

Themed Collection 1

Making Meaningful Connections

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6 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

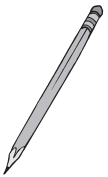
READING SUCCESS STORY

The Importance of Making Meaningful Connections

It is difficult for me when I see a child struggling and having a hard time with reading. Future teachers need to think critically about effective methods and develop meaningful practices to work with struggling students. You won't find this in the teaching manuals. The books tell you how and what to teach, but beyond that you need to be creative and think creatively.

Every single child has the capacity for learning. Each child needs to feel important. I believe every child can read at his or her own speed and time. I want every child to feel special or he or she will not perform. My philosophy after 40 years of teaching is very simple. Leave no child behind. Set your expectations high! Children will "stretch" to meet those expectations! I believe and they will achieve.

—Susanne Sullivan, Retired First-Grade Teacher



PERSONAL LITERACY GOALS

Use this space to identify three goals or positive actions you would like to focus on related to inspiring students to make meaningful connections during reading instruction and reading engagements.

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What is meaningful to you about being a reading teacher?
- What personal experiences have led you to become a reading teacher?
- What are some issues that you face that keep you from focusing on your inner beliefs about being an effective reading teacher?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students about the different ways in which they can think about reading.
2. Who are some of their favorite people who have inspired them to be better readers?
3. Ask students to identify something important that they think keeps them from reading.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

Read Anything Good Lately by Susan Allen and Jane Lindaman (2003) is a wonderful book that celebrates the joy of reading by providing ideas of things to read for each letter of the alphabet. Teachers can use this book to help students create their own alphabet books on why reading is important to them.

Grades 4-10

Carver: A Life in Poems by Marilyn Nelson (2001) is a true story about how students can use reading to overcome the emotional and physical challenges that prejudice can cause. This book can be used to introduce Lesson Link #1.

8 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“Education is a progressive discovery
of our own ignorance.”

—Will Durant



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What does the phrase *progressive discovery* mean to you in relationship to literacy achievement?
- In what areas do you feel you need more knowledge in order to overcome ignorance?
- Reflect on all the memorable books you have read in your life and the progressive path of discovery they have led you to.

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what types of books they like to read to advance their interests and overcome their lack of knowledge. Ask them what schools should do to help with overcoming areas of ignorance.
2. Tell students to think about a time they made a progressive discovery; have them describe it in their journals.
3. Have students write about the progressive discoveries made by the main characters in the books they are reading.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

You Read to Me, I'll Read to You by Mary Ann Hoberman (2004) is told in two voices; it uses traditional reading techniques and invites students to read along with adults. Older students can use this model to interview classmates and younger students about why reading is important. The book can be used as a model for how to organize two voices.

Grades 4-10

Gershon's Monster by Eric Kimmel (2000) is the story of one boy's journey through a progressive discovery, seeking answers to basic questions about life. Like the book cited above, *Gershon's Monster* can also be used with different voices. It uses different perspectives and special coloring techniques to create a multicultural experience for readers. Have students respond to Lesson Link #3 in pairs after reading this book and discuss it later as a class.

“Let what you love be what you do.”

—Rumi



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What do you love about teaching? How can you build more of these types of experiences into your school year?
- What talents would you like to learn about in the future?
- What would your peers say you love to do?

LESSON LINKS

1. Have students list five things they love to do. Ask them what each of these activities has in common.
2. Ask students what types of activities in school they enjoy. Have them explain why they enjoy them so much and what actions they could take to include more of these activities into their school work.
3. After reading, have students list statements in their books that illustrate the characters letting what they loved be what they did.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

M Is for Melody: A Music Alphabet, by Kathy-Jo Wargin (2004) is a picture book that focuses on all the different aspects of music. What is nice about this book is that it can be used with several other books written by the author that also focus on what interests students.

Grades 4-10

A Three Minute Speech: Lincoln's Remarks at Gettysburg by Jennifer Armstrong (2003) is a vivid and easy-to-read explanation of the events that led up to the Gettysburg address. It describes that one of the reasons that Lincoln was so successful was that he loved what he did. Complete Lesson Link #3 and ask students to describe why Lincoln loved what he was doing.

