

Kindergarten, Unit 1

Lesson 1: Learning to Listen



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning the rules for how to be a good listener. These rules help your child know how to listen and act in a group so everyone can learn.

Why Is This Important?

Being good listeners helps children be better learners. Following the Listening Rules helps children listen and pay attention in class.

Ask your child: What are the Listening Rules in your class? (Have your child tell you each rule and show you the action that goes with it. Rules are listed at right.)

Practice at Home

Before giving directions for daily activities, such as picking up toys or washing hands, remind your child to use the Listening Rules. For example:

You need to use your Listening Rules now. Say each rule and do the actions along with your child, then give the directions: **We're getting ready to leave now, so put on your shoes and coat.**

Listening Rules

- Eyes watching**
Point to the corners of your eyes.
- Ears listening**
Cup your ears with your hands.
- Voice quiet**
Put your finger to your lips.
- Body still**
Hug your torso with both arms.

Activity

Have your child choose one of the Listening Rules and illustrate it below. After your child has finished, write which rule you think it is under the picture.



The rule is _____

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning that you need to use your eyes, ears, and brain when you focus attention on something. Your child is also learning how to make an “attent-o-scope” to help focus attention.

Why Is This Important?

Being able to focus attention helps children be better learners. It helps them ignore distractions and focus on what is important in class.

Ask your child: Can you show me how to make and use an attent-o-scope?
(Follow your child’s directions.)

What words do you use to turn on your attent-o-scope?

Possible answers: Focus, listen, pay attention, look carefully.

Practice at Home

Before giving important information, let your child know that you really need his or her focused attention. Suggest that your child use the attent-o-scope.

For example:

This is important. You may need your attent-o-scope. Pause for your child to focus. **I am working this afternoon, so Aunt Janet will pick you up from school today.**



1. Cup hands around each eye like binoculars.
2. Says “Focus” or “Listen” to switch on the attent-o-scope.
3. Puts down the attent-o-scope, but pretends it is still there.

Activity

Have your child choose something in the room for you both to focus on with your attent-o-scopes. Fill in your child’s answers to the following questions.

What are we focusing on?

What are three things you notice about what we are focusing on?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Option: Have your child draw the object you focused on in the box to the right.



_____	_____	_____
(CHILD’S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT’S SIGNATURE)



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning that repeating directions to yourself helps you remember what to do.

Why Is This Important?

Being able to remember and follow directions helps children be better learners.

Ask your child: What can you do to help you remember directions? Possible answers: Listen. Use the Listening Rules. Focus attention. Use an attent-o-scope. Repeat the directions to myself.

What parts of your body do you need to use to listen and follow directions? Possible answers: My ears, my eyes, and my brain.

Practice at Home

Before giving directions for daily activities, remind your child to listen and focus. Then ask your child to repeat back the directions before starting. For example:

You need to listen and focus on these directions. Wait for your child to focus. **Please take your plate from the table and put it on the counter next to the sink. Now repeat out loud what I asked you to do.**

Activity

Give your child basic directions for how to draw a smiley face in the box. Before giving the directions, remind your child to listen, focus, and repeat the directions before starting to draw. Give the directions one at a time. Sample directions:

1. Draw a big circle for the face.
2. Draw two small circles for the eyes.
3. Draw one circle for the nose.
4. Draw a half circle for the mouth.

Option: Now switch places. Let your child give you directions for a simple drawing.

Two large, empty rectangular boxes side-by-side, intended for drawing a smiley face. The boxes are white with black outlines and are set against a red background that has a wavy, torn-paper-like edge.

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning that self-talk is when you talk to yourself in a quiet voice or in your head. Your child is also learning to use self-talk to stay on task and remember directions.

Why Is This Important?

Self-talk is an important learning tool that children can use to help themselves listen, follow directions, and focus.

Ask your child: What is self-talk? *Second Step answer: When you talk to yourself in a quiet voice or in your head.*

When are some times you use self-talk? *Possible answers: When I repeat directions to myself. When I switch on my attent-o-scope. When I want to ignore someone who is distracting me. When I need to focus on my work.*

Practice at Home

When you see your child becoming distracted while doing daily tasks, remind him or her to use one or more of the self-talk words from the activity below. For example:

I see you are having trouble focusing on getting ready for school. What can you say to yourself to help you stay on task? Wait for your child to respond. **What is the first thing you need to do?** Wait for your child to respond. **What is the next thing you need to do?**

Activity

Help your child come up with self-talk to help stay on task in the following daily scenarios. Then write one other daily task and fill in the self-talk to use for that task.

