



My name is Mary Alice Bender. I was born in Columbia, South Carolina, but I grew up in Andover, Kansas. I graduated with honors from Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas. My bachelor's degree is in English with an emphasis in Secondary Education, a subject I love and enjoy teaching. A few years ago, I moved to Utah with my husband, and I have never looked back! I have been teaching at Freedom Academy for the past three years and have a Level 2 teaching license in Secondary English Education. This year I will teach 8th grade Language Arts, journalism, and public speaking. I look forward to the new and innovative classes and working with fantastic students.

My husband has a degree in Outdoor Recreation Management from UVU, so we spend much of our time outdoors. On the weekends, my husband and I love to go rock climbing, hiking, mountain biking, backpacking, and camping. I also love to read and do so voraciously. I am always on the lookout for a great young adult novel to add to my classroom library. In addition, I am always looking for grants that will allow me to grow my library. My goal is to get every student to find at least one genre to love and read with fervor.

I believe reading and writing are the keys to success, as they open doors to worlds of opportunities. Throughout the school year, I will help the students develop these skills so they may continue onto high school and life as successful individuals. I do not pretend to be an easy teacher, but students will leave my class prepared to conquer the world. I will also help the students understand the importance of education and reading because, "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family," Kofi Annan.