

May 8, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I read *An Invisible Thread* before I was even considering becoming a school teacher. I was then working in the media industry, and *An Invisible Thread* was chosen to be included as part of our mini book club. Not only were my co-workers and I incredibly inspired by the story, but we were given the great fortune of being able to sit down and speak with Laura about her life and book. My work in the media industry was very short-lived, but in this short time I was introduced to this amazing story and woman. When I look back I think that I was definitely in the right place at the right time. Or, perhaps, there was an invisible thread that made sure I became connected to Laura.

I say this because over a year later, I found myself in an exciting yet challenging place in my life. I became an inner city school teacher who was eager and optimistic about helping any student that came my way. Challenges came quickly and in abundance, however. I was passionate about teaching and helping the students, but their motivation and interest in learning were difficult to spark. When I was thinking of the first book I wanted to read with my students, *An Invisible Thread* was my initial thought and immediate decision.

I remember how moving and inspiring the story of the relationship between Maurice and Laura was. This was a perfect choice for my students. Many of the students come from unstable environments, childhoods, and/or families. A great message this story conveys is the fact that “we are not alone.” If we are faced with problems in our lives, we can always try to find hope knowing that there are others out there that may be

experiencing similar situations. It also beautifully expresses the incredible power of executing acts of kindness. One simple and kind act can change everything for the better. Students of all backgrounds and experiences can learn a great deal from the messages in this true story. Also, the fact that it is true makes the story so much more relatable and tangible for those who read it. While flirting with ideas of how to use the story in the classroom, I thought that I would try to reach out to Laura herself. I thought it was a long shot that I would even hear back from her, but I figured I had nothing to lose. I wrote asking about advice and thoughts about teaching the story, and was taken aback by her quick and genuine response. After just a short correspondence, Laura expressed that she would be happy to come into our school and talk about her experiences. I was overjoyed. The best part was seeing the look on my students' faces when I told them the good news. Not much seemed to phase or excite them, but this had a great effect on them, and it is something I'll never forget. When I look back at my first year of teaching, I will always be certain that I had some positive influence on my students. When Laura came to my school, she motivated all of us. She left a permanent impression on each one of us, and impacted my students in a way that none of us will ever forget.

Sincerely,  
Kassie Schnall  
Teacher  
Canarsie High School  
Canarsie, Brooklyn