

# Temperature Check Strategy

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

temperature, heard, answer, feel, kids, homework, give, solutions, situation, today, ideas, kiddo, seth, younger kids, perler, listen, cool, school, technique, class

## SPEAKERS

Seth Perler

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### S Seth Perler 00:02

What is up parents, teachers, therapists. It's me, Seth Perler, Executive Function coach. I helps struggling students navigate this thing called education so they can have great life. In this video, I'm going to talk to you about how to listen. But I'm going to give you one specific tool that I use with middle, high school, college, even younger kids that is an amazing tool that you can apply and you can start using today. I'm going to challenge you actually to use it today, of how to listen better. How to listen so that your child feels more heard. Now, why did I just say that? How to listen so that your child feels heard? Because listening, real listening involves that we feel heard. Imagine you're talking to someone and you're saying to them, "Hey, you're not hearing me," and they're like, "I am hearing you. I'm listening." You're like, why would you say something like that? You would say that because you actually don't feel heard, you intuitively don't feel heard. Maybe they listen to the words that you said, but they didn't really hear your core message. You know that something got lost in translation there. Okay.

### S Seth Perler 01:04

So how do we do that? Well, here's one technique that I use all the time. This is what I call the 'temperature check.' So when I do a temperature check with students, again, you can use it with any age kid. You can use it with your graduate students, you can use it with your friends, your spouse, your co-workers, any age, this works with the temperature check. And the way that the temperature check works is it's a way that I talk to kids about any topic so that I can get real information, so that I can actually be helpful to the kids so that we're not getting answers like, "Hey, how was school today?" "Fine." "Hey, how's it going?" "Fine." "Hey, how is this class?" "Fine." "How do you feel?" "Good/bad." You know, like, so that we can actually get meaningful responses that we can do something with to be helpful to this kiddo. So how a temperature works, how I use it, and you can adapt this in so many ways, but generally speaking, what I usually do is a 1 through 10. So I say, "Which temperature on a scale of 1 to 10?" 10 means awesome. One means horrible. You can reverse that, it just depends on the kid and the situation. But generally speaking, I do a 1 through 10. Sometimes I'll do one through 5, and sometimes I'll do 1 through 5 on hands. If I'm speaking to a whole class, I say, "What's your temperature on this math work we're doing? Everybody hold up your hand," and I have kids go like this or like this, I know that those kids really are struggling with the concept. I have kids going like this, or this or this. So you can actually evaluate a whole group of parents or teachers or kids. But on one, you just do a 1 through 10. Alright, what's your

temperature 1 through 10? Now, what topics can you do this with? So let's say that I want to know how they're doing a class. "Hey, what's your temperature with that science class? What's your temperature with that science teacher? What's your temperature with those kids that you were talking about last week that you're having some problems with? What's your temperature with how you slept last night? What's your temperature with your fitness and how your body feels lately? What's your temperature with the food that you're eating? Do you feel like you're eating healthy food?" It doesn't matter? "What's your temperature with your procrastination? With your planner, with your whatever it is. You can really use all sorts of topics. "What's your temperature with school in general? What's your temperature with school today? What's your temperature was school this week," you know? So you're just saying "What's your temperature?"

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Now, what do you do with that information? Let's say that somebody gives you an answer. Seven, seven is the super like non-committal answer, right? So you can even say something like, "What's your answer, and you can't pick seven?" because it forces them to pick an eight or a six and do something, you know, a little more. If this is the kid who always says, "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know," you can say something like that, you know, but you can't pick seven. But anyhow, you want to know, you know "What's your temperature with this thing?" And then they tell you. It's a one, it's a three, it's a five, it's a 10, whatever it is. Your question after that is "Why? Cool, six. Why? Why'd you pick a six?" And then they tell you, and if you follow my work, you're using wait time to be really patient and really allow them to feel heard and tell you why they chose that. Then you might say, "Cool, tell me more." Again, tell the question, 'tell me more' is a way to be an even better listener, to communicate even deeper, just opening that door. "Cool, tell me more." And then pause, wait, and then they tell you a bit more. So now you have an understanding of why they chose what they chose, and you're starting to get somewhere. You're starting to say, "Wow, I know how I can help this kiddo. I'm getting some real answers that are actually useful in this situation."

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So now, and again, parent, teacher, therapist, whoever you are, we can all use this technique. Now, you've said "What's your temperature? Why?" and then you've given some space. You've done what's called 'holding space' so that they feel heard and you can get some good information. Now what I follow up with is "Cool. What could make it one point higher?" So if it was a six, I might say, "Cool, what would make it a seven? A solid seven?" If it's a one "Cool, what would make it a two?" I'm not gonna say, well, what would make it a 10. If it's a one, I'm gonna say "What would make it a two?" I might say, "What would make it a 1.1?" You know, the mind has to not feel overwhelmed by abstractness, we have to make things concrete for these kids, we have to give people an opportunity to find their own solutions for things, what can make a one a 1.1? What can make a one a two? What can make a six a seven? And what happens is, is that my students at this point usually give me like, really good information, and I'm not the one telling them, "You should do this, you should do that," and blah, blah. They're coming up with their own solutions, there's agency, there's ownership, there's buy in, these are their ideas, that now we can start exploring. You know, a lot of times we adults, tell them what we think they need to hear. We don't give them the opportunity, and nor do we value them as being competent enough to come up with good ideas. So you know, here we're saying, "Okay, cool, what would make it a seven?" Now, the answer, you may know, really isn't clear enough, or it's really not action-based enough, or strategy-based enough, that is going to get them where we're trying to get them in whatever the situation is. So at that point, you can be like, you know, they're like, "Well, to make it a seven, this would happen." So for example, if I said, "What would make school," let's say, they say school is a two, and I say, "Okay, what would make school a three?" And they say, "If there was no homework," well, what am I going to do with that answer? That doesn't help us

in the situation. So I'm going to guide them. I'd be like, "Cool. Wow, tell me more about that." I want to hear them. What would it be like if there was no homework? That's going to give me some important insights anyway. But that's not an answer that allows us to give the kid agency and ownership and problem-solving ability to really know how to solve the problem. I mean, if the school feels like a two, how can we make it feel like a three? Like, they're not going to magically make homework disappear. So we want to guide them to be like, "Cool, that's a great answer. I want to understand that. What else? What else? Tell me what else could make it a three?" And then we eventually may be like, "Do you want to hear what I think?" And then we can start guiding them.

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Anyhow, I wanted to basically in this video, I wanted to talk about how to listen better and I want to teach you this temperature check strategy. Again, you utilize it any way you want. But that's the gist of what I do. I usually do 1 through 10. I usually say, I usually say "Why?" You know, "What's the number? Why? What would make it better,?" and I help strategize from there. Quick tip for you. Again, my name is Seth Perler, Executive Function coach, go to [SethPerler.com](http://SethPerler.com). I have a lot of freebies. If you like this video and this helped, you please give me a thumbs up like, subscribe, share it with somebody, Sharing is the best thing you can do to help me. Leave a comment below. What is one way that you use to better listen, or hear, or help somebody feel heard? What's an idea that works with you that you've implemented? Share it with us, help us in our lives as well. My main wish for you today is this. I hope that you have connection with your child and the people that are important to you today. And I hope that you have peace of mind and some joy in your life today. Take care. I'll see you soon.