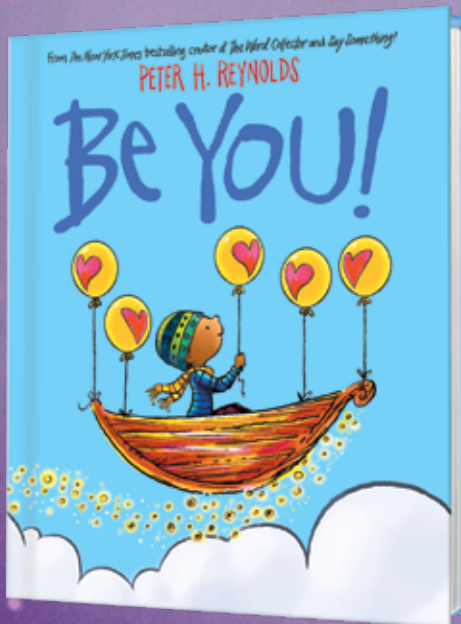


# ACTIVITY GUIDE

Find Inspiration and Make a Difference

with the Books of Peter H. Reynolds

AGES 4-8  
GRADES P-3





## To my fellow Big Dreamers!

These books are more than just pages with words and images. I wrote and illustrated each one to encourage my readers to take time to dream and not to limit how big those dreams can be. Your dreams are all yours—so why not dream big?

Dream in vivid colors! Dream quietly! Dream loudly! Dream creatively!

My art and words are here to encourage you to stay positive, to use your imagination, and to be curious. Know who you are, and be proud of the person you are and who you are becoming. Express what is in your head and heart and share it with the world in whatever way feels right for you—whether through your words, your art, your music, or some other form all your own, it doesn't matter as long as you let the world know what you're thinking, feeling, and dreaming. There are some very loud, booming voices around us, but the world needs your voice! The world needs ALL voices, and yours matters.

By sharing our voices, our thoughts, and our talents, we can each make a difference and together make the world a better place.

*Peter H. Reynolds*



## About the Author

**Peter H. Reynolds** is a *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator of many books for children, including *The Dot (Le point de départ)*, *I Am Human (Je suis humain)*, *Happy Dreamer (Joyeux rêveur)*, *The Word Collector (Le collectionneur de mots)*, *Say Something! (Ta voix compte)*, and *Be You! (Toi!)*. His books have been translated into over 25 languages around the globe and are celebrated worldwide. In 1996, he founded FableVision with his brother, Paul, as a social change agency to help create "stories that matter, stories that move." He lives in Dedham, Massachusetts, with his family. Visit him online at [peterhreynolds.com](http://peterhreynolds.com).

# Activities for *Say Something!*

## PSA FOR HOPE AND CHANGE

After reading *Say Something!* aloud, have students work in small groups to write a short script for a public service announcement they would like to share with the world.

- What is their message for others? What do they feel hopeful about? What would they like to see change in their classroom, in their school, or in the world?
- After students have written their scripts, support them to create an audio or video recording to share with the school community or with their families.
- Help students to work together throughout the process to ensure that all voices are heard. This process introduces critical ways that students can use multimedia to say something to the world.

## SAY SOMETHING! STATIONS

After a first reading of the book, explore with students all the ways that the characters in the book say something through their words, actions, and hearts in their artwork, style, poetry, and even planting.

- Create *Say Something!* stations for students to rotate through or to select the station that appeals to them the most as a way to say something.
- Stations can include a painting or art creation station, a planting station with soil and seeds, a poetry station, a microscope or magnifying glass observation station, a dress-up station, a sign-making station, and even a whisper-to-the-world station.
- Encourage students to try more than one station to realize that there are many ways they can say something. After rotating through stations, have students share what their favorite way of saying something was that day with reasons to support their thinking.



## SAY SOMETHING! SIGNS

One way that the characters say something is by making signs using art and words to inspire others to do the same.

