

# QUIET PLEASE, OWEN MCPHEE!

## EDUCATORS' GUIDE

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Owen McPhee doesn't just like to talk, he **LOVES** to talk. He spends every waking minute chattering away at his teachers, his classmates, his parents, his dog, and even *himself*. But all that talking can get in the way of listening. And when Owen wakes up with a bad case of laryngitis, it gives him a much-needed opportunity to hear what others have to say.

From the author-illustrator team behind *The Invisible Boy* comes a bright and lively picture book that captures the social dynamics of a busy classroom while delivering a gentle message about the importance of listening.

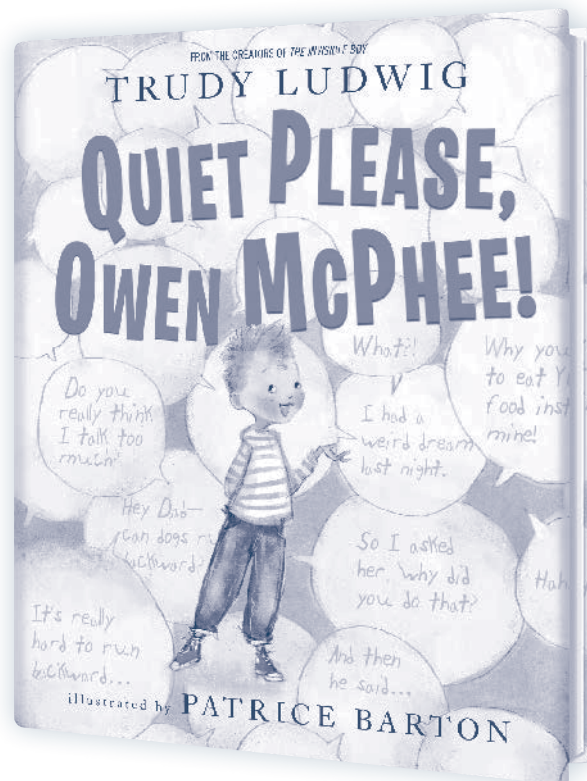
### ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

Photo © 2018 by Ken Long



**TRUDY LUDWIG** is a nationally acclaimed speaker and an award-winning author who specializes in writing children's books that help kids connect with their peers in kind, caring ways. She has received rave reviews from educators, experts, organizations, and parents at schools and conferences around the US for her

passion and compassion in addressing peer aggression and friendship issues. An active member of the International Bullying Prevention Association, Trudy also collaborates with organizations like the Committee for Children and ConnectSafely, and has served as content advisor for Sesame Workshop. Trudy's books have won the Mom's Choice Gold Awards, the IBPA Gold Benjamin Franklin Award, and the NAPPA Gold Medal. Her book *The Invisible Boy* is a Junior Library Guild Selection, a *School Library Journal* Best Picture Book Selection, and a Scholastic *Instructor* Recommended Back-to-School Pick. Visit her at [trudyludwig.com](http://trudyludwig.com). Follow her on Twitter at @TrudyLudwig.



Grades K-3 • F&P: L • Lexile: AD530L  
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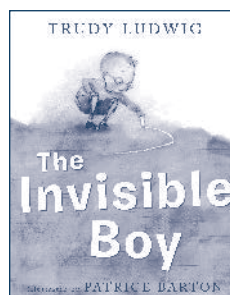


**PATRICE BARTON** earned a BFA in studio art from the University of Texas in Austin, where she lives with her husband and son. Her books include *Sweet Moon Baby* by Karen Henry Clark, *Mine!* by Shutta Crum, *I Like Old Clothes* by Mary Ann Hoberman, and *Rosie Sprout's Time to Shine* by Allison Wortche—all available from Knopf.

### PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Ask students to privately record whether they consider themselves to be talkers or listeners or some mix of both.

