



#### What Is My Child Learning?

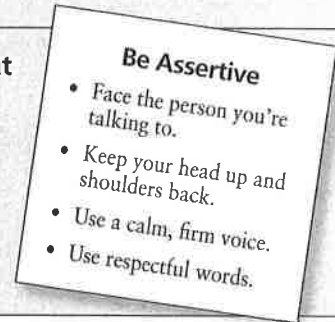
Your child is learning how to ask assertively for help from an adult when he or she is stuck and doesn't know what to do.

#### 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.)



#### 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.

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**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.

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

Your child is learning rules for how to be a good listener.

**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?** (Read each rule below and do the action along with your child.)

**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.

**Why is it important to follow the Listening Rules?** Possible answers: It helps you learn. It is respectful.



**Practice at Home**

Before giving directions for daily activities, such as getting ready for school, setting the table, or getting ready for bed, remind your child to use the Listening Rules. For example:

**You need to use your Listening Rules now.** Do the actions for each rule along with your child, then give the directions: **Please put a placemat and a knife and fork on the table for each person.**

**Activity**

Go through each of the Listening Rules with your child. Then tell your child to use these rules for this activity. When your child is ready, read the following riddle: **I'm round. I'm red. You can pick me off a tree and eat me. What am I?** Have your child write or draw the answer below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a decorative border, intended for the child to write or draw their answer to the riddle.

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

# Grade 1, Unit 1

## Lesson 2: Focusing Attention

Home Link



### 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 that saying things to yourself (self-talk) can help you pay attention.

### Why Is This Important?

Being able to focus attention helps children be better learners.

Ask your child: **What can you do to help you focus attention?** Possible answers: Look at what you want to focus on. Use an attent-o-scope.

Can you show me how to make and use an attent-o-scope? (See directions at right.)

What words can you say to yourself to remind you to pay attention? Possible answers: Focus, listen, pay attention, look carefully.

### Practice at Home

Before giving your child important information, let your child know that you really need his or her focused attention. Then ask your child to repeat what you said. For example:

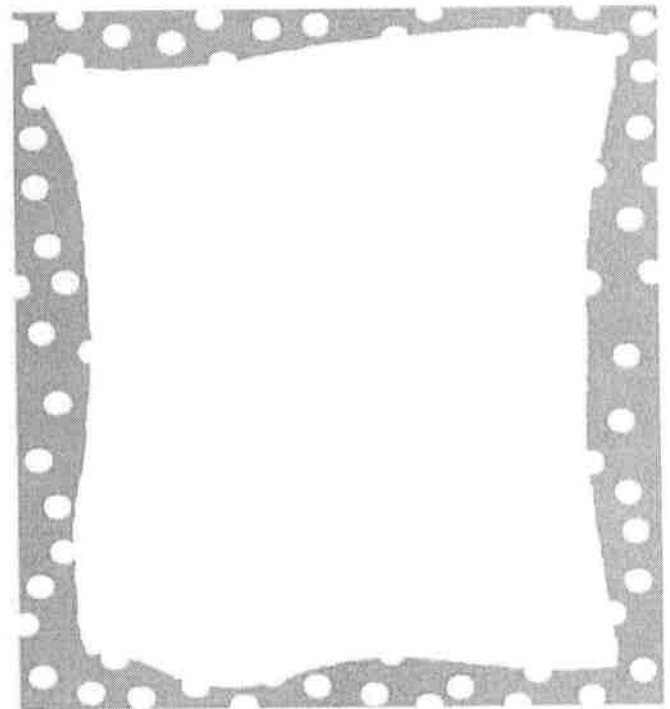
**This is important. I need you to focus your attention. Pause for your child to focus. Please give this note to your teacher. It tells her that I'm picking you up early from school today to go to the dentist. Now please repeat what I said.**



1. Cup hands around each eye like binoculars.
2. Say "Focus" or "Listen" to switch on the attent-o-scope.
3. Put down the attent-o-scope, but pretend it is still there.

