



## Featured Teacher: Ashlei Humpert

*"Hands down, the project I look forward to most with my students."*

### Cast of Characters

Preschool to fifth-graders in Wichita Falls, TX.

### Background and Setting

Humpert is a dyslexia teacher at Jefferson Elementary. She has been teaching for over 14 years and has published four classbooks.

### Memorable Learning

*"The whole process from beginning to end is such a rich learning experience and accomplishment."*



**"The layout of the project helped the students and me stay organized and grew our anticipation of seeing it come to life."**

## Imagination in Motion

At the heart of Humpert's classroom is a growing tradition of transforming young writers into published authors. Over the years, Humpert has led her students in producing original classbooks, each one a reflection of their creativity, collaboration and voice.

In her previous role as the resource teacher, her students published the classbooks, *One Thing I Love*, *If I Were an Animal*, *I Might be a...* and *Let Your Kindness Shine*.

"This year, as the dyslexia teacher, we published, *Minds of Make Believe*. Their imaginations ran wild with stories of imaginary friends, creepy encounters and other spooky yet silly moments," Humpert said.

To decide a topic for her class to write about, Humpert lets all voices be heard. The process begins with a classroom-wide brainstorming session, where students pitch ideas and engage in discussion before voting on the final theme.

"Each year we have published, the kids have truly enjoyed the entirety of the project. The students begin by generating ideas and voting to make the final decision on the topic

of our book. They're encouraged to discuss, defend and even debate their choices. It's fun to watch them collaborate on their ideas," said Humpert. "This year, their 'real-world' application was to write stories of the imagination."

## Making the Switch

This year, Humpert decided to explore Studenttreasures' digital publishing option, a new experience for her and her students.

"This was our first year to try the online publishing option, and the transition from the paper copy to online was smooth and worked very well for our class," she explained.

Humpert shared how this format opened up more creative possibilities and collaboration opportunities in her classroom.

"One of our students was able to teach us about a drawing website he had used for various projects at a school before joining us, and we were able to incorporate this into our illustrations. Using the online format, we were also able to scan in drawings for the students who wanted and chose to draw theirs by hand. The layout of the project helped the students and me stay organized and grew our anticipation of seeing it come to life."



## A Loving Community

For these students, the publishing process is more than a class activity; it is a cherished memory fueled by community, learning and hardwork.

"The whole process from beginning to end is such a rich learning experience and accomplishment," said Humpert. "The students have to push themselves to meet each deadline toward finalization. Allowing them the independence to write and illustrate, stepping in only when needed, really pays off when they finally see their work in print."

The school librarian curates a special display featuring current and past student publications, offering visibility and pride for the young authors.

"Our librarian is wonderful in showcasing our books on special shelves for the whole school to see and enjoy," Humpert said.

"Students who have been a part of the publishing process then get to share their experiences with their school community."

The students' exciting first look at their published book is nothing short of magical.

"There were lots of squeals and jumping, oh, and also lots of hugs," Humpert added. "Did I mention squeals?"

The school community is a big part of making this a special, long-lasting memory for these students.

"We are extremely lucky to have the warm, loving culture we do on our campus," she said. "Our staff embraces every opportunity to support and congratulate our young authors and illustrators."



## Future World-Changers

In her classroom, Humpert reflects on the unique journey of growth and learning that unfolds with her students.

"Within specifically designed instructional classrooms, the focus is on the intervention of certain and unique skills," she explained. "For a classroom like ours, those skills involve and surround print. So, I must begin by saying how proud I always am of each and every single student."

Despite the hurdles, Humpert says her students' final products often reveal more than words can express.

"As they move forward and take it in stride, their collections of work show what their struggles do not. I hope they are able to see themselves and feel seen as the creative, funny, imaginative, hard-working, future world-changers they are."

## Advice to Teachers

Humpert gives guidance to teachers wanting to create a classbook. "Do it! I cannot recommend or speak highly enough about Studenttreasures. They take care of everything aside from writing and illustrating your book. Hands down, the project I look forward to most with my students. The students love it and are rewarded far beyond the classroom by this gift."



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