- Invite students to create their own signs using a variety of materials. If students would benefit from a scaffold, revisit the beginning two-page spread with dozens of examples of powerful speech bubbles that students can use in their own signs, such as “follow your heart,” “together is better,” and “be brave.”
- Have students hold up their signs and take photos for a display as a source of inspiration for others.

## SEEING THE GOOD

There are important times for students to use their voices to express things they want to see change or things that need to stop. Yet, *Say Something!* also encourages students to say things they notice that are good in the world like beauty and kindness.

- Create a class routine where students have an opportunity to reflect daily on things they noticed that were good in their day or in the world.
- Build in time at the end of the day for students to write or draw about things that were good, how they made others happy, or how others made them happy that day.
- Provide time for students to tell someone else about their reflections or to share their writing and drawing with the class.

# Activities for *Say Something!*



## SAY SOMETHING! JOURNALS

Create *Say Something!* journals for students to use each day that give them a space to write about what they are grateful for but also things they would like to see change in their classroom, in their life, or in the world.

- Allow students to write/draw privately in these journals but also invite students to share with you or with the class entries that they want others to know about.
- Encourage students to use this as a space to ask questions they are wondering about and to share things they are noticing about their world, or things they imagine.

## POWERFUL QUOTES

Support students by gathering or researching quotes from a variety of people who are known for saying something to change the world, such as Gandhi: "Whatever you do may seem insignificant, but it is most important that you do it."

- Have students choose the quote that speaks to them the most that they can hang up by their name or photo.
- Encourage students to use their voices to explain why that quote was important to them. Return to these quotes throughout the year to help students think about different ways to lead a happy life. Look for quotes from people that represent our diverse society.
- Use these quotes as a springboard for students to create their own quotes for others to learn from using the *Say Something!* speech bubbles worksheet.

## RESEARCHING KIDS WHO CHANGED THE WORLD

Draw students' attention to the book dedication to Emma Gonzalez, a youth activist using her voice to raise awareness to an issue she cares about.

- Research as a class the ways kids have historically used their voices to create change by learning about Kid Blink and the newsies movement, Clara Lemlich and the shirtwaist makers' strike, Sylvia Mendez and Claudette Colvin and the fight for school desegregation, and marchers like Audrey Faye Hendricks, as well as countless others.
- Have students work in small groups to learn about a kid who said something to change the world.
- Have groups present what they found by "saying something" in any way they choose to the class.

## SAY SOMETHING! CLASS REMINDERS

Together as a class, create a list of reminders that can help everyone say something, such as:

- Look and listen to the person speaking
- Wait for the count of ten before jumping in
- Pick up on what others say
- Notice classmates trying to speak
- Tell people when you are changing your mind

Invite students to write, draw, and sign the reminders as a community-building exercise. Hang the list somewhere visible for all students and visitors to see.

# Activities for *The Word Collector*

## COLLECT ANYTHING!

In *The Word Collector*, Jerome collects all kinds of words. Have students consider whether being a “collector” is part of their identity and in what ways.

- Do they collect some of the things at the beginning of the book like bugs, coins, stamps, rocks, art, baseball cards, or comic books? Do they collect other things? Brainstorm as a class things you can collect that money can't buy, like words, hugs, memories, and bits of nature.
- Create a class list of these types of collections and remind students throughout the year of ways we can all be collectors just by paying attention to the world around us.



## WORD COLLECTING ADVENTURE

Jerome is attuned to words in the world by looking and listening for words that catch his attention.

- Invite students to jot down words they often see or hear. Have them share their favorite words on sentence strips to post around the room on bulletin boards or to hang words along a clothesline across the classroom.
- Encourage students to keep collecting by listening for words that speak to them during read alouds and by noticing words in books they read and out in the world.
- Build in weekly time for students to share new words they want to add to the class collection.

## WORDS AS GIFTS TO THE WORLD

Brainstorm as a class ways you can create gifts to the world simply by sharing words in new ways. Emphasize the ways that Jerome notices how the simplest words are often the most powerful: *I understand. I'm sorry. Thank you. You matter.*

- As a class, create a Wondrous Words bulletin board in the hallway for others to see and add on to.
- Create a path of words for others to find using chalk on a sidewalk or playground.
- Have students think of a special word that describes someone else in the class for a word exchange event at the end of each week or month.
- Start a school-wide campaign for kindness to spread empathy by having students post positive, gratitude-filled words. Let students know that their words can be gifts to the world to make others happy.

## POWERFUL WORDS, POWERFUL KID

Jerome stands with his arms in the air with a swirl of words around him on the book jacket. This is called a power pose and has been shown to make people feel more confident and powerful when they stand in this way.

- Do an online search with students for images of other power poses, such as runners crossing a finish line, superheroes with their hands at their hips, or people with one arm raised in victory.
- Invite students to try out different power poses that make them feel powerful. Once they choose one, take a photo of each student in a power pose standing against a background of words they select or holding up one of their favorite words.
- Throughout the year, when students need a confidence boost, invite them to stand in their power pose just like Jerome to re-energize themselves and to grow their courage.

# Activities for Happy Dreamer

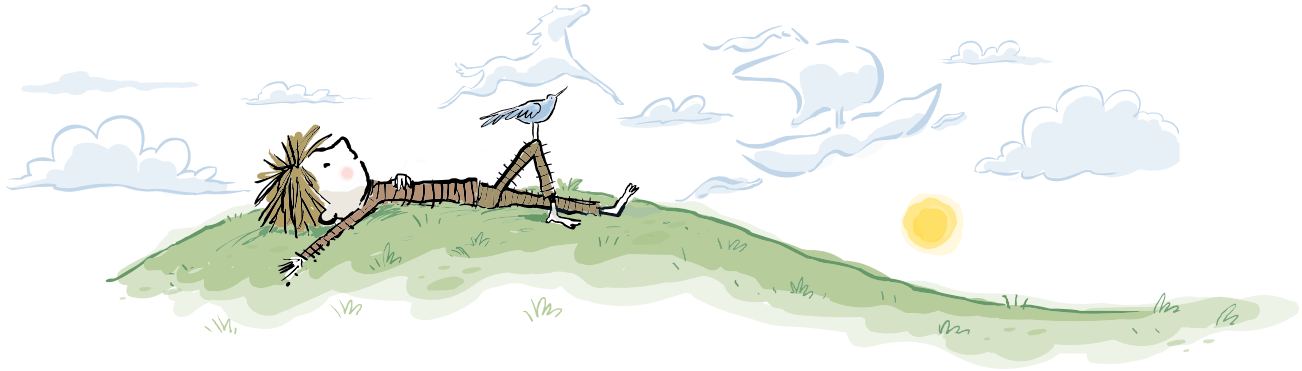
## BEST PART OF ME

In *Happy Dreamer*, Peter Reynolds is celebrating a special part of him—his dreamer self. After reading aloud the book, revisit the page that begins “I’m really good at being me.”

- Invite students to think about what they think is the best part of them. Create a class chart that everyone contributes to by sharing their *Best Part of Me* statements.

The best part of me is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

- Have students notice all of the ways we can love ourselves by reflecting on the best parts of ourselves. Next, have students illustrate and write their statements to hang in the class. You can also have students take selfies using a school camera to accompany their writing and drawing.
- Extend this activity by having students also write *Best Part of You* statements as a gift for someone else in class.



## MANY WAYS WE CAN DREAM

After reading *Happy Dreamer*, ask each student which dreamer they identify with at that moment (you can reference the gatefold in the book). Explain that there is no right or wrong answer, just a feeling about right now.

