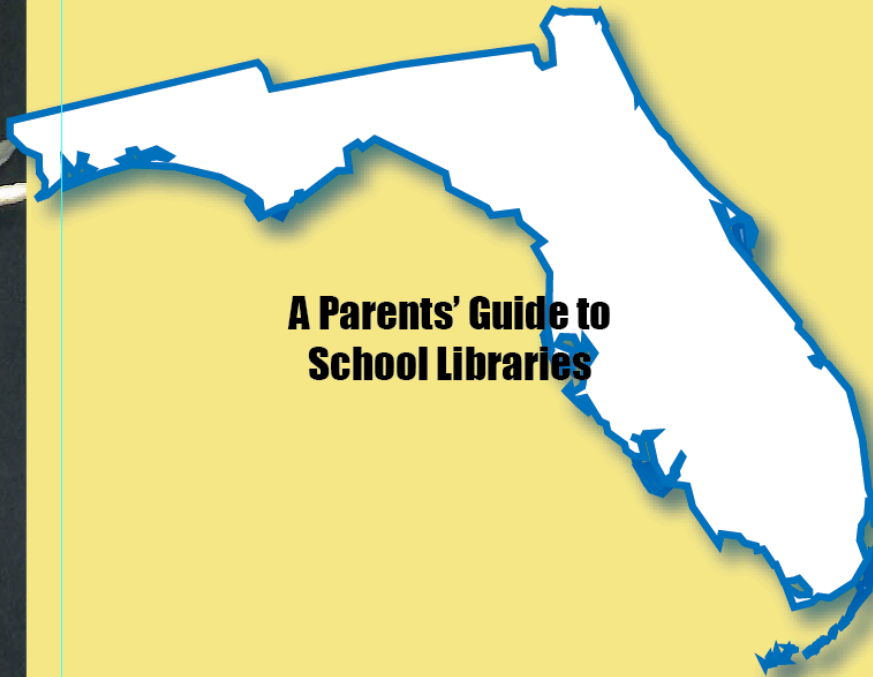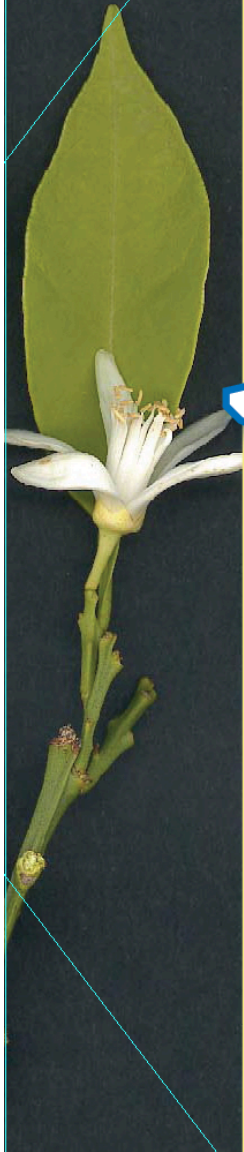# FLORIDA POWER!

A Parents' Guide to
School Libraries

**David V. Loertscher
and Donna Baumbaugh**

Florida Power!

A Parent's Guide to
School Library Media Centers

David V. Loertscher
Donna J. Baumbach

DRUM ROLL! And, Introducing Us Cats

Brigham

You don't have to be so dramatic, Kid

Wednesday

To the Purchaser of This Book

The purpose of this book is to get the message out to parents about Florida's school library media centers and their impact on education.

Florida Power! A Parent's Guide to School Library Media Centers is available two ways:
   As a book and CD Set $35.00
   As a book only: $20.00 (available from: http://www.lmcsource.com)
   As a CD only: $15.00   (Note: the CD has all the pdf files for each page)

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3. Reproduce and sell the book to the parents in your school at cost.
4. Sell the book at a profit to the parents in your school only if the profits are spent on your school library media center.
5. Contact the publisher for pricing of multiple copies of the book for parents in your school.
6. Copy up to three pages for workshops, meetings, and conferences anywhere. Please cite the source of the handouts on each page.

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When in doubt, contact the primary author, David V. Loertscher at davidvl@qwest.net for permission.

If you use the book creatively with parents, we would appreciate seeing your product. Send a copy to: David V. Loertscher, 312 South 1000 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84102.

Contents

Organizational Issues

Appreciation

Many school library media specialists made suggestions for topics in this book because they know that working together with parents will help to provide better library media programs and services.

A School Library Media Agenda for Your Child/Teen

What type of person is likely to be successful in today's information-rich and technology-based world? What type of learner is likely to be successful in the future?

When an exemplary library media program is in place in a school, every young person can be equipped with the skills he or she will need:
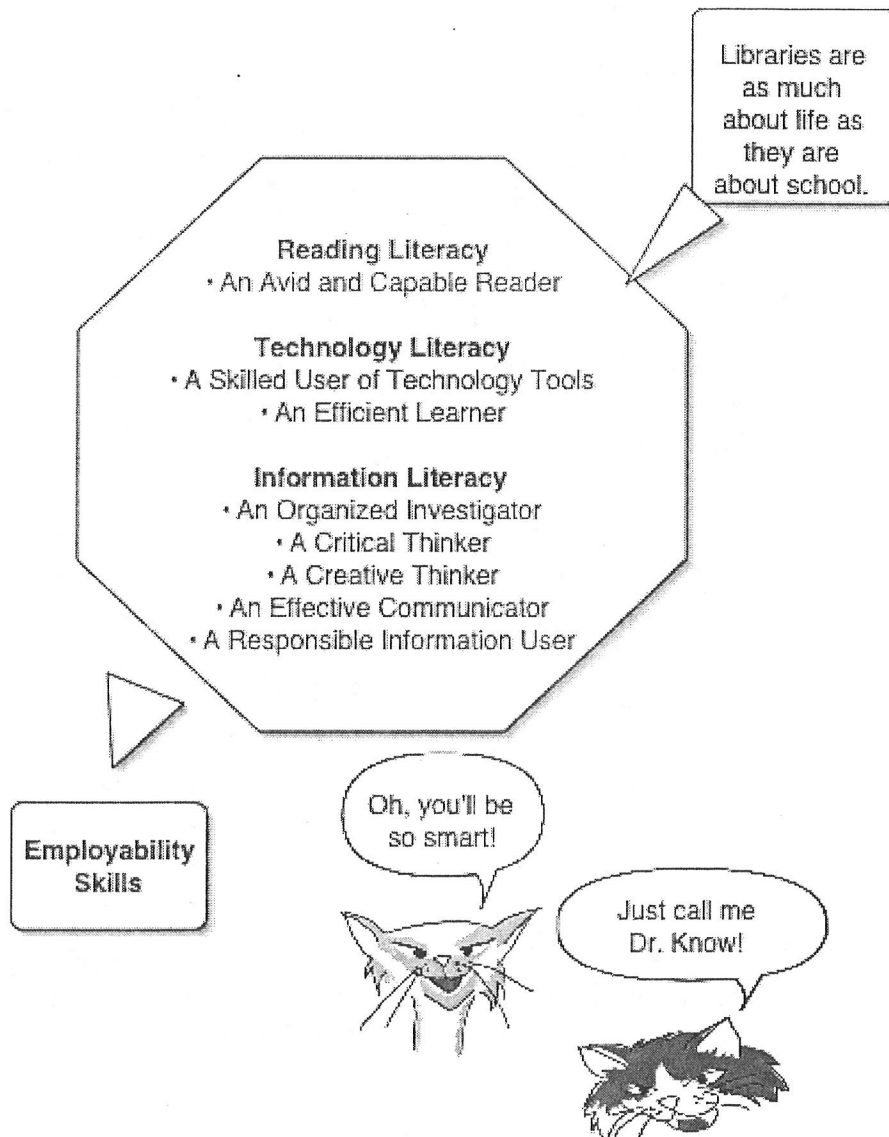
Research on School Library Media Centers: The National Picture

Since 1999, research has been conducted in sixteen states[1] about the impact of school library media programs. In every instance, good school library media programs are linked to higher academic achievement—one part of a healthy educational diet.
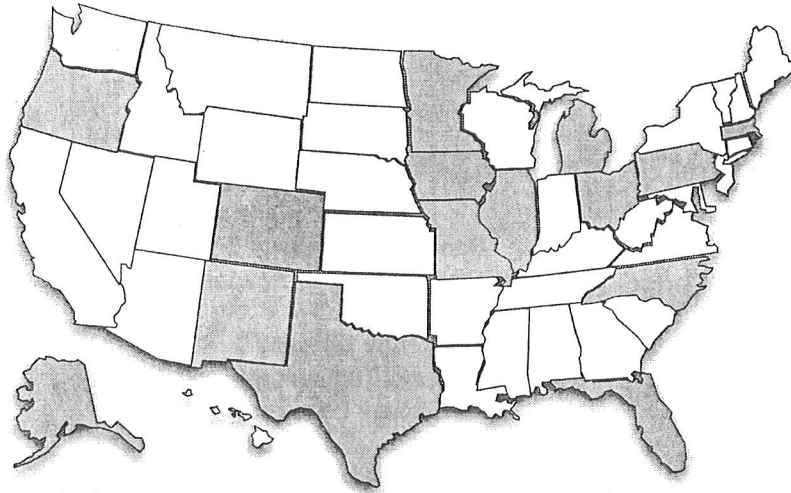
Alaska, 2000
Colorado, 1993, 2000
Florida, 2003
Illinois, underway
Iowa, 2002
Massachusetts, 2000
Michigan, 2003
Minnesota, 2002
Missouri, 2003
New Mexico, 2002
North Carolina, 2003
Ohio, 2004
Oregon, 2001
Pennsylvania, 2000
Rhode Island, 2004
Texas, 2001

It's like milk in your cat dish

Mmm!

