

Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn

To JC & JC

*“Listening is an attitude of the heart, a genuine desire to be
with another which both attracts and heals.”*

—Anais Nin

Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn

Empowering Visible Clarity

John Hattie and Lyn Sharratt

Foreword by John Malloy

Epilogue by Pak Tee Ng

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FOREWORD

As educators, we often focus on the content we need to deliver, the strategies we want to implement, or the new technologies that are emerging. Yet, one of the most powerful instructional tools is often overlooked—the ability to truly listen. In *Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn: Empowering Visible Clarity*, John Hattie and Lyn Sharratt reveal how transformative listening can be for teaching, student learning, and student engagement.

John Hattie's Visible Learning research has reshaped our understanding of effective teaching by pinpointing which practices have the most significant impact on students' growth and achievement. His work underscores that learning is most powerful when it is visible—when students engage deeply and comprehend their own learning. Lyn Sharratt, with her expertise in educational leadership and classroom practice, brings these insights to life in the everyday realities of schools. Through her books *CLARITY: What Matters MOST in Learning, Teaching, and Leading* and *Putting FACES on the Data*, Lyn demonstrates how to create systems, schools, and classrooms that foster effective learning. Together, they show that learning how to really listen makes a huge difference for students.

A central message of this book is the necessity for everyone to engage in active listening and that students must be taught how to do this. The Five-Ear Listening Model outlines five essential steps: "I attend, I hear, I understand, I appraise, and I activate." This model provides educators with a framework to cultivate active listening, stimulate meaningful dialogue, and encourage critical thinking and reflection.

An important insight from the book is that educators play a pivotal role in creating the conditions for active listening and reflection in every classroom and school. Every student deserves to be heard, which requires intentional effort. When we genuinely listen to our students, understand their perspectives, and respond thoughtfully, we build a more inclusive environment where *every voice is valued*.

While the focus of this book is on classroom practices, its principles also extend to leadership practices. School leaders who prioritize

listening and reflection foster collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility. By embedding these practices into school culture, leaders empower their teams, creating environments where both teachers and students can flourish.

Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn underscores that listening is not an add-on to teaching; it is fundamental to effective assessment and instruction. The strategies in this book are both practical and actionable, helping educators integrate listening and reflection into their daily routines. When students learn to listen, reflect, and think critically, they become active participants in their own learning, leading to richer educational experiences. This shift reminds educators to talk less, model more, and, most importantly, listen—as outlined here.

This book is a powerful call to action for all of us. It will resonate with educators, administrators, and policymakers who are committed to improving educational outcomes for all students and fostering student-centered learning environments. In a world where schools are navigating complex cultural and social challenges, *Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn* provides a roadmap for how listening can bridge gaps and build stronger relationships. Listening is not just about hearing words; it is about understanding and empathizing in ways that create meaningful connections.

Listening is transformational—for students, for teachers, and for leaders. It is a skill that must be taught, nurtured, and practiced at every level of our educational system. As you engage with this book, consider how you can make listening, critical thinking, dialogue, and reflection more visible in your own classroom, school, and system. Ultimately, through active listening and meaningful reflection, authentic learning occurs—and our students stand to benefit from our efforts.

John Malloy, EdD
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PREFACE

The impact of a teacher being a good listener on student learning is seismic! The impact of teaching students to become good listeners on their learning is thunderous! The impact of teachers listening to their own impact on their students' learning is monumental. Simply put, listening is the process of actively receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken or nonverbal messages (International Listening Association, 1995, p. 4). Listening is more than hearing; it requires attention, comprehension, and interpretation of the message. It includes appreciation of the emotion and intent of the message. It includes enabling the receiver to connect, empathize, and collaborate with others. There are listening skills that need to be taught and to be learned, and this book is about the power of listening.

Educators are responsible for providing all students with equitable access to high-quality, differentiated educational experiences that result in *all* their students' continuous growth and improvement. To enable this, therefore, it is imperative to acknowledge that being heard by one's teacher is important, and then to establish culturally responsive and equitable classrooms in all grade levels and subject areas is critical. Kalinec-Craig (2017, p. 2) posited that students have "the right to speak, listen, and be heard," which requires teachers to be aware of their listening behaviors. That another hears, understands, and demonstrates that they have heard and understood surely is a primary marker of respect. (This does not mean you have to agree—just heard and understood.)

