“*Passionate Readers* is the perfect title for this helpful book. Pernille manages to teach us how to harness true passion in ways that will transform the readers in our classrooms. It is no small feat to take such large and lofty goals and make them tangible and real for all educators and students, and yet that is what this books offers, with heart and style to boot.”

—Kate Roberts, National Literacy Consultant, Author, and Speaker

“A good professional text is a forever resource. We go back to it time and time again for that just-right lesson or chapter we need to fuel our craft. *Passionate Readers* moves like that novel you can’t put down. Tucked in between the narrative of Pernille’s *five keys* and tireless risk-taking in her *passionate reading environment* are the candid voices of the kids speaking their truths, shining a light on reading identity. Make room for a new forever resource.”

—Sara K. Ahmed, Literacy Coach & Consultant-in-Residence, NIST International School, Thailand
Passionate Readers

How do we inspire students to love reading and discovery? In *Passionate Readers: The Art of Reaching and Engaging Every Child*, classroom teacher, author, and speaker Pernille Ripp reveals the five keys to creating a passionate reading environment. You’ll learn how to . . .

- Use your own reading identity to create powerful reading experiences for all students;
- Empower your students and their reading experience by focusing on your physical classroom environment;
- Create and maintain an enticing, well-organized, easy-to-use classroom library;
- Build a learning community filled with choice and student ownership; and
- Guide students to further develop their own reading identity to cement them as lifelong, invested readers.

Throughout the book, Pernille opens up about her own trials and errors as a teacher and what she’s learned along the way. She also shares a wide variety of practical tools that you can use in your own classroom, including a reader profile sheet, conferring sheet, classroom library letter to parents, and much more. These tools are available in the book and as eResources on our website (www.routledge.com/9781138958647)—to help you build your own classroom of passionate readers.

**Pernille Ripp** is a seventh grade teacher in Oregon, Wisconsin, and the creator of the Global Read Aloud (www.theglobalreadaloud.com), a literacy initiative that has connected more than 2,000,000 students since 2010 through the use of technology. She speaks internationally and writes regularly on her blog (www.pernillesripp.com). She is also author of *Passionate Learners: How to Engage and Empower Your Students*. 
Other Eye On Education Books
Available from Routledge
(www.routledge.com/eyeoneducation)

Passionate Learners, 2nd Edition:
How to Engage and Empower Your Students
Pernille Ripp

The Passion-Driven Classroom, 2nd Edition:
A Framework for Teaching and Learning
Angela Maiers and Amy Sandvold

101 Answers for New Teachers and Their Mentors
Effective Teaching Tips for Classroom Use, 3rd Edition
Annette Breaux

Your First Year:
How to Survive and Thrive as a Teacher
Todd Whitaker, Madeline Whitaker, Katherine Whitaker

What Connected Educators Do Differently
Todd Whitaker, Jeffrey Zoul, and Jimmy Casas

Intentional Innovation:
How to Guide Risk-Taking, Build Creative Capacity, and Lead Change
A.J. Juliani

Inquiry and Innovation in the Classroom
Using 20% Time, Genius Hour, and PBL to Drive Student Success
A.J. Juliani

The Common Core Grammar Toolkit
Using Mentor Texts to Teach the Language Standards in Grades 3–5
Sean Ruday

The Common Core Grammar Toolkit
Using Mentor Texts to Teach the Language Standards in Grades 3–5
Sean Ruday

The Multimedia Writing Toolkit
Helping Students Incorporate Graphics and Videos for Authentic Purposes, Grades 3–8
Sean Ruday
Passionate Readers
The Art of Reaching and Engaging Every Child

Pernille Ripp
Foreword by Donalyn Miller
To the kids in room 235D, past and present; your words changed me; don’t ever let anyone tell you to stay silent.
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- Student Questionnaire—Beginning of Year
- 6-week reading habit check-in
- 25 book challenge
- Classroom library letter to parents
- Conferring sheet
- Core ELA standards
- Educator reading identity
- End of semester English survey
- End of year questionnaire
- End of year reading survey
- How are you as a reader?
- Our classroom library organization
- Reader Profile
- Self-Evaluation of Skills
- Teacher Reading Identity
- Reading Identity Challenge

To download those items, go to the book product page at www.routledge.com/9781138958647. Then click on the tab that says “Resources,” and select the files. They will begin downloading to your computer.
I first met Pernille Ripp like many of you did: I found her on Twitter one day. I was looking for other middle school teachers to follow, and Pernille was interesting and smart. Her blog was a mix of thoughts on teaching and her cool bargain-hunting fashion finds in those days. Pernille was rooted in the technology education world at the time, and I picked up many ideas from her about blogging with my students.