10 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“**Nothing is predestined: The obstacles of the past can become gateways that lead to new beginnings.**”

—Ralph Blum

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- What does *predestined* mean?
- What kind of obstacles have you tried to overcome related to literacy achievement?
- What kind of new things have you tried recently to help students make connections with what you are teaching?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students to write about obstacles they have tried to overcome in school.
2. Have students list some of their achievements in reading.
3. Ask students to recall a time when they were beginning a new activity or learning a new skill in reading. What helped them be successful?

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

The Three Questions by Jon Muth (2002) is a picture book based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. The three questions asked by the author in the story demonstrate how thinking differently can lead to new beginnings.

“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”

—William Arthur Ward



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What does it mean to be a mediocre teacher?
- How do you explain your reading activities?
- In what ways do you think you inspire your students?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what their teachers do that inspires them to read more.
2. Have students write about someone who has helped them be successful in reading.
3. Ask students how they learn best.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

Look-Alikes: The More You Look, the More You See by Joan Steiner (2003) is a picture book that uses many unusual illustrations to help students look at things in the world differently. This is a wonderful book that helps build on the notion of discovery and making meaningful connections.

12 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“*I touch the future. I teach.*”

—Christa McAuliffe

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- How can you help students touch the future through reading?
- Who is someone who helped you touch the future?
- What is it about teaching you enjoy most?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students how they can use reading as a tool to touch the future.
2. Who has helped them touch the future?
3. What do they like the most about learning?

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades K-4**

“*Oh, the Places You’ll Go!*” by Dr. Seuss (1990) encourages students to try new things and overcome their fears along the way.

“It’s not what you are that holds you back . . . but what you think you are not.”

—Anonymous



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS’ DEEPER THINKING

- What do you do in reading that really motivates students?
- What discouraging reading activities do you think need to be changed or eliminated in order to help students make meaningful connections?
- What holds you back from being the best teacher possible?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what motivates them to work really hard.
2. Have students think of activities they do not enjoy and tell why.
3. Have students identify someone they have read about who has inspired them.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

The Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin (2003) is a story about all the daily things that a worm does. In this book, students can see how the little things they do help them to become better people and help a lot of things in this world.

Grades 4-10

My Ol’ Man by Patricia Polacco (1999) is about discovering people who motivate and inspire. Through the use of storytelling, the author does not merely fill the mind with things that are not important or relevant, but explains the value of learning from those we love.

14 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“As teachers we must believe in change, must know it is possible, or we wouldn’t be teaching—because education is a constant process of change. Every single time you “teach” something to someone, it is ingested, something is done with it, and a new human being emerges.”

—Leo Buscaglia

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS’ DEEPER THINKING**

- What kind of change do you think is necessary to improve literacy in your school?
- Do you think education is a constant process of change?
- When you teach something, do you ever notice a new human being emerging?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what kinds of changes they have made related to literacy development.
2. Ask them if they like change.
3. Have students consider whether they notice anything different about themselves when their teacher teaches them something.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

Squids Will Be Squids by Jon Scieska and Lane Smith (1998) is a book about fables that develops the concept of change. Through creative words and pictures, students can learn to develop an appreciation for change.

“An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feeling. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.”

—Carl Jung



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What does Jung mean when he says that curriculum is a raw material?
- What is an analogy to growing plants in your classroom?
- What reading tasks are meaningful to children in your class?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what raw material is.
2. Have them think about a time they changed someone's life related to literacy.
3. Ask students what teachers can do to help them grow in reading.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

Mrs. Spitzer's Garden by Edith Pattou (2001) is about starting the school year by growing plants. Plants in the story go through a wonderful transformation during the year, because the teacher uses lots of tools to cultivate their inner spirits.