Accurate listening goes a step further. It involves listening with great attention, sensitivity, and comprehension. An accurate listener hears the words being spoken and understands the underlying emotions, intentions, and nuances behind those words. Accurate listening involves being fully present in the conversation, actively

"Listening with positive intent enables connection, mutual respect, psychological calm, and greatly enriched, joyful learning experiences."

Gene Reardon, Leading
Counselor, Wellbeing Focus,
Melbourne, Australia

engaging with the speaker, and demonstrating empathy and understanding. Accurate listening is the foundation for building powerful relations, resolving conflicts more effectively, and gaining deeper insights into other's perspectives.

- Chapter 1 outlines the definition and understanding of listening we adopt from our collective thinking.
- Chapter 2 outlines “Clarity: The Five-Ear VISIBLE Listening Model” we have developed which underpins the discussion throughout this book.
- Chapter 3 focuses on Listening Together and discusses the power of effective, focused listening.
- Chapter 4 unpacks Listening Skills needed in school and everyday life.
- Chapter 5 focuses on Listening Practices in the classroom.
- Chapter 6 links the power of learners' voices to accurate listening behaviors. Chapter 6 asks, “Who is doing the most listening, talking, interpreting, and thinking in your class?”.
- Chapter 7 helps the reader reflect on how they can measure listening.
- Chapter 8 provides a case study of how listening can enhance the school improvement work.
- Chapter 9 concludes with the pivotal role of leaders and teachers in understanding and implementing listening skills and behaviors that must be taught and modeled at every level of education.

We argue that the net outcome of *accurate listening* is fundamental to system and school improvement. The world thrives on accurate listening, and classrooms buzz when teachers listen to students and students listen to teachers and their peers.

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John Hattie is an award-winning education researcher and best-selling author with nearly thirty years of experience examining what works best in student learning and achievement. His research, better known as *Visible Learning*, culminates in nearly thirty years of synthesizing more than 2,400 meta-analyses comprising more than 100,000 studies involving over 300 million students. He has presented and keynoted in over 350 international conferences and received numerous recognitions for his educational

contributions. His notable publications include *Visible Learning*, *Visible Learning for Teachers*, *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn*, *Visible Learning for Mathematics, Grades K-12*, and *10 Mindframes for Visible Learning*.



Lyn Sharratt is a highly sought-after expert in the field of education. A distinguished practitioner, researcher, author, and presenter, she has dedicated her career to turning cutting-edge research into practical guidance for system and school leaders. With her extensive experience and expertise, she has developed a unique roadmap for educators to utilize ongoing assessment to inform instruction and drive equity and excellence at all levels of the education system. Her work has been recognized nationally

and internationally, and her insights and strategies have transformed countless classrooms, schools, districts, and even entire education systems. Her notable publications include *CLARITY: What Matters MOST in Learning, Teaching, and Leading* (Corwin, 2019) and *Putting Faces on The Data: What Great Leaders and Teachers Do!* (10th Anniversary Edition, with Michael Fullan, [Corwin, 2022]).

LISTENING TO HEAR

There is abundant literature addressing teacher and student talk. When we delve into research on classroom dynamics, a common observation emerges. Teachers typically occupy around 90 percent of speaking time, often posing hundreds of questions that prompt brief, less than three-word responses. Interestingly, students with above-average achievement levels tend to favor teacher-centric discussions and straight-forward factual inquiries, as they are the winners and find success when teachers dominate the talk and ask so many fact-related questions. One of our themes is that perhaps teachers need to budget their class time better, cutting back on their talk time and instead spending more time listening to the sounds of students' learning, listening to student questions, listening to their impact on all their students—with above average achievement, average achievement and below average achievement.

Similarly, there are abundant books, blogs, and presentations on escalating student voice. But this should not mean students talking for the sake of talking. Nuthall (2007) showed that too often students talking to each other convey wrong or false information, which can be more powerful and override what a teacher has said. As we have argued, there is a time and right place in the learning cycle for student talk, but any such talk presumes it will be heard, understood, and critically queried by other students and by the teacher (Hattie et al., 2024). Student talk, like teacher talk, presumes they are acute listeners. Yet, books in education exploring the art of listening are notably rare. Those who struggle academically yearn for an environment where teachers refrain from

dominating the conversation and, instead, lend an ear focused on their thought processes. They aspire to hear fellow students and their teachers grappling with problem-solving, aiming to unravel the “magic” possessed by those who seem to excel. They want to know, “How did you do that”? Their desire is for an inclusive space where diverse voices can engage in thoughtful discourse, fostering an atmosphere where teachers and their peers understand how they are thinking. They want to hear how to enhance, support, correct, and guide themselves toward comprehension.

