

I know you believe you understand what you think I said, but I am not sure you realize that what you hear is not what I meant.

Listening is the second part of any effective communication interchange and is the part that is frequently taken for granted. One assumes that listening is something that “just happens.” Many people fail to recognize the difference between passive listening and active listening.

Activity: Telephone or Gossip

- prepare several note cards with different phrases written on them
- divide the class into two or three straight lines
- show the first person in each line a note card
- the first person needs to whisper the phrase once to the next person in line
- the last person will say aloud the phrase

Activity: The Story

- read the following story (twice) to the class (have transparency for later)
- have students respond to the statements about the story (transparency)
- compare and discuss answers

The Story

A business man had just turned off the lights in the store when a man appeared and demanded money. The owner opened a cash register. The contents of the cash register were scooped up and the man sped away. A member of the police force was notified promptly.

Statements about the Story -

True	False	?
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1. A man appeared after the owner had turned off his store lights
2. The man demanded money.
3. The man who opened the cash register was the owner.
4. The store owner scooped up the contents of the cash register, and ran away.
5. Someone opened a cash register.
6. After the man who demanded the money scooped up the contents of the cash register, he ran away.
7. While the cash register contained money, the story does not say how much.
8. The story concerned a series of events in which only three persons are referred: the owner of the store; a man who demanded money, and a member of the police force.
9. The following events were included in the story: someone demanded money, a cash register was opened, its contents were scooped out, and a man dashed out of the store.
10. The robber was a man.
11. The robber demanded money of the owner.

Misunderstandings are often caused by how our biases or expectations affect what we see and hear.

Correct answers and explanations for The Story

1. ? A business man turn off the lights. We don't know if this man is the owner.
2. T He did demand money.
3. ? The owner opened the cash register but we don't know if the owner was a man.
4. ? We don't know who scooped up the contents of the cash register.
5. T The owner, who is someone, opened a cash register.
6. ? We don't know if the person who scooped up the contents was a man. Also, we don't know if the person ran away or drove away. We just know that he or she sped away.
7. ? We do not know if there was money in the cash register. We just know that there were contents - could have been jewelry, important papers, anything.
8. ? We don't know if the business man and the owner are one or two people.
9. ? We don't know if the man dashed, walked, or rolled out of the store. We only know that he sped away.
10. ? We don't know if it was a robbery or if the man who demanded money was a robber.
11. ? We don't know if it was a robber.