

Spring 5-13-2019

Are You Listening? How Listening Skills Help Students Become Informed and Engaged Citizens in a Culturally Diverse World

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Are You Listening? How Listening Skills Help Students Become Informed and Engaged
Citizens in a Culturally Diverse World

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Honors Project

Submitted to the Honors College
At Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for graduation with
University Honors

May 13th, 2019

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Abstract

The ability to listen is vital for good communication to exist and flourish. Without properly developed listening skills, one may unintentionally create roadblocks when communicating with others. Good communication will allow for the spread of differing ideas and perspectives. The social studies classroom is a place in which students have the opportunity to develop skills to become good citizens. These skills include the ability to make reasoned and informed decisions and interact with a culturally diverse and interdependent world. In order to achieve these skills, students must engage in discussion with their peers. While there is a focus on the ability to communicate ideas, a focus on the ability to listen to those ideas is absent within the social studies curriculum. Good listening skills are imperative to the success and continuation of conversation. If students are to participate effectively in a culturally diverse world, they must develop listening skills. The development of listening skills will help students to better understand those who possess a different disposition or perspective than themselves.

Problem Statement

This white paper addresses the issue that the development of listening skills is not valued and made a priority in the Social Studies classroom. Because of this, students may be unable to become good citizens that are able to interact in a culturally diverse world.

As a society, we place value on ensuring that everyone has a voice. However, the effectiveness of that voice is determined by its audience. If a voice is denied an audience, then its purpose is diminished. It is equally important that the audience is attentive and actively listening to the speaker. Because of the lack of time spent instructing students on how to actively listen, we are not preparing students for when it becomes their time to serve as an appropriate audience.

When the value is placed solely on developing a student's voice, then there will not be an audience to hear that student's voice.

The development of good listening skills is integral for effective interpersonal communication to occur. The development of good listening skills has been valued in several fields including business, peace and conflict studies, and communications. When regarding the research, there has been a significant absence in the discussion of listening when looking through an educational lens.

Background

According to the National Council for the Social Studies (1921), the purpose of social studies is to “help young people to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.” Good citizenship relies heavily on citizens being able to interact and communicate positively with one another. Because the development of listening skills has not been highly valued in the educational field, and more specifically in the social studies classroom, students are not given adequate opportunity to develop and practice their listening skills, thus placing limitations on their ability to communicate effectively. This could be detrimental to achieving the purpose of Social Studies.

Conversation about listening and how to teach students listening skills began in the 1960s and continued throughout the 1970s. Tutolo's (1975) article discusses how research began to be conducted in the 1960s on defining listening and determining how listening could be effectively taught in the classroom (p. 1108). Building off of fundamental questions posed by earlier research, Tutolo (1975) discusses the need for critical listening and how instruction to develop critical listening can be implemented into the classroom (p. 1109). Pearson and Fielding (1982)

build on the existing research about listening comprehension by asking the question of what listening comprehension looks like as a process (p. 618). This selection of research shows a progression of looking at listening in a broad sense by determining its relevance to communication to breaking down the listening process and discovering how to best implement training on listening in the classroom.

There are several academic fields that have placed a value on listening, such as business, peace and conflict studies, and music and foreign language education. Golen's (1990) article about listening and business college students focuses on what listening barriers existed among business college students (p. 28). By identifying these listening barriers, there could be progress made in overcoming these barriers and move towards more effective listening and communication. There is also some research on how imperative listening is in music education. Prichard (2012) states that developing listening skills is present in the standards for music educators (p. 101). According to the article (2012), many music educators acknowledge the importance of listening and try to incorporate activities on listening; however, music educators express that time can place a constraint on how frequently they can practice listening (p. 101). Foreign Language instruction was another area in education in which developing listening skills is valued. Gruber-Miller (2005) discusses listening activities that can be conducted in the classroom to help students understand Latin (p. 87). Robert Bolton (1979) discusses what effect listening can have when communicating and endeavoring to solve conflicts with others (p. 41). Bolton (1979) claims that poor listening can play a prominent role in shutting down communication, thus prolonging and, in some cases, intensifying the conflict (p. 60). Throughout the research, it is clear that these fields are connected in their shared belief that listening can improve the field and the individuals within those fields.

