

Improving Your Understanding

When you listen to complex oral texts there are several strategies you can employ to help you improve your understanding.

Before Listening:

- Review any handouts and think about questions you want to ask and what you already know.
- Use your prior knowledge to predict (infer) what the speaker might say
- Organize your space so that you are comfortable and not distracted.

During Listening:

- Making eye contact, watching speaker's expression and body language can help you understand what he/she says.
- Use a graphic organizer to keep track of important points
- Connect what the speaker says with what you already know (making inferences). Ask yourself is the speaker confirming or contradicting what you already believe to be true?
- Silently ask yourself questions to check that you understand the oral text.

After Listening:

- Ask the speaker appropriate questions to clarify your understanding
- In conversation with others, paraphrase (repeat using different words) the speaker's message to confirm your understanding.
- Listen to other people's perspectives on the speaker's message to provide you with a new or deeper understanding of the oral text.
- Summarize what you have heard orally, visually or in writing. Use the method that will help you retain what you gained from the presentation. This will help you remember the main message as well as how it was supported.