In Florida FCAT scores are higher in schools with at least one certified, university-trained school library media specialist, adequate support staff, up-to-date collections of books and other resources, and access to technology.[2]

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[1] For a complete list of these studies, consult http://www.davidvl.org under "Research" or the Colorado State Library at http://www.lrs.org/impact.asp.
[2] Baumbach, D. Making the Grade: *The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement*, Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2004. Summary available online at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/makingthegrade.

What Every Parent Should Know about Florida School Library Media Specialists

What do you as a parent know about the role of the school library media specialist and library media program in your child's education? What should you know?

Here are three important facts about Florida's school library media specialists:

1. School library media specialists make a measurable contribution to improving the academic achievement of Florida students.[1]
2. Certified school library media specialists, experienced teachers with additional hours of specialization and advanced degrees, pursue a variety of activities that contribute to improving student performance.[2]
3. Florida schools need more university-trained, certified school library media specialists, and those with school library media specialists need additional library clerks and volunteers.[3]

If you compare students in higher scoring schools where there is at least one certified school library media specialist and additional staffing totaling more than 80 hours per week with similar schools whose staffing is less than 80 hours per week, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding academic standards is higher at all grade levels where there is more staffing. [4]

However, not all Florida school have a certified library media specialist! Only 80% of Florida's public elementary schools and less than 80% of combination schools (K-12, 6-12, etc.) have a certified school library media specialist. Library media specialists are critical to elementary students! At a time when students are learning to read, to locate information, to meet their school and personal needs, and to use technology and information systems, schools who think they cannot afford a certified library media specialist really cannot afford to be without them if they are preparing students for middle school, high school and beyond!
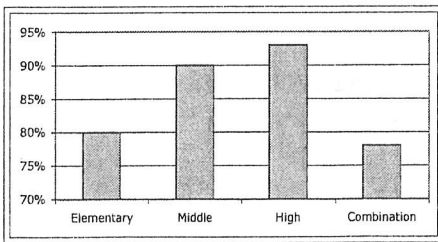
Over 25% of all Florida school library media specialists and 40% of high school library media specialists will be retiring in the next several years, so more of our schools may be without trained school library media specialists. How can this happen when there is more information, more technology and more emphasis on learning and student achievement? Don't let it happen in your school. Percentage of Florida Public

Schools with at Least One Certified Library
Media Specialist

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[1] This fact is derived from *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement*, by Donna J. Baumbach, University of Central Florida. The measure of academic achievement utilized in this 2003 study was the reading portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

[2] Florida Department of Education Certification Requirements for Educational Media.

[3] This fact is documented by the 2003 Florida study *(Making the Grade.)*

[4] Baumbach, D. *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State.*

What Every Parent Should Know About Florida School Library Media Center Collections

Florida's schools are quite large compared to the national average. While collection sizes and budgets are about the same as schools in other states[1], items per pupil and expenditures per pupil are much less than the national average for books and non-print items.[2]

Where school library media programs are better staffed, better stocked, and better funded, academic achievement tends to be higher.[3]

Book Collections per Pupil in Florida School Library Media Centers Compared with National Averages

Legend: Florida (2000–2001); National Average (2001–2002)

If Florida is serious about improving student achievement and producing information- and technology-literate citizens, we must bring spending and books per student up to *at least the minimum* of the national average. To go *beyond the national average* would demonstrate an understanding of what it takes not only to raise test scores, but also to create readers who enjoy books and who know how to use information resources to solve problems—skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

National Averages per Pupil Expenditures for Non-print (Audiovisual, Software, and Web-based Products) Compared with Florida's Schools' per Pupil Expenditures

Legend: National Average (1999–2000); National Average (2001–2002); Florida (2000–2001)
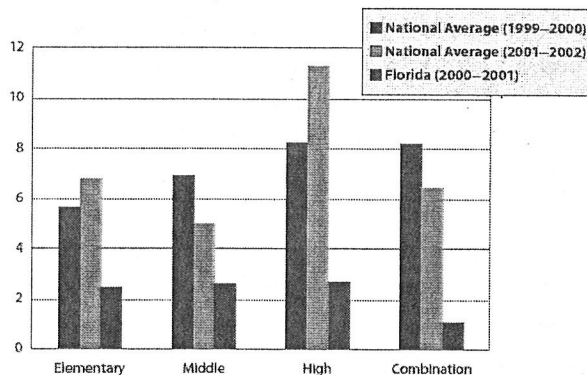
In addition to the size of the collection, quality, variety and age are important. How does your child's school library media collection measure up?

You can check the age of your school's library media collection at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/aoc

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[1] From data collected by Marilyn Miller and Marilyn Schontz and reported in *School Library Journal*, October 2003.
[2] From data collected in *Making the Grade (The Florida Study)* by Donna J. Baumbach. Summary available at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/makingthegrade
[3] See School Library Impact Studies from Library Research Services at http://www.lrs.org/impact.asp
[4] This fact is derived from *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement*, by Donna J. Baumbach, University of Central Florida. The measure of academic achievement utilized in this 2003 study was the reading portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).
[5] Florida Department of Education Certification Requirements for Educational Media
[6] This fact is documented by the 2003 Florida study *(Making the Grade.)*

What Every Parent Should Know about Florida School Library Media Programs

A recent study[1] showed that school library media programs are active, vital contributors to teaching and learning in Florida's K-12 schools. Findings from this and numerous other studies on the impact of school library media centers are consistent. School library media programs positively impact student achievement when:
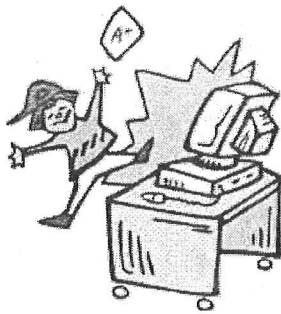
> - A professionally-trained, full-time, certified library media specialist leads the program
> - Adequate support staff is present
> - School library media collections are strong in quantity, quality, and variety
> - Students have access to resources beyond the library media center
> - Literacy, information literacy, and technological literacy are taught
> - Students use the library media center and its resources
> - Technology is available

At the **elementary level**, FCAT scores[2] are higher where:	At the **middle school** level, FCAT scores are higher where:	At the **high school** level, FCAT scores are higher where there are:
• There is a certified library media specialist • There are more paid staff • Circulation is higher • There are more books and videos • There are more computers and more Internet access in the library media center • There are more non-print materials	• There are more certified library media specialists • The media center is open more hours each week • There are more videos • There are more electronic reference materials • There are more computers and more Internet access in the library media center	• More staff hours each week • More certified library media specialists • More paid library staff members • More interlibrary loans • More usage of technology in the library media center • More computers and more Internet access

FCAT and ACT scores are significantly higher where there is higher usage of the library media center. Usage increases with:

> - The number of certified, university-trained library media specialists
> - The total number of staff hours per student
> - The number of networked computers per student
> - The number of books, periodical subscriptions, videos and software packages per student
> - Library media expenditures per student

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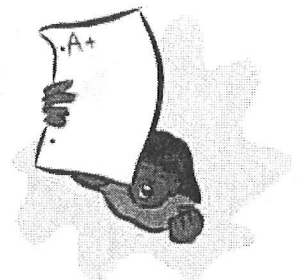
[1] *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement* by Donna Baumbach, University of Central Florida. Summary available online at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/makingthegrade

[2] Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) reading scores; from data *in Making the Grade.*

[3] This fact is derived from *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement*, by Donna J. Baumbach, University of Central Florida. The measure of academic achievement utilized in this 2003 study was the reading portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

[4] Florida Department of Education Certification Requirements for Educational Media.

[5] This fact is documented by the 2003 Florida study *(Making the Grade).*

Why a Professional School Library Media Specialist?

You mean we need a person with a college degree in the school library media center? After all, can't the books just be checked in and out by a clerk or even a volunteer parent?
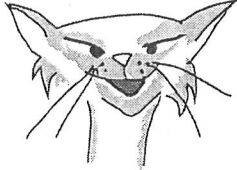
I'm afraid not, Kid. The school library media specialist of today is a teacher who administers a very complex print and digital information environment and serves as an information coach for teachers and students.

Here are a few things professional school library media specialists do:

1. They help teachers create exciting learning experiences in an information-rich and technology-rich environment.
2. They help students get the best information to fulfill their assignments.
3. They build and maintain a digital school library open to you and your children/teens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from home and from anywhere in the school. They are interested in safe and reliable information rather than the whole Internet.
4. They guide and teach students to evaluate information— particularly from the World Wide Web: "Who's saying what to me, for what reason, and with what credibility?"
5. They teach students the research process to help them manage the "information overload" they face both now and in the future.
6. When teachers bring classes to the library media center, the school library media specialist and the teacher work together so that every student gets the individual attention he or she deserves.
7. And, by the way, the library media specialist is still reading's best friend.

Is your school library media center staffed by at least one PROFESSIONAL school library media specialist?
Ask the pointed question: "Are you a university-trained, certified, school library media specialist?" If your school does not have such a person, ask why it doesn't and what is being done about it. Your kids deserve a highly-qualified school library media specialist leading a quality library media program.

Trying to staff a library with only a clerk is like trying to run a hospital entirely with LPNs or an airline only with baggage handlers.

Information Literacy: A Life Skill

Whether your child is a kindergartner, a high school senior, or anywhere in between, school library media specialists help students learn to locate, evaluate, and use information on science, social studies, or any other school topic.

The challenge for the students of today is to sort through all the information and voices crowding into their world. Though the amount of information is sometimes overwhelming, they must learn to make sound decisions, evaluate information, and prepare for jobs and careers.

Given a topic, a problem, an assignment, a paper, or just a personal quest, the child or teen might follow the process pictured below. It's a messy, sometimes frustrating process, requiring lots of work and hard thinking.

