

Reflective Listening

Reflective listening is a core tool for becoming attuned to developmental stage, honoring each learner's uniqueness, and cultivating the trust they have in us to facilitate conversations about Israel.

Reflective listening phrases you might use:

- "It sounds like you're feeling..."
- "I'm hearing that..."
- "It's important to you that..."
- "You're wondering about..."

What the speaker is literally saying:

What am I hearing the speaker say (core phrases, strong words, metaphors)?

What the speaker is conveying:

What am I noticing? What is surprising?

What is the social element? Where do other people fit into this narrative? Where is the speaker feeling social pressure?

How am I, as the listener, engaging with what I hear? When did I feel social pressure to react in specific ways (clap, nod, agree, laugh)?

What beliefs, ideas, or commitments are implicit in what the speaker says? Where is this speaker confident? Where are they lacking confidence?

What is the speaker looking for (information, help with sense-making, resources, reassurance)?

What I need to know for the next time I connect with the speaker (*things to consider after the conversation*):

When is the next opportunity to interact with this speaker? How do you want to prepare for that interaction?

Within the community of learners that you support, where will this speaker find support or tension?

What obstacles need to be considered to prevent this speaker from shutting down during future conversations about Israel?

Guidance for Reflectively Listening to Teens

Developmental clues to listen for in teens

- Is the teen trying out an idea or identity?
- Are they speaking from emotion rather than information?
- Who are they imagining is watching them (social pressure)?

Israel conversations can activate stress responses in teens. Bring in an explicit safety/emotional regulation with questions:

- What emotions is this teen expressing directly or indirectly?
- What signs of overwhelm or activation am I noticing?
- What helps this particular teen feel safer?