

STRATEGY GROUP: Metacognitive

STRATEGY SET: Centering your learning

STRATEGY: Paying attention

This strategy involves two modes, *directed attention* and *selective attention*.

- **Direct attention** means deciding generally or globally to pay attention to the task and avoid irrelevant distractors. Encourage direct attention by providing interesting activities and materials, reducing classroom distractions, reminding students to focus, and rewarding them when they do so.
- In contrast, **selective attention** involves deciding in advance to notice particular details. Facilitate selective attention by giving learners an incomplete chart to fill out, a table or checklist on which to mark details, or some other activity which requires attention to specifics.

Both of these attention modes, directed and selective, are important for listening.

For instance, Murray's mind begins to wander when he is listening to someone talk in the new language, so he consciously directs his attention to the conversation. In a Spanish-language simulation about catching a plane at the airport, Reinhardt quickly learns that he must notice the announcements about times of arrival and

departure for his plane. Janos selectively notes expressions as he hears them, using a checklist provided by the teacher.