- Write out the different types of dreamers on the board or on index cards taped to the wall. You can even brainstorm more types of dreamers with students! Have each student write down their name on a sticky note and cluster them by the dreamer that reminds them of themselves that day.
- Ask the students questions that require them to look at their answers as data. For example, “How many students chose each type of dreamer?” Ask them to count the number of students who identified as two different dreamer types and to use those two numbers to write an addition problem. As a group, compare and contrast the kinds of dreamers. (e.g., How might a “daydreamer” and a “peaceful dreamer” be the same? How would they be different?)
- Repeat this activity the following day. Ask the students, “Did you feel the same way? Why? Did you choose a different dreamer? Why? Have the results changed? How?” Encourage them to write further math problems (addition or subtraction) to show the change in results.

## WRITE ABOUT YOUR DREAMS

Collaborate with your students to create a *Happy Dreamer* classroom corner. Brainstorm a list of reasons to have such a space and items that would be appropriate to have there. Supplies that you can suggest or offer as a teacher might be the *Happy Dreamer* book, pillows, clipboards, and writing and drawing supplies. Additional classroom corner items might be:

- A *Happy Dreamer* journal for each dreamer in the class. For their first entry, have each student write and draw about a hope they have for themselves and a dream for the world.
- Writing prompts inspired by *Happy Dreamer* (e.g., “A colorful dreamer might draw . . .” “A quiet dreamer might hear . . .” “What do you think ‘creative chaos’ looks like?” “This is a list of my treasures . . .”)
- Speech bubbles and quote bubbles printed out on paper for the students to write and share some of their thoughts about happiness and dreaming.

## FORTUNE-TELLER

Make copies of this fortune-teller and provide one copy to each student. Students can work in pairs to fold the fortune-teller. This activity integrates math, reading, and a social component as students work in pairs to reveal each other’s fortunes.

# Activities for Be You!

## WHO ARE YOU BECOMING?

Have students keep a journal over several months or over the school year. Introduce the journal as a place for them to store pieces of themselves as they grow and learn about who they are. Students can use collage, drawing, or writing to reflect and fill the pages. Tell them that people of all ages are still learning about themselves, as long as they are paying attention. Provide time each week for them to reflect on what they have learned about themselves.

- What do they like to do when they are alone? What do they think about? Do they enjoy being alone with their thoughts?
- What makes them feel energetic? What makes them feel tired?
- How would they describe themselves?

## NAME POEM

Invite students to create an acrostic name poem in their journal or on a separate piece of paper. After they write the letters of their name vertically down the page, they can fill in adjectives or nouns that describe them, starting with each of the letters in their name. If using the letters of their name as the first letter of each descriptive word is too restrictive, they can use the letters of their name in any position of a word.

## YOUR NAME AND YOU

Talk about names as a part of what defines a person as an individual and as part of a group. Names have cultural meanings and individual and family meanings.

- Have children find out the story of how they got their names. Sit in a circle and have each child share what they found out about their name's story. If children can't find out how they got their names, help them research the meaning of their names instead.

- Discuss why first names are so important in American culture. How would students think differently about themselves if they were called by their family name, or by the name of the town they are from? Would they feel less like themselves? Or more like themselves? Would they feel more responsible to represent their group?



## WHAT MAKES YOU YOU?

People are like fingerprints: unique and special. What makes you unique and different from other people? Provide each student a copy of the final endpaper or of the first spread in the book.

- Have students read out words they aren't familiar with, and define them together.
- Have each student take two markers or pencils of different colors. Ask them to use one color to circle adjectives they think describe them already, and the other color to circle adjectives that describe how they would like to be some day. If they don't see a word they would like to use, they can add it.
- When they are finished circling their words, have a group discussion. Some students can share words they are striving for, and other students can help brainstorm how to practice being that way.

## YOU IN THE WORLD

Discuss the relationship between the self and the world. Use these questions as prompts and encourage students to share their experiences:

- Was there a time when you were so engaged in doing something that you lost awareness of your surroundings? This is a state that scientists call "flow," and it is an important state for creativity and improving skills. What were you doing? How did it feel?
- Reflect on a time when you needed help and you received it. How did it feel to need help? How did it feel to get help? Did getting help from that person change your relationship to them? Did you learn something about the other person, or about yourself?
- Think about something new you learned about the world—how something worked, a natural phenomenon, etc. Did that change the way you look at the world around you? Did that make you view yourself or your relationship with the world differently?
- Reflect on a time when you didn't understand something, and you took the time to figure it out. How did that feel?