The Florida FINDS Model
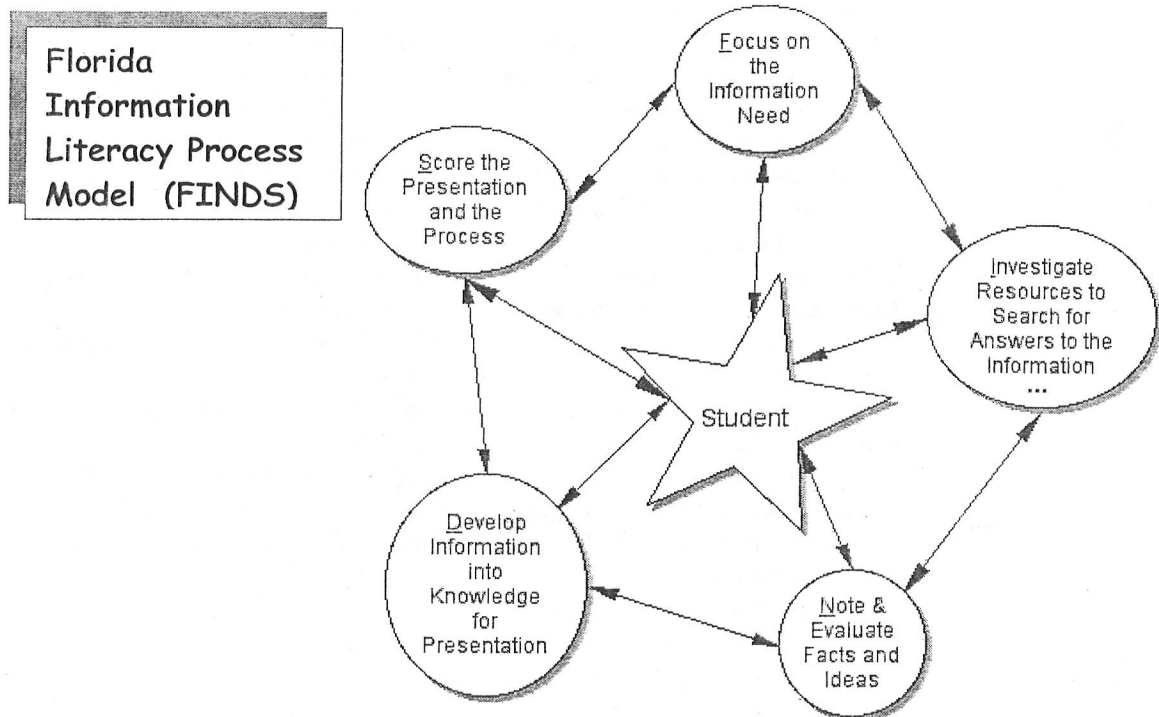
Helping Your Child/Teen Learn to Work with Information

As young people work on various assignments and projects requiring them to find and use information, parents can help and support the work of the school library media specialist and classroom teacher.

The Research Task (FINDS)	What the School Library Media Specialist Teaches (in Collaboration with Classroom Teachers)	How Parents Can Help
Focus on the Information Need	• Identifying and modifying the search question. • Identifying the kind of information needed. • Recognizing the importance of information. • Narrowing or broadening a topic.	• Find books on the topic with lots of pictures to share together. • Explain concepts and define terms. • Help narrow a topic to something manageable in the time available.
Investigate resources to search for answers to information question	• Brainstorming, webbing, using graphical organizers. • Identifying key words. • Identifying sources of information. • Knowing when more than one source of information is needed. • Where and how to find information in the school library media center. • Where and how to find information online or in places other than the school library media center. • Using tables of content, indexes, headings, keywords, captions, guide-words, glossaries, appendixes, cross references, menus, help screens, hyper-text links, URLs, and other organizers. • Using graphical clues, such as size, color, font, headings, legends, icons, bold face and italics. • Using specialized resources and visuals. • How to use resources ethically and responsibly.	Ask: • Where can you find the information you need? • Where else might you look? • Do you need to look at more than one source of information? • Did you find quality information? How do you know? • What is the source for the best information? • How do you find the information in this book (or on this Website)? • Did you look in the table of contents? Index? • What did this article say about your topic? • What does this visual tell you? • Is that important? • What do you think?
Note and evaluate facts and ideas located to answer the question	• Recognizing fiction and non-fiction. • Recognizing different points of view. • How to skim or listen for relevant information. • How to take notes. • How to quote, paraphrase and cite information.	• Keep asking and helping to find the "main ideas" and the "supporting ideas" as reading/viewing/listening occurs. • Ask how they are recording and organizing the information they find.

The Research Task (FINDS)	What the School Library Media Specialist Teaches (in Collaboration with Classroom Teachers)	How Parents Can Help
Develop information into knowledge for presentation	• Different ways to organize and sequence information. • Evaluating and sorting through information to find what is relevant and useful in answering the research question. • How to synthesize information from many sources. • How and when to apply personal ideas and perspectives. • How to predict outcomes and events. • Selecting and using the proper format(s) to present findings and information. • Composing for different communication tools. • Working together as a team and being a responsible member of a team.	• Help make logical connections between ideas across the various sources being used. • Ask, "Does the conclusion, decision or summary follow logically from the information collected?" • Ask, "Are the ideas presented more important than how the presentation looks? • Ask, "Are these your own words and ideas? • Ask, did you give credit to the resources you used? • Ask, what technology tools will help you present this information?
Score the presentation and search process	• Using a checklist. • Determining if the question has been answered. • Using feedback from others. • Evaluating efforts and making plans to revise or improve.	• No matter the grade on the project, what do they know and what are they able to do? • How can they do better next time?

You can find out more about FINDS and online tools to use in research at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/finds.

No excuses then?

You're doggon' right!

Cut and Clip (Plagiarism)—A Major Problem

Many teachers and school library media specialists today complain that students cut and clip (copy and paste) information from the Internet, books, and other resources and then turn it in as if it were their own work. The goal of any paper, project, or assignment is to learn something. When students cut and clip, the impact on learning is devastating. Zero learning.

Replace CUT and CLIP with Cut, Clip, & THINK!

Let's get a few things straight:

1. It's OK to cut and clip articles, pictures, quotes, or anything else as you assemble information for a project.
2. Hint: When cutting and clipping, be sure to note source of the information, so you don't lose the author, title, date, Internet URL, etc. Those will be needed for the citation and bibliography.
3. When we use information from a source, we cite it properly with the author, title, publisher, date and, if from the Internet, the URL. If we don't, we have plagiarized.
4. When we use the exact words of others, it is a quote; when we summarize their ideas, it is paraphrasing. Both need citations.
5. We may quote and summarize the ideas of others, but it is our own creative thought, analysis, and decisions that will be evidence of learning.
6. THINKING is the true objective of learning and the life-blood of our society.

Thinking makes my head hurt!

Better than getting your butt kicked, Kid

You can help by asking good questions as your child's/teen's project develops. Question starters will stimulate discussion and perhaps some appropriate advice.

1. Have you recorded the sources as you find information?
2. What is the difference between what this author says and what you think?
3. How did your teacher or library media specialist teach you to record the sources of the ideas you have gathered?
4. How do you weave your and other's ideas into a finished product?

Evaluating a World Wide Web Site: A Critical Skill

Work with your child/teen to help decide whether or not a web page is reliable sources for research.

Need help? Ask your school library media specialist.

URL: _____

Author:	Based on the information you found, rate this source:
Who is the author? *(Can't find a name? Look at the top and bottom of the page. Click through other pages on the site looking for an author).*	
What makes the author an expert on this topic? What do you learn about the author's **occupation**, years of **experience, education,** or other facts that make him an expert?	___ **Credible**
List any **connection the author has to a university, research laboratory, governmental agency, or other reputable organization** related to the topic.	___ **Not Credible**

Purpose:	Based on what you found out about the purpose, rate this source:
What is the **purpose of the website**? To **sell** something? To **provide information**? To **convince** you of something? What does the **domain name** (.com, .gov, .org, .edu, .info) tell you about the purpose of the site?	
If only **one side of the argument** is presented, what side is left out?	___ **Biased**
What is **another resource** or type of resource that might provide the **other side** of the story?	___ **Not Biased**

Accuracy:	This information is
Note any **obvious errors** on the page, including **spelling** or **grammar** errors. What does this suggest about care in producing the page?	___ **Accurate**
How does the **information factually compare to information from other sources** you've already read?	___ **Not Accurate**

Content and Currency:	This information is
If statistics are provided, **how old is the data**?	___ **Current**
How **recent is the other information** on the page? Does this make the information more or less valuable?	___ **Cited**
When was the page **written**? **When** was it last **revised**?	___ **Not Current**
Does the author provide a **bibliography, works cited** page, or **footnotes** that tell us where he got the information?	___ **Not Cited**

Summary:	The best reasons for ☐ **using** or ☐ **rejecting** this website are:

Internet Safety for Kids

Here are a few tips from the FBI about Internet Safety

There are some very important things that you need to keep in mind when you're on your computer at home or at school.

- First, remember never to give out personal information such as your name, home address, school name, or telephone number in a chat room or on bulletin boards. Also, never send a picture of yourself to someone you chat with on the computer without your parent's permission.

- Never write to someone who has made you feel uncomfortable or scared.

- Do not meet someone or have them visit you without the permission of your parents.

- Tell your parents right away if you read anything on the Internet that makes you feel uncomfortable.

- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are. Someone who says that "she" is a "12-year-old girl" could really be an older man.

To read more about privacy rules, visit the Federal Trade Commission's Web site at http://www.ftc.gov. There is a special section just for kids.