To be successful in education is a two-way street—both understanding and being understood are integral components. Achieving this requires honing the skill of accurate listening, creating a learning environment where the exchange of ideas is valued, and where every student feels empowered to think aloud, contributing to a collective journey of comprehension and discovery. All ideas are accepted in these spaces, and there is “no one right way.”

Undoubtedly, one of the highest forms of praise we can bestow upon another person is to hear their words and convey a genuine understanding of their message. This act embodies respect and an embrace of diversity but does not mean you have to agree with what is heard. Aristotle’s timeless wisdom rings true: “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

In New Zealand culture, where we are both Pakehas, there are situations where we may not have the privilege of speaking, yet we unquestionably possess the right to listen. Listening to others is surely a fundamental mark of our respect for the speaker, the culture, and its people. By actively demonstrating our attentiveness, asking thoughtful (sometimes probing) questions, and expressing agreement or disagreement with courtesy, we contribute to a dialogue that values the richness of diverse perspectives. Winston Churchill astutely remarked, “Courage is what it takes to sit down and listen.” Indeed, in the act of listening, we find not only a demonstration of courage but also a pathway to understanding, connection, and building bridges between different worlds of thought and experience.

Many theories of psychotherapy are premised on listening. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, started many sessions with free association, and it was the therapist’s role to listen attentively and analyze the patient’s associations to uncover unconscious conflicts and thoughts. Perhaps the most famous method is Rogerian, developed by Rogers (1951, 1961, 1980). Analogous to educators, Rogers argued

that therapists must embody “unconditional positive regard” for their clients. This involves actively listening, extending nonjudgmental acceptance and support, maintaining full presence and engagement, and earnestly striving to comprehend the client’s perspective without imposing personal judgments or interpretations. Rogers emphasized the profound impact of authentic listening, asserting that “when someone really hears you without passing judgment on you, without taking responsibility for you, without trying to mold you, it feels damn good” (p. 69). He stressed that only after establishing such regard can therapeutic progress genuinely unfold. Lessons for educators abound here.

One of us (JH) initially encountered Carl Rogers during graduate classes, where he viewed a video featuring Carl Rogers, Fritz Perls, and Albert Ellis conducting a counseling session with the same client (see Burry, 2008). Following this exposure, students were tasked with a more in-depth exploration of each therapist; JH continued to be impressed by Rogers’ meticulous approach as both an experimentalist and psychotherapist. JH, along with a team, was instrumental in establishing a telephone counseling service based on these principles, and one of his first evaluation projects was researching the impact on this program (Hattie, 1978). The common message was that listening was core to the success of this service. Listening enabled a discussion about the presenting issue (which often was not the core issue at all) and established a caring relationship between caller and listener. Often, it was a caller hearing how others heard them and how others interpreted what they were saying that led to greater CLARITY to then attend to their issues or seek the most optimal professional care.

Rogers made a compelling assertion that initiating interactions with clients through “reflective listening” is essential. Unfortunately, this approach has been somewhat oversimplified, often reduced to the cliché of “Um, tell me more,” or mere parroting of the client’s words (Guenther, 2022). However, Rogers’s concept of listening goes beyond this; it is nuanced, intentional, and at times challenging. It involves

An important insight from *Visible Clarity* is that educators play a pivotal role in creating the conditions for active listening and reflection in every classroom and school. Every student deserves to be heard, and that requires intentional effort. When we genuinely listen to our students, understand their perspectives, and respond thoughtfully, we build a more inclusive environment where every voice is valued.

Dr. John Malloy, foreword, in *Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn*, by John Hattie and Lyn Sharratt, Corwin 2025.

demonstrating to the client that the therapist is genuinely engaged, respecting their perspective (even if not necessarily agreeing), and conveying authenticity. Only by establishing this empathetic connection can the therapeutic process progress to the point of testing understandings—observing how the client reacts to life situations—and allowing space for the client to amend or reject the therapist’s interpretations of their experiences. Rogers (1961) argued that there are *five categories of messages* sent between people that encompass 80 percent of all communication:

- *Evaluative* responses are most used, where the listener makes a judgement of the sender’s message’s relative goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, or rightness.
- *Interpretative* indicates the listener’s intent is to teach, to tell the sender what their problem means, or how the sender really feels about the problem,
- *Supportive* indicates the listener’s intent is to reassure, to soothe, to reduce the sender’s intensity of feeling.
- *Probing* indicates the listener’s intent is to seek further information, to provoke further discussion along a certain line, or to question the sender.
- *Understanding* indicates the listener’s intent is to respond only, to ask the sender whether they have correctly understood what is being said, how the sender feels about the problem and how the sender sees the problem.

