

Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives

By Peter H. Johnston



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Introducing a spelling test to a student by saying, 'Let's see how many words you know,' is different from saying, 'Let's see how many words you know already.' It is only one word, but the already suggests that any words the child knows are ahead of expectation and, most important, that there is nothing permanent about what is known and not known.

Peter Johnston

Sometimes a single word changes everything. In his groundbreaking book *Choice Words*, Peter Johnston demonstrated how the things teachers say (and don't say) have surprising consequences for the literate lives of students. Now, in *Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives*, Peter shows how the words teachers choose affect the worlds students inhabit in the classroom, and ultimately their futures. He explains how to engage children with more productive talk and to create classrooms that support not only students' intellectual development, but their development as human beings.

Grounded in research, *Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives* shows how words can shape students' learning, their sense of self, and their social, emotional and moral development. Make no mistake: words have the power to open minds or close them.



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Editorial Review

Review

By combining rich descriptions of classroom interactions with research to back up his claims, Johnston writes convincingly and paints lasting images of effective ways to engender agency (the will to act), positive self-theories, and constructive perspectives to change lives within our classrooms. --Language Arts

Johnston's thinking is transformative. He has created a layered effect of ideas and theories that form a solid path to becoming a master in the apprenticeship of children into humanity. --MiddleWeb

It is brilliant. Just as in Choice Words, Johnston packs a ton into a small book. -- A Year of Reading blog

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