Several sources discuss activities that will help students practice their listening skills. These sources also explore the results of these listening activities and how they can help to create civically engaged young citizens. Andolina and Conklin (2018) explain an activity called *Project Soapbox* that multiple schools in Chicago incorporated into their curriculum (p. 375). This activity allowed students to make a speech about a relevant issue in their community, while their peers listened to the speech. Andolina and Conklin (2018) concluded that the students reported that Project Soapbox helped to improve their empathy towards their peers and their ability to listen and understand their peers (p. 399). Andolina and Conklin drew from W. C. Parker's (2010) article that contributed to the conversation on listening by stating that classroom discussion should be encouraged more frequently (p. 2816). Increased classroom discussion will help to give students the opportunity to practice listening to one another. Bickmore and Parker (2014) expressed agreement with W.C. Parker's stance on the importance of classroom discussion in their article (p. 292). Bickmore and Parker (2014) expanded on this view by explaining that classroom discussion could help to encourage students to value listening to the perspectives of others (p. 292). Narkunas (2011) states that her students wrote in reflexive journals about their listening experiences (p. 68). This allowed students to evaluate their listening abilities and take action to improve their listening skills.

Throughout the research, there is a common theme of the need for creating a safe space in which students can engage in meaningful conversation about relevant topics. Throughout the social studies curriculum, a value is placed on discussion in the social studies classroom in order to prepare students for a civically active life. While the focus of social studies education has been on meaningful discussion in the classroom, instruction on how to properly listen has received

less attention. Listening is integral to positive communication and discussion. By providing students with training on how to listen, students will be able to communicate with understanding and empathy, skills they will be able to take with them outside of the school context. Developing listening skills will better prepare students to be citizens of a culturally diverse society.

Solution

When developing the skill of listening, there are three levels of mastery. The three levels are “Internal Listening,” “Focused Listening,” and “Global Listening.” These levels of mastery are derived from the Co-Active Coaching Model (2012). This provides a framework in which social studies educators can implement into their classrooms. Students can receive instruction that will help them work through each level of mastery. If students are given opportunity to practice and develop their listening skills, then they will be able to reach the third level of mastery. When students master the third level of listening, “Global Listening,” then they will be better equipped to interact as citizens of a culturally diverse and interdependent world. As social studies educators, we expect students to engage in civic activities with a level three mastery of listening, without providing any focused instruction on the development of listening skills. The social studies classroom needs to be a space in which students can cultivate this skill that is necessary to their success in civic engagement.

The first level of mastery, “Internal Listening,” is achieved when one listens to their inner dialogue (2012). When practicing Internal Listening, one’s attention is focused more on what one will say in response to the current speaker. Because one needs to spend time to develop a response to a conversation, this draws focus away from what the speaker is saying. It is possible that many students already operate at this level of listening. Currently in education, there is a

focus on student response and student voice. While this focus is still important and should not be lessened, a focus on listening to others needs to be present as well.

The second level of mastery, “Focused Listening,” is achieved when one listens intently to the voice of another person (2012). This level of mastery requires an individual to switch their focus from their own inner dialogue to the voice of another person. This level helps individuals to begin framing a mindset of listening to understand, rather than to respond. Some students may already possess the ability to listen at this level. It is possible that the context of the situation can influence how difficult it will be to engage in this level of listening. If an individual is listening to someone who holds similar values as they do, then it may be easier to engage in Focused Listening because one is genuinely interested in what that person has to say. If two individuals have differing or opposing values, then it might be more difficult to engage in Focused Listening because one is more focused on their response rather than understanding the viewpoint of another.

In the Co-Active Coaching Model (2012), the third level of mastery, “Global Listening,” requires an individual to read the energy in the room and examine how that impacts the relationship between themselves and the person speaking. In this white paper, Global Listening deviates from the Co-Active Coaching Model, in the sense that it requires the listener to consider the experience and background of the speaker. This level of mastery requires the individual listening to practice empathy. This level of listening allows an individual to fully understand what is being said by another person. This is the level at which students will listen to understand rather than listen to respond. The goal of social studies education is to help young people engage as citizens in a culturally diverse and interdependent world. In order for this to occur, students must be able to actively listen, especially at the third level of mastery, to their fellow citizens. All

students should have the opportunity to master Global Listening before they are expected to engage in a culturally diverse and interdependent world.

