

Ann Gladem

Ann Gladem graduated from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education in 1992. She later earned her Master of Science Degree as a Reading Specialist in 2000. After one year of teaching in Antigo, Wisconsin Ann joined our staff at the Middle School in August of 1994.

Per her teaching philosophy, Ann says it can be summed up simply as student centered. "The English Language Arts content that I teach is of course paramount, but the success that I have had in my classroom is driven by the positive relationships I establish with my eighth-grade students. The old quote, "They don't care what you know until they know how much you care," is still relevant in today's classroom."

Ann makes a conscious effort to get to know her students. She has them complete an interest inventory at the beginning of the year with the most important question being, "*Write a paragraph telling me what you'd like me to know about yourself.*" Ann then spends time reading and taking notes on these initial inventories. This way when she has her first conference with her students, she can make connections with them.

With our growing diversity Ann makes it a point of using multicultural materials on a encouraging her students to make connections to their own families based on what they are reading. She does a unit in folklore where students were asked to share customs and traditions from their families.

In terms of innovative programs, Ann is well known for the ever-evolving Holocaust unit that she introduced. After reading the *Diary of Anne Frank* about fifteen

years ago, she realized that in reading this novel she also needed to teach her students not only of Ann Frank's life, but the lessons of the Holocaust. Ann in an effort to bolster her background knowledge attended various Holocaust-related seminars and conferences--including a trip to the United States Memorial Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.! Ann also wanted her students to learn from more people—NOT JUST HER. So she organized a field trip to Milwaukee where students toured a Jewish synagogue, learned about Judaism and heard several survivor accounts. The following year, her academic team of teachers helped her host the first Holocaust Day at the middle school—their have been nine since then!

Ann has also served as an advisor of the Book Bunch Club which meets at lunch. The club reads approximately six books and meets during lunch a couple times a month. They even were able to take an end of the year field trip to the Governor's Mansion when Jessica Doyle was hosting *Read on Wisconsin*.

When asked about unrealized goals she may have for her classroom or her professional development Ann noted like many English teachers across the country, Ann and her peers are in the process of preparing to use the Common Core Standards as the basis of her teaching. Her impression of these standards is positive; however, it will take a great deal of thought, time and effort to implement them into the curriculum.

Ann is also a strong proponent of collaboration. "Schools need to work together for the betterment of students. It concerns me to think of teachers being in competition with each other. Last school year, teachers from another district came to observe our language arts classrooms and practices at the middle school. Even though we felt like there was nothing out of the ordinary per our planning, our visitors were genuinely

interested in our collegial efforts. Working together will strengthen the teaching profession.”

From her principal Dr. Rob Abbott, “Ann’s leadership skills have been and will continue to be a huge asset for our school. I appreciate her energy, time, and desire to continue to learn.”

From Todd Linse and the eighth grade team, “Ann epitomizes excellence in education; as a collaborator with colleagues. Ann takes every opportunity to advance her knowledge in the field of language arts and middle level education.”

From a former student, “Mrs. Gladem’s impact on me went far beyond my eighth grade language arts class. Because of her I decided to pursue a career in education. She was truly unlike any other teacher I ever had. From day one in 8th grade, I could tell by her passion that she loved teaching. Looking back, what strikes me to this day was her readiness, organization, and overall excitement to be in the classroom. Had I not had her as a teacher I would not have been successful in high school. She turned me around! She laid out the grounding and preparation before I left the middle school. Mrs. Gladem has left an indelible impression on me and many others who had the good fortune to have her in 8th grade!”

It was with pleasure that we forwarded the nomination of Ann Gladem for the Kohl Fellowship Award.