



Featured Teacher: Sarah Poquette

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Cast of Characters

First-grade students in Massachusetts

Background and Setting

Poquette has been a teacher for seven years.

Memorable Learning

"The idea of creating their own book collectively and becoming published authors gave some of my struggling writers the confidence that they needed to progress in their skills, and it challenged my higher students to not rush through their work and focus on adding details."



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A Roar-some Adventure in Publishing

During the 2025-2026 school year, Poquette decided to bring in a new class activity to enhance her students' informative writing skills, publishing a classbook. What started as an animal-themed classbook grew into a memorable experience for her first graders—one that blended research skills, creativity and a big dose of confidence.

"Students got to select their own animal, which increased their ownership and excitement throughout the process," Poquette said.

Ownership & Creativity

Publishing classbook wasn't just about writing facts; it was an invitation for her students to flex their creative muscles and take pride in their work. Poquette recalls the joy her class experienced in making the classbook visually special.

"My students enjoyed it, as they had a lot of autonomy in the process. They loved getting to choose their own animal, as well as illustrating their own pictures," she said. "They also loved this [class activity] as it was an unconventional method of writing that we weren't used to. They got to trace their words in Sharpie [and] use special markers for their drawings—both of these heightened the excitement around the project!"

Boosting Confidence, Inspiring Persistence

Poquette witnessed a transformation in her classroom during the publishing process. For some students, seeing their work come together in a book sparked a newfound confidence; for others, it was a reminder to slow down and do their best.

"The idea of creating their own book collectively and becoming published authors gave some of my struggling writers the confidence that they needed to progress in their skills, and it challenged my higher students to not rush through their work and focus on adding details," said Poquette. "It was a lot of work, but a great experience overall for all of my learners!"

One student stood out to Poquette while creating their classbook.

"He was not very fond of writing, but was so confident that he was asking to write a second page in the book! Due to time constraints, it wasn't possible, but his ambition and desire to go above and beyond to contribute to the classbook was great to see as his teacher," said Poquette.



Anticipation Building for the Big Reveal

With their classbook on the way, Poquette and her students are planning a celebration to remember.

"I can imagine my students will be so excited and proud," said Poquette. "My hope is to invite some other classes/teachers to come to our classroom and listen to them read our book."

Advice to Teachers

Reflecting on her first time publishing, Poquette recommends getting a head start to make the last month of school smoother.

"I would recommend starting earlier in the [school] year so you don't feel rushed to get it done," she said. "I started the class activity in April, and I think ideally I would have liked to start a bit earlier, as the end of the school year can get hectic!"

Poquette also shared that next year, she wants to create a classbook focused on her students.

"Not only is it a showcase of their work, but a more sentimental keepsake for them to keep, as well as myself," Poquette said.



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