Also, download the FBI's "A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety" either in English or Spanish at: http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguide.htm

Help Your Child/Teen Become an Expert:
Start at the School Library Media Center

"I've been crazy about frogs since I was a kid. I collected them along with snakes, ants, and other critters, and even joined the Wisconsin Herpetological Society as a charter member—at age 14. Now, as a zoologist-photographer, I get to combine my two great passions. For a guy like me, an assignment to cover Brazil's Atlantic forest was a ticket to Frog Heaven."

-Mark W. Moffett. "Frog Heaven," *National Geographic*, March 2004, p. 24.

On winning the Academy Award for 2004, Peter Jackson, the Director of The Lord of the Rings movies said, "Thanks to my parents who gave me an 8mm movie projector at age nine."

Projects and research, or natural curiosity may lead your child into topics far beyond the expertise of teachers or the school's curriculum. When your child becomes interested in the Antarctic, whales, dinosaurs, science fiction, inventions, or a myriad of other topics, talk to the school library media specialist about ways to turn their interest into expertise.

You and your child might:
- ❖ Explore the school library media center first
- ❖ Explore the public library
- ❖ Explore the Internet
- ❖ Link into experts
- ❖ Gain access to advanced collections
- ❖ Do experimentation and research
- ❖ And, question all information in libraries. Your child might be in the forefront of something new and great!

Novice to Expert Continuum

Novice ➤ Apprentice ⟶ Mini-Expert; Hobby ⟶ Vocation; Avocation

Black Holes suck.

Oh?
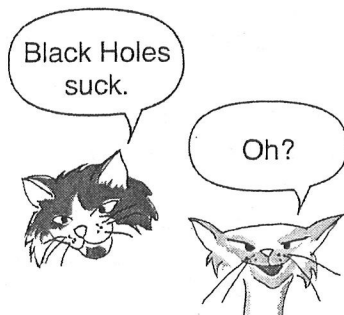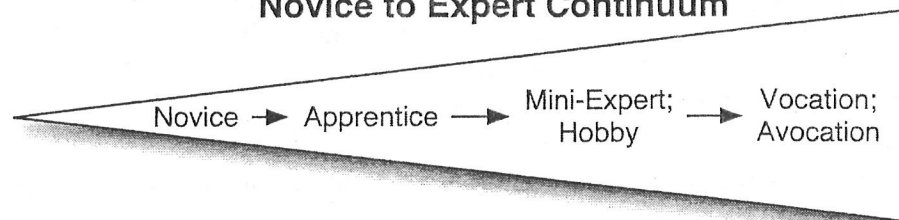
A Critical Thinker

Educators have long been interested in the idea of critical thinking. Indeed, there is a major body of literature on the topic. Library media specialists see critical thinking as one of the components of building an information literate person. Critical thinkers are not sponges (believing everything they read, view, and hear), nor cynics (believing nothing they read, view, and hear), but healthy skeptics (using evidence and authoritative sources to judge believability).

CRITICAL THINKING CONTINUUM

Sponges - - - - - - - - - Healthy Skeptics - - - - - - - - - - Cynics

Becoming a healthy skeptic is one of the life-skills school library media specialists try to build, a skill that will be valuable long after school years have ended. One of the major challenges is to educate children and teens to be critical thinkers and evaluate information they find on the Internet. Parents will want to help their children ask:

<u>Who</u> is saying <u>what</u> to me, <u>for what reason</u>, and <u>when</u> was it said?

Repeat: Who, When, Where, Why

For the 1,000th time...

Another way of involving young people is to make them answer questions about a source before they can use it in their projects/research papers. We want the questions to become second nature so that as adults, they discriminate among the flood of messages they encounter.

Evaluative Questions for Judging Quality Information

❑ Is the source authoritative? (Trustworthiness is a key factor.)

❑ Is the information current? (Current insofar as the topic requires the latest information.)

❑ Is the information fact or opinion? (Opinions are fine as long as we recognize them as such.)

❑ Is the information accurate? (Ah, most difficult to ascertain such as an Enron report to stockholders several years ago.)

❑ Is the information easily understood and useful? (This is a critical factor for children and teens who lack the time or skill to plough though complex information sources.)

❑ Does the provider of the information have an agenda? (Beware of the information source that is really out to sell the reader something, or is propagandizing the reader.)

A Creative Thinker

Is your child/teen creative? All of us have creative capacities and they can be improved. Creativity can also be squashed. Consider the definition in the box on the right[1] and an advertising poem used by Apple Computer.[2] School libraries are full of creative ideas and books that stimulate creativity. Enjoy!

To the Crazy Ones

Here's to the crazy ones.
    The misfits.
        The rebels.
            The troublemakers.
                The round pegs in the square holes.
The ones who see things differently.

They're not fond of rules.
    And they have no respect for the status quo.

You can praise them, disagree with them, quote them,
    disbelieve them, glorify them or vilify them.
About the only thing you can't do is ignore them.

Because they change things.
    They invent.   They imagine.   They heal.
    They explore.   They create.   They inspire.
They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.
How else can you stare at an empty canvas and see a work of art?
    Or sit in silence and hear a song that's never been written?
Or gaze at a red planet and see a laboratory on wheels?

We make tools for these kinds of people.
Because while some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius.

And it's the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world,
    who actually do.

Think different.

c. 1997. Apple Computer Inc.

The Creative Process

First Insight
↓
Saturation
↓
Incubation
↓
Ah-Ha!
↓
Verification

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[1] The creative process is Getzel/Kneller's description in von Wodtke, Mark. *Mind Over Media: Creative Thinking Skills for Electronic Media.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993. P 11.
[2] ©1997, Apple Computer, Inc. Used by permission.

Tips for Homework Help

Homework: A Concern for the Whole Family

How to Help: Show That You Think Education and Homework Are Important
- Set a Regular Time for Homework.
- Pick a Place.
- Remove Distractions.
- Provide Supplies and Identify Resources.
- Set a Good Example.
- Be Interested and Interesting.

How to Help: Monitor Assignments
- Ask about the Homework Policy.
- Be Available.
- Look over Completed Assignments.
- Monitor Time Spent Viewing TV and Playing Video Games.

How to Help: Provide Guidance
- Help Your Child Get Organized.
- Encourage Good Study Habits.
- Talk about the Assignments.
- Watch for Frustration.
- Give Praise.

From: "Helping Your Child With Homework." U.S. Dept. of Education, Accessed, March 2, 2004 at: http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework/index.html.
The entire manual is available for downloading in a number of formats.

Know How the School Library Media Center & Public Library Can Help

Resources
- ❖ Know the hours of both the school library media center and public libraries.
- ❖ Know what's available on the school library media Website and the public library Website.
- ❖ Look for lists of the best Websites to be available on the libraries' Websites; using those as starting points may save countless hours of searching.
- ❖ Use "Ask a Librarian," Florida's virtual reference service at http://www.askalibrarian.org.
- ❖ Know which school library media center online databases and digital periodical collections can be accessed from home. Keep a list of any passwords needed to access them. You can get those from your school library media specialist.
- ❖ Use your public library card to access the Florida Electronic Library at http://www.flelibrary.org.

Advice:
- ❖ Be a supportive guide on the side.
- ❖ Help your child with organizational skills and timelines for the assignments.
- ❖ Help the child meet milestone deadline dates for longer projects.
- ❖ **Don't do the projects for your child!**

The School Library Media Center and the Textbook

Textbooks constitute a core element of most schools in the United States because they provide structure, content, and guidance for teachers on how to teach a subject. In recent years, textbooks have been "dumbed down." That means, their reading level has decreased and their content simplified. Yet because knowledge is expanding, the amount to be learned each decade continues to increase.

A typical teacher is faced with many students in each class who cannot read and understand the textbook; they also will have other students in the class who need more information than the textbook offers. There is an alternate information source for all students—the school library media center. If your child does not read well, the school library media center has resources to provide understandable content. If your child reads very well, the library media center may provide more challenging and thought-provoking materials than the textbook.

Typically the library media collection will contain:
- Multiple reading levels
- Multiple interest levels
- More depth in subject treatment (vs. the breadth of treatment in textbooks)
- Pictures, diagrams, charts, models and real objects
- Multimedia such as videos, audio, and computer software
- Periodicals, maps, atlases, and reference books
- A wide variety of perspectives such as cultures and opinions
- Online databases to meet a variety of needs
- The ability to borrow materials that students and teachers need from other school library media centers through SUNLINK (http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu)

The point is not to eliminate the textbook. The point is to supplement any textbook with a fine collection of library media materials that can support every learner—your child included. Perhaps schools with the most at-risk students should have the best library media centers if we really expect every child to pass "the test."

School Library Media Centers and Technology

School library media centers house books and print resources, but they also have been on the forefront in many areas of technology including video, audio, and digital devices. When microcomputers were first purchased for schools, they were frequently found in the library media center. School library media specialists were among the first to recognize the power of technology in automating many tasks such as circulation and cataloging. They also understood how computers could be used to locate and retrieve information—both from the school library media center and, through the Internet, from beyond the walls of the school.

School library media specialists are more interested in what's ON the wires rather than the wires themselves. Their focus is on:
- ❖ Online databases containing periodicals and factual information.
- ❖ Linking to the best Web sites.
- ❖ Tools students can use to do their assignments.
- ❖ Providing access in the library media center, in the classroom, and at home.
- ❖ Portable computers for differing classroom/library uses.
- ❖ Wireless access to library information systems from anywhere in the school.
- ❖ Helping teachers create exciting learning experiences using technology tool for teaching and learning.