### Activity

1. Have your child pick an object in the room without telling you what it is.
2. Have your child give you one hint at a time about the object. Try to guess what it is.
3. Between guesses, give your child time to focus attention on the object so he or she can think of another hint.
4. After you guess what it is, have your child write the word or draw a picture of the object in the box provided.



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

Your child is learning that repeating directions to him- or herself helps to remember what to do.

**Why Is This Important?**

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

Ask your child: **What parts of your body do you need to use to listen and follow directions?** Possible answers: Ears, eyes, brain.

**What can you do to help you remember directions?** Possible answers: Listen. Focus my attention. Repeat the directions to myself.

**Why does it help to repeat the directions to yourself?** Possible answers: It helps me remember. It helps me learn and know what to do.

**Practice at Home**

Before giving directions for daily tasks that require more than one step, prompt your child to listen and focus. Give your child the directions. Have your child repeat the directions to you, then to him- or herself as many times as needed until the task is complete. For example:

**You need to listen and focus on these directions. Wait for your child to focus. Please go to your room and get a pair of socks and a clean shirt. Now repeat what you have to do out loud.**

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**Activity**

Choose an object, such as a sock, cup, small toy, or hairbrush. Have your child leave the room you are in so he or she cannot see you, and then hide the object in a corner of the room on the floor, behind something else.

Give your child the following directions to find the item. Then have your child repeat the directions before looking for it. Remind your child to repeat the directions if he or she starts to look somewhere not mentioned in the directions.

1. It is somewhere on the floor.
2. It is close to a wall.
3. It is behind something else.

(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 focus on a task, ignore distractions, and remember directions.

**Why Is This Important?**  
 Self-talk is an important learning tool children can use to help themselves listen, follow directions, focus, ignore distractions, and stay on task.

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

**What can self-talk help you do?** Possible answers: Focus attention, follow directions, ignore distractions.

**When are times that you use self-talk?** Possible answers: When there are distractions. When I repeat directions to myself so I can remember them. When I'm trying to focus on my work. When I switch on my attent-o-scope.

**What can you say to yourself to help you focus?** Possible answers: Pay attention. Focus. Listen.

**Practice at Home**

When your child becomes distracted while doing daily tasks, remind him or her to use one or more of the self-talk words from your discussion above. For example:

**I see you are having trouble focusing on getting ready for bed. 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**

Check off one task and one distraction from the lists below, or come up with your own. Then have your child complete the task using self-talk to ignore the distraction.


Tasks	Distractions
<input type="checkbox"/> Match socks pairs from a clothes pile	<input type="checkbox"/> Play music
<input type="checkbox"/> Tie shoes	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk on the phone
<input type="checkbox"/> Put toys away	<input type="checkbox"/> Have others in the room doing something else
<input type="checkbox"/> Read a book	<input type="checkbox"/> Walk around your child
<input type="checkbox"/> Wipe the table	<input type="checkbox"/> Tap your foot/snap your fingers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Self-talk words your child used to ignore the distraction and stay on task:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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	<p><b>What Is My Child Learning?</b>          Your child is learning how to be respectful at school.</p>	<p><b>Why Is It Important?</b>          Being respectful helps children be better learners.</p>
	<p>Ask your child: <b>How do you behave respectfully at school?</b></p>	

**Read Together**

There are many ways to be respectful at school. You can:

- Be kind and polite
- Take turns
- Pay attention and listen to the speaker
- Raise your hand to speak

When you're being respectful, you're thinking about how others want to be treated and treating them that way. Thinking about how you would like to be treated will help you decide how to treat others.


**Practice Together: Record of Respect**

1. Discuss with your child ways he or she showed you or others respect today.
2. Write examples of the respectful behavior below.
3. If you want, you can use the back of this paper to add more.

Today I showed respect by:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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	<p><b>What Is My Child Learning?</b>                  Your child is learning and practicing four Skills for Learning: focusing attention, listening, using self-talk, and being assertive.</p>	<p><b>Why Is It Important?</b>                  Using Skills for Learning helps children be better learners. Self-talk helps children stay focused and on task.</p>
	<p>Ask your child: <b>When do you use self-talk to help you be a better learner at school?</b></p>	

**Read Together**

Using Skills for Learning helps you be a better learner. You've been learning to focus your attention, listen, and use self-talk. Focusing your attention and listening show respect.


