Active Listening Activity

Grade Level: All
Time: 30 min.

**Purpose:** To help students practice active listening, and to discuss and debate without getting personal.

**Procedure:**

Put the students into groups of three:

1) One person states her or his views on a controversial subject for about three minutes (ideally about the selected PA issue).
2) The second person listens, takes notes, and then summarizes out loud what was said.
3) The third person evaluates the second person’s listening skills to see how close the summary came to what was originally said.

Switch off so everyone in the group has a chance to play each role, and use a new question for each round.

Follow up questions:

- Were there conflicts between people’s public and private views? How could you tell?
- Did stories that people told from their own experience give them more authority, or did they weaken people’s arguments?
- Did how they told they story matter?
- Can someone who did not actually put the ideas together report what “actually” got said?
- Are people’s own interpretations the only thing that can come from a summary?