Have students choose one of these situations and create artwork that expresses the feelings they had. They can add their art to their Becoming journal, or they can put it up in the classroom or at home.

# Activities for Our Table

## YOUR TABLE

Have students think about the various tables they sit around regularly with other people. Provide craft materials for the following activities.

- Create place settings. For each person who sits at the table with you, create a placemat or name card that reflects what you appreciate about them, and why you are glad they are at your table.
- Create a centerpiece that reflects your group values. Think about how you want to treat each other. What kind of space do you want your table to be? Your centerpiece can use paper flowers, painted stones, three-dimensional art, or other components.
- Create conversation cards. Have the class brainstorm questions people can ask each other or topics people can discuss to get to know each other better. Many of these should be questions that can be asked daily, such as “What was the best thing that happened to you today/this week?” or “What did you worry about today?” Some can be more probing questions such as, “Share something you have done that you are proud of and why.” Provide index cards for students to decorate and put some questions on. If writing is a challenge, type and print out the class’s brainstormed questions for them to glue onto the cards. Invite students to bring the conversation cards to their tables at home, at school, or elsewhere. Follow up after a week and invite students to share an experience they had using the conversation cards.

## PAY ATTENTION TO OTHERS

Play games to practice active listening.

- Have students sit in a circle. Tell them they will play a memory game to practice active listening. One student says something they like. The student to their right repeats what the first person likes and adds what they like. Each person then adds their own favorite thing to the chain. It can be a favorite food, a sport, a hobby. See if you can go all the way around the circle. If someone forgets what another person said, they can ask someone else for hints or help.

## SCREEN-FREE CHALLENGE

- As a class, hold a week-long or month-long screen-free challenge. Decide what a reasonable challenge could be: no screens? Maximum of one hour per day? Brainstorm activities one can do without screens, such as drawing, reading, writing, or playing a card game or board game with others. At the end of the week (or at the end of each week during a month-long challenge), discuss how the challenge went. Do students think they can get families involved? The entire grade or school? Reflect on what the challenge participants did during their screen-free time. Would they like to continue making time to do those other activities once the challenge is over? Did they notice any changes, such as their perception of time or the quality of their relationships, during the challenge?

## WORKING TOGETHER

- Have students sit in small groups and share their strengths or passions. Once they have an idea of what each of them is good at or passionate about, have them brainstorm things they can build, make, or do that will use each of their strengths. Have them create a plan for their creation or activity. What materials will they need? What steps will they need to take? How much time should they allow for each step? Is the work (or fun) distributed evenly among the group? Prepare for and then host an activity day where they can put their plans into motion. Afterward, have them reflect on how the experience compared to the plan.
- Have students reflect on when it is useful to do things in groups and when it is not. What can you achieve working together that you cannot achieve on your own?
- Provide a prompt or story starter for students to use to write a poem or short story on their own. Next, use the same prompt to write a short story together, taking turns adding on. Try the activity a second time. Have the students compare the experience of working alone versus working together.



# Activities for Our Table (continued)

## OTHER SPACES

Have students think about group activities that make them feel close to others. These could be favorite activities to do with family, with friends, at school, or in other group settings.

- Have students draw a picture of themselves doing the activity with the group. They could also write a poem, story or word cloud describing the experience.
- Students should think about and try to convey how it feels to do the activity with the group, what they notice and learn when they do it, and why they enjoy it. Students may share their art and writing with the class.

Spaces can be shared with different groups. Ask students to reflect on spaces and groups:

- What are some groups other than family where you feel a sense of closeness and belonging? What happens in your time with that group that makes you feel a part of something greater than yourself? How do you feel you fit into that group?
- Our classroom is a space we share with each other. As a group, brainstorm some practices the classroom could use to ensure it is a space where people feel seen and heard. Maybe we already have some practices like these. What are they? Do they help? How could they be improved?
- As a group, create a vision board with reminders of existing and new practices to make the classroom a nurturing space where people connect.