Getting Ready for School	Getting Ready for Bed
<p>Picking Up Toys</p>	<p>_____</p>

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning how to ask assertively for help from an adult when he or she is stuck and doesn't know what to do.

Why Is This Important?

When there is something children don't understand, being assertive helps them continue to learn rather than being stuck.

Ask your child: What can you do when you are stuck and don't know what to do? *Second Step* answer: **First try really hard by myself to figure it out. Then ask another student for help. If I still can't figure it out, ask a teacher or another adult for help.**

Can you show me how it looks and sounds to ask for help assertively?
(See the poster at right.)

Be Assertive

- Face the person you're talking to.
- Keep your head up and shoulders back.
- Use a calm, firm voice.
- Use respectful words.

Practice at Home

Notice when your child is getting frustrated with a difficult or new task, such as tying shoes or reading a book. Give your child enough time to try to figure it out alone before reminding him or her to ask you for help. For example:

I see that you are starting to feel frustrated about trying to read that page. If you would like some help, you can say: "Excuse me. Can you please help me read these words?" Wait and let your child ask you assertively for help. Make sure that you give him or her the needed help soon after being asked.

Activity

Ask your child these questions and write his or her responses in the spaces below.

When is a time when you need help at home or at school? Help your child think of an example.

What could you say to ask for help assertively? Help your child decide what to say. Then have your child practice saying it to you.

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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Kindergarten, Unit 2

Lesson 6: Feelings

Home Link



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning how to pay attention to people's faces and bodies to figure out how they are feeling.

Why Is This Important?

Children who can identify feelings tend to get along better with others and do better in school than those who can't.

Ask your child: Show me a happy face. Does your body feel comfortable or uncomfortable when you're happy? Answer: Comfortable.

How does my face show I am happy? (Make a happy face.) Possible answers: Mouth is turned up into a smile. Cheeks are up. Eyes are small.

Show me a sad face. Does your body feel comfortable or uncomfortable when you're sad? Answer: Uncomfortable.

How does my face show I am sad? (Make a sad face.) Possible answers: Mouth is turned down. Eyes are looking down. Head is down.

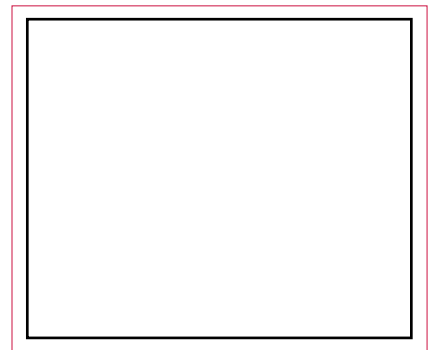
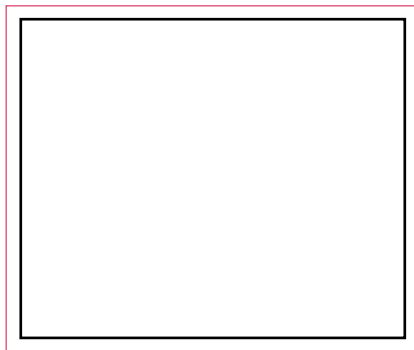
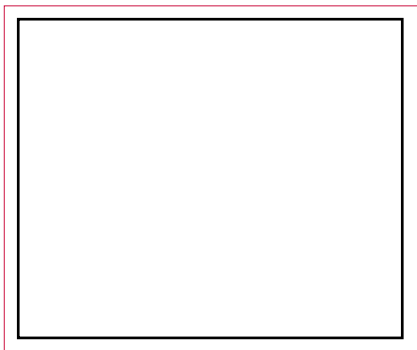
Practice at Home

Help your child identify and name feelings, using physical clues to help. Name feelings as you, your child, or others are experiencing them. For example:

Your child is getting upset when you say it is time for bed. **I can see by the way your mouth is turned down and by your droopy eyes that you are feeling *disappointed* that it's time to stop playing and go to bed.**

Activity

Help your child cut out three photos of faces showing different feelings. Use TV guides, newspapers, or magazines—anything that has photos of real faces. Paste the photos in the spaces below. Write what your child thinks the person is feeling below each face.



