DiALoG User Guide — Interpersonal Verbal Argumentation: Listening

DiALoG Dimension: Listening

As you use the DiALoG Tool in your classroom, you will determine if the following statement is Not Descriptive, Somewhat Descriptive, or Very Descriptive of the discussion you observe.

Students consistently reference the contributions of others and/or ask one another to clarify or elaborate their positions. Students indicate that they are listening through their body language (e.g., eye contact, facing one another when speaking).

To help determine how well the statement describes the discussion you observe, you might also consider:

At the Very Descriptive level, students indicate that they are listening to one another by consistently showing listening body language and referencing points made by others in the group. Students may acknowledge these points by referencing who said them (*As Lisa said earlier, I think that . . . .*). Or, students may simply build on arguments that were made earlier in the discussion, either by agreeing or disagreeing with the arguments. Students look at the speaker when he or she is speaking, make eye contact, and indicate through the position of their bodies (turned toward the speaker) that they are paying attention.

Possible student statements that indicate students are listening:

- *So, what you are saying is . . . .*
- *What do you mean when you say . . . ?*
- *I didn't fully understand. Can you say that again?*
- *I don't think that is what they meant. I think what they meant was . . . .*

Useful teacher prompts to model or provide opportunities for students to demonstrate listening:

- *In your own words, can you rephrase what was just said?*
- *Can someone repeat the argument that was just made?*
- *What are your thoughts about the idea that _____ just gave us?*

Responsive Mini-Lesson Summaries

The Responsive Mini-Lesson (RML) summaries below are intended to help you understand how the lessons help students build facility with respectful listening during a scientific discussion and to determine which RML is an appropriate fit for your students.

Not Descriptive

At the Not Descriptive level, students rarely acknowledge or reference one another's ideas and/or do not use listening body language. This may indicate that they will benefit from more practice listening to one another during classroom discourse.

To respond to a score of Not Descriptive, this lesson asks students to analyze a discussion to identify examples that do and do not reflect actual listening. Students act out two scripts—one that exemplifies poor listening behavior, and another that exemplifies what good listening behavior looks and sounds like. This accessible content helps students develop an initial understanding of listening. The goal of this lesson is to help students identify what it looks like, feels like, and sounds like to listen to one another during a discussion.

Somewhat Descriptive

At the Somewhat Descriptive level, students sometimes acknowledge or reference one another's ideas and/or indicate listening body language. However, they are not consistent in this practice, and/or they do not always send clear messages that they are listening.

To respond to a score of Somewhat Descriptive, this lesson engages students in an argumentation task that requires active listening. Students first create class Guidelines for Listening and then practice using the Guidelines in small-group discussions focused on evidence about life on other planets. The lesson concludes with students reflecting on how focusing on listening behaviors helped the discussion. The goal of this lesson is to improve students' listening skills as they engage in a collaborative argumentation task that requires active listening.