When people want to get to know each other better, they often meet to share a meal or a drink. Why are mealtimes good for talking and spending time together?

- Have students think of other spaces and times they share with people.
- Have students think of spaces and times when they are with other people but not connecting.
- Is there a space or time they share with others that could be used to connect, such as a car, bus, or train ride?
- Have students create a charm to hang up or display in that space as a reminder to pay attention to each other when you are there. The charm can use symbols to represent the importance of that time together and how they want to feel, like a clock, a peace sign, hearts or flowers, or something else. They can explain the charm to the rest of the group.
- Discuss why it is also important to have alone time and to give others alone time.



# Celebrating Student Voices and Choices

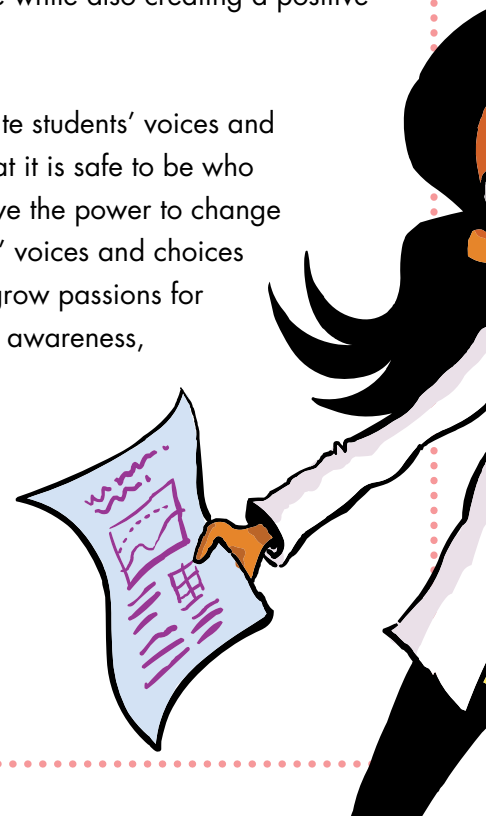
In classrooms and out in the world, literacy is a tool that students can use to know themselves better and to understand the world. All of the skills and strategies students are learning in school can help them find their voice. Of all the meaningful experiences teachers provide students as readers, writers, and communicators, those related to student empowerment may be the most important today.

When students feel confident in their ideas and choose to share them, they are building a strong foundation for a lifetime of confidence and courage. Teachers can celebrate students' voices and all the ways they are expressed by first listening with intention and by reading aloud books with characters that serve as models. In *Say Something!*, Peter Reynolds shows readers the myriad ways that people can express themselves. Teachers can use *Say Something!* as a teaching tool to promote multiple ways of sharing something with the world through words, actions, and heart. Teachers can also use this book to take notice of the ways children speak, write, create, and express their unique style, and even the ways children are present for others.

Read together, Peter Reynolds's books can show children that they can change the world and share their voice simply by being themselves. His books give children models for how to be a part of a new social imagination whether they see themselves as happy dreamers, word collectors, or world changers. Reynolds's books invite children to ask big, important questions: What do I want the world to be? How can I make the world a better place? What problems do I see, and how can I help solve them? Engaging students in these big questions helps them find their voice while also creating a positive classroom community.

When classrooms celebrate students' voices and choices, children learn that it is safe to be who they are and that they have the power to change the world. When students' voices and choices are celebrated, children grow passions for learning more, for raising awareness, and for bringing about change.

To celebrate students' voices and choices, notice opportunities for children to take the lead.



# Celebrating Student Voices and Choices

Encourage students to share their voices, hopes, and dreams along with their concerns.