Activities that promote and develop listening skills should be incorporated into the social studies classroom. The following activities can all be implemented into the classroom to immerse students in the act of listening. These activities or exercises can be implemented into the classroom without drastically altering the curriculum. The following activities are categorized into three sections: Individual, small group, and whole class activities. Each of these activities work to help students master each level of listening.

Additionally, the activities should be paired with direct instruction on how to properly listen. Students must be able to enter an activity knowing what criteria on which they will be assessed. By providing students with the foundational elements of listening before they engage in the activities, the students will be able to better apply those skills when they are completing the various activities. If students do not receive instruction about listening, then it may become very difficult for the students to move through the levels of listening.

Individual Activities:

- Mindfulness Exercise (Level One)

Mindfulness Exercise

Individual activities will help students master level one, Internal Listening. An activity that could be incorporated into the social studies classroom is to have the students practice mindfulness. This would allow the students to recognize and acknowledge their inner dialogue. By providing the students with the opportunity to listen to their own dialogue, the students will be able to master the first level of Internal Listening. Once students have accomplished this, they

will be able to shift their attention from their own inner voice and focus on the person they are meant to be listening to.

This activity can be feasibly adopted into the social studies classroom. For example, before the class enters a discussion about a topic allow the students to have a few quiet moments to themselves in which they can think about that topic. This will provide the students with the opportunity to develop their own thoughts about the topic. If students are not provided this time before hand, they may spend time listening to their inner dialogue during the discussion. This could ultimately prevent the students from engaging in Level Two and Level Three of listening.

The students' progress will be measured according to a rubric attached in the Appendix. The students will be assessed using the rubric specific to Internal Listening. This rubric will assess the students on the following criteria: Identify the level of listening in which they are operating, interpret the impact Internal Listening has on the interaction, and develop appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication. The assessment requires the students to reflect on their experience in order to meet all of the criteria.

Small Group Activities:

The following activities are best suited for a small group environment. These small group activities will help the students reach Level Two and Level Three of listening.

- Three Minute Mindful Listening Exercise (Level Two)
- Pieces of the Truth (Level Three)

Three Minute Mindful Listening Exercise

The Three Minute Mindfulness Exercise requires students to engage in a conversation with one other person. During this exercise, students will be provided a topic to discuss and each

student will have three, uninterrupted minutes to share their thoughts regarding the topic. When one student is speaking, the sole job of the other student is to listen to what their peer is saying.

This activity can be easily incorporated into the social studies classroom and curriculum. This exercise can be used to discuss a social studies concept or topic that has several different perspectives associated with it. This exercise would be beneficial to encourage students to think deeper about controversial issues that are often difficult to discuss in class because these topics are polarizing. This will allow students to share their thoughts in an environment in which they know they will not be interrupted and will have that respect from their peer. Because of that knowledge, it may make it easier for the students to engage in discussion about social studies concepts.

This exercise helps students to master Level Two of listening, or Focused Listening. This exercise requires students to actively and attentively listen to their peers during their allocated three minutes. There is no pressure on the student who is listening to formulate a response to what is being said by their peer. This allows the students to truly devote their attention to understand what is being said by their peer. This exercise also allows students to acknowledge the perspective of others, and that those perspectives may differ from their own. By recognizing that, students are moving towards Level Three of listening.

The students' progress will be measured according to a rubric attached in the Appendix. The students will be assessed using the rubric specific to Focused Listening. The rubric will assess the students on the following criteria: Identify the level of listening in which they are appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication. These criteria require students to reflect on their listening experience.

Pieces of the Truth

This activity revolves around the idea of acknowledging and recognizing the validity of other's identity and experiences and how that has shaped their perspective and beliefs. Within their small group, students will be assigned a specific identity. Once students have assumed that identity, the group will be provided a topic. Then each student must provide their thoughts on the topic through the lens of the identity they have been provided. Each student will have one, uninterrupted minute to share their identity's thoughts regarding the topic. While one student is speaking, the sole purpose of the remaining students in the group is to listen. After each student has spoken their thoughts about the topic, they will rotate and assume a new identity and repeat the process until each student has assumed each of the identities.