In 2010, when Pernille founded Global Read Aloud, more literacy educators discovered her. She loves sharing books, but she is mindful about what books she promotes—always considering diversity and the authentic interests and needs of students. Her enthusiasm for young people and her emphasis on creating engaging learning conditions for all students inspired many of us to reach beyond the walls of our classrooms to find collaborative communities that expanded our students’ understanding and awareness of the world. Through her blog, her books, and her presentations she continues to give us a glimpse into her classroom and her thinking behind her interactions with students. I consider her a colleague in the truest sense—open to ideas and willing to share her questions as much as her insights. She’s a teacher’s teacher, but her mindset and core beliefs always lead us back to what’s best for kids.

I taught sixth grade for a decade and loved it. Mostly, I loved middle school kids. Their physical, emotional, and intellectual development is all over the place—which is endearing and maddening in turn. With one foot in childhood and one in adolescence, it’s a rough time for kids. As Poppy in Holly Black’s Newbery Honor book Doll Bones describes it, “I hate that everyone calls it growing up, but it seems like DYING.” Dramatic, perhaps, but many young adolescents feel pushed into growing up when they aren’t ready, while others seem to run toward their teen years at full tilt. They are figuring out who they want to be. Trying on personalities. Seeking affiliations. Asking questions about the world and their place in it. Their vitality and sense of urgency warm us like the rays of the sun. As middle school teachers, our students make our work feel vital and urgent, too.

As much as teenagers crave independence and agency, they still want adults who see them and make them feel safe. When they feel safe with you, they are all in, but it takes time to earn their trust. After spending almost half their lives to this point in school, many have become jaded. If you listen
to middle schoolers, they will tell you they want to enjoy school more than they do. They want to like your class more than they do. They want to learn. They know they have a lot to learn. Instruction offering few opportunities for their self-expression and inquiry bores and frustrates them. They feel disrespected at school. Teenagers have a strong sense of justice and they rankle under rules for the sake of rules. They understand that many rules, like homework expectations and dress code policies, exist for institutional reasons that have everything to do with the sanity of adults and little to do with engaging young people in meaningful learning.

We worry so much about what kids might do that we don’t let them show us what they can do.

I think the best teachers respect kids. Reading Pernille Ripp’s work shows me how much respect and admiration she has for her students. She has high expectations for them, but she also sees them as people with unique needs and interests. She’s a master kid-watcher and reflective practitioner—two skills vital to long-term success as a teacher. She doesn’t have all of the answers, but she keeps asking smart questions about her own teaching practice. Above all, she shares some of the same qualities with her students that make this life stage so fascinating and challenging. She shares their enthusiasm and their constant disequilibrium. She shares their strength and their vulnerability.

Pernille’s passion for children’s learning and the value of teachers runs through every blog post she writes and every lesson she teaches. Her enthusiasm for language and its power flows from her and undoubtedly influences her students’ perceptions of English class. She knows books and media, but she never lets her opinions or value systems override her students’ interests and need for agency. She fiercely protects her students’ rights to meaningful learning and constructs classroom activities and rituals that value her students’ voices over her own. She loves our profession, but she doesn’t cut teachers any slack. Even herself. She pushes us to question traditional practices that limit students’ reading and writing lives while continuously reminding us of the importance of our work.

One of the qualities I most appreciate about Pernille is her reckless bravery. She takes chances. She writes incendiary things on her blog that push people. She gets on fire about things. She’s upset about the state of literacy education in many classrooms, and she wants us to be upset about it, too. She knows that our students cannot wait for us to get it right. She’s all in with her students, and that requires taking risks that may not pay off in the end. Better to try and fail than to teach the same way for the next thirty years and never grow. It is said that we learn as much from our mistakes as our successes (I would contend we learn more), and Pernille is not afraid to make mistakes in her teaching as long as she always keeps her students in front of
her. I appreciate her willingness to challenge herself and challenge us by her example. Her humility in the face of failure and success inspires us all to try harder. She knows that she has a lot to learn. She reminds us that we all do.