16 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“*The secret to education is respecting the pupil.*”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- What positive actions do you portray that demonstrate respect for students?
- What actions do you feel you can add to increase your level of respect?
- What do respecting students and the secret to education have in common?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what positive actions they take to show respect to others who struggle in reading.
2. Have students think about how they can show more respect.
3. Have them identify how they can be respectful when students are learning.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades K–4**

The Day The Babies Crawled Away by Peggy Rathmann (2004) helps students make connections with the concept of showing respect to all children. Watching students is very important, and teachers should observe and converse with students as they engage in new learning experiences. This will enable teachers to ensure that students are making connections between new knowledge—of things that they have never experienced before—and the knowledge they already have of their own world.

“*The biggest room in the world is the room for improvement.*”

—Author Unknown



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What new teaching techniques have you learned recently?
- What personal experiences have led you to search for new ways of approaching a lesson?
- What are some problems that you run into when attempting to improve a lesson? How can you overcome these problems, or if not overcome them, lessen them?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what subject in school they wish they could improve in and why.
2. Have students name one thing that they can do to improve their understanding of the material in their favorite class.
3. Ask students to consider what motivates them to do their best work.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

Hershey's Milk Chocolate Weights and Measures by Jerry Pallotta (2003) is a picture book that uses realistic drawings of Hershey's candy to teach math definitions. This book can help struggling young mathematicians or readers to have fun while they learn. Sometimes a fun way of learning can help a struggling student get motivated to improve. For a struggling reader who loves math, this book is a great resource. The pictures help the student relate to the words on the page.

18 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“*Teachers can teach, but only students can do something with what they have learned.*”

—Nick, age 16

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- Do you encourage your students to practice what you have taught them outside of school?
- What activities could you suggest students do outside of the classroom that are homework in disguise?
- How important do you feel it is to connect the material you teach to the real world for your students?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students if they have used something outside of school that they enjoyed learning about in school.
2. Have they ever felt that the things they were learning in school would never relate to their lives, but discovered later on that they did?
3. Ask students which subject they would choose and why if there were one subject they had to have homework in every night.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

Chicken Soup For The Preteen Soul by Mark Victor Hansen, Patty Hansen, and Irene Dunlap (2000) capitalizes on young adolescents' interest in reading about real people and their issues. The stories help students become interested in reading because young adolescents live for their social experiences. Students will enjoy reading these stories, while at the same time they will be practicing comprehension skills and other valuable abilities; thus, it becomes homework in disguise.

“*No act of kindness, no matter how small,
is ever wasted.*”

—Aesop



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- How important are acts of kindness in your classroom?
- How can you support acts of kindness among your students?
- How do you show your students that each one is valued equally?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what acts of kindness they have performed in the classroom.
2. How do they feel when someone does something nice for them?
3. How do they feel when someone is unkind to them?

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades 4–10

The Whipping Boy by Sid Fleischman (1986) is a wonderful book for this theme of treating others the way you would want to be treated. In this book Prince Brat, the main character, is taught to be responsible for his own actions and to become empathetic toward others.

20 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“*Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises.*”

—Demosthenes

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- Do you give your students opportunities to help around the classroom?
- Why, or why not, do you feel this is important?
- When you are given opportunities to do something new, how do you feel?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students if they have chores at home.
2. Given these jobs to complete, how do students feel?
3. Ask students what other opportunities they are given at school, with friends, etc.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

My Name is Pocahontas by William Accorsi (1992) is a great depiction of what can happen when opportunities present themselves and an individual takes advantage of an opportunity. Students will learn about the Indian princess Pocahontas and how she met John Smith and the other English colonists. Due to her perseverance, she is able to travel to England with them.

“Great ability develops and reveals itself increasingly with every new assignment.”

—Baltasar Gracian



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- Do you recognize your students' capabilities within their school work?
- How do you acknowledge your students' accomplishments?
- How do you feel about your own accomplishments?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students how they feel when they complete an assignment.
2. Which subjects are easy for them and which are more difficult?
3. Have students describe their greatest accomplishments.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades 4–10

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George (1959) is a great story which fits in perfectly with this theme. The story is about a boy who lives alone in the mountains, where he learns to adapt to new situations and environments, and is taught an important lesson on survival. Throughout this journey the boy discovers his strengths and weaknesses and learns to use his strengths to survive.

