



MASON NICHOLS

All through college I envisioned I would specialize in teaching elementary math. It wasn't until my first job teaching all subjects to third graders that my thoughts shifted. I learned to love to teach reading, find joy in reading for leisure, and challenge myself to read more. In my first year of teaching I was organizing books within my classroom for famous African Americans for Black History Month. Upon completing my inventory I realized a huge problem. I had so few books for this topic and realized my classroom library lacked diversity. As a teacher I want all students to see themselves in the books I have. Since that day I made it my goal to diversify my books to create an inclusive classroom library for all.

Today I enjoy curating and adding to my classroom library along with sharing my love of diverse books with colleagues and other teachers on social media. Using social media is a great tool to meet others, and build a community of teachers that enjoy creating inclusive classroom libraries.

Teaching reading has since become my favorite subject. I love helping students find joy in reading, and to show them how empowering it is to know how to read. During the start of the pandemic in lockdown I made it a goal to connect my classes with authors. With the use of social media I was able to connect with several authors who were kind enough to send videos to my students during that time. Now, I continue to reach out to authors and create virtual author visits for my students for them to make connections to authors and learn we are all readers and learners.