This week, you practiced self-talk. Self-talk is talking to yourself in a quiet voice or in your head. Using self-talk helps you stay focused and on task and manage distractions.

**Practice Together: Distraction Detectives**

1. Go to the room where your child usually does his or her homework and pretend you're *both* second-grade students working on a homework assignment.
2. Become distraction detectives! Walk around the room and identify things that could distract you (such as television, computer, toys, or siblings).
3. For each distraction, decide on self-talk you could use to stay focused and on task.
4. Say your self-talk out loud and write it down below. Use the back of this paper if you need more space.

Distraction	Self-Talk

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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	<p><b>What Is My Child Learning?</b>                  Your child is learning and practicing two Skills for Learning: focusing attention and listening.</p>	<p><b>Why Is It Important?</b>                  Focusing attention and listening help children be better learners.</p>
	<p>Ask your child: <b>How do focusing your attention and listening help you be a better learner at school?</b></p>	
<p><b>Read Together</b>                  Using Skills for Learning helps you be a better learner. You've been learning to focus your attention and listen. Focusing your attention and listening show respect.</p> <p>This week, you practiced focusing your attention by using your eyes to watch, your ears to listen, and your brain to concentrate. When you've focused your attention, you're ready to listen and learn.</p>		

**Practice Together: Focus and Listen**

- Together, choose a room in your house where you will hear a lot of different sounds, from both inside and outside.
- Prepare to focus your attention and listen to the sounds in the environment for one minute. Begin!
- When the minute is up, fold this paper in half and take turns writing down all the sounds you heard and remembered, in the boxes below.
- Compare your lists. Are many of the sounds the same or different?
- Discuss what helped you focus your attention, listen, and remember what you heard.

Child	Adult

(CHILD'S NAME)	(DATE)	(ADULT'S SIGNATURE)
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Are adults really so different from kids? Choose an adult family member. Each of you complete the following sentences on your own (use scratch paper) using the "feelings" words below. Then compare your answers.

If you chose a different feeling word for the same sentence, write your feeling word in one "different" column, and your adult's feeling word in the other "different" column below. If you chose the same feeling word, just write it once in the "same" column.



	Different (You)	Same	Different (Adult)
When someone in the family is sick, I feel:			
When I have something important to get done and don't have enough time to do it, I feel:			
When I am by myself, I feel:			
When I am with a lot of people, I feel:			
When I think about riding on a roller coaster, I feel:			
When I finish all my household chores, I feel:			
When it is time for bed, I feel:			

Feelings words

worried, unsure, scared, lonely,  
happy, sad, serious, frustrated,  
nervous, joyful, satisfied, stressed,  
peaceful, relaxed, excited

This homework assignment was completed on \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE) (ADULT SIGNATURE)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You are an “ear doctor.” However, instead of checking people’s hearing, you check how they listen with attention. Today you’re going to check an adult family member’s Listening with Attention Skills, then your adult will check yours.

Before the checkup, read through the checklist below with your adult to make sure he or she knows how to listen with attention.

Tell your adult three things you did at school today. Pay careful attention to the Listening with Attention Skills he or she uses while listening to your story. Then check off all the Listening with Attention Skills used.



Listening with Attention Skills	Yes
Focus on the person’s words	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don’t interrupt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions to find out more	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeat what you heard to show you understand	<input type="checkbox"/>

How did your adult do? \_\_\_\_\_

If all the skills were not checked off, try it again!

Now your adult will tell you three things he or she did today, then check off your Listening with Attention Skills.



Listening with Attention Skills	Yes
Focus on the person’s words	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don’t interrupt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions to find out more	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeat what you heard to show you understand	<input type="checkbox"/>

How did your adult do? \_\_\_\_\_

If all the skills were not checked off, try it again!

This homework assignment was completed on \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE) (ADULT SIGNATURE)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine you're a reporter who is reporting on strong emotions and empathy. You've already had a chance to interview a classmate. Now you're going to interview an adult family member using the same questions. Read the selected lyrics from "Walk, Walk, Walk" and the interview questions out loud to your adult. Record his or her responses for your final report.

