

# Mission Together

## Lent Activity: 'Listen to him'



### Introduction

*Activities One and Two complement our 'Listen to Him' assembly.*

In our assembly we heard how God wants us to listen to his son, Jesus. We can do this when we pray. Prayer is a conversation and like any conversation we have with our friends, in prayer we talk **and we listen**. Children all over the world, like those at Marka School for Refugees in Jordan, do what God asks of them – they listen to Jesus every day.

We can listen to Jesus every day too.

**Question** - How can we listen to Jesus? *Invite responses.*

- We can hear Jesus speak to us through readings from the Bible (especially the Gospels).
- We can hear Jesus speak to us through those who care about us: family members who tell us how to stay safe; teachers who teach us how to learn; and in a special way priests and nuns – they spend their lives reading Jesus' words, so they can tell us how to follow Him more closely.
- We can hear Jesus in our hearts, not in the way we hear someone speaking to us through our ears, but in the same way we hear thoughts in our head. Jesus speaks to us when we decide to share our sweets, or when we think about ways we can help someone in need, or when we think of a person who needs our prayers.



In all these ways – through the Bible, people who love us, our thoughts – we know that Jesus is speaking to us **when what we hear helps us to be more like Him**: sharing what we have, being kind to everyone, forgiving, helping, including people, being fair.

### We Listen in Prayer

Another way we can hear Jesus is through prayer. But sometimes we are so busy that we forget to pray or perhaps we think we do not have time. If we want to listen to Jesus this Lent we will need to make time to pray.

**Question** - When can we do this? *Invite responses.*

- When we wake up, on the journey to and from school, before or after meals, when we go to bed. Sometimes it is hard to listen. But if we want to get better at anything, like playing sport or a musical instrument, what do we do? We practise. If we want to listen better we need to practise. Let's do that!



*This activity encourages children to develop an important listening skill: the ability to block out background noise and focus attention on a single voice or sound.*

*The activity also helps children welcome stillness as a way to draw closer to God and to hear Jesus speak to them in the stillness of their hearts.*

For activity one pupils will need:

- One copy each of Appendix 1.
- Pens / pencils

Ask the children to stay silent, to shut their eyes (no fidgeting) and to pay attention to the different sounds they can hear around them. Ask them to do this for 30–60 seconds (depending on age).

Now ask the children to keep listening as they write or draw alongside the image of the large ear all the sounds they can hear.

After a suitable period of time ask the children:

- How many sounds they heard.
- Did they each hear different noises?
- How hard it was to stay silent.
- Did anyone hear the sound of their breathing?

Next ask the children to listen very carefully to **just one** of the sounds they heard. Allow 30–60 seconds to do this (depending on age).

Ask the children to keep listening to their chosen sound as they write alongside the small ear image a description of that sound e.g. rustling, whizzing, snapping. For KS2 pupils you may wish to develop this into a poem or creative writing exercise.

Tell the children that by listening carefully to their chosen sound they were able to hear that noise above all the others. We can become even better at focusing on single sounds by practising our careful listening every day, especially in the classroom and also when we pray.

When we pray there can be many sounds that can distract us, but if we try and focus on one – the sound of our breath is a good choice – then we will be more able to hear Jesus in the peace and quiet and in our thoughts.

Conclude the activity by encouraging the children to listen carefully to Jesus this Lent and finish by saying the Mission Together prayer as a class. A copy of this prayer can be found at <https://missiontogether.org.uk/prayer-resources/>