Determine the state of information systems in the school that are needed to support your child's education. Ask about:
- ❖ The state of computer equipment (age, software, operating systems).
- ❖ The reliability of the information systems (are they working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?).
- ❖ Equitable access to computers and the Internet for every child.
- ❖ Technology training for teachers.
- ❖ Software your child needs and uses to do excellent work.
- ❖ Online databases and digital periodical collections to easily locate high quality information.
- ❖ Collections of the best Web sites targeted at school topics and age levels.
- ❖ Filters and policies that will protect against advertising, pornography, and predators, yet are open enough to find the information your child needs.

This handheld connects using Bluetooth

Huh?

You can also find more information about the status of technology in your school by accessing the STaR (School Technology and Readiness) Profile at http://www.starsurvey.org/starreports/index.html.

The Digital School Library Media Center

Quality school library media programs extend their services through Web pages available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week and are linked from the home page of the school. Bookmark its URL and become familiar with its contents. Guide your child or teen to its features. Here is a list of features you might find on a school library media center Web page:

Connections to Assignments	When assignments by teachers involve the library media collections, links to those assignments with lots of resources is a common school library media center Web page feature.
Bibliographies to Complete Assignments	Many school library media specialists try to save learners time by posting the best Web sites, tips, guides to helpful books, or online databases for assignments.
Tips on Research	Look for links to tips and tools for to help with research: citing sources, good search engines and directories, tips for successful searching, helpful experts to consult, and mini-tutorials on parts of the research process.
Online Periodicals	Search digital magazine indexes and full-text articles. These digital collections will be invaluable in finding current articles on almost any topic.
Online Databases	Online databases contain all sorts of factual data such as weather information, science data, population statistics, lists of government agencies, or other current factual or experimental data.
Selected Web Sites	Library media specialists select a body of "the best" of the web for use by their students and teachers.
Best Book Lists	There are hundreds of recommended lists of good books for kids and teens to read. The library media specialist may link to some of these or create their own with input from teachers and students.
Published Student Work	Many students create very high quality papers, poetry, fiction, or other projects, and these can be posted on the library media Web site for other students to enjoy.
Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)	Most schools will have an online catalog of everything the library media center owns; this can be accessed through the Website or through SUNLINK (http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu), the catalog for all Florida K-12 public schools.
Connections to Other Libraries	There should be a link to SUNLINK, so that students and teachers can see what is in other school library media centers and ask the library media specialist to borrow it if needed. There may also be links to public libraries, academic libraries, state libraries, and national libraries, bringing the best in the world to students.
Connections to School Activities	The library media Web page may link to the school web page, school activities, sports events, competitions, and important school announcements.
Parent Pages	Tips and helpful resources for parents might include emergency information, ideas, and resources for helping with homework, reading lists, educational opportunities, and sources for scholarships.
Resources For Teachers	While the teachers could use all the information sources listed above, special links might be provided including those to special subject web sites, professional development opportunities, and tips for busy teachers.

Equip Your Child/Teen with the Right Technology Tools

Every year, computer technology makes advances and the industry hopes we will upgrade our home and school information systems. Most schools have many computers available in the school library media center and in classrooms for students to use in their learning activities. Some schools have found the money to provide every child a laptop or notebook computer linked to school networks, the school library media center, and the public library. Some schools are experimenting with handheld technologies, and wireless technology is providing access to information systems anywhere in the school.

What system that is pretty basic will work for my child?

No gourmet catfood for six months, Kid

I'm worth it

❖ A basic computer with a current operating system that can access school network from home: computer, keyboard, mouse, monitor, and a CD drive and burner is very nice.

❖ Internet access: A way to connect to the school, the school library network, and the world: either a dial-up modem (slow), a DSL line (getting more reasonable but not available everywhere), cable modem, and/or a home wireless system. Speed (bandwidth) is the critical thing here. (It's like the difference in size between a garden hose or a fire hose in downloading and uploading information.)

❖ A reliable printer. Now days, the printer costs little, but the ink/toner will be very expensive (industry plot). Find an inexpensive source of supplies, and be sure you ask how much it costs to print before you buy.

❖ Software. It is best to have the same or similar software package that your child/teen will be using at school. An "office" package" (word processor, spreadsheet, etc.) and a graphics program will be essential and can be used in many ways. An Internet browser is also a necessity.

What if I can't afford a system like this?

❖ The school may supply one through grants or specialist projects for a short period of time or for the entire school year

❖ Find a place your child/teen can use a computer: the school library media center, public library, computer lab in the community center, etc.

❖ Consider a less expensive keyboarding device or handheld computer compatible with the school's computers. They get cheaper and more powerful all the time.

❖ Ask your school library media specialist for advice.

What Your Child/Teen Needs to Do with Technology

The school library media center has a wider variety of resources and technologies—probably more per square foot than any other area of the school. Why? Today's students use technology for entertainment and for education. But what do they really need to know? Students must learn to use technology effectively to be prepared to live and work in our complex, information-rich world. National standards fall into six broad categories:

National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS*S)

1   Basic operations and concepts
2   Social, ethical, and human issues
3   Technology productivity tools
4   Technology communications tools

5   Technology research tools
6   Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools
(http://cnets.iste.org/students/s_stands.html)

In addition, the **Sunshine State Standards** (http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/sss.htm) include technology skills integrated throughout the curriculum. Here is a sampling by grade level and subject area. Note how often library media resources and services are required or implied!

	PK–2	3–5	6–8	9–12
Language Arts	• knows strategies to use to discover whether information presented in a text is true, including asking others and checking another source. • uses simple materials of the reference system to obtain information. • uses basic computer skills for writing, such as basic word-processing techniques, using e-mail; accessing and using basic educational software for writing.	• uses electronic technology, including word processing software and electronic encyclopedias, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information. • selects and uses appropriate technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of communication. • writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content.	• uses a variety of reference materials, including indexes, magazines, newspapers, and journals, and tools, including card catalogs and computer catalogs, to gather information for research topics. • uses electronic technology including databases and software to gather information and communicate new knowledge.	• selects and uses a variety of electronic media, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information. • selects and uses appropriate study and research skills and tools according to the type of information being gathered or organized. • synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions.
Mathematics	• displays solutions to problems by generating, collecting, organizing, and analyzing data using simple graphs and charts. • adds and subtracts whole numbers to solve real world problems using appropriate methods of computing, such as objects, mental mathematics, paper and pencil, and calculator.	• analyzes real-world data to recognize patterns and relationships using tables, charts, histograms, bar and line graphs, pictographs, and circle graphs generated by appropriate technology, including calculators and computers. • designs experiments to answer class or personal questions, collects information, and interprets the results using statistics.	• collects, organizes, and displays data in a variety of forms, including tables, line graphs, charts, bar graphs, to determine how different ways of presenting data can lead to different interpretations. • analyzes real-world data by applying appropriate formulas and organizing data in a quality display, using appropriate technology.	• selects and uses appropriate instruments, technology, and techniques to measure quantities in order to achieve specified degrees of accuracy in a problem situation. • describes, analyzes, and generalizes relationships, patterns, and functions using words, symbols, variables, tables, and graphs.

Science	• uses the senses, tools, and instruments to obtain information from his or her surroundings. • knows that scientists and technologists use a variety of tools to obtain information in more detail and to make work easier.	• understands that people, alone or in groups, invent new tools to solve problems and do work that affects aspects of life outside of science. • knows that before a group of people build something or try something new, they should determine how it may affect other people.	• knows that computers speed up and extend people's ability to collect, sort, and analyze data; prepare research reports; and share data and ideas with others.	•knows that technological problems often create a demand for new scientific knowledge and that new technologies make it possible for scientists to extend their research in a way that advances science.
Social Studies	• knows methods of communication from long ago and technological developments that facilitated communications. • knows significant individuals in U. S. history since 1880 (e.g., people who have worked to achieve equality and improve individual lives).	• knows the significant scientific and technological achievements of various societies. • knows significant people and their contributions in the field of communication and technology and the impact of these devices on society.	• understands important technological developments and how they influenced human society. • knows the major events that shaped the development of various cultures. • understands how factors such as culture and technology influence the perception of places and regions.	• uses a variety of maps, geographic technologies including geographic information systems (GIS) and satellite-produced imagery, and other advanced graphic representations to depict geographic problems. • understands the effects of the Industrial Revolution.
Foreign Language		•answers or formulates questions about a variety of media experiences produced in the target language (e.g., video, radio, television, songs, or computer programs).	• comprehends and interprets the main ideas and details from television, movies, videos, radio, or live presentations produced in the target language. • recognizes the relationship between verbal and nonverbal signals in communication, while listening to a live speaker of the target language or while viewing and listening to a mass-media product.	• conducts research on a topic of interest from an academic discipline (e.g., an event, a historical figure, or a scientific concept) using a variety of target-language sources (e.g., print, audio, and CD-ROM). • uses target-language sources to obtain information (in person or via the Internet) about a hobby, sport, or topic of personal, community, or world interest.
The Arts	• understands that works of art can communicate an idea and elicit a variety of responses through the use of selected media, techniques, and processes. • knows various careers that are available to artists.	• understands the emotional and social impact of theatre, film, and television on an individual's life and community and in other culture. • knows the types of tasks performed by various artists and some of the required training.	• knows pertinent skills, discipline, and knowledge needed to pursue careers and recreational opportunities in theatre, film, television, and electronic media.	• uses unified production concepts and techniques for various media (e.g., theatre, film, television, and electronic media). • uses scientific and technological advances to develop visual and aural staging elements that complement the interpretation of a text.
Health & Physical Education	• recognizes the ways in which media, technology, and other sources provide information about health.	• knows how to locate resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information. • knows the ways in which technology can influence personal health.	• knows how to access a variety of technologies for health information. • knows how messages from media and other sources influence health behavior.	• knows resources from home, school, an community that provide valid health information. • uses technology to assess, enhance, and maintain fitness and skills.