(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning how to show care and concern by saying or doing something kind or helpful. This is called *showing compassion*.

Why Is This Important?

Being able to show compassion helps children get along with others.

Ask your child: What does *showing compassion* mean? Possible answers: It means saying something kind or doing something to help. It shows you care about how someone feels.

When is a time you can show compassion for someone else? Possible answers: When someone is feeling sad, lonely, tired, or frustrated.

How do you feel when someone says something kind or helps you out? Possible answers: happy, special.

Practice at Home

Help your child notice when someone he or she knows could use some help or a kind word. For example:

- I see that your sister can't find her toy. What could you do to help?
- It sure looks like Uncle Milo could use some help cleaning the sidewalk. Is that something you could do?

Activity

Together with your child, write down ways that your child could or does help at home. For example: Help carry in groceries.

Ways to Help at Home

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning to focus attention on his or her own body to figure out his or her feelings. Your child is also learning that if the feelings are uncomfortable, it helps to talk about them with an adult.

Why Is This Important?

When children realize they are having strong feelings, they can take steps to calm down to keep themselves from getting out of control.

Ask your child: What clues from your body help you figure out that you are feeling worried? Possible answers: Tummy hurts. Heart beats fast. Breathe fast. Feel hot/cold. Legs wobble.

When you are feeling worried, what can you do to help you feel better? Second Step answer: Tell a grown-up about your feelings.

Practice at Home

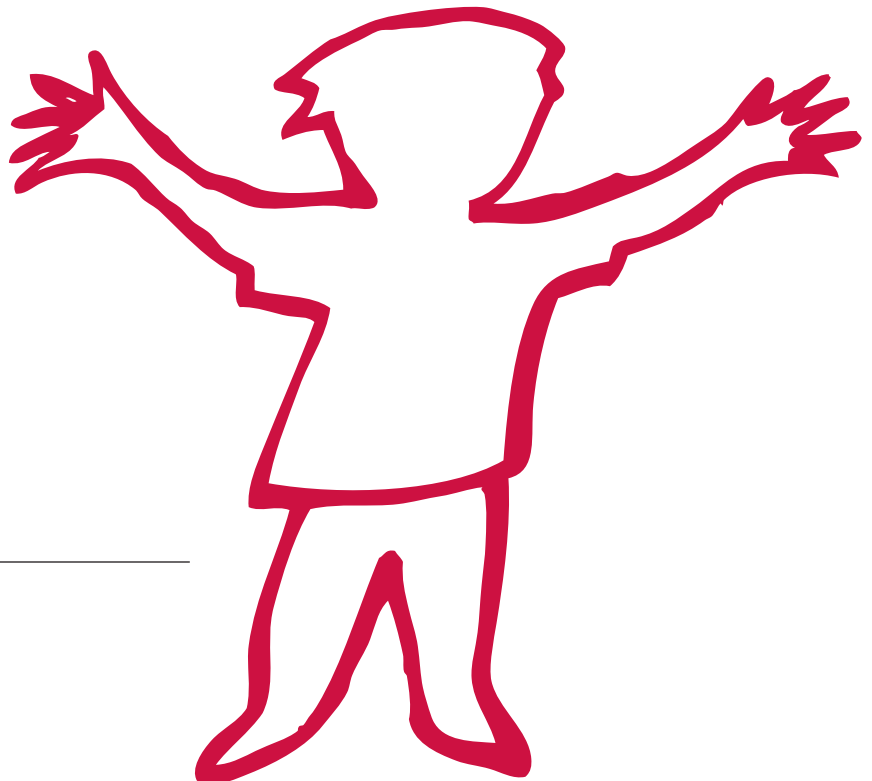
When you notice your child is starting to have strong feelings, such as worry, anger, sadness, excitement, or disappointment, ask what he or she is feeling in his or her body. For example:

A friend just dropped your child's favorite toy and it broke. **Oh, I see that your favorite toy just broke. Put your hand on your tummy. What is it doing?** Wait for your child to respond. **Put your hand over your heart. What is it doing?** Wait for your child to respond. **Listen to your breathing. What is it doing?** Wait for your child to respond. **Can you name your feeling?**

Activity

Help your child do the following:

1. Choose "worry" or "anger" and write it beside the body outline.
2. Identify where he or she feels this feeling in his or her body.
3. Color in those places on the outline, for example, tummy, heart, hands.