# Mission Together

## Listen to Him Activity Two

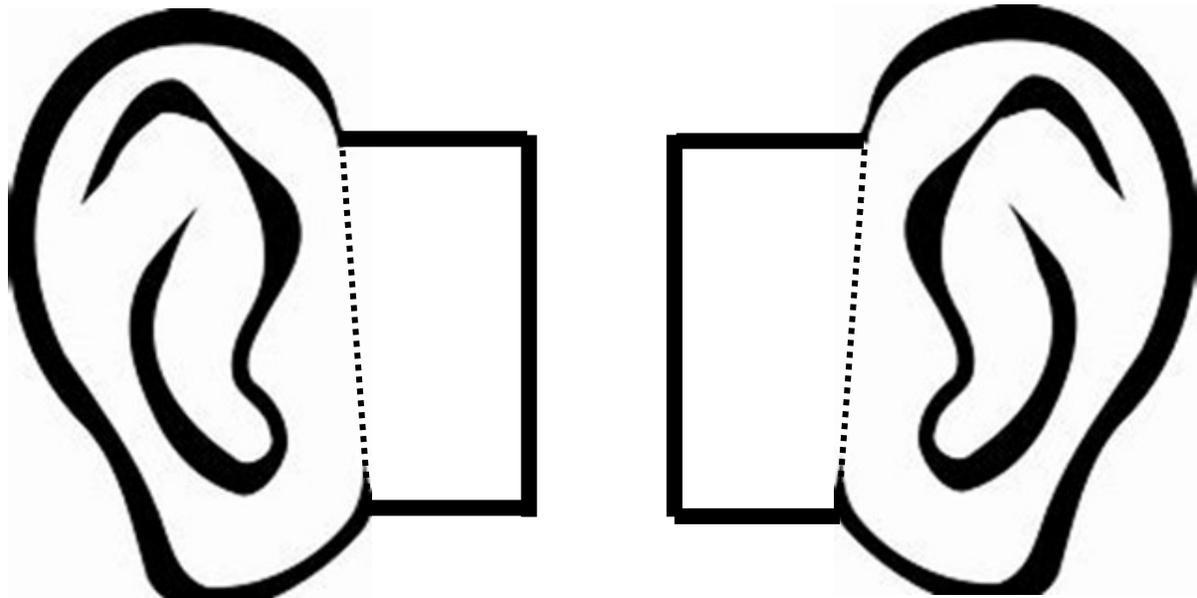


### Instructions.

- Prepare strips of paper long enough to fit comfortably around a child's head. Around 50cm x 5cm should allow enough overlap to secure the ends.
- Provide each child with a photocopy of the ears below and ask them to cut carefully around the thick black lines only. The perforated line will be bent to create a tab.
- Once the ears have been cut out, provide each child with a paper strip. With the help of classmates or staff, ask pupils to create a headband for themselves by securing the two ends with sellotape.
- Whilst wearing their headband, pupils then need to ask classmates or staff to attach their cut out ears. The tabs will help.
- Finally, ask children to remove their headband and in between the ears, at the front of the head write – using colourful pens or pencils – 'I listen to Jesus'.
- In the space in between the ears, at the back of the head, ask children to write the ways they can listen to Jesus e.g. through the Bible, through people who care for us...

For optional activity two, pupils will need:

- One pair of photocopied ears
- One long strip of paper to act as a headband
- Scissors
- Sellotape
- Coloured pens or pencils

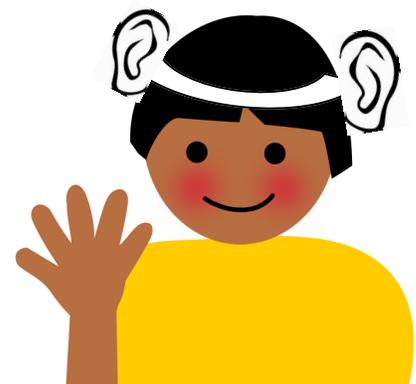


### Plenary

Ask the children what they have learned about the importance of listening. Ask why it might be good to listen carefully:

- To our teachers?
- To our parents / carers?
- To Jesus?

Remind the children that all year round we should take time to speak and listen to Jesus, but in Lent we are to try even harder; remembering also in our prayers children in the world who need our help.



# Mission Together

Listen to Him – Appendix 1



Listen carefully, then write or draw *as many sounds you hear* around the large ear.



Listen carefully, then write a description of **just one** of these sounds alongside the small ear.



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