No classroom could provide the variety of resources required for students to meet these standards. A resource-rich centralized library media collection with information and technology systems enable and enhance the collaborative efforts of teachers and school library media specialists in ensuring students can meet these and all other standards. Does your school have adequate resources? Can you see how an investment in school library media resources pays dividends throughout the entire school and curriculum? It makes sense logically and financially!

Making Library Media Center Resources Accessible to ALL Students

If ALL students are to be successful, it is critical that ALL students have access to library media resources. As more information is delivered using computer and network technologies, library media centers play an increasingly important role in ensuring that ALL students access and use a variety of digital media such as the Internet, information services, and other information resources.

In making digital resources accessible to ALL, media specialists should consider the principles of universal design. Universal design suggests that rather than designing the media center services and facility for the average user, design instead for students with a broad range of abilities and disabilities. Media centers serve ALL students including students with learning disabilities and visual, speech, hearing, and mobility impairments.

Think about this: Encyclopedias provided in standard print formats are inaccessible to students who are blind and present barriers to students with low reading skills or to students for whom English is a second language. The same materials in a universally designed digital form can offer options for different learners. The materials can be read aloud by a computer or screen reader, printed on a braille printer, offered in spoken or written translation, and/or presented with highlighted main points and organizational supports. Digital media can empower individuals in ways not otherwise possible.

The media center may not have special equipment on hand for every type of disability but should have equipment and software programs that support common special needs. Many students in the school, not just those with visible or identifiable impairments, may use these technologies. Some students will find they learn better with larger print, audio support, visuals, or other assistance that technology can provide.

Think about: adjustable tables to accommodate wheelchairs, large print materials and labels to assist those with low vision, a large screen monitor, a speech output system on the computer, a trackball for those who have trouble controlling a mouse, a wrist rest for those with mobility impairments.

It is essential that the media center's resources are designed to be accessible to students with learning differences.

- Do digital resources with images and sound provide text alternatives?
- Can the media center's digital resources (including online catalogs, indexes and full text databases, and CD-ROMs) be accessed with a variety of assistive computer technologies such as screen readers and speech synthesis?
- Are media center web pages designed in an accessible format?

To learn more about the school library media center, assistive technology, and technology for universal design and access, see http://www.paec.org/fdlrstech/ua/ua.html.

Advice About Reading and Your Child

Here are a few common questions and answers about reading:

How do you get a child excited about reading and keep them that way through teenage years? The tried and true methods include:

- Reading to your child every day from birth.
- Making frequent trips to the public library.
- Giving books as gifts.
- Talking and talking, and talking, and talking about books.
- Having something to read all around the house: newspapers, magazines, books—materials that your kids <u>want</u> to read.
- Making reading a pleasant thing—not the enemy.
- Sharing lots of suggestions for better and better books.
- Reading what your child/teen is reading and talking, talking, talking.
- Making sure your children see you reading.
- Maximizing access to libraries: public, school and home.

This is book #23 in the series

I'm exhausted already, just thinking about it

My daughter reads nothing but series books. Should I worry? Probably not. Many of us older folks grew up on Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys and turned out all right. Children or teens often go through reading phases but get tired of the same hackneyed plots. Instead of fighting against series books, read better books aloud, and provide access to lots of better titles.

My son reads nothing but science fiction and fantasy. Should I worry? This literature is escapist for many boys and if they are participating in normal life activities, there is little to worry about. Why not read a title he recommends and have a family discussion about it?

Many of the teen novels seem to be so graphic about dysfunctional families, drugs, sex, and legal trouble. What should we do? There are all kinds of authors for teens including a number of writers who treat teen lives realistically in their books. It all depends on your family values whether you want to allow, encourage, or restrict such literature for your own teens. Our best advice is to read what your teens are reading and talk, talk, talk.

What are school library media specialists doing about teaching young people to read? School library media specialists are working with classroom teachers to teach and reinforce reading strategies taught in the classroom. They are participating in staff development activities to learn more about teaching reading, and many are adding the reading endorsement or certification to their credentials. But mostly, they are striving to provide quality reading materials and experiences so that students will want to read. Their belief is that kids practice the skills they learn in the classroom by their voluntary reading in the school library media center. If children or teens can read but don't, school library media specialists are not happy about their graduation to aliteracy (a person who can read but doesn't).

Celebrating Reading—Florida Style

Celebrating reading is appropriate any time. Here are just a few of the Florida celebrations of reading.

- ❖ Amelia Island Book Festival http://www.bookisland.org/
- ❖ Sarasota Reading Festival http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=READING
- ❖ Key West Literary Festival http://www.keywestliteraryseminar.org/
- ❖ Jacksonville's Much Ado About Books http://www.muchadoaboutbooks.com/
- ❖ St. Petersburg's Festival of Reading http://www.festivalofreading.com/
- ❖ Miami Book Fair International http://www.miamibookfair.com/

Check with your school library media specialist or public library for reading festivals and celebrations in your area.

Celebrate Reading Almost Every Month:

February	Library Lovers Month
March	Read Across America, March 2
	Freedom of Information Day, March 16
April	National Poetry Month
	School Library Media Week
	National People's Poetry Week
	TV Turn-Off Week
	El día de los niños/El día de los libros, April 30
May	Get Caught Reading Month
September	Library Card Sign-Up Month
	International Literacy Day, September 8
	Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read
October	International School Library Day
	National Book Month
	National Storytelling Festival (Jonesborough, TN)
	Teen Read Week
November	Children's Book Week
	Family Literacy Day, November 1

Anytime is a good time to read in Florida!

I'd say it's nearly purr-fect!

Check with your local school library media center and public library for "One Book, One School" or "One Book, One Community" events.

> If these don't work for your community, invent something!
> *Anytime is a good time to celebrate reading!*

Finding a Good Book for Florida Children and Teens

What should we choose at the library? What book should I buy my child or grandchild? There are so many books and too little time! Where should we start?

There's nothing like curling up with a book and you!

Here are some of the best book lists to recommend to your child or teen. And the good thing about Florida is that every year, your child can participate in choosing the best books by voting!

	Florida Children's Book Award Pre-K through Grade 2
	Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Grades 3-5
	Sunshine State Young Reader's Award Grades 6-8

Find current reading lists and past winners of all the awards at your school library media center or public library.

There are also many other book awards, and your school library media specialists can help you find the lists and award winners that are right for your child or teen.

If We Believe the Reading Research,
What Should the Teacher, the Parent, and the Librarian Provide to:

"Learn to Read"

If a school community really believes the research saying that "amount counts," then both the school library media center and the public library should have an extensive collection of reading materials young people want to read. So many school library media centers in Florida and throughout the nation have outdated, ragged, and uninteresting reading collections that many young people may ignore them. When reading collections are large, current, attractive, and easily accessible, good things happen. The best results of library contributions to reading should be most noticeable when young people have few reading materials in their homes, and when they are in the lowest quartile of reading scores. Is your school library program providing the following:

Skill-Based Reading Program

Tons of books to take home.

Tons of books to create rotating class-room collections from the LMC.

Choice:

Books kids and teens want to read.

+

Books adults believe they should read.

Reading materials in all formats including books, magazines, paper-backs, newspapers, e-books, web sites.

Motivation

Library reading activities that build reading enjoyment—concentrating on "reading is fun."

Leadership / Support of Initiatives
• Sustained Silent Reading
• Reading Aloud
• Motivational programs
• Reading discussions
• Reading events

Bottom line: The library contribution to reading should plug the holes in whatever skill-based program exists toward the goal of 100% avid and capable readers. Does your school's library media reading program measure up? Are you as a parent taking advantage of the library media resources?

If We Believe the Reading Research,
What Should Teachers and the Library Media Center (LMC) Provide to:

"Read to Learn"

As skills in reading build, the concentration of the reading program shifts to using reading as a tool to learn as well as reading for enjoyment. The school library program has much to contribute to all subject disciplines. Content knowledge is expected to mushroom. All teachers are reading teachers—helping students use strategies they have mastered in learning to read and applying them to reading to learn. The school library media program provides resources to help them read to learn.

Topical Unit of Study

Lots of books on the topic with high reader appeal.

Temporary collections borrowed from other schools and libraries.

Choice:

Books kids and teens want to read on the topic.

+

Books adults believe they should read on the topic.

Reading materials in all formats including books, magazines, paper-backs, newspapers, e-books, Web sites.

Motivation

Library reading activities that build reading enjoyment during the topical study.

Bottom line: The library media center's contribution to reading in the subject areas should stimulate more reading for information and therefore more in-depth knowledge and understanding. Does your school's library media center reading program measure up? Are you and your child taking advantage of the school library media resources as your child/teen explores school subjects and other topics of interest to them?

You, Too, Can Raise a Non-Reader!

It is much easier to raise a non-reader than a reader. Here are a few critical suggestions:

1. Don't let your child see you reading.

2. Use TV and videos as the primary babysitter.

3. Don't buy books for your child—they're too expensive.

4. If your child has a library fine or loses a book, cut off the library privileges.

You didn't do any of these things

5. Don't take your child to the public library or to the bookstore.

6. Talk about TV and movies but never about books.

I care, Kid

7. Keep your child away from those pop culture magazines, series books, and picture books (after the 2nd grade).

8. Don't allow reading in bed and don't get a bed lamp.

For other similar suggestions, see: "Unlucky Arithmetic: Thirteen Ways to Raise a Nonreader" by Dean Schneider and Robin Smith. *Horn Book*, March/April 2001. Find it at www.hbook.com in the archives. Also: "Ten Ways to Prevent Reading by the Parent," LEA Working Parties, at http://www.stockportmbe.gov.uk/docs/literacy/leaparties/ repleasure/adult/t3.htm. Thanks to Lynne Michels for sharing her list.

