

FOCUS: A Learning Strategy for Listening

Good learners are strategic, meaning that they possess a variety of ways to meet cognitive challenges. Good listeners use strategies that improve their performance when they are asked to listen.

FOCUS is the mnemonic developed to outline this learning strategy. Each key word is an action verb that cues students on what to do.

Memory Device	Intended Associations
Focus on speaker	F1. Eyes and mind on the speaker. F2. Resist talking to your neighbors. F3. Keep your hands and feet quiet.
Open your mind	O1. Clear your mind of distracting thoughts. (Ignore distractions) O2. Be ready to learn and remember. O3. Set your mind on the subject. O4. "Your brain is like a parachute. It only works when it's open." O5. Think about what is being said.
Connect	C1. Try to relate what you are hearing to things that you already know and are related to the lesson. C2. Create a picture in your mind of the new information. C3. Listen to other students' related comments.
Use your eyes	U1. Pay attention to the book, chalk board, worksheets, overheads, or other visual materials.
Select	S1. Select the important parts so you know what to remember. S2. Say the important parts to yourself in your own words. S3. Ask questions to make sure you understand.