This activity can be implemented in several ways within the social studies classroom and curriculum. Similar to the Three Minute Mindful Listening Exercise, this activity can be used to discuss controversial topics. This will allow students to recognize and acknowledge the differing perspectives and beliefs surrounding controversial topics. This activity also takes that a step further by having students step into those identities and speak from them. This allows students to build empathy, which in turn helps to improve their active listening abilities. When students practice empathy towards others, they are able to acknowledge the validity of the voice of others and respect their opportunity to share those beliefs. This activity could also be used to discuss historical events that include several different perspectives. This will allow students to see a more complete and whole view of history, rather through a limited lens that may not be as representative.

This activity helps students master level three of listening, or Global Listening. This activity requires students to move past their inner monologue and biases to fully understand the

identity that they and their peers are presenting. In order to fully understand the perspectives represented in this activity, students must engage in active listening. Students must empathize with what is being said by their peers in order to gain a complete understanding of the truth surrounding the topic of discussion. Through this activity students will inherently build and improve their listening skills.

Students' progress will be measured according to a rubric attached in the Appendix. The students will be assessed on the criteria specific to the rubric on Global Listening. The rubric will assess the students on the following criteria: Identify the level of listening at which they are operating, interpret the impact Global Listening has on their interaction, and develop appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication. This criteria requires students to reflect on their listening experience and express what they have learned in a written or oral format.

Whole Class Activities:

- Circle Processes (Level Three)

Circle Processes

Circle Processes are often used when working to solve conflict amongst a group of people. This activity requires those of differing views to come together and listen to one another's viewpoints. While this process is most often employed to resolve a conflict, this activity can be modified to best fit the demands of a social studies classroom.

Circle Processes originated from Native American practice and have been adapted into several different fields such as business and education (Pranis, 2014). The Circle Process requires there to be a sacred object, or a talking piece, that is understood by the entire group.

Only the individual holding the sacred object may speak. While someone is speaking, the only job of the remaining group members is to listen to the speaker. During this process individuals are not welcome to interrupt a speaker or directly address another comment in the group during the first round of the Circle Process. The goal of the Circle Process is to gain an understanding of the views and perspectives of each person involved in the group.

This activity can be used in varying forms within the social studies classroom. Circle Processes can be implemented in a small group or a large group setting. For a larger class, it may be more beneficial to break up the class into smaller groups, so that each student feels better heard and is not intimidated by the large size of the class. Circle Processes can be used to discuss controversial topics in place of a standard debate style activity.

This activity can be used to help students to become Global Listeners. The Circle Process requires students to consider more than what each person is saying. During the process there is time for reflection in which students can really think about what their peers have said and begin to think about what led each student to their response. This activity allows students to have the opportunity to think about different perspectives and why others might have those perspectives.

Similar to the Pieces of the Truth activity, students' progress will be assessed with the rubric specific to Global Listening. While the Circle Processes activity and the Pieces of the Truth activity are assessed by the same criteria, the Circle Processes activity can involve the entire class, thus broadening the conversation. The Circle Process activity will help students to strengthen their listening skills because they will be required to listen to and empathize with several different perspectives.

Conclusion

The National Council for the Social Studies defines the purpose of social studies education to be, “To help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (1921). This statement recognizes that the world in which we live is diverse and consists of several different experiences and perspectives. This statement also recognizes that students must not only be citizens of the United States, but citizens on a global scale. Through social studies education, our students must become global citizens who depend on one another in order to positively advance all of society. While the skill of listening is not explicitly stated within this statement, it is integral to the success of social studies education. If students receive no instruction on how to actively listen to others, then they will not be able to appropriately and productively function in a diverse world.

Even though there is no formal education provided on listening skills, there is an expectation that students leave school operating as Global Listeners. Because of this, students may find themselves struggling to interact effectively with their fellow citizens. This is because listening is imperative for productive communication to flourish. If students receive no instruction on how to actively listen, then this could serve as a roadblock to effective communication with their fellow citizens. Poor communication can lead to the polarization of people with differing views, which will naturally make it more difficult to interact in what is meant to be an interdependent world.