Do you have a dominant mode? Do your students believe you have a dominant mode? Do your students each have a dominant mode?

Similarly, for teachers: practicing “reflective listening” doesn’t imply projecting a blank screen. Through empathetic listening and clarifying meaning, educators can initiate the building of positive relationships that lead to fostering trust and understanding. Teacher listening serves as a model for students and encourages the development of empathetic listening skills, ultimately contributing to collaborative learning in the classroom. By consistently checking for understanding through reflective listening, teachers are essentially asking, “Is the information I’m providing suitable for your current position in your learning journey toward accomplishing our co-constructed Success Criteria?” This inquiry invites students to discuss their experiences, prompting them to think aloud,

question, and respond. Simultaneously, it allows the teacher to demonstrate an ability to stand in each student's shoes, gaining insight into how they construct their understanding of the world (while not necessarily agreeing with the student). This dynamic interaction lays the groundwork for effective teaching and learning.

This involves much more than “reflection”—which can be as simple as looking at oneself in a mirror. We are the interpreters of the reflection and do not always see our biases or blemishes and certainly do not see ourselves as others might see us. It is a reflection more in terms of walking *through* the looking glass, like Alice in Wonderland, and listening to how others see us, hear us, and understand us. Too much teacher reflective research is “looking in the mirror” whereas more is needed to *hear* how others see us. This is where the power of listening becomes critical.

Contrary to the often inward and retrospective nature of educator “reflection,” reflective listening incorporates a more evaluative approach. It involves critiquing in its true sense of determining the underlying logic, cross-checking with others' perspectives, and viewing the world from *the other side* of the mirror rather than simply gazing at one's reflection. It encourages a deeper exploration of varied viewpoints and a richer understanding of the complexity inherent in communication and interpretation.

Again, this extends beyond “reflection” where individuals recount and react or internalize what they've heard or done. In this case, reflection means the educator hears themselves as others hear them, grasps the emotional essence of their impact on others, and comprehends another person's interpretations and critiques of their words and actions. Too often, what one articulates may not precisely convey our intended meaning (our own children soon learned, “do what he means, not what he says!”). Empathetic listening becomes a potent tool, enabling the individual to recognize how to articulate their thoughts more effectively.

Throughout this book, we explore the profound impact of listening within a specific context: the classroom. For example, consider the context of Learning Intentions, the “why,” and the context of feedback

Communication is two-way. We should seek to articulate better. More importantly, we should seek to listen better. Better articulation makes listening easier, but it is better listening on both sides that enhances mutual understanding and builds relationships.

Dr. Pak Tee Ng, epilogue, in *Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn*, by John Hattie and Lyn Sharratt, Corwin 2025.

Can we guide students to listen for, listen in, listen out for, listen closely, listen intently, listen with patience, listen with open minds, listen actively, listen with discerning ears, listen without judgment, listen between and beyond the lines, and listen with an ear to the ground?

relative to the Success Criteria: Do the students hear, understand and know how to action these Success Criteria? Are students truly absorbing, comprehending, and acting upon the feedback provided? Are we actively engaging with our colleagues' perspectives and sometimes dissenting opinions in staff meetings and Professional Learning sessions? Do we proactively seek and attentively listen to others' insights regarding areas for

improvement, efficiency gains, and enhanced effectiveness? Moreover, do we possess a solid understanding of the fundamental skills associated with effective listening? Have we established operating norms for classrooms and meetings at all levels that elicit the conversation and feedback that are evident in effective systems as Learning Organizations?

We delve into the question of how we can gauge our students' proficiency in listening and how to improve our own listening behaviors. Equally crucial is the exploration of how we impart the skill of listening to both students and fellow educators.

The various dimensions of listening explored herein contribute to a comprehensive understanding of its significance in education and communication in society. Listening to really hear another's honest perspective has the power to resolve or prepare us to respond to the incredibly divisive national and global issues we face.

When we spoke to colleagues about our writing this book, a most common question was about the place of electronic devices such as smart phones as an impediment or distraction to listening. On the one hand, such devices can be positive in terms of access to information, convenience, customization, and communication. That is, students can listen to educational content, podcasts, audiobooks, access information and apps, adjust playback speed, reduce noise, and increase hearing acuity. On the other hand, they can be distracting, diminish the quality of listening and learning, and they can reduce face-to-face communication and listening.