Feeling:

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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Kindergarten, Unit 3

Lesson 14: Calming Down Strong Feelings

Home Link



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning that sometimes feelings can be strong, and how to calm down strong feelings.

Why Is This Important?

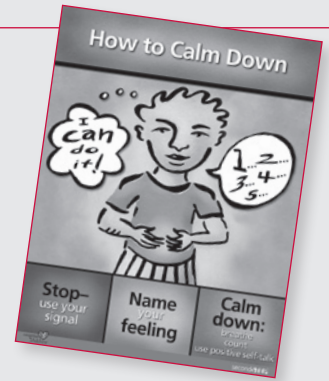
When children's feelings are very strong, it is hard for them to think clearly and pay attention. When children are calm, they are able to learn and get along better with others.

Ask your child: When you are starting to feel a strong feeling, what should you do first? *Second Step* answer: Put my hands on my tummy and say "Stop."

After you say stop, what should you do next? *Second Step* answer: Name my feeling.

Then what can you do to calm down? *Second Step* answer: Take belly breaths.

Can you show me how to belly breathe? Let your child lead you through belly breathing: Put your hands on your tummy. Focus on your breathing. Breathe in through your nose, making your tummy (belly) move out. Breathe out through your mouth, letting your tummy move in.



Practice at Home

When you notice your child having strong feelings, remind him or her to use the Calming-Down Steps. Then, together with your child, practice belly breathing. For example:

Your child is starting to get frustrated. **I see you're having a strong feeling. Put your hands on your tummy and say "Stop."** Wait for your child to say stop. **What are you feeling?** Help your child name the feeling. **Now let's belly breathe together.** Practice belly breathing with your child.

Activity

Help your child think of two scenarios when he or she often has a strong feeling and needs to calm down. Have your child name the feeling. Practice the Calming-Down Steps together after writing down each scenario and feeling.

1. Scenario: _____

I feel _____ . Practice the Calming-Down Steps.

2. Scenario: _____

I feel _____ . Practice the Calming-Down Steps.

_____	_____	_____
(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning how to calm down and choose something quiet to do to make waiting easier.

Why Is This Important?

Children who have good waiting skills tend to do better at school and have better social skills than those who do not.

Ask your child: What can you do to make waiting easier for you? Possible answers: Take some belly breaths. Count. Use self-talk (“I can wait.” “Stay still.” “Be patient.”) Do something quiet that will not distract others (tap fingers together, count everyone in line, hum a song quietly).

Practice at Home

During daily activities that require waiting, such as waiting for you to finish a phone call, waiting for dinner, or waiting for a friend to visit, remind your child to use one of the ways to make waiting easier learned in class. For example:

I am going to make a phone call. I need you to wait very patiently while I finish the call. What can you do to help you wait? Wait and let your child respond. Offer suggestions if needed, such as belly breathing, counting, using self-talk, or doing something quiet that will not distract others.

Activity

Complete the following questions about this girl with your child.

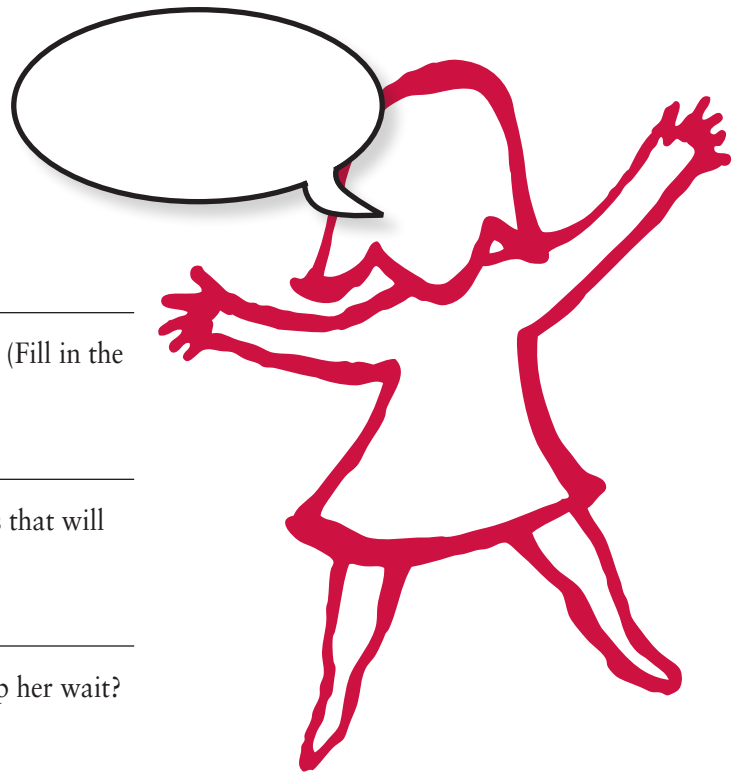
1. This girl needs to wait. What do you think she is waiting for?