As social studies educators, it is our responsibility and obligation to provide instruction that will nurture and build students’ listening skills. By providing students the opportunity to

improve their listening skills, they will be better prepared to engage in conversation with their fellow citizens. When the development of listening skills is valued in the classroom, students will be able to better see its importance and the impact it can have on their role in society. There are several ways in which listening activities and exercises can be incorporated into the social studies curriculum. The listening activities mentioned previously can be used in several ways to reinforce social studies concepts while simultaneously providing students with the opportunity to develop their listening skills.

Currently in social studies education there is a large focus on developing student voice whether that be orally or in a written format. While that skill is important and should not be valued any less, listening skills need to receive equal attention and priority. A voice does not hold power or influence if there is not an audience to hear and understand it. Students must be aware that as citizens it is not only their obligation to speak and communicate ideas, but to also step back and attentively listen to the ideas made by others.

Annotated Bibliography

Andolina, M. W., & Conklin, H. G. (2018). Speaking with confidence and listening with empathy: The impact of project soapbox on high school students. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 46(3), 374-409.

This source discusses how students showed an improvement in their listening and empathy skills after completing Project Soapbox, a program that focuses on public speaking and occurs in Chicago Public Schools. Project Soapbox was designed to help encourage students to increase their civic participation outside of the classroom. This curriculum was implemented into nine public schools in the Chicago area and 204 high school students were surveyed using pre- and post-surveys. Data was also gathered through focus group interviews with the students. This article contributes to the discussion on the importance of listening in the classroom by stating that providing students the opportunity to discuss and listen to one another will lead to benefits in their civic lifestyle. Encouraging listening in the classroom will help students to become democratic citizens.

Bickmore, K., & Parker, C. (2014, August 31). Constructive classroom talk in classrooms: Divergent approaches to addressing divergent perspectives. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 42(3), 291-335.

This source argues that discussion on political and social conflicts is part of a good democratic education but is not often implemented and encouraged in the classroom. This article is in conversation with W. C. Parker's article in that they are in agreement about the importance of listening to the perspective of others. This source contributes to the discussion of listening skills in the social studies classroom in that discussion on controversial political and social conflicts will help students to value listening to the perspectives of others.

Bolton, R. (1979). *People skills: How to assert yourself, listen to others, and resolve conflicts*. New York City, NY: Simon & Schuster.

This book contributes to the discussion on listening by breaking down what listening is and discussing why there are several barriers to effective listening in communication. When regarding listening skills in an educational context, this source discusses how cultivating listening skills is not as valued when compared to reading skills. This book discusses how listening should be more valued because it plays a large and imperative role in communication with others. Breakdown in communication due to poor listening can inhibit students from learning how to be a good democratic and civically active citizen.

“Co-Active® Coaching Skills: Listening,” (2012) Coactive.com

This source provides a model for three levels of mastery regarding listening. The three levels include, Internal Listening, Focused Listening, and Global Listening. The model explains how one can reach each of the three levels of listening. The reader is encouraged

to operate at Focused Listening and Global Listening in order to practice the most effective listening when in conversation with another person.

Cutrona, C., & Guerin, D. (1994). Confronting conflict peacefully: Peer mediation in schools. *Educational Horizons*, 72(2), 95-104.

This article provides a focus on preventing conflict amongst students in school. Not specifically on listening but could contribute to the conversation on listening by discussing how good listening can help to prevent conflict amongst students.

Golen, S. (1990). A factor analysis of barriers to effective listening. *The Journal of Business Education*, 27(1), 25-36.

This source examined listening barriers amongst business college students. The authors of this source aimed to discover what listening barriers existed amongst students, which listening barriers the students found to be most frequent, and if these barriers were attached to a specific demographic variable. The authors found that listening just for details and facts was the most frequent variable the students had run into.

Gruber-Miller, J. (2005). Developing listening and speaking skills: Practical ways to implement the standards with the "oxford latin course". *The Classical Journal*, 101(1), 87-98.

