

What is the process of giving and receiving feedback like for you? What can you do to give better feedback and improve how you engage with the feedback you receive from others?

The process of giving and receiving feedback for me has been deeply rooted in listening. When someone shares their experiences with water conservation - whether it is about how they grew up using water, the habits their families practiced, or the changes they have made over time, I try to approach their story with attentiveness and respect. Giving feedback in this context is not just about evaluating what they said, but about understanding why they said it the way they did. I listen for the details they emphasize, the emotions attached to their experiences, and the specific examples they choose to include. From there, my feedback has typically involved sharing my thoughts about how effectively they conveyed their message, how clearly they explained their ideas, and how their story connects to larger conversations about sustainability and environmental responsibility. I also tend to reflect on how their experiences relate to my own, which helps create a sense of dialogue rather than judgment.

However, I recognize that giving strong feedback requires more than simply responding with my personal opinions or drawing connections to my own experiences. To give better feedback, I need to be more intentional about identifying and naming the specific themes present in what others share. For example, if someone talks about water shortages in their community, I should clearly point out themes like resource scarcity, economic impact, or cultural habits surrounding conservation. By explicitly identifying these themes, I can provide feedback that is more analytical and constructive rather than general or surface-level. This also shows the person that I truly understood the deeper meaning of their story.

Another way I believe I can improve these skills is by balancing affirmation with constructive critique. While it is important to acknowledge what someone did something well, such as using vivid examples or providing strong personal reflection, it is equally important to gently suggest areas for growth. This might include encouraging them to clarify certain terms, expand on key details, or connect their story more clearly to broader environmental data or research.

When it comes to receiving feedback, I can also grow in how I engage with it. Sometimes feedback can feel personal, especially when I have invested time and thought into my work. Instead of immediately defending my choices or focusing on what I disagree with, I can practice pausing and identifying the core message behind the critique. If someone points out that my explanation of water conservation methods lacks clarity, for instance, I should consider whether I assumed too much prior knowledge from my audience. Engaging with feedback in this way requires humility and a willingness to see blind spots in my own communication.

Overall, improving both how I give and receive feedback means becoming more intentional, analytical, and open-minded. By actively listening for themes, offering balanced and specific

responses, and approaching critique with humility, I can contribute to more meaningful conversations about water conservation and strengthen the collaborative learning process.