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**Barriers to Effective Listening**

Identify the possible barriers to listening in the following situations. Then indicate what the person needs to do, right now in that situation, to offset those barriers.

1. John is in geometry class. It is his last class before lunch. He overslept this morning and had to skip breakfast, so he is hungry. His teacher is explaining a new proof that he really needs to understand because there will be a test on Friday. But the room is very warm and stuffy. One of the windows is open a bit, but there are kids outside playing soccer. They are very noisy.

BARRIERS:

FIX:

1. A mother is telling her teenage son the things he must do that day before he will be allowed to go out with his friends. When she gets to the third task, she begins to criticize him for failing to keep his room clean. At the same time, the son notices his younger sister in the next room laughing and making faces at him.

BARRIERS:

FIX:

1. Joan’s history teacher is reviewing yesterday’s lesson. Although the teacher knows the subject well, he has a raspy and unpleasant voice. Joan took careful notes yesterday in class and has read the assignment. Next period, she is having a major exam in French that she is concerned about. She is also worried because her boyfriend has been very moody lately and seems to be upset with her about something.

BARRIERS:

FIX:

1. The woodworking teacher is demonstrating to the class the techniques of sanding furniture by hand. The next project will be to make a simple chair. Jim has a lot of experience working with wood and feels this assignment ought to be a breeze. The boy seated behind Jim is whispering loudly to the person across the aisle. In the next room, the sound of hammering and sawing can be heard clearly.

BARRIERS:

FIX:

1. Sherry has been listening attentively in English class for more than 30 minutes when a principal comes in over the PA system with some announcements. As the announcements begin, she looks at the clock and notices there are only 10 minutes left in class. She closes her book and puts away her notes just as the principal starts talking about student behavior at lunch. Sherry thinks to herself, “I wonder when they are going to stop getting on to everyone in this school for the stupid actions of a few people. I’m tired of hearing this all the time.”

BARRIERS:

FIX: