

“I hate reading!”

“Reading is boring and stupid.”

Those are just a couple of the guaranteed statements I know I’ll hear on the first day of school when I start talking about my love of reading. I always reply with “you just haven’t found the right book yet.”

My name is Brett Legault and I have been teaching for just over nine years, and teaching, what I would consider effectively over the past five years. That was when I was introduced to the idea of choice and voice in the classroom by a peer. Since then I have started following educational leaders such as Penny Kittle, Kelly Gallagher, Pernille Ripp, and Donalyn Miller just to name a few. I quickly realized the impact that having a wide selection of books in the classroom has on students and have worked diligently to ensure I have high interest books in multiple formats so that all students, regardless of ability, can find something they enjoy.



Currently I teach at a hockey academy school in Starbuck Manitoba Canada. Students come from multiple communities in the surrounding area and my classroom dynamics are often quite unique. A lot of these students have only been presented with books about hockey because that’s what teachers have assumed they would want but when they walk into my classroom and see the wide variety of types, genres and formats of reading available to them, they are often transformed from students who have rarely finished a book to students who are reading on the bus, car rides to games and whenever they can sneak in a page or two.

I also have an eleven year old daughter who struggled to find books that held her interest until she discovered books that featured female protagonists. Suddenly it hit me like a ton of bricks the difference it makes for readers to see themselves in the stories they are reading and since then I have endeavored to ensure that I have a diverse selection of books in my classroom library so all students can see themselves represented in the books available to them.



“Unlike many of the teachers I have had in the past Mr. Legault didn’t just pick out a book and tell me to read it. He helped me find books that were interesting to me. Mr. Legault always had a huge variety of books in his classroom with different genres or messages. Anytime there was a book that any of his students wanted to read Mr. Legault tried his best to purchase those books throughout the school year. I am so grateful that I was able to have a teacher like Mr. Legault who had a passion for reading and passed that on to his students.” - Kiera, Grade 8

There is no greater joy in teaching than realizing the difference you can make in a student's educational journey. I truly relish the opportunity to create life-long readers and the Book Love Foundation grant will ensure I can continue to have a classroom library that helps all readers flourish.