This source illuminates a part of the education system in which listening is valued. This article specifically discusses a Latin class in which listening activities are used to help students understand the material. The author discusses several listening activities, including pre- and post-listening activities that can be implemented in a foreign language classroom to help students learn the material. While this article does not specifically discuss listening and its relation to civic education, it does contribute to the conversation of listening by discussing an instance in which listening activities are an integral part of the curriculum.

Howe, B., & Covell, K. (2009). Engaging children in citizenship education: A children's rights perspective. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 43(1), 21-44.

This article's primary focus is on the importance of citizenship education and how it should be taught in schools. The authors argue that a good citizenship education can help to build and sustain a democratic society. The authors explain that a good citizenship education strays from a focus of individualistic endeavors and encourages meaningful participation and collaboration with peers. The authors support John Dewey's concept of experiential learning and believe that citizen education should be taught in this manner. While this article does not directly address listening skills and its place in the classroom, the authors do heavily address citizenship education which is integral to social studies education. The absence of listening skills in this article is significant because it shows that implementing listening skills into citizenship education, and that the implementation

of training in listening could help students to better collaborate and learn from one another.

Kress, J. S., Norris, J. A., Schoenholz, D. A., Elias, M. J., & Seigle, P. (2004, November).

Bringing together educational standards and social and emotional learning: Making the case for educators. *American Journal of Education*, 111(1), 68-89.

This article discusses the importance of social and emotional learning and how teacher refrain from teaching it because of conflicts with the more valued academic based curriculum. This article could help explain a barrier to teaching listening skills because they are not as valued as academic skills; therefore, not given a place in the standard curriculum.

McNaughton, D., Hamlin, D., McCarthy, J., Head-Reeves, D., & Shreiner, M. (2007). Learning

to listen: Teaching an active listening strategy to preservice educational professionals.

Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 27(4), 223-231.

The authors of this article explore the effects of teaching preservice educational professionals listening skills and how it benefits their communication skills. The authors use a pretest and posttest control group in order to gather their data. The authors express that listening is an active and integrative process, consisting of several steps. This view of listening is in agreement with Thompson, Leintz, Nevers, and Witkowski's view on

listening. These authors contribute to the discussion of listening skills instruction in schools by discussing an instance in which listening is valued in the education field.

Morton, J. (2007). Fighting war: Essential skills for peace education. *Race, Gender, & Class*, 14(1-2), 318-332.

This article focuses on “peace education” in schools. A part of this instruction on peace is teaching students how to properly engage in dialogue with their peers. The author goes on to list listening as one of the essential skills of good dialogue and communication. Listening is often done poorly and can cause students to struggle to connect their thoughts with the thoughts and ideas of their peers. This article contributes to the conversation on listening by discussing how important listening is in fostering an atmosphere of respect in the classroom.

Newmann, F. M., Marks, H. M., & Gamoran, A. (1995). Authentic pedagogy and student performance. *American Journal of Education*, 104, 2-43.

This article defines authentic instruction as consisting of the construction of knowledge, disciplined inquiry, and value beyond school. The concept of authentic instruction seems to be well accepted by several other authors and sources in the social studies context.

This article contributes to the discussion on listening by outlining what good and meaningful instruction looks like in the social studies classroom and how the development of listening skills can help facilitate and improve that instruction.

Norkunas, M. (2011). Teaching to listen: Listening exercises and self-reflexive journals. *The Oral History Review*, 38(1), 63-108.

In this article the author discusses listening activities and exercises they had designed to help develop their students' listening skills. The students would be conducting interviews and the author thought it important that the students learn how to effectively listen. The author expresses the importance of students learning how to listen and communicate with those of a different race or ethnic background than themselves. The author implemented several listening exercises such as having students listen to several different stories and writing regularly in their reflexive listening journals. This allowed students to notice barriers to their listening ability and work on those throughout the class. This article contributes to the conversation on listening by stating the importance of students learning how to listen to those who are different than them in order to communicate effectively.

Parker, W. C. (2010). Listening to strangers: Classroom discussion in democratic education. *Teachers College Record*, 112(11), 2815-2832.