There are five meta-analyses (no. studies = 144, est. # of students = 348,261) on the distracting presence of electronic devices, with an average effect size of $-.24$; and 31 meta-analyses (No. studies = 1,539, est. # of students = 167,413) on the positive use of devices, with an average effect size of $.61$. Teachers need to be smart about the optimal times to use these devices and ensure that they are not a distraction.

THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF LISTENING

It comes as no surprise that scholars argue that listening has many dimensions. S. M. Jones (2011), for example, posited that listening encompasses (a) cognitive processes, involving attending to, understanding, receiving, and interpreting messages; (b) affective processes, entailing motivation and stimulation to attend to another person's messages; and (c) behavioral processes, encompassing responses through verbal and nonverbal feedback (e.g., backchanneling, paraphrasing). Moreover, active listening employs verbal strategies (e.g., asking clarifying questions), while passive listening is nonverbal, such as providing backchanneling cues (e.g., head-nodding). Supportive listening distinguishes itself from other types of listening (e.g., casual conversation or conflict resolution, informational listening) as it demands that listeners exhibit emotional involvement. This involves attending to, interpreting, and responding to the support seeker's content and emotions—a complex and challenging task.

Chion (1994) argued there are at least three modes of listening: (1) Causal listening (the most common) is listening to sound to gather information about its cause (or source). "When we cannot see the cause of sound, sound can constitute our principal source of information about it." This mode can lead to high error rates and be deceiving. (2) Semantic listening refers to a code or a language to interpret a message like Morse code or American Sign Language. When learning to read, for example, we do not want our students to listen to the sound but listen to the sound as part of a more comprehensive process (e.g., working out the word and its meaning). (3) Reduced listening focuses on the attributes of the sound, independent of its cause and meaning. We listen to the whole sentence, pay little to no attention to the individual sounds, hear a song and not discern the instruments, and sort out sounds directed at us from surrounding noise.

Under the umbrella of reading, we recognize the Big Five core skills (Gough & Tunmer &, 1986): phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—and want to add oral listening and comprehension as the sixth and seventh core skills. Unfortunately, the development of listening skills is often assumed to occur naturally, without explicit guidance, by osmosis and without help (Mendelsohn, 1984; Oxford, 1993/2019). When Hattie questioned researcher, educator, and notable author, Marie Clay, the creator of Reading Recovery, about the criticism that her work did not incorporate the "f-words" (phonemes, phonetic awareness), she clarified that these skills are indeed integral.

She said these are core listening skills. She also recognized the significance of teachers actively listening, saying that through listening to students learning to read and paying close attention to the strategies employed, we can gain insights into our students' literacy behaviors, track their progress, identify challenges, and discern their needs.

We conclude our initial thinking about listening with a summary presented in terms of the following "Big Ideas":

1. What is listening? Listening is a multidimensional construct that consists of complex (a) cognitive processes, such as attending to, understanding, receiving, and interpreting messages; (b) affective processes, such as being motivated and stimulated to attend to another person's messages; and (c) behavioral processes, such as responding with verbal and nonverbal feedback (e.g., backchanneling, paraphrasing) (S. M. Jones, 2011, *Supportive Listening* p. 85).
2. Listening is the zone in which inquiry begins to happen, when understanding initiates curiosity from which seeds of ideas begin to germinate.
3. Listening Comprehension is an active, strategic, and constructive process: *Attending - Hearing - Understanding - Appraising - Activating*.
4. Active or Passive? Listening is not a passive skill that is nonverbal; it can be and often is an active skill involving many complex processes, such as integrating information from a range of sources: phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. The fact that students achieve this in "real time" as a message unfolds makes listening "complex, dynamic, and fragile" (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995).
5. The Cinderella Dilemma. While the other three language skills (reading, writing, and speaking) receive direct instructional attention, teachers often expect students to develop their listening skills by *osmosis* and without help (Mendelsohn, 1984; Oxford, 1993/2019 in Osada, 2004). Our aim is to be more explicit about the teaching and impact of listening.

We now turn our heads to a practical example of implementing "responsive listening" in the classroom by introducing our first "Deliberate Pause."

