

Active Constructive Responding - Intermediate Mid

Lesson Information

Positive Psychology Learning Outcomes

Students will...

1. identify four ways that people respond to good news: active constructive, active destructive, passive constructive, and passive destructive.
2. identify characteristics of the four types of responding.
3. explain the importance of active constructive responding.
4. define active constructive responding.

Language Learning Outcomes

Students will...

1. listen for specific information.
2. listen for the main idea.
3. use context and background knowledge to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.
4. ask follow-up questions to get more information.

Materials Needed

- [Active Constructive Responding](#)
- [Note-taking activity](#)
- [Note-taking activity answer sheet](#)
- [GEICO Hump Day Camel Commercial - Happier than a Camel on Wednesday](#)

Overview

Today we will talk about one way to maintain positive relationships whether the relationships be with friends, spouses, colleagues, or family members.

Activating Background Knowledge

Speaking prompt: What does it take to maintain a good relationship. Plan for 30 seconds. Speak for 1 minute.

Activity 1: Listening/Reading

Pre-Listening

Listening/reading strategy: Using context and background knowledge to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.

The term "active constructive responding" is probably new to you.

- Based on your background knowledge of each of the individual words, what do you think this phrase might mean?
- Discuss with a partner for 1 minute what you know about each of the words and what you think active constructive responding might be.

Note: Students may be unfamiliar with these words. Allow them to look up the individual words if necessary (but not the entire phrase together).

Now, with your partner, read this paragraph:

"When you use **active constructive responding** to react, you magnify the excitement the person is sharing. **Active constructive responding** builds trust, connection, intimacy, and satisfaction in your relationships. It also boosts your own overall well-being and reduces conflict."

Look for words or phrases that give you clues to the meaning of active constructive responding.

- Does this confirm your prediction about what active constructive responding means or would you like to change your prediction?

Discuss with your partner and come up with a possible definition for active constructive responding.

Have a few partners share with the class what they came up with.

First Listening

Now we will watch a video about active constructive responding. Watch to see if your guesses about active constructive responding were correct.

Post-listening

Discuss with your partner:

- What is active constructive responding?
- Was the definition you came up with correct or close to correct?
- What stands out to you about ACR?

Second listening

Listening strategy: Note-taking. Taking notes while listening will make you a more active listener. Note-taking helps you remember what you heard.

Listen to the first part of the video again and complete the notes. (You can stop the video at 2:50)

[\(Note-taking activity\)](#)

[\(Note-taking activity answer sheet\)](#)

Have partners review their notes with a partner or small group.

- Did others get answers you were unable to hear?
- As a group try to complete the notes.

Have students read the entire dialog as they go over the notes with their groups (instead of just filling in the blanks).

As a class briefly go over what the research says about active constructive responding.

Activity 2: Listening/Speaking

Pre-listening

Active Learning Strategy: Using charts and visuals to organize and remember information. Creating and/or using charts and diagrams is one way to be an active learner.

Here is a chart that may help you remember the 4 types of responding. (Show students the chart or use the PowerPoint).



Use the chart to briefly review the 4 types of responses as a class.

Display a copy of the chart or hand out a copy of the chart to each group of students (roughly 4 students per group).

Listening

- Listen for the main idea
- Listen for mood

Watch the following video clips in which Mike shares with Alice news about getting a promotion at work. Decide which type of responding is being demonstrated.

After each clip, discuss as a class which type of response was demonstrated in the video clip.

- How can you tell?
- What phrases or actions in the clip identified the type of response it was illustrating?
- How does the response affect Mike's mood?
- How would you feel if someone responded to your good news in this way?

Activity 3: Speaking

Give each group a chart showing the four types of responding as well as cards with scenarios on them. Have members of the group take turns choosing a card and reading it to the group (have a partner help read if there are 2 people talking). The group decides which type of responding is being shown. Place the card in the proper section of the chart.

Next, give each group a role-play card with one of the four types of responses and some good news. As a group, create a response that matches the response type you were assigned. Choose two people from your group who will **role-play** the scenario for the class. The rest of the class will guess which type of response they are demonstrating.

After each group discuss:

- Which type of response was this?
- How would you feel if you received this type of response?
- After all, groups have had a chance to share their role-play, discuss:
- Which type of reaction would you like to receive when sharing good news?
- Why is it important that we use active constructive responding?

Activity 4: Speaking

Speaking Strategy: Asking follow-up questions. When you ask follow-up questions in conversations it shows that you are interested and helps you get more information from the speaker.

One of the skills of active constructive responding is asking follow-up questions to show interest and get more information. Follow-up questions should relate to what the speaker has just said and request more information.

Use fluency lines (inner/outer circles) to practice asking follow-up questions. Have students form two lines with the lines facing each other. One person shares some good news or tells of something good that happened to them. The person facing them asks follow-up questions relating to what their partner shared. The questions need to request more information about the good news or event. Then switch who shares the good news and who asks the follow-up questions. After one minute one line will rotate one person to the left giving students a new partner. Repeat until students have rotated through the line or until the desired time for this activity is up.

Activity 5: Speaking

Ask students to think about what they have learned today about active constructive responding. Tell students that they will be summarizing what they have learned today about ACR and teaching it to their partner. Give students 1 minute to plan what they will say. Encourage students to plan before they speak by writing down some notes or sentences. Each student will teach their partner about ACR for 1-2 minutes.

Homework

For homework have students watch/listen to this video and respond by describing 3 good events that were reported to them recently and how they responded or could have responded in an active constructive way. (Students can watch the video and submit their responses through Canvas.)

Follow-Up

Tuesday:

Out of the four types of responding we have discussed, active constructive responding is the only response that builds positive relationships.

- What are some reasons we don't always use active constructive responding?
- What gets in the way of us responding actively and constructively?

With a partner or small group, brainstorm a list of reasons why you may not always respond with ACR. (Examples include stress, bad mood, looking at a phone, being busy, not agreeing that the news is good, etc.)

Have each group share one reason with the class and make a list on the board.

- What are some ways we can overcome these challenges or distractions and better apply active constructive responding?

Use conditionals to link the condition and the response.

For example: If/When someone shares good news with me I will put down my phone and listen.

Wednesday:

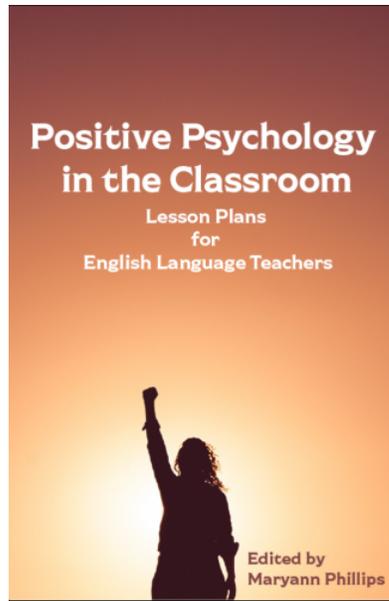
Watch the Geico camel commercial (It's hump day).

- Which type of responding is being displayed by the office employees?

Thursday:

Discuss with a partner how you are doing this week at applying ACR. Give an example of when someone shared good news.

- Did you respond actively and constructively?
- If not, how could you have reacted differently?



Phillips, M. (2022). *Positive Psychology in the Classroom: Lesson Plans for English Language Teachers*. EdTech Books.

<https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyintheClassroom>