

One month into the third grade people seemed nice, but I only knew one kid. His name was Thomas; he helped me a lot, more than I could have asked for. He stood up for me when people would pick on me. If only he was in my class the day that my school experience went down hill. The day I started to dread the question many teachers ask. The most important question anyone has ever asked me. "Anna, will you read this passage out loud?" I couldn't let anyone find out I didn't know how to read.

As I sat in my class with ten other classmates, and one so-called-teacher, we started reading a book; I couldn't even read the title, let alone the actual text. We were taking turns reading out loud. The boy next to me was almost done with his paragraph and it was almost my turn. I was so nervous. The teacher was going to ask me that question that I despised. "Anna you will read the next paragraph?" As I began to read I could hear myself start to struggle. "As t-t-the b-boy w-wa-." "That's right you can't read. Next reader." My teacher stopped me to say that front of the entire class, as they all laughed at me. I never felt so embarrassed in my life as much I did when that teacher said that to me. I decided then that I was never going to read again.

If only Thomas was in that class with me; he was the only that knew I couldn't read. Thomas was in every other class with me, he would always sit next to me and try to explain the things that the teacher was teaching us that day as best as he could. When I was called on me to read out loud he would always ask the teacher if he could read it instead.

For the fourth grade I started a new school. As I sat in class, I still feared that haunting question, and I didn't have my friend Thomas there to help me. From the first day, I could tell that the teachers at this school were different; they didn't just skip over me when I didn't know how to say a word. They would actually stop and help me get through it. I got the help that I have been waiting to get. The teachers were right there when I had a question, or when I couldn't sound out a word. One of my teachers always told me that I would be able to read before I knew it. There I learned how to read and actually read my first book and finished it here. I spent seven years at this school. But then it was time to move to high school and I still hated reading.

On September 8th 2008, my parents moved me in, helped me get settled into Purnell, and then they left. That was hard for me because I didn't have my parents there to help me get through my schoolwork. Now I'd have to trust this new person, Ms. Boyer, as an advisor. She didn't know what I went through. But I stepped into my English class with Ms. Patient. "Ha-ha" I thought. Great name for a teacher at an all girls' boarding school. I think Ms. Patient quickly found out that I didn't like reading and that I wasn't the best at it. She helped me get through the reading that we had to do that year by helping me after classes and making sure I comprehended everything. It was hard but I think she knew that I would read when I was ready. Ms. Patient made me realize that I didn't have to dwell on the fact that I couldn't read as well as everyone else, but to focus on my other strengths like memorization, and listening which helped me gain more confidence as a learner. For example at the end

of my Sophomore year, some of you may remember I had to memorize seven speeches, and apparently I was pretty good at it because it got lots of laughs.

Now I am senior, and Ms. Patient is my English teacher once again. She knows I still don't like to read and I am still not the best at it. I am trying hard to overcome this by reading in small chunks, and making sure I comprehend it as well. I don't hate the question "Anna, will you read this passage out loud?" anymore. I am still nervous to read in front of a class, but I now have the confidence to say, "I would rather not." Reading will be a part of my life no matter what I will do. I will continue to overcome this fear of reading aloud and I will get better at it. I am not done trying yet.