I'm a Reader—And I Don't Apologize

Daniel Pennac in his wonderful book entitled *Better Than Life*[1] lists the
following rights:

The Reader's Bill of Rights

1. The right not to read.
   *

2. The right to skip pages
   *

3. The right to not finish
   *

4. The right to reread
   *

5. The right to read anything
   *

6. The right to escapism
   *

7. The right to read anywhere
   *

8. The right to browse
   *

9. The right to read out loud
   *

10. The right to not defend your taste

Reading to Your Child: A Few Tips

Reading time is a special time. Hold your child in your lap. Cuddle. Be close. And this works with a small child, a big child, and more teens than you'd expect. Reading together is a special time and the consequences of togetherness are far-reaching. Here are a few suggestions for that special time.

For Young Children

❖ Turn pages, name things, name colors; attention span will be at a minimum.
❖ Have frequent, short book encounters—don't worry about short time span.
❖ Have some regular times for reading: bedtime, quiet time, every time grandma comes.
❖ Repeat favorites.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

Developing Readers

❖ Repeat sounds, words, and phrases.
❖ Use favorite books regularly but introduce new ones also.
❖ Use a variety of books to improve the richness of your child's language development.
❖ Note that attention spans are growing as well as understanding of story lines.
❖ Talk about the story.
❖ Remember that children will begin to recognize letters and words. You need not press them to read.
❖ Note that listening vocabulary is more developed than reading vocabulary.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

Beginning Readers

❖ Remember that word and letter sounds can be a regular part of reading, but not the focus.
❖ Blend the two readers: you and the child. Sometimes the child reads, sometimes you.
❖ Encourage expression by questions, phrasing, and vocally mimicking story characters.
❖ Read aloud stories above their reading level to enrich the child's language.
❖ Talk about the story; predict what will happen; ask what just happened; ask what they like and don't like.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

Reading Aloud

❖ Use expression in your voice; get excited, sad, loving, or angry as the story requires.
❖ Read with fluency. Your listener will pick up on your smooth delivery and the beauty of the language.
❖ Act out real parts or have the child do that acting at the appropriate times.
❖ Read aloud even if you don't read well.
❖ Remember that it's ok to become emotional. Five handkerchief books are great read-alouds.
❖ Always make reading aloud time a pleasant experience.

My Child/Teen Hates Reading! (Is That Really So?)

My child/teen doesn't read:

❖ Novels.

❖ Assigned textbook chapters.

❖ Any book I recommend.

❖ Anything that is "required."

However, the other day, I caught that kid reading:

❖ The sports page.

❖ An Internet site.

❖ A rollerblade magazine.

❖ A comic book.

❖ A car-repair manual.

❖ A fashion magazine.

What to do:

❖ If you discover an interest, feed it.

❖ Don't belittle or say such things as "You're dumb, you can't read."

❖ Don't talk about your child's reading problems or lack of reading interest when family, friends, or strangers are around.

Reading is its own reward.
There is no need to bribe, beg, threaten, or cajole.

I read 100 books. You owe me $100.

Nice try, Kid

Almost all children/teens will read something they really want to know about. Find the hook.[1] (Of course there are exceptions for dyslectic kids or other kids with physical or emotional problems.)

If your child/teen really has reading skills issues, find a knowledgeable tutor with a good track record. But mostly, have lots of things your child/teen wants to read at arms length and see that there is a good school library media center and public library close by.

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[1] Fader, Daniel. *The New Hooked on Books*. Putnam, 1977. The classic of the field. Fader worked with kids in prison and got them to read. Check a library. It's now out of print. Also: Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. Libraries Unlimited, 1993. One hundred years of research about reading can't be wrong.

Public Libraries and School Library Media Centers:
A Winning Combination.
(Take Advantage of Both)

It's really Benjamin Franklin's fault that we have the public libraries of this country. He convinced folks to bring their one precious book to a room and allow others to check it out. Give one book; get many. Thus began the Library Company of Philadelphia that turned into our public library system. It is an American gem. Everyone contributes the cost of one or several books through tax dollars and we have the "free" public library.

Today, school library media collections serve curriculum needs and public library collections serve more diverse needs for all ages. School library media centers reach 90% of the U.S. youth; public libraries, fewer. Using both collections provides both diversity of information and depth in selected topics.

School library media specialists are happy to introduce children to the public library and frequently work with the public library to make this happen. They want students to become acquainted with services for nights, weekends, and vacation periods. Public library collections will be their collection for life.
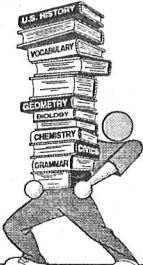
Check out some of the services of the public library that might be vital to your child's/teen's success:

❖ Digital collections of periodicals and databases that can be accessed usually from home.
❖ Special in-depth collections such as local history.
❖ Large fiction and nonfiction collections.
❖ Virtual reference services (the general public can ask questions over the Internet, and library staff are on duty to help at almost any time of day or night).
❖ Internet terminals.
❖ Special programs such as story hours, term paper clinics, guest speakers, workshops, and children's or teen book clubs.
❖ Comfortable study and reading areas.
❖ After school programming; homework help.
❖ Special assistance for home-schoolers.

Launch Your Child with Book Bags, Curiosity Kits, and Theme Bags:
Three Ideas for Parents and Teachers to Consider for K-2

Goal:		Result:
Each child from kindergarten through 2nd grade reads **500+** books per year.		Every reader will read at or above grade level and develop a reading habit.

Book Bags. Each classroom acquires enough canvas book bags (either from commercial sources or by making them) for each child in the classroom, plus a few extras. Each book bag is numbered and can be decorated. Once a month, the class goes to the library media center, where the children help select the books for the book bags. Into each book bag goes 1) a book that children can "read for themselves" (a wordless picture book, an alphabet book, books with a few words, or highly illustrated books, etc.) and 2) one book that can be read to the child by an older sibling, parent, friend, or caregiver (a good read-aloud picture book, a folktale, or a nonfiction animal book, etc.). Back in the classroom, the book bags are hung on hooks or put in cubby holes. Each day as the children go home they take a different book bag, rotating throughout the month. The teacher keeps a list on a clipboard to record the book bag number next to the child's name. The homework for a kindergartner through second grader is to read two books a day. If the child forgets to bring the book bag back, the spares can be used. In no case is a child denied access to a book bag, because reading practice is considered essential. At the end of the month, the class revisits the LMC, where the books are exchanged for new ones. Books in the book bag program are checked out to the room. No individual circulation records are kept for these books.

In addition to using the book bags, the class comes to the library once a month to choose books for the classroom collection (a minimum of 100 books at a time). The students make other visits during the month to select their own personal books to take home in addition to the book bags. The typical kindergartener, first, or second grader should have read a minimum of 500 books during the school year and then link into the public library system for regular reading during vacation periods.

Curiosity Kits. A variant on the book bag program is the creation of curiosity kits where each child creates a book bag filled with 2+ books on a theme that they think other members of the class might be interested in: whales, riddles, drawing books, hobbies, paper airplanes, kite flying, etc.

Theme Bags: During a month when the teacher will be studying a topic, children fill a third or a half of the bags with books on the topic.

When Parents and Books Cross Swords: A Few Tips

Ideas in books have always stirred controversy. The treatment of religion, politics, swearing, sex, violence, and stereotyping of culture or race can stir anger and resentment when these ideas conflict with parent and family values. One thing to always keep in mind:

There is no such thing as a non-controversial book!

Throughout world history, ideas in books have been dangerous. Reading the Bible has been banned, books have been burned, and parents have requested that certain titles be removed from libraries and library media centers.

Schools, teachers, parents, librarians and library media specialists respect a parent's right to limit the exposure of their children to certain ideas and will try to work on ways to carry out those wishes. The trouble comes, however, when parents insist that certain ideas not be available to other children in a class or school. They might, for example, ask that a book be removed from the library media center.

All Florida school library media centers have a "Materials Selection Policy" that explains how materials of all types are selected for the school library media collection. Ask to see a copy of that policy so that you begin to understand how the professional library community tries to deal with ideas and controversial materials of all types in various communities. This policy will also usually spell out ways for parents to register objections to materials in an orderly fashion. Remember that if a library media center removed all objectionable materials, there would be nothing left on their shelves. Here are a few other tips:

1. Help your child understand the family's values and know how to recognize objectionable materials and ideas.
2. Help your child to deal with objectionable ideas and materials when encountered. (Close the book/stop reading; Say, "That's what you might think; that's not what I think," or "I don't read that kind of material.")
3. Ask both teachers and library media specialists for alternatives to books or materials that have been assigned. There are many alternative titles for any topic that is being studied.

4. Respect the right of other parents to allow their children to encounter ideas other than those you value.
5. Talk, talk, talk to your children about the ideas they encounter daily in school, with friends, from the mass media, and from books. Give them strength to stand up for what they believe and value.
6. Help children and teens understand that just because everyone else is reading something, doesn't mean they need to participate. There is nothing wrong with being different.
7. Read the books your children/teens are reading and discuss them as a family.
8. Be sympathetic to library media specialists and teachers who may understand the specific needs of your child but are also dealing with 500-1000 other individuals and their unique needs.

The American Library Association (ALA) provides guidance both to library media specialists and the general public on the topic of intellectual freedom. In their words:

> **Intellectual Freedom** is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. It is a core value of the library profession and a cornerstone of democracy. (http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=if)

ALA opts for the most freedom, while respecting community values. No library media specialists we know of would stock hundreds of anti-Catholic books in a Catholic school. Neither would they shelve *Playboy* among the picture book collection. We live in a world of dangerous ideas. The issue, of course, is when, where, and how our children will learn to handle "different" ideas. Work with your school, your school library media specialist, teacher, principal, and community to handle ideas as they conflict with values. Intellectual freedom is a gift of our form of government. It's a reason we choose to live here rather than somewhere else.