DELIBERATE PAUSE

To bring the tenets of this chapter together with a practical example, we are drawn to **listening as input and writing as output**. Stated simply, listening is the precursor to talking, thinking, and writing. As Margaret Meek says (*Realization*, p. 38), writing seems to be a perpetual and recurrent miracle. Writing begins with listening and can evolve to students selecting, from their portfolios, their best writing sample and publishing it to celebrate their learning. We believe this process of culling a portfolio of writing pieces to find the “best piece” to publish involves critical listening, speaking, reading and publishing, underpinned with active listening for feedback. Two examples of ways to publish students’ writing follow. The first is a more hands-on and traditional methodology, perhaps better suited for younger years; the second uses digital technologies to produce and present.

EXAMPLE ONE

1. Have students write daily, as authors, following the Success Criteria (SC) in the Sidebar, that has been co-constructed with the class.
2. Post a visual Anchor Chart of the process for writing: Brainstorm, Story Map, Write, Read to a Friend, Revise, Present.
3. Discuss with the students what they deem their best writing piece is, using the Success Criteria (SC) to select their sample.

Success Criteria for Writers Who Want to Become Authors

I can

- ✓ Use strong and weak examples to improve my work
- ✓ Be clear about the purpose of and audience for my writing
- ✓ Use the steps in the writing process to finish a piece of writing
- ✓ Use Graphic Organizers to generate and organize ideas

(Continued)

(Continued)

- ✓ Listen and get ideas from my classmates
- ✓ Give and get Descriptive Feedback against the SC
- ✓ Use the Bump-It-Up Wall to discuss how I am going and what will be my next steps

4. Prepare the book itself:
 - a. Sew 5–6 white “8.5×11” papers together down middle
 - b. Using two identical pieces of cardboard, as covers, stick to a larger sheet of sticky vinyl covering (Mactac)
 - c. Fold the sides and ends of sticky vinyl covering (Mactac) over the cardboard
 - d. Stick white pages in middle
 - e. Glue one white page to front and one to back of book
 - f. Add a library pocket to the inside front or back cover, whichever the school librarian uses
5. Use computers to type stories, including a title page, and paste these onto each page of the new “book.”
6. Add student artwork to books.
7. Present to librarian to put in school libraries to share with others after sharing with parents or carers.
8. Share their products with each other. Listen to the feedback: What did parents, teachers and students hear?

EXAMPLE TWO

Students:

1. Introduce a variety of technology tools, such as Google Apps for collaboration and construction and inspiration for mind mapping.

2. Use mind mapping software, such as <https://miro.com/templates/> to first develop a story map with partner or small group—using persuasive text demands from the curriculum—on a controversial topic in society that they feel passionate about.
3. Teachers give direct feedback on this document (against the Success Criteria in Sidebar).
4. Complete the creative persuasive writing text.
5. Create a video trailer of their writing to entice an audience to read it.
6. Share their products. Listen to the feedback. What did teachers and students hear?

Success Criteria for Secondary Students Who Listen, Think, and Write Critically

I can:

- ✓ Step back, explore and analyze one's own role in an experience;
- ✓ Consider the different perspectives and responses of others involved;
- ✓ Make connections with relevant theories, supporting ideas by reference to and evidence from literature, research, and data analyses;
- ✓ Consider legal and organizational implications;
- ✓ Show awareness of social and political influences; and,
- ✓ Show what I have learned from the process and how my moving forward will be informed by experience and research.

Writing begins with listening. Both modalities open students to the pleasure of exercising their creativity and critical thinking in ways that grinding on facts, details, and information never will.

More than a way of knowing, supported by listening and talking, writing is an act of discovery (Realization, p. 39).

Listening is the ultimate mark of respect. That I not only listen but also demonstrate that I have listened, I honored your being . . . I do not have to agree, but at a minimum, I can hear your viewpoint: the heart of democracy, the core of genuineness, the essence of working with minority cultures.

At the end of each chapter, we close with a commitment to embedding the teaching of listening in all that we do in classrooms.

COMMITMENT

I commit to:

1. *Speaking less in my classes to impart facts and listening more and intently hearing my students' voices to inform my next classroom practice.*
2. *Reflecting on my "dominant mode" of listening.*
3. *Demonstrating to my students and colleagues I have heard and understood what they have said, before responding with my views.*
4. *Using mentor texts and rich literature to expose students to excellent writing models before crafting their own.*
5. *Bringing together Listening, Speaking, and Reading through authorship.*

The message of this book has hit home with "Sometimes, the best gift that we can offer another person is the gift of listening."

Dr. Pak Tee Ng, epilogue, in
Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn,
by John Hattie and Lyn Sharratt, Corwin 2025.

In the next chapter we develop our model of listening. . . .