### ALSO BY TRUDY LUDWIG AND PATRICE BARTON



**The Invisible Boy**  
Grades 1-4 • F&P: N Lexile: AD680L  
HC: 978-1-582-46450-3  
EL: 978-0-449-81820-6



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# WHILE READING *QUIET PLEASE, OWEN McPHEE!*

The activities below correlate to Common Core Standards: ELA reading for ideas, details, craft, and style; presentation of knowledge; research; speaking and listening; and use of nuanced words. The quote bubbles and calendars in the book can be used for meeting standards related to required informational learning on display documents.

- Focus on Barton's illustrations on the cover and opening endpapers. Ask students: How can you tell just by looking at the illustrations that Owen talks a great deal? What activity is Owen NOT doing that needs to be done? Have them explain their answers by pointing out details in the illustrations.
- As the text begins, ask students to identify the word that describes how much Owen enjoys talking (i.e., *loves*). Next, direct them to the reaction of the dog, Hannah, in that illustration. What is Hannah's position saying about what she wants? Last, talk about the use of figurative language in the phrase "more than an earful," and ask students to discuss how this particular phrase relates to Hannah, given that she is a hound dog.
- Stop after you have read about Wednesday and challenge students to use the text and illustrations thus far to suggest what Owen can or should do on Thursday. Have them share ideas about or illustrations of how he can solve his problem.
- Have the students share their story continuation ideas and post some in the classroom.
- As you continue reading, have the students discuss which, if any, of their story continuation ideas were chosen by Ludwig and Barton.
- Have students follow the story through Friday and challenge them to detail how Owen's behavior has changed. Discuss how Barton's illustrations show this.

## FOR OLDER READERS

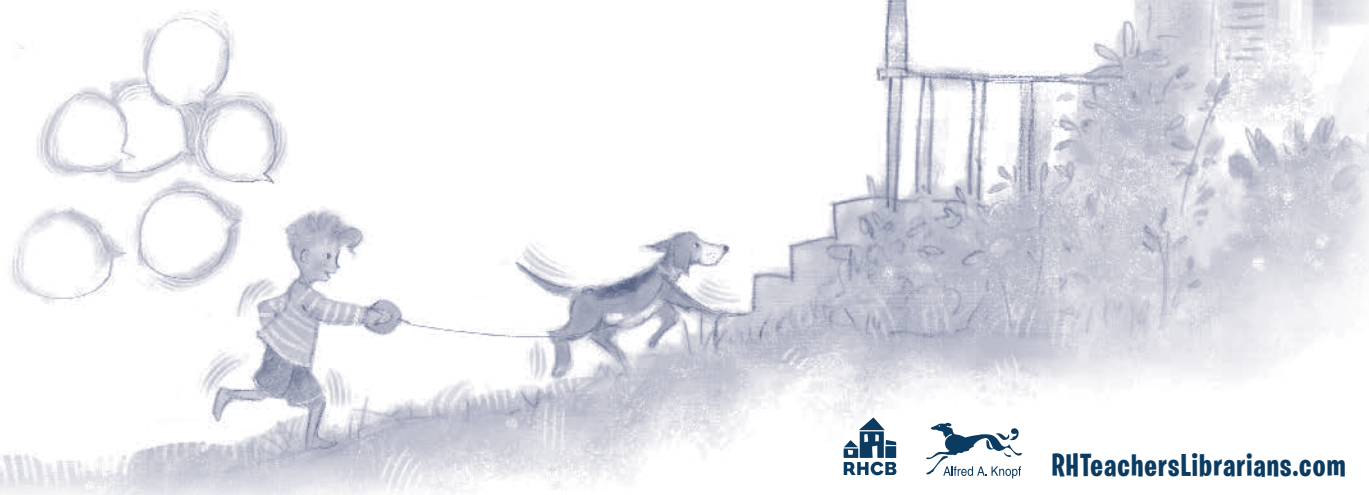
- As students follow Owen's week in school, ask them to think about the following questions.

**BIG QUESTION:** *Is it better to talk or listen?* Have students support their response with at least three details from the story.

Do not comment on individual arguments. Instead, make certain that students are using visual data from the illustrations, such as *Splat!/Fizz* after Owen ignored instructions during science class or his classmates' responses to him spoiling *Scorpion's Revenge*, in their answers.

