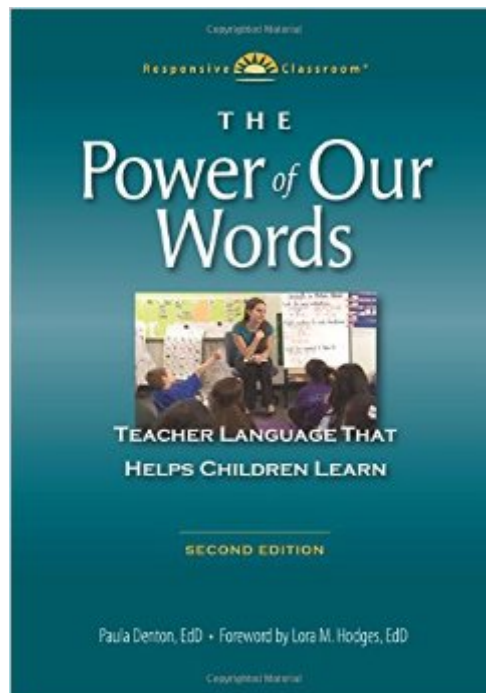


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# The Power Of Our Words: Teacher Language That Helps Children Learn (Responsive Classroom)



## Synopsis

Simple changes in a teacher's language can bring about profound changes in students and classrooms. By paying attention to your words and tone of voice, you will:

- Increase students' engagement with academics
- Build positive community
- More effectively manage your classroom

That is the message of *The Power of Our Words*, a book that has changed the teaching lives of tens of thousands of educators since it was first published in 2007. In this updated second edition you will find practical information to help you:

- Lead students in envisioning themselves achieving success
- Use questions that encourage deep and creative thinking
- Listen to students in ways that support their growth
- Reinforce students efforts and remind or redirect them when they go off track.

Throughout, you will find an increased emphasis on using teacher language to support academic engagement and critical thinking skills as called for in the Common Core State Standards. And an updated, livelier format makes this second edition even easier to read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a classroom teacher in inner city schools for 8 years, I have found myself immersed in school cultures which were disrespectful and authoritarian toward parents and students. This book presents a different approach to the teacher's role as a catalyst for learning. Well-grounded in pedagogical theory, it is pragmatic in its descriptions of how language that encourages motivation and responsibility might sound. For example, one area the book addresses well is the delivery of

reinforcement. I have always felt that nonspecific praise such as "good job" didn't really help students understand what it was about their academic or behavioral improvement that merited recognition. It made me uncomfortable that feedback in this form made students dependent on my approval and tethered them to my judgment alone. This book helped me understand how I can clearly communicate evidence of growth to the student so that he or she can perceive that success. In "The Power of Our Words," Denton helps teachers envision how they can communicate with students in ways which promote personal and intellectual engagement. She offers supportive suggestions to help teachers figure out how they might change their own style of language. Finally, the book inspires the hope that as we hone the clarity of our messages in classroom speech, we will be more efficacious in helping students become autonomous, reflective, and motivated learners. I believe that is a major key to closing the achievement gap.

Paula Denton's book has proved immensely helpful for me in my work coaching teachers to reflect on and enhance their teaching practice. Her suggestions for refining teacher language are practical and immediately accessible for both experienced and "rookie" teachers. I highly recommend this book to teachers who want to improve their communication, interaction, classroom management and relationships with students and colleagues.

I bought this book three weeks ago and I find it one of the most useful books I own. It is written well and packed with practical ways to create a positive learning environment.

We are two teachers who teach 2nd grade and kindergarten. We read this book as part of our graduate class, Advanced Educational Psychology. *The Power of Our Words: Teacher Language that Helps Children Learn* is an informative, well organized book that is a quick read. It is written by Paula Denton who is an educator in the elementary setting who has Responsive Classroom training. We highly recommend this book to anyone who interacts with children (educators and parents) and wishes to use language to help them succeed and learn. The book is organized into 7 chapters and includes easy-to-read examples, charts, and even appendices to help the reader apply the strategies. The book is based upon 5 guidelines for how to speak to children: be direct and authentic, convey faith in children's ability and intentions, focus on actions, keep it brief, and know when to be silent. As educators, we have started to implement strategies in our own classrooms with success. The students have responded in a positive way and the strategy has promoted a calmer classroom climate. We recommend starting out small. Focus on one aspect of

your language you wish to change. Trying to tackle all strategies at once will be overwhelming. Most teachers have heard that you should praise children for their work and efforts. Most of can say, "I like the way Johnny is standing in line." This lets Johnny know that he stands in line quietly to please his teacher. Instead, we should say, "Some students are remembering the procedures for standing in our line." This gives the responsibility to the student. Good luck! It is a worthwhile read!Bethany & Rebecca

This book will change your teaching! So many of our classroom challenges can be conquered by changing our language. Often we manipulate and pit children against each other unintentionally with our language. Denton's book is loaded with practical examples and an exceptional index of different types of language you can use for particular situations. Before you change any other aspect of your teaching, consider reading Denton's *The Power of Our Words*, as small changes in your language can lead to big positive changes in your classroom. A great resource for veteran and novice teachers!

This is an excellent read for educators at all grade levels and stages of their careers, and it highlights an important, yet often overlooked, tool teachers use most often in the classroom: our words and language. I can't recommend this book highly enough to fellow educators; author Denton really makes you think about how your words and tone of voice impact your students. This may seem like a 'common sense' sort of topic, but in reading this short, accessible book, you realize that language is an essential tool of teaching and one that really takes skill and practice to use effectively. I especially liked that Denton included a whole chapter on effective listening, which I think is often left out of the teaching equation when we get wrapped up in how much curriculum we have to cover, etc. This is a quick and worthwhile read for all educators, especially those in the classroom. Highly recommend it.

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