



Featured Teacher: Erin Jacobson

“Everyone learns in a different way. This project allows students to choose how to express themselves creatively through their writing, artwork, and/or the use of technology.”

What’s My Story?

Jacobson taught first grade for seven years and then third grade for five years. Now, she serves as a TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment), working with K-12 curriculum and mentoring new teachers.

Background and Setting

“I’m always looking for new ways to enhance learning. I piloted a Studenttreasures project with my first graders. After that, various grade level teachers came on board to try it too. Eventually, I became the school’s coordinator working with between 5-8 teachers publishing each year.”

Overall, she’s been assisting with Studenttreasures projects for 10 years and likes that the project supports meeting state and common core standards for learning, with the ability to incorporate various lessons using technology.



Book project supports classroom lessons, promotes freedom for individual expression year after year.

A Tale of Teamwork

Jacobson believes that the publishing project, “sends a powerful message for teamwork” whether your class is creating a classroom book or an individual book.

She shares, “The students see how working together to create something greater is worth doing and that “my part matters.”

The Future is Now

Jacobson’s personal favorite is Scripsi, the online publishing option because you can enhance your everyday lessons with 21st century learning. It encourages students to learn how to present information or ideas differently and assists in mastering computer skills.

Learning Outside the Box

What makes the book publishing process unique in Jacobson’s eyes?

“The students are able to take ownership and pride in their work, and the project gives them the freedom to be expressive in multiple ways.”

“So much of learning is dictated for various reasons. We should always be mindful that when we do that, for whatever reasons, we also place a cap on students’ unknown potential. Therefore, it’s good to have a nice balance of options for students. Growth happens when educators strive to provide students with creative and differentiated opportunities for individual learning. This project gives students the power and control over their own learning and allows them to think outside the box.”

There is an added benefit when incorporating lessons. Jacobson suggests using a book project to provide repetition in standard

lessons and reapplying the knowledge in a new way through the publishing process – whether it be specific lesson topics, such as similes, metaphors, or idioms, or broader, such as researching or using technology to meet the ISTE standards (National Educational Technology Standards).

Inspiring Exploration and Sparking Connections

Year after year, Jacobson has witnessed how student personalities come out in the students' writing and artwork.

“Often, students who are on the quieter side don't express themselves or share verbally, but this project is an open gateway to learning more about each student's personality, talents, strengths and interests. The books also spark conversations amongst the students that wouldn't otherwise happen.”

Building up the Suspense

The book reveal is always extra special. Jacobson has been known to leave the box of books sitting out to build anticipation and believes the most heartwarming experience is that initial moment when you hand students something they created.

Tips for Success and Bonus Lessons

Because of the guaranteed excitement the initial book reveal causes, Jacobson says, “Allow for at least an hour for students to look at each other's books. Let them have time to dote on the work they have done and how they have contributed to something fantastic.”

Also...

During this time, Jacobson suggests incorporating other lessons. For example, when students take turns reading each other's books, students can be encouraged to be respectful, make positive comments, and learn how to give praise and be happy for others.

A Story They Never Forget

With years of experience helping children become authors, Jacobson has seen the lasting memories made.

“When that book comes in the mail, the students are ecstatic. The conversation and praise between the kids is phenomenal. They are SO proud. The students truly value and cherish the books they authored for years.”