This article discusses how schools should teach for discussion instead of teaching with discussion. Discussion with peers of differing views will help to create enlightened and engaged citizens. Parker's work is referenced in Andolina and Conklin's article when

discussing the importance of listening to thoughts of others to help foster empathy and good listening skills.

Pearson, P., & Fielding, L. (1982). Research update: Listening comprehension. *Language Arts*, 59(6), 617-629.

In agreement with Robert Bolton's book, this source also discusses the lack of focus on the development of listening skills despite the large amount of time people engage in listening. The authors discuss how this could be caused by the increased value educators assign to reading and writing comprehension. This article discusses research from the 1960s and the 1970s that prove that students can develop and improve their listening skills through training in school. This article contributes to the conversation about listening skills by discussing listening strategies that may be successful when implemented into the classroom.

Peterson, A. (2009, March). Civic republicanism and contestatory deliberation: Framing pupil discourse within citizenship education. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 57(1), 55-69.

This article discusses the importance of students being able to engage in effective discussion in order to become a good citizen. This source focuses heavily on the importance of classroom discussion on meaningful topics to increase a sense of civic responsibility in students. This method of teaching is in agreement with Newmann and

Gamoran's article about authentic pedagogy. This article is relevant to the discussion on listening because good listening must be practiced in order to have productive classroom discussion.

Pranis, K. (2014). *The little book of circle processes: New/Old approach to peacemaking*. New York City, NY: Good Books.

This book discusses the Native American tradition of a talking piece, in which a group of people organize themselves in a circle and pass the talking piece from one person to another. Only the person holding the talking piece is permitted to speak, while the others listen. This book focuses on a listening activity that has been beneficial in the school setting. This book contributes to the conversation on listening by discussing an active in which students would be engaged and it would help to develop their listening skills.

Prichard, S. (2012). Listening to learn: The status of listening activities in secondary instrumental ensemble classes. *Contributions to Music Education*, 39, 101-115.

Similar to Gruber-Miller's article, this article discusses another area of the educational field in which listening is valued and implemented into the curriculum. This area would be musical education. The author argues that students who practice and develop their listening skills will help them become critical learners. This article contributes to the conversation on listening by discussing the benefits listening activities can have on music performance and academic performance.

Rosenberg, M. B. (2003). *Nonviolent communication: A language of life* (2ndnd ed.). N.p.: Puddle Dancer Press.

This book discusses nonviolent communication and how this can prevent conflict. This book discusses behaviors that can lead to break downs in communication and ultimately lead to or sustain conflict. This book contributes to the discussion on listening by explaining what behaviors can lead to conflict and knowledge of proper listening can help to prevent these behaviors from occurring as frequently.

Smart, K. L., & Featheringham, R. (2006, September). Developing effective interpersonal communication and discussion skills. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69(3), 276-283.

This article explores the importance of listening skills in the workplace and in business education courses. The authors express that listening skills is often less emphasized but are is a necessary part of effective communication and success in society. The authors explain a listening and communication activity that they believe would be beneficial for students when they are building their listening and communication skills. This activity is called a “fishbowl” discussion in which a group of students sit in an inner circle and verbally participate, while the remaining students sit in an outer circle and evaluate the conversation. This allows students to build an argument backed with evidence and see positive and negative communication elements. This article contributes to the discussion

on listening skills in the social studies classroom by emphasizing the importance of providing students with the opportunity to build on their listening and communication skills.

Stewart, J. (2011). *Bridges not walls: A book about interpersonal communication* (11th ed.). N.p.: McGraw Hill-Education.

This book also delves into communication between people. This book contributes to the conversation about listening skills by discussing listening and the major role it plays in interpersonal communication. There is agreement amongst authors that listening plays a significant role in helping or inhibiting communication.

Thompson, K., Leintz, P., Nevers, B., & Witkowski, S. (2004). The integrative listening model: An approach to teaching and learning listening. *The Journal of General Education*, 53(3/4), 225-246.

The authors are in agreement with the argument made in Smart and Featheringham's article that listening is a skill highly valued in the workplace. The authors explain that there has been a lack of emphasis on teaching listening skills in school because scholars have not agreed upon an exact definition for listening or a way in which to teach listening skills to students. The authors go on to say that barriers to teaching listening skills could be in part due to common misconceptions about listening. These misconceptions include believing listening is a passive activity, that listening skills are developed naturally, and

believing that hearing and listening are synonymous. These authors contribute to the discussion on listening skills in the Social Studies classroom by presenting the Integrative Listening Model, which provides a framework for teaching listening skills in schools.