22 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“*Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.*”

—Chinese Proverb

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- What motivated you to become a teacher?
- How do you motivate those students who need more help?
- Who was your most memorable teacher?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what they like most about school, and least.
2. What do they want to be when they are older?
3. Have students describe what motivates them to learn.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

Hiawatha by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1983) is a great book to read to get across the theme presented here and to bring some diversity into the classroom. It tells the story of a legendary Native American leader, Hiawatha, and his journey through boyhood to manhood and responsibility. This story allows students to see that, at one time or another, they need to motivate themselves to do things on their own and to become independent.

“Learn as much by writing as by reading.”

—Lord Acton



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- How important do you feel it is to read the books that your students are reading?
- How much time do you take out for yourself to read and write?
- What are you still learning either from your students or by writing and reading?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students if they enjoy writing, and why or why not.
2. Ask students how often they read books outside of school.
3. Do they feel they learn as much by writing as by reading?

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades K-4

Dr. Seuss's ABCs by Dr. Seuss (1963) is a wonderful tool to help beginning readers start to develop some writing skills. This book is designed to help students understand the alphabet through poetic writing.

24 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them.”

—Earvin “Magic” Johnson

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS’ DEEPER THINKING**

- Do you feel that you instill hope in your students for their future?
- Do you think that your students believe that you have faith in them?
- Do you provide your students with criticism that is hopeless or hopeful?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students if they feel the adults in their lives have faith in their success.
2. How hard do they feel they try in school?
3. What subjects do they feel the most frustrated in, and why?

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

The Giver by Lois Lowry (1993) is an amazing book that covers hundreds of different themes, and it fits in perfectly with the theme of having someone who believes in you. Jonas is chosen to become the new Receiver of Memories in his town, and the Giver helps him through this painstaking process. The Giver gives Jonas the encouragement he needs to take on this enormous responsibility.

“Friends can appear in the most unlikely people, and are often right in front of you.”

—Rich Thornton



THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .

PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING

- What do you do to encourage your students to befriend each other?
- What is your plan of action when you see a child being left out on a constant basis?
- Is there anything you can do in your classroom to help your students accept each other's differences?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students what qualities they look for in a friend.
2. Do they feel that they portray these qualities to their friends?
3. Ask them what they can do to help someone who is left out of a group.

LITERATURE LINKS

Grades 4–10

The Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene (1980) deals directly with friendships. It demonstrates to students that two young people, who are supposed to be enemies, can instead put their differences aside and develop compassion, along with trust for one another.

26 QUOTES TO INSPIRE GREAT READING TEACHERS

“Since you are like no other being ever created since the beginning of Time, you are incomparable.”

—Brenda Ueland

**THIS QUOTE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT . . .****PROMPTING TEACHERS' DEEPER THINKING**

- What makes you unique as a teacher?
- What do you do in your classroom to allow your students to explore their talents?
- What are the special talents of your students, and how do you utilize them in your classroom?

LESSON LINKS

1. Ask students if they have hidden talents.
2. Ask students what they are passionate about.
3. Have students describe their favorite things to do outside of school and why they like these activities so much.

LITERATURE LINKS**Grades 4–10**

I'm Gonna Like Me by Jamie Lee Curtis (2002) is a great book that helps students realize their talents. It is dedicated to building self-esteem and loving yourself despite imperfections, because imperfections are what make a person unique.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Quotes That Inspire You to Make Meaningful Connections

A Reflection on My Personal Literacy Goals

Use this space to write a reflection on the goals you have achieved or positive actions you have taken related to literacy or reading.

My Reading Success Story

Use this space to document any of your reading success stories.

THEMED COLLECTION 1 BOOK LIST

- Accorsi, W. (1992). *My Name is Pocahontas*. New York: Holiday House.
- Armstrong, J. (2003). *A Three Minute Speech: Lincoln's Remarks at Gettysburg*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
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