Like all of us, Pernille stands on the shoulders of greatness—the influential middle school researchers and teacher leaders like John Guthrie, Ernest Morrell, Kate Roberts and Chris Lehman, Nancie Atwell, Kylene Beers, and many others who have asked important questions about adolescent literacy and learning. Throughout Pernille’s interactions with her students you’ll see an organic community built on a foundation of best practices steeped in decades of research, which she employs in practical, manageable ways. Reading and writing workshop meets reality. She recognizes the struggle of teaching under mandates and encourages us to look beyond them and focus on our long term literacy goals for students. Intellectual curiosity and engagement front and center, not prepackaged kits and scripted programs.

If you know Pernille’s work, this book provides a deeper look at her thinking. If you’re meeting her for the first time, I’m thrilled for you. Come sit in her classroom and learn with her. You’ll find a dear colleague and smart mentor.

—Donalyn Miller
About the Author

Pernille Ripp is an expert in literacy and technology integration and dedicates her research and practice to developing engaged and empowered students and communities.

She is a teacher, speaker, author, blogger, and passionate advocate for education. She is a Skype Master Teacher; recipient of the 2015 WEMTA Making IT Happen Award; and the 2015 ISTE Award for Innovation in Global Collaboration. She is a proud member of the Educator Collaborative, a global think tank and professional development organization, working to innovate the ways educators learn together.

In 2010, Pernille founded The Global Read Aloud, a global literacy initiative that began with a simple goal in mind: one book to connect the world. From its humble beginnings, the GRA has grown to connect more than 2,000,000 students in 60 different countries.

She is the author of Passionate Learners—How to Engage and Empower Your Students, now in its second edition, and Empowered Schools, Empowered Students, both focusing on creating learning spaces and communities where students thrive and all stakeholders are empowered and passionate about learning. She has also authored Reimagining Literacy Through Global Collaboration published in 2016 by Solution Tree, Her work has also been featured in many print and online journals including The New York Times, School Library Journal, The Guardian, and MiddleWeb.

You can follow Pernille’s work on Blogging Through The Fourth Dimension, her personal blog and a frequent Teach100 top-rated education blog. With her mentoring, her own students’ blogs have had more than 600,000 unique views since they began.

Pernille’s current research interest is in creating passionate literacy environments within the restriction of our current educational systems to help students fall in love with literacy again. The door of her classroom is always open to visitors, and the students in room 235D will gladly take your questions.
Acknowledgments

I owe so much to so many; I think most of us who educate do. I owe my love of teaching to those who passed their love of curiosity and teaching onto me. I owe my love of books to the authors who write them and continue to pass them into our hands as they help us shape the world. I owe my love of learning to those that first explored the world with me—my parents and my siblings. And I owe the immense happiness I have in my life to all who are a part of it.

This book would not have been be a possibility if it wasn’t for all of those educators, speakers, authors, and researchers who have paved the way for many of us. My work stands on the shoulders the likes Richard Allington; Nancie Atwell; The Two Sisters; Joan Moser and Gail Boushey; Lucy Calkins; Kylene Beers; Harvey “Smokey” Daniels; Donalyn Miller; Teri Lesene; Penny Kittle; Kelly Gallagher; Elin Keene; Kate Roberts; and Maggie Beattie Roberts and many others. You shared your knowledge with the world and unwittingly gave me the foundational knowledge needed to realize that this could be better, that teaching reading well did not have to be something that felt impossible.

This book would not have been a possibility had it not been for the challenge from my editor, Lauren Davis, who believed in me every step of the way, who did not mind my late night emails filled with self-doubt as to who I thought I was, writing a book about reading. She told me it was time to write about what we did in room 235D, so I did.

To Lin Manuel Miranda and the “Hamilton” soundtrack, to Kelly Clarkson, to Patty Griffin, and to all the other artists who were on my writing playlist when I tried to drown the noise out at coffee shops and in airplanes. Your songs are the soundtrack of this book. Can you imagine?

To Christopher Lehman, Jes Lifshitz, and Reidun Bures, whose words, friendship, and even hard truths have shaped me as an educator and pushed me to make this book more than it was. How lucky I am to consider you friends.

To all of my fellow Nerdy Book Club members: how blessed I am to have found this community that not just guides me but has also sparked so many meaningful friendships. You know who you are.

To the librarian at Bjerringbro Bibliotek who let me check out The Clan of the Cave Bear, even though I was clearly much too young to fully understand it. I read what I wanted to because no one ever told me I couldn’t.