

Some of the best...!

Strategies and approaches for...

Listening (with confidence and perseverance) at KS4

1. Learners work in pairs and listen for alternate number answers and then share their answers before listening a second time. On feedback their approach is “we think that no. 1 is.....”
2. Give the answers first and ask learners to anticipate (written or orally) what language they will hear (even scripting a suggested dialogue/monologue). When they listen, they compare what they've anticipated with the audio material.
3. No questions first time around. Learners listen for intonation, tone of voice clues to speaker mood and opinion. Second time learners listen for key words. Third time respond to details for comprehension.
4. Learners respond to material heard by ordering cards. The focus can be the on structures, where learners sort the activity cards into columns to denote present, past or future or opinions, where the categorising is into positive and negatives or simply on the order in which the items on the cards are mentioned in the passage.
5. Learners are the source of listening themselves. A text is posted on the wall – learners read and memorise as much as they can and run back to their group and repeat it. Learners have to respond to the text by answering questions or filling in a grid or completing a multiple choice activity. (if learners write down what is said, this is called ‘running dictation’).
6. Move away from the ‘disembodied voices’ of CD by using video extracts for listening tasks (Youtube, foreign television channels, short tv adverts, bbc online clips)
7. Use songs. Gap fill and or responding using a simple proforma to identify key features, key language and elicit opinions.
8. Use listening as a stimulus for speaking as often as you can, rather than an end in its own right.
9. Learners make their own listening material in groups (as a revision activity at the end of a module) and the whole class completes the different activities. Can use video for this (webcam & effects)
10. Think of all speaking activities as listening activities too and let this influence your planning. For example, verbal tennis, speaking lines, role plays are as much about listening as they are about speaking.
11. Pre-teach some key language. Teacher selects some key language crucial to the listening passage and flags this up, defining it in the foreign language for learners before listening. This activity is a listening task in itself and can greatly enhance learners’ comprehension of the text when they come to listen to it.
12. Repeat listening exam papers a couple of lessons later or the following week (after you have gone through and marked it. This really improves confidence which in turn impacts on performance.