

AN EXERCISE IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND MEMORY

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Tell the class you need eight volunteers (do not explain why). Ask the volunteers to leave the room and to divide themselves into two groups.
2. When they are gone, tell the class that they are about to see an exercise in listening communication. The point of the exercise is that two-way, interactive communication facilitates listening comprehension and memory and that one-way communication is usually less effective.
3. Ask for a volunteer in the class who is willing to tally up the correctly remembered details of a story and give him/her the Detail Page.
4. Have the first student come in and tell him the story. Do not allow for any questions. Instruct him to call the second member of the group in and repeat the story to him. Then the second person tells the story he has heard to the third and third person tells it to the fourth.
5. The teacher calls in the first person of the second group and gives the following instructions: "I am going to tell you a story. Listen carefully, because I want you to tell this to someone else and it is important to get all the details. When I have finished, you can ask me any questions you wish." Tell the story; deal with the questions, and ask the student to call in the next person and repeat the story, dealing with the second person's questions.
6. Proceed as before until all persons in the second group have heard the story. The only difference is that the same instructions are given to each new listener and that he does not repeat the story until he has his questions answered.

STORY:

Some time ago, there was a terrible tornado in our area. The winds were clocked at 85 miles an hour. Our roof is made of tin, and the tornado peeled off the roof just like a can-opener. The next day, we found our roof in a field five miles away. My neighbor, Mr. Black, told us that the Ford Motor Company had the equipment to straighten out that roof, so we crated it up and sent it to Ford. We didn't hear anything for five months. About a month later, I got a letter saying that they were sorry, but they couldn't repair our car!

WHAT THIS EXERCISE WILL ILLUSTRATE:

1. You remember more easily from reading than you do from listening.
2. Most forgetting takes place immediately after learning occurs.
3. Intentionality is crucial to learning and remembering. (As the class gets involved, they will find themselves remembering more.)
4. Activity (as opposed to passivity) is crucial to all learning, but especially when listening. This is illustrated by the interactive group, who usually do much better than the group that cannot question.

DETAIL PAGE

DETAILS	GROUP #1					GROUP #2			
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
1. terrible tornados									
2. 85 mph									
3. tin roof									
4. roof peeled off like can-opener									
5. found next day									
6. in a field									
7. field 5 miles away									
8. neighbor									
9. Mr. Black									
10. Ford had equipment to fix roof									
11. crated up roof									
12. sent to Ford									
13. didn't hear for five months									
14. month later letter came									
15. can't fix car									
TOTALS									

