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Introduction

The Importance of Listening:

The first steps we take to learn a language, whether as a child or as an adult, involve the process of listening.

Through listening we gain a greater understanding, not only of the explicit rhythms and patterns of speech, but also the implicit grammatical forms and conventions of the written word.

Listening, therefore, must never be viewed as a poor relative to the other core aspects of literacy: that of speaking, reading and writing, a somewhat distant cousin whom we seldom visit. Rather, developing this key skill needs to be seen as an integral and necessary component of learning literacy as a whole.

Such an important and transferable skill lies at the heart of good language learning. It forms the foundation of understanding upon which other language skills are built.

Poor listeners usually lack concentration and find it difficult to 'filter out' less important information. This can affect their overall language performance and development and serves to highlight the necessity of developing this often neglected skill.

One reason why the connection between listening and learning is such an important one is that listening is not simply a matter of 'hearing' but the active process by which we make sense of what we hear.

It is by 'listening', rather than simply 'hearing', that allows us to engage with and respond to what we have heard with increased effectiveness.

Good listeners get involved with what they hear, both intellectually and emotionally.

All this serves to promote the simple fact that children need to be taught to become ACTIVE LISTENERS!

Promoting Active Listening Skills in the Classroom:

There are 3 key activities that directly contribute to the overall comprehension of what the learner listens to:

Listening for gist

This is listener based. It allows the listener to 'tune in' to what they are listening to and make predictions as to what they may encounter. The language used, the tone, pace and inflections of the speaker's voice, the added sound effects all combine to help the listener make sense of what they are listening to and ascertain the overall context.

Questions that are asked in this section help learners to consider:

- Which type of text is this? [Genre]
- Where and when is this text placed? [Setting]
- Who is this text for? [Audience]
- What is it trying to tell me? [Main idea]
- Why has this text been written? [Purpose]
- How formal/informal is this text? [Style]

Listening for specific information

This is text based. It allows the listener to 'filter out' non-essential text and select the specific words, phrases and grammatical constructions needed to discover meaning.

Questions that are asked in this section help learners to listen out for cues, both spoken and unspoken, that tells the listener that the answer is near:

- Was Jupiter a Greek or Roman god?
- What did Mrs Brown find in her soup?
- In what year did Alfred, Lord Tennyson write 'The Eagle'?

Listening to evaluate

Strategic listeners are able to monitor and evaluate their own listening. By checking their own answers and comparing them with those selected by their peers, learners begin to discern to what degree they are able to state the following:

- I am able to use a variety of strategies to help me understand what I am listening to.
- I can plan which strategy will serve me best in a particular situation.
- I am able to decide how effective this strategy was and if necessary, change it, in the future.
- I can determine how successful I have been in reaching my listening comprehension goals and whether the combination of strategies I selected was an effective one.

With this in mind, *'Reading Explorers – Aloud!'* has been specifically designed to promote the core idea that learners need to actively engage with what they are listening to in a focused and purposeful way.

The worksheets provided help support this process, enabling children of all abilities to access a wide variety of text types and gain authentic listening practice. They also provide teachers with self-contained and easy to manage lessons that enhance the entire listening experience.

It is important to note at this stage that a range of 'answering' is encouraged rather than simply asking learners to "write down" their answers. You are exploring and encouraging their listening skills, not their ability to write in full sentences!

For this reason, the worksheets are illustrated with a variety of visual cues and learners asked to 'answer' in a number of different ways.

Task orientated instructions include:

 Circle your answer

Match your answer

A → B

 Tick ✓ 1 box

Listening for Purpose – A Three-Step Approach:



As learners begin to adjust their listening behaviour in order to deal with a variety of situations and text types, each learner will develop their own set of listening strategies and enhance their ability to apply those strategies more effectively to the various listening situations they encounter.

As individuals develop their overall listening dexterity (their ability to use a combination of strategies simultaneously) not only will the learner's comprehension improve but so too will their confidence to explore and interpret the world around them.

The CD

Each book is accompanied by a CD that contains up to 29 original audio tracks. Each track has been produced in the studio using the latest technology and sound effects and is read by a professional voice-over artist in order that it is as authentic and engaging as possible.

The CD also contains copies of all worksheets and activity pages seen within the book itself, together with any additional sheets that may be required in order to complete an extension activity.

Colour your answer 

 Draw your answer

Write your answer **1066**

Sample Worksheet

Track number on CD →

Title →

Instruction →

Listening for gist →

Instruction →

Instruction →

Listening for specific information →


Instruction →

Listening to check →


Picture cue →


The Curse of the Calcutta Diamond


Name: Date:

 **Listen to Track 01. Answer these questions:**


- Where is this story set? *Circle your answer*



 In a cinema


 In a museum



 In a school

- Do you think this part of the story is set...

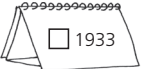

 * At night

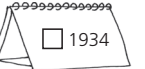

 In the day

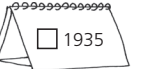
Draw your answer:

 **Now listen again and answer these questions:**


- When was the Calcutta diamond found? *Tick ✓ 1 box*



 1933



 1934


 1935


- Where was the Calcutta diamond found? *Tick ✓ 1 box*



 In a river



 In a cave


 In a treasure chest


- Match the person with how they died:

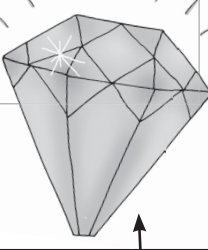

 Mrs Peacock



 Mr Gates


 Mrs Masood

- What colour was the velvet cushion the diamond was sitting on?
Colour in your answer





