

## Terri Burg

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*“Reading should not be presented to children as a chore, a duty. It should be offered as a gift.”—Kate DiCamillo*

I grew up in Akron, New York, a small town just north of Buffalo. I attended Akron Central School; where I entered kindergarten at one end of the building and graduated from high school at the other. I followed my high school sweetheart (whom I later married) to Michigan State University where I earned a Bachelor of Arts in English. I earned a Master of Arts in Reading from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. Throughout my career I have had various K-12 positions in the areas of reading and language arts. My favorite was as a Reading Recovery teacher. I loved starting at the very beginning and leading my little readers into successful reading lives. I am currently teaching 7th grade language arts. It’s fun to get reacquainted with students I worked with at the

elementary school and see that they still love reading.

Receiving the Book Love Foundation Classroom Library Grant has created a whole new atmosphere in my classroom. There are always conversations about books, recommendations, and requests for new books. My students even created a Christmas tree out of our old, abandoned anthologies and placed their favorite titles along the base as the best gifts in the world. Now that my students all have books they can read and care about, teaching is much more enjoyable. Concepts that have been so tricky to teach in the past just come easier with their own mentor texts. Student engagement is up, assignment completion is up and I can’t remember the last time I heard the whispered grumble, “I hate this class.” Everyone needs their own classroom library.