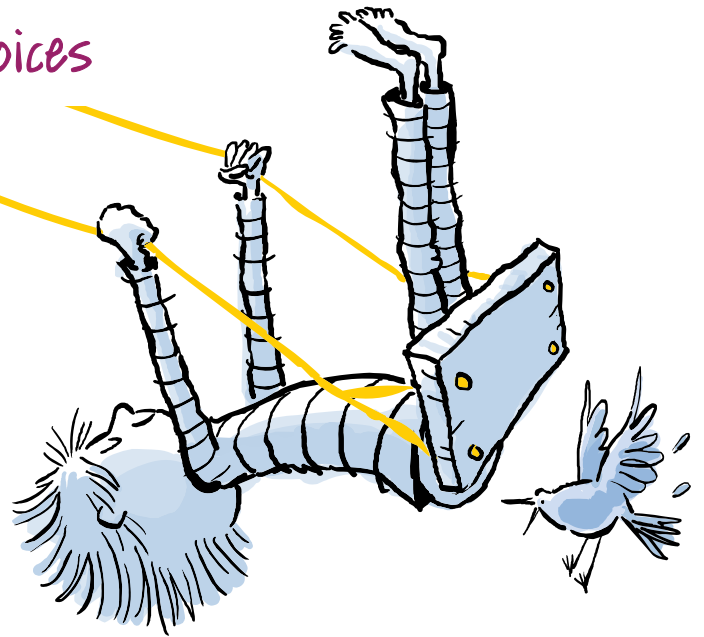
Give students choices for how they can share their voices and ideas through writing, drawing, and speaking. Include students in decisions about the classroom and ask for their help to decorate it. Commit to daily community meeting time where students greet one another, share news from their lives, and are encouraged to ask questions. Model patient, thoughtful dialogue that encourages the kinds of critical thinking that comes from deep listening and connection.

The literacies of social action are supported by developing academic skills such as reading from a variety of sources, report writing, writing letters of thanks or inquiry, crafting news articles, giving speeches, making posters, listening with care, and asking good questions. Through the acquisition of these skills, children will gain the tools to fully engage with the world around them and to consider personal, global, and historic social issues.

If literacy is about possibility, students' voices are the key to a better, more hopeful world tomorrow. Consider doing a school-wide book study of Peter Reynolds's books or using one of his books for a school-wide read aloud. Encourage students to share their voices by launching a celebratory school-wide day

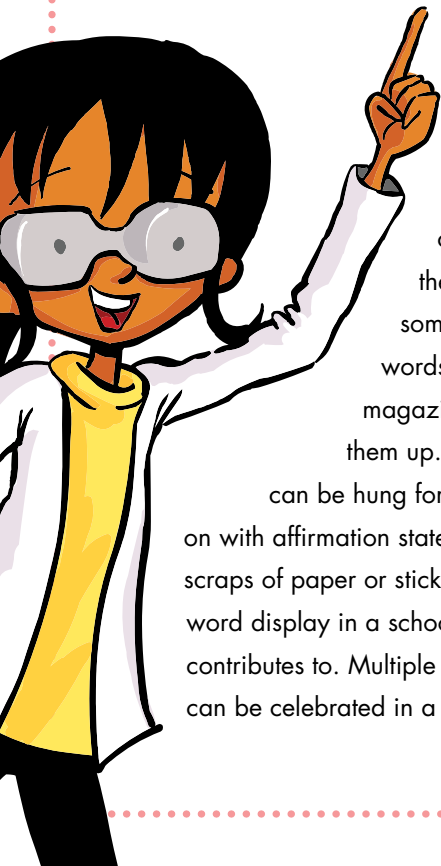
such as a Wondrous Words Day inspired by Jerome from *The Word Collector* or a *Say Something!* Day. On this day, students, teachers, and school community members can share their favorite word or words with someone else. Students can find words they love in a newspaper or magazine, cut them out, and hang them up. Student writing and artwork

can be hung for others to see and to comment on with affirmation statements. Students can use scraps of paper or sticky notes to create a dynamic word display in a school hallway that every student contributes to. Multiple languages spoken in the school can be celebrated in a school-wide assembly along



with simple words that have a big impact like "thank you" or "I love you." Teachers and students can acknowledge all the ways students say something in the community just by being themselves.