 **Now listen one more time to check your answers.**

Reading Explorers Aloud! - Year 3

Lessons Overview

The Curse of the Calcutta Diamond (A Mystery)	A Recipe for Friendship (A Recipe)	1066 (A Historical Recount)
What's Up Doc? (Jokes)	The Loch Ness Monster (A Scottish Legend)	Who's there? (A Bedtime Story)
Ship Ahoy! (A Factual Narrative)	Skeleton Island (A First Person Recount)	The Witch of Axon (A Riddle)
All at Sea (Songs)	Monkey Business (A Comic Tale)	Big Cats (A Nature Programme)
Fee Fi Fo Fum (A Classic Fairy Tale)	News Flash! (A News Report)	The Dragon of Andor (A Poetry Reading)
Killer Plants (A Nature programme)	The Chase (A Drama)	Recycle, Recycle (A Radio Appeal)
The Secret Treasure (An Audio Book)	Hola! (A Postcard)	Lessons in Life (A Radio Play)
Tornado (A Poetry Reading)	A Birthday Surprise (An Invitation)	The Monster Within (A Childhood Memory)
The Greedy Wolf (An Aesop's Fable)	As Dead As A Dodo (A Historical Recount)	Pollution (A Poetry Reading)
Dead or Alive! (A Radio Appeal)	Gung Hay Fat Choy! (A Presentation)	

The Dragon of Andor

Listening Comprehension Skills


A poetry reading

Warm up Questions:

- When you think of dragons, what do you think of?
- Listen to the first verse. What type of dragon do you think Dave will be? Why?
- What do you think will happen in this poem?

Main Activity:

Listening for gist


 Play Track 15

Ask yourself:

- Why is Dave the dragon so special?
- Who is with him? Why are they with him?
- How do they feel? How do they act?
- Why do they act in this way?



Listening for specific information


 Play Track 15

Answer the following questions:

- What was the dragon's name?
- Did the dragon roar or bite?
- How does the poet describe the poet's eyes?
- How did the knight kill the dragon?



Listening to check

 Play Track 15

Self-check your answers or swap your answer sheet with a partner to mark.

Answers to worksheet:

Q1: *Kind, Loving, Wise*

Q2: **UNKIND, ANGRY, SELFISH**

Q3: 

Q4: No

Q5:  Like rubies

Q6:  With a sword

Evaluative Questions:

- Why do you think the Knight killed Dave the dragon if he was so kind and loving?
- What does this tell us about the character of the knight?
- What does this poem teach us about how we should treat those who look different to us?

Extension Activity:

As a class project, write letters to school children who live in another country. They may well have a different skin colour to you, wear different clothes to you, live in different types of houses, eat different food or even speak a different first language. How fantastic! Celebrate how we are all different but also think about how, deep down, we are all the same: we want, need and love the same things. Tell them all about you, your life and your family. And who knows, one day you might even get to meet them and become the best of friends.



The Dragon of Andor

Name: Date:



Listen to *Track 15*. Answer these questions:

• How would you describe the dragon? Tick ✓ 3 boxes

- Kind
 Loving
 Wise
 UNKIND
 ANGRY
 SELFISH

• How would you describe the knight? Tick ✓ 3 boxes

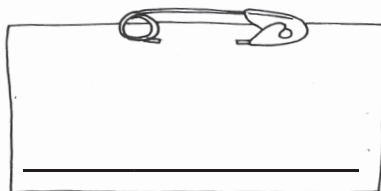
- Kind
 Loving
 Wise
 UNKIND
 ANGRY
 SELFISH



Now listen again and answer these questions:

• What was the dragon's name? Put his name on the badge

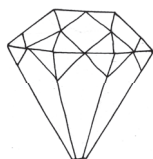
- Duncan
Dave
Daz



• Did this dragon 'roar or bite', yes or no?

• How does the poem describe the dragon's eyes? Circle and colour your answer

- Like diamonds
Like emeralds
Like rubies



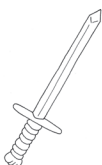
• How did the knight kill the dragon?



With a gun

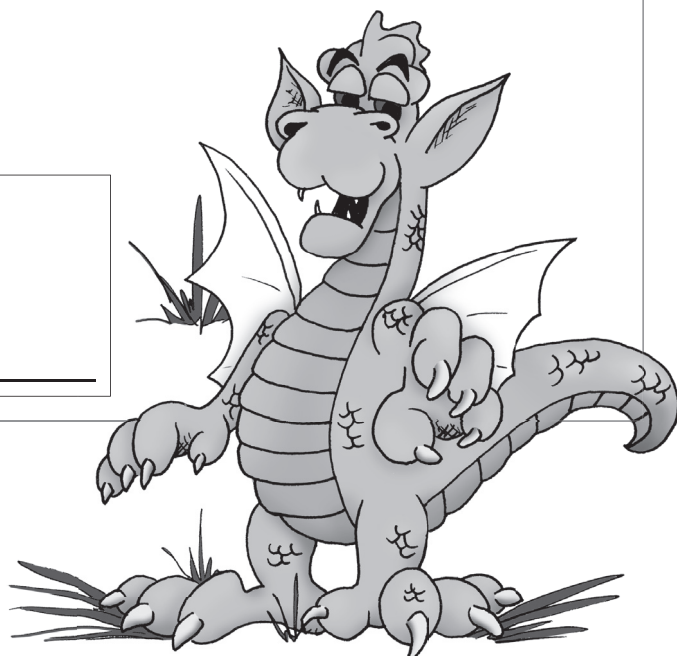


With poison



With a sword

Draw your answer:



Now listen one more time to check your answers.