

Teaching is planned opportunism. We have an idea of what we want to teach children, and we plan ways to make that learning possible. When we put our plans into action, children offer us opportunities to say something, or not, and the choices that we make affect what happens next. Teaching requires constant improvisation. It is jazz. A child asks a question. Do we answer it? if so, how? How long do we wait before we answer it? if not, what do we say? A child successfully accomplishes something--or fails to. We have another opportunity to say something but what?
Johnston (2012), p, 4,

Positively. Powerful Language

Say more about that..

include the word "yet" with students/teachers to keep the door of possibility open.

Did you hear what _____ said?

How did you do that?

How could we figure that out?

Thanks for teaching us that.

Thanks for noticing that.

Ask your partner how he did it.

What are you thinking?

How did you _____? You should go and tell _____.

Maybe you should find another way to _____.

What would you do now?

Could you think of other ways that would also work?

Look at how you _____.

I noticed that....

Thanks _____ and _____. If you hadn't disagreed, we never would have got to the bottom of that.

Add in chapter 4 words and phrases.....

Possibly.

I should hear a conversation about your confusion.

Do you agree with _____?

Show me fascinated.

Use mental verbs: think, imagine, feel, believe, wonder, want, like, need, know

Not -- I like the way you....

Rather-- Your answer made me think of _____.

Your thinking about the character helps me understand her better.

When you choose these words, your writing is _____.

Your plan has many details. Why did you decide _____?

Move from *is* to *could be*

e.g. What is the main idea? to What could the main idea be?

Questions to extend thinking

Can you explain further how ...?

Can you expand on ...?

Why do you think that ...?

Why did you decide _____?

What else might go with that idea?

How are _____ and _____ connected?

How can we build on what _____ said?

How can we combine these two ideas?

What is the common theme?

What will you do?

Why is that important?

Does this connect with to any other things you have encountered?

Prompts to support kids' talking about their thinking

Why do you think that?

Could you explain?

I agree, because... or I disagree, because ...

And... or I agree, and... or I have evidence....