

**Transforming Classroom Talk: Books and Ideas
to Cultivate Collaborative Conversations
Raising Student Achievement Conference 2018**



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Books that Engage Readers to Read, Read, and Read Some More:

Czajak, P. (2018). *The book tree*. (R. Kheiriyeh, Illus.). New York, NY: Barefoot Books.

Arlo loves books and reading until one day when the mayor decides to take all the books away from the town. Arlo is devastated and copes the only way that he knows how, by writing down stories and sharing them with anyone who will listen. Ultimately, his words take root and the book tree grows and so does a new love for reading for the townspeople. But will it change the mayor's mind?

Eggers, D. (2018). *The lifters*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Gran and his family move to Carousel, but do not realize that there are forces underneath them that are causing the town to slowly sink. One day, his friend Catalina opens a door leading to the underground and beginning their work to try to overcome what is happening underground and ultimately "lifting" their town out of danger.

Stoddard, L. (2018). *Just like Jackie*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Robbie and her grandfather have been together for as long as she remembers. He has taught her about many things, including cards, baseball and a few other important things. Now grandpa's memory is failing so much, he can't even remember her name. To make things work, she feels angry all the time and gets in trouble at school.

Now she is in a therapy group and she can't tell anyone what's going on because if she does, then they'll take her away and she'll lose the only family that she has ever known.

Books that Make Readers Stop, Think, and Converse:

Britt, P. (2017). *Why am I me?* (S. Alko & S. Quall, Illus.). New York, NY: Scholastic.

A celebration of the diversity of humanity and the uniqueness of each of us by understanding that there is no "me," but a world where there is only a "we."

Brandt, L. (2014). *Maddi's fridge*. (V. Vogel, Illus.). New York, NY: Flashlight Press.

Sofia and Maddi are best friends who share everything. One day Sofia discovers that Maddi's family doesn't have anything in her fridge and Maddi shares with her that it is because they don't have the money to buy food, but makes Sophia promise not to tell anyone. Sophia is torn because she feels like it is a secret that she shouldn't keep, but what shouldn't do.

Braden, A. (2018). *The benefits of being an octopus*. New York, NY: Sky Pony Express.

Zoey has lots of responsibility for a seventh grader. She goes to school, but she also takes care of her younger siblings after school so that her mother can work at the local pizza parlor. Her teacher encourages her to join the debate club where she hopes that Zoey will find her voice and the confidence that she needs to help her family find its way out of a challenging situation. Life is hard for Zoey at home and at school, so she manages the stresses of her day to day life through the things that she has learned about the octopus.

Books with Characters Who Inspire Readers:

de la Pena, M. (2018). *Carmela full of wishes*. (C. Robinson, Illus.). New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Books for Young Readers.

On Carmela's birthday, she is finally old enough to go with her brother as he runs the family errands. While they are going through the neighborhood, she finds a dandelion and is excited to make a wish, but what will she wish for? So many wishes and she doesn't want to make the wrong wish.

Campbell, M. (2018). *Adrian Simcox does not have a horse*. (C. Luyken, Illus.). New York, NY: Dial Books.

Adrian loves to tell anyone who will listen that he has a horse, but Chloe knows better. He does not have a horse. She gets angrier and angrier until one day her mother takes her to the neighborhood where he lives and Chloe is surprised by what she learns about the life that Adrian lives outside of school.

Books with Perspectives that Change Readers' Thinking:

Latham, I. (2018). *Can I touch your hair?: Poems of race, mistakes, and friendship*. (S. Alko & S. Qualls, Illus.). New York, NY: Carolrhoda.

Irene and Charles are working on a project and they don't know each other very well. They also aren't sure that they want to because all they see in each other are their differences. As they begin to ask each other questions, explore who they are, and deal with their misconceptions, they begin to understand that maybe they may have more in common than they think ...and could be friends after all!

Verde, S. (2018). *Hey, Wall: A story of art and community*. (J. Parra, Illus.). New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

There is a wall who used to be a proud wall, but now it isn't, but Angel wants to do something to change that. With the help of his neighbors, he decides that he is going to make a difference in the life of not only the wall, but in his neighborhood through the use of art, music, and community.

Yaccarino, D. (2016). *I am a story*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

From the telling of stories around fires to cave paintings to the books that we hold in our hands, the history of "story" is shared reminding of us of how many different ways we share and continue to share stories with each other.

Professional Resources:

Biggs-Tucker, K., & Tucker, B. (2015). *Transforming Literacy Teaching in the Era of Higher Standards, 3-5*. Scholastic.

Johnston, P. (2012). *Opening minds: Using language to change minds*. Portsmouth, NH: Stenhouse.

Turkle, S. (2016). *Reclaiming conversation: The power of talk in a digital age*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Walther, M. (In Press). *The Revved-Up Read Aloud: What to Say as You Turn the Page*. Corwin.

Walther, M. & Biggs-Tucker, K. (In Press). *Blurring the Lines: An Integrated Reading and Writing Workshop*. Stenhouse.