CONQUER THE STAGE

Listening assessment

"To listen with your heart is to hear the gentle whispers of another's soul."

PREAMBLE

"Listening is the art of understanding before being understood"

Listening is the root of speaking. This assessment will help you benchmark how well you listen before, during, and after speaking, as well as in everyday interactions. Think of it as a mirror, not a test.

Instructions:

- This assessment has four sections of 25 marks each (total 100).
- Read carefully and answer honestly.
- Your total score will show your current listening strength as a communicator.

PART A
THE REFLECTIVE LISTENER

Think carefully & benchmark your daily listening habits at a scale of 1–10. (*Score: 1 = not at all, 10 = always/strong)*.
You are free to choose any score from 1-10 based on your current level.

Listening Habit : Presence

1. I give my full attention when someone speaks.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

NOT AT ALL   ALWAYS / STRONG

Listening Habit : Observation

2. I notice non-verbal cues (expressions, gestures, tone).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

NOT AT ALL   ALWAYS / STRONG

Listening Habit : Adaptability

3. I adjust my talk based on audience response.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

NOT AT ALL   ALWAYS / STRONG

PART A
THE REFLECTIVE LISTENER

Listening Habit : Empathy

4. I try to understand what the other person feels, not just what they say.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

NOT AT ALL   ALWAYS / STRONG

Listening Habit : Feedback use

5. I act on feedback from past talks to improve.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

NOT AT ALL   ALWAYS / STRONG

Scoring key:

Score range 1 - 10. *For eg: If you choose 1, score =1, if you choose 5, score = 5.*

Total score = Sum of scores of all 5 questions. Final score = (Total score ÷ 2)

Min score= 2.5   Max score = 25

PART B
THE ATTUNED SPEAKER

Options and scoring:

Always (5), Often (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)

6. I arrive early to listen to organisers and attendees.

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. I use names, stories, or insights gathered from the audience in my talk.

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. I observe audience reactions while speaking (smiles, yawns, nods).

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART B
THE ATTUNED SPEAKER

9. I stay open to perspectives even if they challenge me.

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. I practise - eye contact, empathy & attention.

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Scoring key:

Options and scoring:

Always (5), Often (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1)

For eg: If you choose 'Always', score =5, if you choose 'Sometimes', score = 3.

Min score = 5 Max score = 25

PART C
THE INFORMED LISTENER

Evaluate your knowledge, and understanding from the book

11. According to the International Listening Association, listening means:

a. Just hearing clearly
b. Receiving, constructing meaning, and responding to messages
c. Waiting for your turn to speak
d. Memorising what was said

12. Which of these is not part of the E.A.R. model?:

a. Empathy
b. Empty
c. Affirmation
d. Argument

13. Which of these is the BEST example of "Empty" in the E.A.R. model?

a. Dropping assumptions and preconceptions before listening
b. Forgetting parts of what the speaker said to avoid bias
c. Filtering out background noise and distractions to focus
d. Keeping your mind free from rehearsing your response while listening

PART C
THE INFORMED LISTENER

14. Which of these is a sign of active listening on stage?

a. Scanning the audience for body language and expressions
b. Delivering memorised lines regardless of reactions
c. Avoiding eye contact to stay focused
d. Talking continuously to avoid silence

15. Why should speakers listen to other speakers?

a. To find faults
b. To learn from their strengths, mistakes, and audience reactions
c. To take a mental break before your turn
d. To compare styles and feel superior

Scoring key:

Correct answer = 5 marks × 5 qns

Min score = 0 Max score = 25

Answer key (Section C): 11b, 12d, 13a, 14a, 15b

PART D
THE ADAPTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Choose the best response for five real-world scenarios speakers face.
Best option = 5 points

16. During a panel, you don't fully understand the question. You:

a.   Guess and answer quickly
b.   Ask for clarification before responding
c.   Pretend to understand and change topic
d. Give a generic motivational line

17. While speaking, you notice many yawns. You:

a. Ignore it and continue
b. Speak louder and faster
c.   Add a quick poll, activity, or humour break
d.   End the session early

18. An audience member says your point wasn't clear. You:

a.   Defend your point strongly
b.   Ask what part needs clarity and restate simply
c.   Move on without addressing
d. Joke that they weren't listening

PART D
THE ADAPTIVE COMMUNICATOR

19. Before your talk at a college, the best listening approach is:

a. Ask students about career goals to weave into your talk
b. Only share your credentials
c. Avoid interaction to stay focused
d. Rely on assumptions about student interests

20. After your talk, someone gives harsh criticism. You:

a. Get defensive and explain yourself
b. Listen calmly, ask clarifying questions, and note feedback
c. Brush it off immediately
d. Laugh it off without reflection

Scoring key:

Correct answer = 5 marks × 5 qns

Min score = 0 Max score = 25

Answer key (Section D): 16b, 17c, 18b, 19a, 20b

PART E
THE SPEAKER'S DASHBOARD

See your overall score and understand where you currently stand as a speaker.

Section	Questions	Scoring Pattern	Score
Sec A: The Speaker's Mirror	1 – 5	Score range 1 - 10. Total score = Sum of scores of all 5 questions. Final score = (Total score ÷ 2) *Min score = 2.5 Max score = 25*	
Sec B: Your listening practices on stage	6 – 10	Options and scoring: Always (5), Often (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), Never (1) *Min score = 5 Max score = 25*	
Sec C: Knowledge on listening in public speaking	11 – 15	Correct answer = 5 marks × 5 qns *Min score = 0 Max score = 25*	
Sec D: Situational listening	16 – 20	Correct answer = 5 marks × 5 qns *Min score = 0 Max score = 25*	

PART E
THE SPEAKER'S DASHBOARD

See your overall score and understand where you currently stand
as a speaker.

Totals and interpretation:

Total score (A + B + C + D): _____ / 100

Percentage: _____ %

Interpretation:

Score Range	Interpretation
85 -100	**Deep Listener –** You connect, adapt, and grow through listening.
70 - 84	**Emerging Listener –** You have a strong base; refine it with consistency.
50 - 69	**Distracted Speaker –** You are already aware, but you need to practise E.A.R. habits.
Below 50	**Talking Tree Without Roots –** You have to build your listening first; speaking will follow.

PART F
THE SPEAKER'S NEXT MOVES

We hope that this assessment and the book have helped you benchmark your listening skills. Whether you are a novice speaker or a seasoned speaker, listening is a skill that plays a vital role.

A phenomenal speaker is always an empathetic listener.

Happy Listening!

Action plan