



Featured Teacher: Brandie McNabb

"The quietest kid in the class can have the best writing. This project allows students to express themselves in ways you've never seen."

What's My Story?

"I've been teaching for 16 years at Rollins Place Elementary in Louisiana and currently teach second-grade ELA."

Background and Setting

"I publish twice a year with Studenttreasures – classbooks and individual student books. I've been publishing for 7 years with Studenttreasures."

"Previously, one of our newer teachers presented the project and headed it up for the second-grade classes. The following year, I took it over and have been doing it ever since."

The Cast of Characters

Approximately 400 second graders participate in the project each year.



Students' excitement and pride in publishing motivates and inspires long-time educator

Fun with Fact or Fiction

"Our most popular classroom topic is "The Best Part of Me," which makes picking a topic easier but also still allows the students to pick the part of them they want to share, along with their pose for the picture.

"For us, writing is the most important subject covered as part of the classbook project, along with language arts. For the individual books, we include poetry anthologies. Some teachers have taken the nonfiction books students have written and created informational class books, which would then incorporate science.

"Depending on your topic, you could easily build it into the curriculum. Many of the standards require students to produce a final written product, and using Studenttreasures could assist with that."

Tips for Success

"Start early, with sending home the permission slips and the initial project work. It's always last minute getting the permission slips back."

Building up the Suspense and Making it Extra Special

McNabb keeps all of the students' past published books on a shelf behind her desk. During the back-to-school process, as students visit, she sets out the books and new students always inquire about them, asking if they will get to publish one.

As they approach the project, she suggests building up the fact they will be published authors. She shows them actual author signatures and has them practice their signatures, which incorporates writing lessons.

The Happy Ending

At McNabb's school, the book signing event is an extra special experience. The kids take it very seriously, sit up straight, hold themselves professionally and visit with all the parents. The interaction between the parents and students is especially meaningful.

"Last year, out of 48 parents between my two classes, we had around 28 attend. All of them were very encouraging with the book and student work. I can't wait to schedule this year's event when the book arrives!"

Her Motivation Year after Year

What motivates McNabb to continue the project every year?

"The final product – a published book! We can write to publish and share in class, but it's not the same as seeing your work in a book that has been bound with a pretty cover."

And ...

"Parents LOVE it! Before the author event, I always talk to the kids about how authors engage their

audience in conversations while they sign the book. Last year, one of my kiddos asked a parent what she thought was the best part of her. The parent had tears in her eyes!"

In addition to the author's signing event, McNabb's school district administration visits, and the school shares it on Facebook.

A Never Ending Story – Inspiring a Love of Writing, Books, Exploration

For McNabb, encouraging a love of books, reading, and writing provides a lasting and meaningful gift she witnesses year after year – when a student who hates reading at the beginning of the year, grows to love it.

"A book is a way for some of my students to travel and learn about far off places. They might never have the opportunity to venture out of their city, but with a book, the world is in their hands."



READ MORE

about McNabb, her fellow teachers, and their students who were featured in Student-authors celebrated during assembly at Rollins Place Elementary.



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