



Featured Teacher: Quanisha Ford

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Cast of Characters

Third grade students in Huntsville, AL.

Background and Setting

Ford has been in education for eight years and has taught third grade for four. Her class is the first in her school to become published authors.

Memorable Learning

"This process brought our classroom community even closer together."



"My students improved their writing grades because of this project - I was astounded!"

Ms. Ford's Class Goes to Hollywood

Ms. Ford's class is unlike any other. In her classroom, students are the stars. Hollywood-themed décor adorns her classroom and Ford rolls out the red carpet (literally!) for her students.

"I wanted kids to feel like celebrities and be delighted to enter the classroom, so I wanted to decorate my classroom in this way," says Ford. "Most importantly, I wanted to work in a setting that made me pleased to be there. We receive a lot of inquiries about our Hollywood classroom and the exciting things we do, so we wanted to put together a book that informs students and teachers about what we do."

Ford's class published a Studenttreasures classbook detailing the ins and outs of her star-studded classroom and the activities that take place throughout the day.

Fittingly, the title of their book is *Ms. Ford's Class Goes to Hollywood*. Aside from detailing their day, their book supports teachers by showcasing fun and exciting ways to bring engagement into the classroom.

Lights, Camera...Create!

"The process was enjoyable for my students. They persevered and put in a lot of effort. We first came up with a few ideas for the title, after which I chose the top three, and we cast our votes. We then determined a target date for the release of our book. The kit delivery process was excellent. I made a big deal out of the fact that everything was arranged when the package arrived. It was finally time to get started! My students spent time writing each day, noting topic ideas on paper.



I gave them a stopwatch and instructed them to jot down their thoughts. Every week, we set a target for what we intended to accomplish. Ultimately, we outlined our topic and decided to focus on our routines, affirmations, classroom makeovers and life with Ms. Ford outside of school."

Building Confidence and a Love of Writing

"My students who lacked confidence in their writing abilities started to love writing, which helped them develop their ELA skills as well as their writing confidence. Some of them were thrilled to show me their preliminary drafts, which they had brought home to work on. Some children started writing ten sentences instead of just three - I was astounded. I no longer had to bribe kids to write like I once did. They were ecstatic to get started, which delighted me immensely. My students improved their writing grades because of this project, and they began formulating ideas for their upcoming books."

An Unforgettable Experience

"The students were overjoyed to see their stories published in a book. I had a book cover reveal to get them excited about the book even more.

Furthermore, they were astounded by the book's quality when they first viewed it. With parents, friends and employees present, WAAY-TV arrived to film our publishing party. Every student in the classroom obtained a copy of the book thanks to parents, MLK staff and local donors."

Tips for Success

"I recommend teachers think about using Studenttreasures to create a classbook, to enjoy the process, and give your students grace. Make thoughtful plans and choose an appropriate moment to release the book. I would also include a countdown to the publishing date to make the students excited to finish the assignment. I would then make a schedule to stay on target after that. Teachers could assign tasks weekly or monthly, for instance, focusing on brainstorming titles in Week 1, voting on titles in Week 2, etc., or writing in February and illustrations in March. To avoid feeling overwhelmed, students require tasks to be broken down."