Tutolo, D. (1975). Teaching critical listening. *Language Arts*, 52(8), 1108-1112.

This article discusses listening skills in the context of critical listening. The author describes critical listening as a complex process, similar to that of critical thinking. Developing critical listening skills will help students to decipher unclear messages and retain an open mind when listening to others to help ensure the listener is gaining the complete message. This article contributes to the conversation on listening skills by discussing critical listening can help to improve communication.

Wright, W. (2013). Managing communication and disputes: The multicultural classroom. *Counterpoints*, 391, 29-37.

This article discusses the importance of conflict management skills when facilitating classroom, especially about controversial or culturally diverse topics. The author states three skills professors should have when regarding conflict management skills. These skills are active listening, effective questioning, and the ability to restate and summarize with neutral language. When discussing active listening, the author states that the listener must attempt to fully understand one's message before responding. This article

contributes to the discussion about listening skills by describing how important listening is when communicating in a culturally diverse setting.

Appendix

Table of Activities

		Activities		
		Individual	Small Group	Whole Class
Levels of Mastery for Listening	Level One: Internal Listening	Mindfulness Exercise	Listening Reflection	
	Level Two: Focused Listening		Three Minute Mindful Listening Exercise	
	Level Three: Global Listening		Pieces of the Truth	Circle Processes

Level One: Internal Listening			
	Proficient	Acceptable	Developing
Identify level of listening	Student will be able to clearly identify, either in a written or oral format, the level of listening in which they are operating.	Student is able to identify, with some degree of difficulty, the level of listening in which they are operating.	Student is unable to identify the level of listening in which they are operating.
Interpret the impact Internal Listening has on the interaction	Student will be able to clearly formulate and explain, either in an oral or written format, ideas as to how their inner dialogue had an impact on their ability to listen.	Student will be able to formulate, with some difficulty, some ideas as to how their inner dialogue had an impact on their ability to listen.	Student is unable to develop ideas as to how their inner dialogue had an impact on their ability to listen.
Develop appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication	Using what the student has learned from their experiences with Internal Listening, they are able to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is able to explain their experiences with Internal Listening, but they are unable to connect how these experiences can allow them to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is unable to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.

Level Two: Focused Listening			
	Proficient	Acceptable	Developing
Identify level of listening	Student will be able to clearly identify, either in a written or oral format, the level of listening at which they are operating.	Student is able to identify, with some degree of difficulty, the level of listening in which they are operating.	Student is unable to identify the level of listening in which they are operating.
Interpret the impact Focused Listening has on the interaction	Student is able to clearly express, either in an oral or written format, what explicitly was said by the person to which they were listening.	Student is able to express, either in an oral or written format, some of what was said by the person to which they were listening.	Student is unable to express what was said by the person to which they were listening.
Develop appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication	Using what the student has learned from their experiences with Focused Listening, the student is able to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is able to explain their experiences with Focused Listening, but they are unable to connect how these experiences can allow them to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is unable to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.

Level Three: Global Listening			
	Proficient	Acceptable	Developing
Identify level of listening	Student will be able to clearly identify, either in a written or oral format, the level of listening in which they are operating.	Student is able to identify, with some degree of difficulty, the level of listening in which they are operating.	Student is unable to identify the level of listening in which they are operating.
Interpret the impact Global Listening has on the interaction	Student will be able to clearly formulate and explain, either in an oral or written format, how the human experience of the person speaking plays a role in the interaction.	Student will be able to formulate, with difficulty, some ideas of how the human experience of the person speaking plays a role in the interaction.	Student is unable to formulate and explain any ideas regarding how the human experience of the person speaking plays a role in the interaction.
Develop appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication	Using what the student has learned from their experiences with Global Listening, they are able to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is able to explain their experiences with Global Listening, but they are unable to connect how these experiences can allow them to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.	Student is unable to develop an appropriate response that fosters productive listening and communication.