**BREAKOUT DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Discuss Owen's reaction to Marcus's statement that he talks too much. How does Owen respond? Consider your previous discussion about whether it is better to talk or listen. In this instance, was it important that Marcus chose to talk and not listen?

- Owen writes an apology to Isabela, the STEM bridge project team member. Ask students how they think Isabela would answer the question: *Is it better to talk or listen?* Why? Make certain they reference her words and the story told through the STEM bridge building project illustrations.
- Conclude by asking students what informational document Owen uses to manage his own tendency to talk too much. Ask them if they think it will be effective. Help them support their answers by directing them to compare the endpapers.





# CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

The activities below correlate to Common Core Standards related to speaking and listening skills.

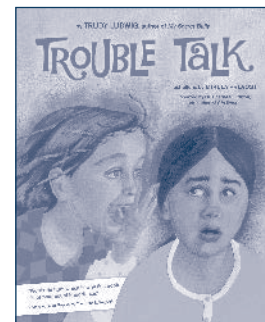
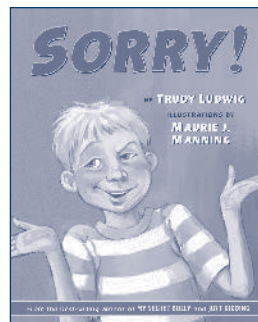
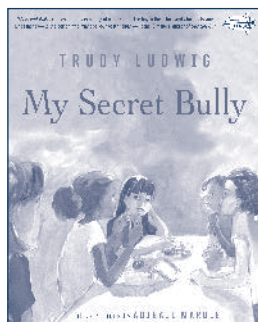
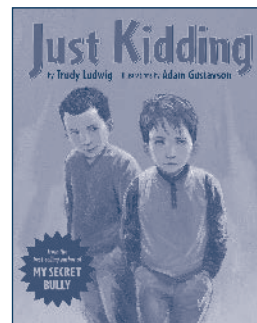
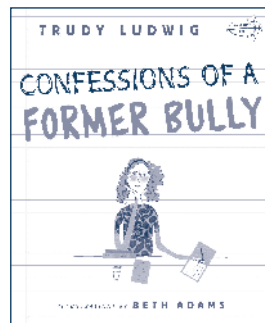
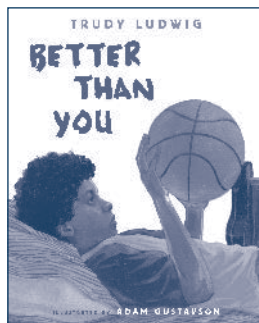
- Have students revisit their responses to the questions above. Ask them if their ideas about talking and listening have changed after reading the story. Invite the students to share anecdotes from their own lives in which talking too much has had negative consequences or listening to others has had positive consequences.
- Invite teachers or members of the community to visit the class and detail how listening and collaborating are essential to getting their jobs done in an effective and timely manner.
- Work as a class to develop a PSA or record a podcast featuring their comments on the need to listen. Invite the school guidance counselor, school administrators, teachers, PTA members, and other adults to be part of the project.
- Lead a classroom author study on Trudy Ludwig and her books, including *Sorry!*, *Just Kidding*, and *Confessions of a Former Bully*. Make connections between Trudy's characters, and develop a crossover project in which Owen can share his hard-earned expertise with the characters in these works whose talking hurts others.

## FOR OLDER READERS

- Retell the story as a collaborative team book from the perspectives of Hannah, Mr. Delgado, Isabela, and Marcus.
- Encourage artists and to team up with others in the class to create a graphic novel or advice blog where Owen helps others learn to be better listeners and fixes situations in which talking has hurt others.



## ALSO BY TRUDY LUDWIG



# REWARDING KINDNESS WARRIORS!

Author Trudy Ludwig visits schools nationwide throughout the year to recruit Kindness Warriors. Reproduce the badges below and record kind deeds to be posted on a class bulletin board or sent home with students.

is a **KINDNESS WARRIOR** because

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

