

Stefanie

MCCLEISH

A Little About Me

Subjects and Grades Taught

Sophomore World Literature
Multimedia Communications
(all grade levels)

Buffalo Grove High School

Our classroom library is an integral part of our classroom and greatly impacts my reading instruction. Set-up in the front of the room, our classroom library has become lungs of our environment. Our class routine includes a minimum of 20 minutes for independent reading each day. I have also put a new spin on First Chapter Fridays. After doing a reading meditation with students at the beginning of the school year, many students referenced their favorite reading memories from elementary school relating to Mystery Readers coming into the classroom. The connections to these memories inspired me to incorporate this practice into our high school classes. I recruited over 20 different staff members from around our school to come in on Fridays and read a passage from their favorite book. We had our principal, security personnel, Math teachers, history teachers, P.E. teachers, counselors, interns, and support staff come and share their love of reading. When readers canceled at the last minute, students even popped into the "hot-seat" and read from their current books. It has brought me SO much joy to implement this year! I am also constantly book-talking books, offering recommendations, and conferencing with students about their reading.

At the end of year I had students reflect on a number of questions, but one in particular was, "What do you love most about this class?" The overwhelming response was "independent reading time". I am so grateful to have received a Book Love Grant which will allow me to continue my mission of spreading empathy, understanding and joy through reading!



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@MissShakespeare

"I have read more books this year than I have in the past few years because she encourages us to read all the time. She gives independent reading time in class and that helped me get hooked onto books that I wouldn't have without the dedicated time. She gives us enthusiastic book recommendations and as an Indian boy myself, I felt safe in her class because I know that she values various identities and cultures and encourages my classmates to do the same."

- Jaden Matthew, student

"If I had to sum up the vibe of Mrs. McCleish's classroom, it's modern bookstore meets magical library. Books are central to her world, and not just the assigned ones. She thoughtfully advocates and matches students to books like the wand shop in Harry Potter."

- Vanessa Skiles, parent

