STAGES OF LISTENING: SKILLS AND ACTIVITIES
**PRE-LISTENING STAGE**

- Involves activating schemata to help students predict the content of the listening passage
- Setting up a reason to listen
- Involves information gap or opinion gap, and students ask questions based on things they would hope to hear
WHAT A LISTENER NEEDS TO KNOW BEFORE LISTENING

 Contextual information
   Who is speaking and who is listening?
   Why?

 Speaker’s voice and way of talking
   Pitch, accent, volume
   Speaking styles - e.g; use metaphors liberally

 Information about the passage to be heard
   How long will it be?
   What is its function?

 Information concerning the topic
   Is it something the listener knows about and can relate to?
ACTIVITIES FOR ACTIVATING SCHEMATA/PREDICTING

- Brainstorming
- Visuals
- Realia
- Texts and words
- Situations
- Opinions, ideas and facts
THINGS TO AVOID DURING PRE-LISTENING STAGE

- Don’t let the pre-listening stage drag on. Make it short and fast paced.
- Don’t give away too much information.
- Don’t ‘do a listening before listening’ – ‘Never say anything yourself if a student could say it for you’ (Christine Nuttall).
- Don’t just talk about the general topic - should stick to the content of the passage.
Students hear the input once/listening for gist
Check their answers in pairs or groups
Give the students confidence and to open up any areas of doubt
Why Use While-Listening Activities

- Well-designed activities can help students to understand the listening passage
  - Provide a focus
  - Perceive the text’s structure
  - ‘Chunk’ the listening into sections

- So that the students can show evidence of understanding or non-understanding
- Listen for the main idea
- Get the basic information
  - What?
  - Who?
  - Why?

**Listening for gist**

- Listen for specific information
- Equivalent to selective listening
- Listener extracts the information that he/she needs

**Listening for detail**
Inferring
- Making deductions by going beyond what is actually stated
- Activities to practice inferring:
  - Pause and predict
  - Twelve questions

Participating actively
- Transferring what is heard from one medium to another
- Using skills such as drawing or tracing a route on map
● Note-taking
  ● Promotes higher level of attention
  ● Pick out the important points
  ● Techniques for note-taking
    ○ Choose only important information
    ○ Use title & subtitles
    ○ Refer p.88

● Dictation
  ● Associated with teacher-controlled methodology and Grammar-translation
  ● Examples of activities:
    ○ Interactive dictation
    ○ Dictogloss
    ○ Refer p.91-93
The whole class checks answers

Discusses difficulties (e.g.; unknown vocabulary) and responds to the content of the passage

Involve the ‘mining’ of the recording for - useful language, grammatical structure, vocabulary/discourse markers
Reflecting
- Classroom listening as diagnostic
- Find out what the students *didn’t* struggle with and how they come to their answers
- Students can reflect on their listening experience without the pressure of having to process the real-time speech or do a task

Checking & summarising
- Monitor the students’ discussion, asking for textual evidence of their ideas, confirming or denying these ideas and answering queries
- **Discussion**
  - Choosing texts containing conflict, contentious areas or challenging topics
  - Encourage reaction from the students

- **Creative responses**
  - Ronald Carter notes that creativity is usually associated with writing rather than speaking
  - Thus, needs to consider creative post-listening activities that involve both writing and speaking

- **Critical responses**
  - Creative thinking & critical thinking are often linked
  - Awareness of the speaker’s viewpoint, biases and prejudices
Information exchange

- Shared information is what allows societies to function and develop
- The shared information needs to be relevant to the students
- Using ‘jigsaw’ listening activities

Problem-solving

- Problem-solving task types that go well with listening materials:
  - Listing
  - Sorting
  - Ranking

Refer p.106
Examine salient features of listening texts

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Cohesive devices
- Discourse markers
- Pronunciation

Two ways of doing this:

- Playing short segments of the recording and stopping them - students focus on the desired features
- Using transcripts - represent an invaluable source of connected speech
Students putting together the fragments or a damaged or abbreviated form of the text

Some of the activities involved:
  - Gap-fill
  - Storyboard
  - Disappearing dialogues
  - Re-ordering