2. She is very excited. How should she breathe to help herself calm down?

3. What can she say to herself that will help her wait? (Fill in the speech bubble.)

4. What is something quiet she can do while she waits that will not distract others?

5. Is there anything else you can think of that will help her wait?



_____	_____	_____
(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning the first two steps for problem-solving. Your child is learning how to say the problem, then think of solutions for that problem.

Why Is This Important?

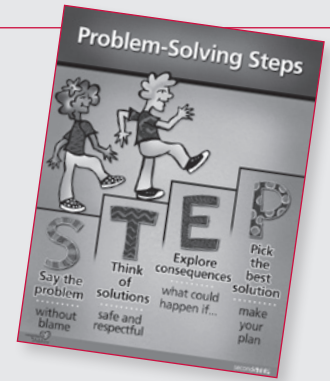
Children who can solve problems get along better with other children, are less aggressive, and have fewer conflicts.

Ask your child: What should you do if you are having a strong feeling before you try to solve a problem? *Second Step* answer: **Calm Down.**

How can you calm down? *Second Step* answer: Put my hands on my tummy. Say "Stop." Name my feeling. Take belly breaths.

What is the first Problem-Solving Step? *Second Step* answer: **S: Say the problem.**

What is the second Problem-Solving Step? *Second Step* answer: **T: Think of solutions.**



Practice at Home

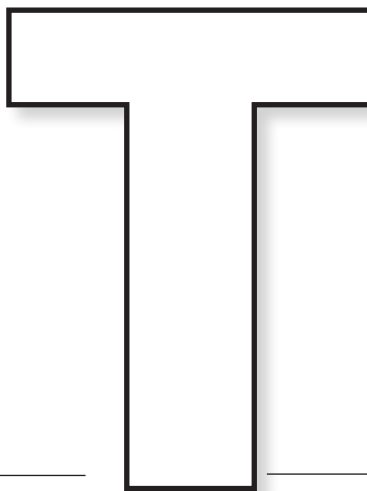
When problems come up at home, such as missing toys or conflicts with siblings, help your child use words to describe the problem. Then together, think of some solutions. For example:

Your child can't find a favorite toy. Say: **You seem very upset. First calm down, and then we can solve this problem together.** Belly breathe with your child. **What is the problem?** Help your child describe the problem. Then repeat it. **You can't find your toy. Now let's think of some solutions.** Help your child think of solutions, such as to search each room or play with another toy. **Which solution do you want to try?** Have your child pick a solution and try it.

Activity

Have your child color in the first letter of the first two problem-solving steps. Write the step next to the letter.





(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)



What Is My Child Learning?

Your child is learning that sharing, trading, and taking turns are Fair Ways to Play with toys with other children.

Why Is This Important?

Having Fair Ways to Play with others helps children make and keep friends.

Ask your child: **What are Fair Ways to Play with toys with other children?** *Second Step* answers:

1. **Sharing, or playing together.** What can you say? “May I share that toy with you?”
2. **Trading.** What can you say? “Would you like to trade this toy for that one?”
3. **Taking turns.** What can you say? “Please, may I have a turn?”



Practice at Home

When your child is playing with another child, remind them to use Fair Ways to Play. If you notice them having trouble, ask them to choose one of the Fair Ways to Play. For example:

I see you are having some trouble playing together. What would be a fair way to play with that toy? Wait for one or both of the children to respond. If they can't remember what they are, remind them: **You can take turns with the toy, you can play together with the toy, or you can play with different toys and trade after three minutes. I can set the timer for you.** Have the children pick a fair way to play.

Activity

Have your child draw a picture of two children using one of the Fair Ways to Play in the box below, or use a separate piece of paper. Then check which of the fair ways you think he or she drew.

Sharing

Trading

Taking Turns

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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