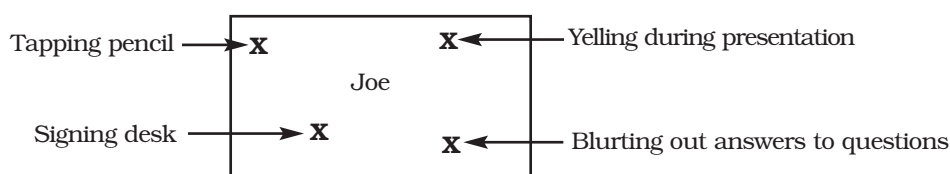
APPENDIX N:

Stay Focused and Attentive

To help evaluate this aspect of listening a seating plan tool has been provided as an example. While the listening activity is going on an evaluator (teacher, parent, student, etc.) can mark on the seating plan when a student is off task according to your listening expectations. It is important, as a teacher, to explain what the evaluator is looking for. For example, the teacher might explain that she/he is looking for the following:

- Good eye contact
- Good body language
- Not talking/whispering

The evaluator will mark an X by the student's name on the seating plan each time the student is not displaying the expectations above. It is important for the evaluator to write comments beside the X" as well. For example:



This is beneficial for the teacher because it helps the teacher use the rubric for evaluation purposes. This is also useful for interviews with the parents to give them concrete information on their students' listening skills.

Tips

- This evaluation tool is helpful in any listening situation across the curriculum.
- Don't try to evaluate (as a teacher) a speaking activity and this listening activity at the same time. This is too difficult!
- Find someone (parent, principal, TA, etc.) to do this listening evaluation. This gives you a new look at your students' listening and helps to confirm your views on certain students' listening skills.
- Use the listening skills language frequently in your classroom so students become familiar with it.
- Students can be used as evaluators too. Warning – make sure students do not try to sabotage the evaluation on purpose.

**2317 Arlington Avenue
Saskatoon SK Canada S7J 2H8
Phone: 306-373-1660
Toll Free: 1-800-667-7762
Fax: 306-374-1122
E-mail: mcdowell@stf.sk.ca**

www.stf.sk.ca/mcdowell