Honoring and celebrating students' voices and choices is essential to nurturing and cultivating confident, courageous, compassionate students. Peter Reynolds's books can help you begin.



# About the Books



**Happy Dreamer**  
HC: 9780545865012 • \$17.99  
Also available as an ebook  
Ages 4 to 8, Grades P to 3

## Praise for Happy Dreamer

"The message of acceptance and patience comes through clearly, and the exhortation to 'carve your own path' and 'show the world who you are' will be appreciated by anyone who has ever felt misunderstood." —*Booklist*

"A sweet gift to praise spirited individuality, this choice encourages readers to dream big. Let those sparkles fly!" —*Kirkus Reviews*



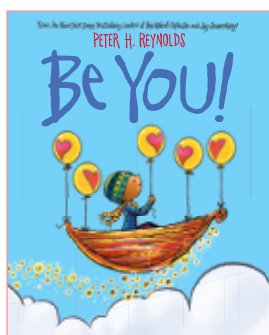
**The Word Collector**  
HC: 9780545865029 • \$17.99  
Also available as an ebook and audiobook  
Ages 4 to 8, Grades P to 3

**El Coleccionista de Palabras**  
(The Word Collector)  
PB: 9781338329704 • \$6.99  
Also available as an ebook

## Praise for Word Collector

"Capture[s] the beauty of words and the wonder of sharing them with others . . . enchanting." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Packs a powerful punch . . . capture[s] both the joy of learning and the power of kindness." —*School Library Journal*



**Be You!**  
HC: 9781338572315 • \$17.99  
Also available as an ebook and audiobook  
Ages 4 to 8, Grades P to 3

## Praise for Be You!

"A gorgeous guidebook for those seeking encouragement while encountering life's challenges . . . Both beautiful and inspiring as graduation gift or guide to life." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Any reader feeling the pressure to conform to expectations may find great comfort in knowing this book is on a nearby shelf, at the ready to offer up good counsel." —*Publishers Weekly*



**Little Happy Dreamer**  
HC: 9781338625806 • \$8.99  
Also available as an ebook  
Ages 0 to 3, Grades P and Under

**El pequeño soñador feliz**  
(Little Happy Dreamer)  
BD: 9781338715460 • \$8.99  
Also available as an ebook

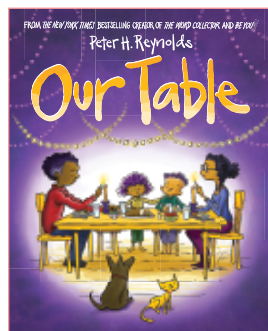


**Say Something**  
HC: 9780545865036 • \$17.99  
Also available as an ebook and audiobook  
Ages 4 to 8, Grades P to 3

**¡Di algo!** (Say Something!)  
PB: 978133856596 • \$7.99  
Also available as an ebook and audiobook

## Praise for Say Something!

"This book's encouragement to kids to find their voices can also be used to start a conversation about how they can make a difference in their world." —*Kirkus Reviews*



**Our Table**  
HC: 9781338572322 • \$17.99  
Also available as an ebook and audiobook  
Ages 4 to 8, Grades P to 3

## Praise for Our Table

★ "In Reynolds' established tradition, this story is simple and full of heart, celebrating the wonder and possibility of being human and being in relationship . . . Sweet and timely for today's families." —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ "Reynolds tells the story simply and illustrates it expressively . . . A reminder of what really matters." —*Booklist*, starred review

This discussion guide was written by Autumn Allen with contributions from earlier editions by Kristin Rydholm and Katie Egan Cunningham. Autumn Allen is an educator, a writer, an editor, a book reviewer, and a children's literature specialist. Visit her online at [autumnallenbooks.com](http://autumnallenbooks.com).