*You see she's getting angry, you've felt that feeling too*

Describe a time when you've felt really angry: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



What did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

*Embarrassed, jealous, scared: strong emotions through and through*

Describe a time when you've felt embarrassed, jealous, or scared:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



What did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

*Empathy's the pathway to recognize and walk  
So you can dish out some compassion and really walk the talk*

Describe a time when you've helped another person or shown empathy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



How did that make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This homework assignment was completed on \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE) | \_\_\_\_\_ (ADULT SIGNATURE)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever feel like adults just don't listen to you? Or maybe adults feel like you just don't listen to them? It could be that you are both *listening*—you're just not *listening with attention!*

Today you're going to explain to an adult family member the skills used to listen with attention. Then you're both going to practice! These skills can help you communicate better and get along with others.

**Practice Listening with Attention**

Tell your adult three things you'd like to do tomorrow. Pay careful attention to the Listening with Attention Skills he or she uses while listening to your story. Then check off all the Listening with Attention Skills used.



Listening with Attention Skills	Yes
Focus on the person's words	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't interrupt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions to find out more	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeat what you heard to show you understand	<input type="checkbox"/>

How did your adult do? \_\_\_\_\_

If all the skills were not checked off, try it again!

Now your adult will tell you three things he or she would like to do tomorrow, then check off your Listening with Attention Skills.



Listening with Attention Skills	Yes
Focus on the person's words	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't interrupt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask questions to find out more	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeat what you heard to show you understand	<input type="checkbox"/>

How did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

If all the skills were not checked off, try it again!

This homework assignment was completed on \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE) (ADULT SIGNATURE)



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You are a communication skills inspector. Just as a building inspector makes sure a building is in good working order, you will make sure your communication skills with another person are in good working order.

Today you're going to inspect your communication skills with an adult family member. Think of an activity or chore you can do together where you will need to use communication skills. Take a look at the list of communication skills "inspection items" here before you start. Then get going! When you've completed the activity, go through the checklist and mark all the skills that were in good working order.

**Can't think of an activity?**

Here are a few ideas: chores, homework, grocery shopping—just about anything you can do where you work cooperatively with another person!

The chore or activity I will be doing with an adult family member is \_\_\_\_\_

### Communication Skills Inspection List

<b>Active Listening</b>	<b>Respecting</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Look at the person.	<input type="checkbox"/> Give compliments.
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't interrupt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to the adult's ideas.
<input type="checkbox"/> Show interest.	<input type="checkbox"/> Be polite.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't be judgmental.

**Empathy**  
During the activity, the adult was feeling \_\_\_\_\_

My clues were \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_

**How would you rate your overall communication skills?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Great!	<input type="checkbox"/> Need some work
<input type="checkbox"/> Okay	

Now show this to the adult, and see if he or she agrees!

This homework assignment was completed on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_ [adult] signature



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[www.secondstep.org](http://www.secondstep.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes you “hear” what a person is saying without him or her saying a word. You can often tell a person’s communication style just by looking at his or her facial expressions and body language. A passive communicator might have slumped posture. An aggressive communicator might have glaring, narrow eyes. An assertive communicator holds his or her head up while looking straight at you.

Now try to “hear” different communication styles just by looking at them.

1. Look through magazines or newspapers for people who are using passive, aggressive, and assertive communication.
2. Find one image for each, and glue them in the boxes to the right.
3. Imagine what each person might be saying. Write it in the space below each picture.
4. Now show the pictures and descriptions to an adult. Can he or she guess which style of communication each person is using? Circle their answer.
5. If he or she guessed wrong, go over with him or her the characteristics of different styles of communication. If he or she guessed right—way to go!

This homework assignment was completed on

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_ [adult] signature

**Style:** Passive Aggressive Assertive

glue picture here

What is the person saying? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Style:** Passive Aggressive Assertive

glue picture here

What is the person saying? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Style:** Passive Aggressive Assertive

glue picture here

What is the person saying? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_