In My Life

Frequently, in our daily lives, we hear music but rarely listen. Listening to music can not only strengthen our understanding of that particular piece, but can also allow us to have a greater appreciation of music in general. Listening can give us insight into another person's struggles, their strengths, and passions. Let's deepen our understanding of the difference between hearing and listening.

Listen: Take a 15 minute break to walk around your neighborhood, or simply find a quiet spot in your own home. Do nothing but listen. What can those sounds tell you? Do you hear nature or industry? Do you hear people? Is this music or just noise?

Think: How often do you have music in the background while studying, exercising, or reading? When was the last time you truly listened to the music that was playing? How important is listening?

Write: Pick a few of your favorite songs. Really listen and absorb. Answer the following questions with one well-developed paragraph (4-5 sentences) for each bullet point.

- Reflect on your first 15 minute exercise. What did you notice? Describe what you listened to in great detail. Focus on what you can infer from the various sounds. In addition, tell how your emotions were affected. For instance: "At first, the distant and nearby cars on the roughly paved road sounded like a bass rhythm, three varieties of birds chirped a sweet melody, and the neighbors were listening to something upbeat using a portable speaker while washing their car. The sounds made me happy to hear life and action in my neighborhood."
- When truly listening to your favorite songs, did you notice anything new? Did the lyrics or melody take on any new meanings? Did you experience new emotions?
- How can learning to "listen" positively affect you as a person in everyday life? Give examples to support your response.
- How can learning to "listen" positively affect you as a musician? Give examples to support your response.

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