

# Kristin Mathieu

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I have been teaching high school English for 19 years, 14 of them for Milwaukee Public Schools. Milwaukee is one of the most segregated cities in the entire country, which translates to highly segregated and underfunded public schools that serve mostly BIPOC students. During my 2nd year of teaching, I began a Master's program with a focus on reading. While conducting research I came across Marilyn Reynold's text *I Won't Read and You Can't Make Me: Reaching Reluctant Teenage Readers*. Reynolds completely changed the way I taught. I learned that ALL students need/want to read, but require a lot of reading choices. Reynolds gave me the blueprint to help the most reluctant readers find books they loved and create lifelong readers. In order to implement the strategies, I needed a classroom library. At the time I was a member of an Air National Guard unit with more than 900 members and this gave me one of the most brilliant ideas of my teaching career! I requested permission from my commander

to send an email a request for books to over 900 unit members! As a result, I was able to create my first classroom library! In the years since, I have had more than 80 projects funded on Donors Choose with most being for classroom library books. I am extremely excited and grateful to The Book Love Foundation for this opportunity to update my library, so that more students can fall in love with reading and become lifelong readers and learners.

