



**Lesson Plan**

*Designed by Maro Giannakopoulou, Music school, Mytilene, Greece*

<b>Title of Activity:</b> The Circle of Silence – Mindful Communication & Deep Listening	<b>Subject area:</b> Social & Civic Education – Life Skills – Emotional Education - Language
<b>Grade Level(s):</b> 12–14 years	<b>Duration:</b> 1 teaching hour (45 minutes)

<p><b>Learning objectives:</b> Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop mindful and active listening skills.</li> <li>• Express thoughts and feelings with respect and clarity.</li> <li>• Listen without interruption or judgment.</li> <li>• Foster a climate of trust, safety, and democratic culture in school.</li> <li>• Understand the importance of dialogue as the foundation of the school community.</li> <li>• Cultivate empathy and respect.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Teaching Method:</b> Experiential learning</p> <p><b>Teaching Techniques:</b> Dialogue Circle – Non-Violent Communication (NVC) pair exercises</p>
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<p><b>Materials / Resources / Technology use:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A circle of chairs.</li> <li>• A "talking piece" (an object held by the speaker).</li> <li>• Basic rules posted.</li> <li>• Timer (optional).</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Activity Description:</b> “Silent Circle” is an experiential practice of mindful communication. It cultivates deep listening, respect for others' speech, and democratic coexistence. Students experience the roles of speaker and listener, experimenting with silence and reflection to see how the quality of listening affects classroom relationships.</p> <p><b>Introduction:</b> <b>Setting the Framework (5’)</b> Brief introduction:</p>
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- What does it truly mean to "listen"?
- Group Agreement: respect, silence, confidentiality.

The teacher presents the rules:

- No interruptions, comments, or arguments.
- We listen to understand, not to answer.

### **Step 1: Silent Pairs – Deep Listening Preparation (10')**

Students split into pairs.

- Student A speaks for 2 minutes on a simple topic (e.g., "A moment at school when I felt good").
- Student B listens **without** making **Comments, Gestures, interruptions**.

Switch roles.

### **Step 2: Reflective Listening (10')**

Second round in pairs.

- The speaker talks for 1–2 minutes.
- The listener responds only with: "What I heard you say is..."

Short discussion:

- How close was what I heard to what was actually said?

### **Step 3: Silent Circle (10')**

Students sit in a circle and speak in turns, answering questions such as:

- How do I experience school lately?
- What challenges me?
- What supports me or makes me feel like I belong?

*Participation is optional – silence is accepted.*

Rules of the Circle:

- Only the person holding the "talking piece" speaks.
- 10–15 seconds of silence between each speaker.
- No comments or replies.  
(If someone does not wish to speak, they simply pass the talking piece.)

### **Step 4: Reflection (10')**

Short oral or written reflection:

- How did I feel speaking without being interrupted?
- How did I feel listening without judging or preparing an answer?
- What changes when we listen with full attention?

### **Closure:**

The teacher connects the activity to active citizenship at school: democracy starts with how we listen, speak, and coexist. Acceptance of different opinions and diversity in general.

## The Circle of Silence – Mindful Communication & Deep Listening



### Assessment

- Participation in the process (verbal or non-verbal).
- Respect for the circle rules. Quality of reflection.
- Written reflection: "What listening means to me."

### Extension

- Establish a Silent Circle once a month.
- Use the method to resolve classroom conflicts.
- Apply the practice during teachers' meetings.