

Write an introduction to an entertaining and narrative blog post titled "How I Almost Met My Hero". I met my hero. But before you get too excited, this isn't a story of a momentous meeting with a celebrity or philanthropist, but rather a hopefully humorous account of how I came close to running into someone who taught me so much more than any rock star could. This story is about my seventh grade English teacher Mrs. Dorsett, who not only had the same name as one of my very favorite authors, Madeleine L'Engle, but was also more influential on me than anyone else in my school career. (1) The first time I met Mrs. Dorsett was at her first book club meeting, which I attended with my mom. She was an extremely petite woman, but that didn't stop her from having huge glasses that made her eyes appear to take up half of her face. It also didn't seem to stop her from being overwhelmingly enthusiastic about books and the students who read them, even if it meant taking off class time for everyone to meet for their monthly meeting. She had kids sit around a big table in the library and share books they'd read over the last month, which she listened to intently as if she were auditioning us for a reality show about future literary greatness. If we wanted to get published someday, I thought, listening to her drone on about the merits of David Copperfield and Dr. Zhivago, we had to learn what we could from Mrs. Dorsett's book club. Following her book club meeting, my mom and I would put together a "Wish List" of books she'd like us to read and discuss with her. Because she was so interested in the books we read and loved so much, this was sometimes awkward for me because it meant I had to find sleepovers or extra time for reading assignments outside of school hours because I couldn't be trusted to stay up later than 9:30 p.m. at bedtime. Still, I was excited to be close to someone who shared my passion for books and stories, even though I wasn't always sure how much she actually read. I can't say for sure what it was about Mrs. Dorsett that made me so attracted to her. Maybe it was because she read so many books or talked about her book club so much that it made me think of the kind of literary life I wanted. Maybe it was because she believed in us and allowed us to believe in ourselves, which is something very few teachers actually do after middle school. Maybe it was because her enthusiasm for books made me think that reading was a worthwhile pursuit even if I wasn't sure I would ever write something worthy of being published. Maybe it was because her book club made me feel like she personally wanted to know all there was to know about me. We were all so impressed with Mrs. Dorsett that when she left Drake Middle School for another school near my house, our class used the money left over from our class trip fund to buy her a clock radio so she could listen to classical music while she read in the morning at home. There are plenty of things I wish I'd done in my life, but this is one thing that fills me with pride every time I remember doing it.

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