

The Magical Power of Words

Please share ideas, story starters, inspiration, and student writing prompts that may inspire our Young Authors across the state as they begin the writing process. This document can be shared with ALL councils so students from the mountains to the coast can benefit from all of our good ideas. Thanks for your help with this!



1. Share about how words have had a deep impact on your life.
2. Write about a book, poem, speech, or song that has influenced you.
3. How have words had a **positive impact** on you?
4. How have words had a **negative impact** on you?
5. Share the story behind your name and how it was chosen for you, or the origin of your name. (inspiration for older students: *The House on Mango Street*)
6. Tell about your nickname and how you received that nickname.
7. Use an app like **WordFoto** to have students use adjectives to describe a picture.
8. Maybe making words and how they connect with games like Scrabble or Banagrams
9. Think about a time you read something (email, text...) and you were not taking the information in the correct way because you are reading only the words and not hearing the tone or seeing the body language. This would be great for Middle/High School as you are talking about Social Media.
10. What is your favorite word? Why do you love it?
11. American education reformer Horace Mann once said, "Once sent out, a word takes wings beyond recall." Describe a time when your words had unintended consequences, positive or negative.
12. Share the book "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" by Carol McCloud or "How Full is Your Bucket?" by Tom Rath. Have kids write a story about when they filled someone's bucket.
13. Tell the story (video or to a friend), then write it.
14. Describe a magical transformation initiated by words.
15. "**Big Words for Little People**" by Jamie Lee Curtis. This is a great book that gives big words and then will explain...maybe have students mimic something like this.
16. *The List* by Patricia Forde
17. A great book for adults to read "**Choice Words**" by Peter Johnson. This would be great for Professional Development.
18. "**Donovan's Word Jar**"
19. How can **YOU** use your words to change the world?
20. **Fish in a Tree Book** by Lynda Mullaly Hunt
21. With middle or high school students you could have students select one word to focus on for the school year and write about which could include "strength, courage, kindness, determination, persistence, resilience, flexibility etc. Check out the book *Change Your Life With Just One Word: My One Word* by Mike Ashcroft and Rachel Olsen

22. If you are teaching about students' names, another great book is *Christopher Changes His Name* by Itah Sadu and Roy Condy. Kids LOVE this book!
23. "The magic is only in what books say, how they stitched the patches of the universe together into one garment for us."
— Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*
24. "Books are a uniquely portable magic."
— Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*
25. "I don't believe in the kind of magic in my books. But I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book."
— J.K. Rowling
26. Write about a person who has used words to impact others or change the world in some significant manner.
27. Read a famous speech and explain how/why the words made a difference in the world. (Examples: MLK, John Kennedy, Gandhi, Sojourner Truth, Abraham Lincoln, Sheryl Sandberg, Hillary Clinton, Maya Angelou)
28. There is a famous childhood saying: "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me." How is this statement true or not true in your experiences/life?
29. Include the power of *all* words (e.g. braille and ASL). Invite a speaker with experience in these unique words and the challenges readers face.
30. Book--*Tell Us (Teach Us) Your Name* by Huda Essa--great for students with unique or uncommon names to honor the history and meaning behind them.