The world is full of dangerous ideas, Kid.

I know. That's why I have you.

Picture Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful picture books for the younger age and for "children" of all ages. Here is a short list of authors and titles:

For Beginners
- The *Curious George* books (in various languages)
- Dr. Seuss books
- Ezra Jack Keats – any titles
- *Inch by Inch* by Eric Carle
- *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf
- *The Berenstain Bears books – any titles*
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin
- *The Little Engine that Could* by Watty Piper
- Richard Scarry – any titles
- Maurice Sendak – any titles (*Nutshell Library* is one example.)
- Rosemary Wells – any titles
- Stephen Kellogg – any titles
- Gene Zion – any of the Harry the Dirty Dog books
- Mother Goose books – pick out several with good illustrations.
- *Changes, Changes, Changes* by Pat Hutchins
- David Wiesner – any titles (*Tuesday* is one example.)
- P.D. Eastman – any titles such as *Go Dog Go!*
- Frances Hoban – the Frances books (a bear)
- Beatrix Potter – Peter Rabbit books
- David Shannon – all the David books (he gets in constant trouble!)
- Simple cookbooks designed for small children—Let them help you cook!
- Animal books and more animal books – you can never seem to have enough.
- Wordless picture books – ask for them at the library
- Alphabet books – there are hundreds. Get most of these at the library; animal ABCs are very popular
- Board books - young kids can handle the pages – look for titles on colors, shapes, animals, etc.
- Counting books – many titles

- A child's pictionary (a beginning dictionary with hundreds of pictures)

For Kids a Bit Older
- Patricia Polacco – any titles (*Pink and Say* is amazing)
- *Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears* by Verna Aradema
- *Seymour Simon – any titles about science and space*
- *How Much is a Million* by David M. Schwartz
- *The Red Balloon* by Albert Lamorisse
- Jon Scieszka – any titles
- Gerald McDermott – any titles
- Wonderful illustrated editions of fairytales such as *Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Hansel and Gretle*
- Arnold Lobel – any titles *(Frog and Toad Books)*
- David Macaulay – any books - for older viewers (*Castle, Pyramid*)
- *Aesop's Fables* – find a collection with pictures you like.
- Chris Van Allsburg – any titles such as *The Polar Express*
- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein and others of his poetry
- Bill Peet – any titles
- Ed Emberley – any titles

Picture Books for Teens/Everybody
- *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, illustrated by Christopher Bing
- *When Marian Sang* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida
- *Crazy Horse's Vision* by Joseph Bruchac

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)
- Eric Carle: www.eric-carle.com

You can search for good books by grade level and interest level at SUNLINK:
    http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu

Chapter Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful chapter books for grades 2-6 that we could not resist listing some of our favorites:

For Beginning Readers
- Laura Ingalls Wilder – any titles – still classics
- Beverly Cleary – any titles – still as good as ever
- Marc Brown – any of the Arthur books
- Dav Pilkey – Captain Underpants series

For Older Readers
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- J.K. Rowling – the Harry Potter books (if witchcraft doesn't bother you)
- *Catherine Called Birdy* by Karen Kushman among other titles.
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963* or *Bud Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Evans
- Richard Peck – numerous titles
- Lawrence Yep – any titles
- C.S. Lewis – any titles
- Madeleine L'Engle – any titles
- DiCamillo, Kate. *Because of Winn Dixie;* also, *The Tale of Desperaux: Being the Story of a Mouse*
- *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park
- *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse
- *Holes* or other titles by Louis Sachar
- Brian Jacques – Redwall series
- *Witness* by Karen Hesse
- E. L. Konigsburg – any titles
- Jane Yolen – any titles
- Cynthia Voigt – any titles
- Lois Lowry – any titles
- The *Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi
- *Freak the Mighty*
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- Katherine Paterson – any titles
- Roald Dahl – any titles
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- Shiloh *by Phyllis Naylor*
- *Sounder* by William Armstrong
- *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford

- Lemony Snicket – or any of the "Unfortunate Events" books
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Bronx Masquerade* by Niki Grimes

Non-Fiction Winners
- *The Diary of Anne Frank* (there are many great titles about Anne and her ordeal as well as the Holocaust)
- *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine 1845-1850* by S. Campbell
- *An Extraordinary Life: The Story of a Monarch Butterfly* by Laurence Pringle
- *Leonardo da Vinci* by Diane Stanley
- *The Truth About Great White Sharks* by Mary M. Cerullo.
- *The World at Her Fingertips: The Story of Helen Keller* by Joan Dash
- *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman
- *Navajo Code Talkers* by Nathan Aaseng
- *Homesick: My Own Story* by Jean Fritz
- *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr
- *The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours* by Jane Goodall
- *Hidden Worlds: Looking Through a Scientist's Microscope* by Stephen P. Kramer & Dannis Kunkel
- *Animals in Flight* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jenne Wakastsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie* by Elizabeth Partridge

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)
- Lois Lowry: www.loislowry.com

> You can search for good books by grade level and interest level at SUNLINK:
> http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu

Teen Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful teen books that we could not resist recommending some of our favorites:

- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- Chris Crutcher – any titles – particularly good for boys
- *Rocket Boys* by Homer H. Hickam (a good movie-book discussion; movie is *October Sky*)
- Richard Peck – almost any title
- *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850* (Non-fiction)
- Gary Paulsen – almost any title. The *Brian* books are popular with boys
- *Slake's Limbo* by Felice Holman
- *The 7 Habits for Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey
- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- Robert Newton Peck – *A Day No Pigs Would Die* and sequels
- *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* by Margaret Craven
- *Hiroshima* by John Hersey
- Maya Angelou – many titles. Don't miss *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- *Go Ask Alice* – drugs decimate
- *A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich* by Alice Childress
- William Sleator – almost any title
- *Deathwatch* by Robb White
- *The Pigman* and other teen titles by Paul Zindell
- Will Hobbs – many titles
- Cynthia Voigt – many titles
- *Buried Onions* by Gary Soto

Science Fiction/Fantasy
- J.R.R. Tolkien – 11 Academy Awards can't be wrong
- Ray Bradbury – many titles
- Isaac Asimov – many titles
- Robert Heinlein – early books
- Marion Zimmer Bradley – many titles
- Anne McCaffrey – the Dragon books
- Robin McKinley – wonderful retellings of fairy tales such as *Beauty*
- Orson Scott Card – numerous titles
- Frank Herbert – the Dune books

- Jane Yolen – any titles

Biographies
- *American Chica* by Maria Arana
- *Warriers Don't Cry* by Melba Beals
- *All Over but the Shoutin'* – Rick Bragg
- *I Am Jackie Chan* by Lung Cheng
- *Hungry Ocean* by Linda Greenlaw
- *Hawk: Occupation, Skateboarder* by Tony Hawk
- *Space: A Memoir* – Jessie Kercheval
- *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane
- *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Pedro and Me* by Judd Winick
- *Rosa Parks: My Story* by Rosa Parks
- *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Tenboom
- *Moving Violations* - John Hockenberry
- *Chinese Cinderella* – Adeline Yen Mah

Adult Books for YAs
- Agatha Christie. Yes, still read and worth it
- Tony Hillerman – mysteries of the Navajo Indian culture
- Jane Austin – all writings - a classical favorite
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – tough to beat the Sherlock Holmes titles
- *The DaVinci Code* by Dale Brown
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell
- Steven King – one of the most popular authors with YAs
- John Grisham –legal novels
- David Baldacci – more legal thrillers
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok
- Dave Pelzer – The *It* books

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)
- Will Hobbs: willhobbsauthor.com

You can search for good books by grade level and interest level at SUNLINK:
http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu

Reluctant Reader? Try Information Books

Just because kids are not novel readers, doesn't mean they have to be non-readers. Try nonfiction (information books). There are better information books for children and teens now than at any time in the history of the world. Visit the school library media center, public library, or a large bookstore to find books on anything your child may be interested in. For example:

- ❖ Space and space exploration.
- ❖ Animals, animals, animals.
- ❖ "Eyewitness Books" published by Dorling Kindersley.
- ❖ Insects – the more close-up photos, the better; giant spiders, snakes.
- ❖ Projects, experiments and cookbooks of things to make, like slime.
- ❖ Sports non-fiction – record books, how to play, equipment, biography.
- ❖ Disasters – mountain climbing; hurricanes; shipwrecks; earthquakes.
- ❖ The Human Body (you know they'll go for the sex first).
- ❖ *The Guinness Book of World Records* and derivative titles in their series.
- ❖ Cars, rollerblades, snowboards, motorcycles.
- ❖ Drawing, cartooning, anime.
- ❖ "Cut-away" picture books showing the insides of castles, submarines, pyramids.
- ❖ Websites of museums, art galleries, Northwest Indian masks.
- ❖ Cookbooks (experiment with them).
- ❖ Wars.
- ❖ Airplanes and missiles.
- ❖ The latest technology toys and gadgets.
- ❖ Rocks, minerals, and jewels.
- ❖ Diseases.
- ❖ Coping with death and loss.
- ❖ Jokes and riddles.

This list never ends. Once your kids get started on a topic, they will exhaust every library and bookstore in town. Now that's a shame!

Essential book: Jobe, Ron and Mary Dayton Sakari. *Info-Kids: How to Use Nonfiction to Turn Reluctant Readers into Enthusiastic Learners*. Stenhouse, 2002.

Self-Help at Your School Library Media Center and Public Library

Need help as a parent or as a child/teen? Try the school library media center and public library. Here are just a few of the topics and types of materials available for the asking.

1. Sex, drugs, alcohol, child abuse and other nasty matters.
2. Sexually-transmitted diseases—prevention, reality.
3. Legal information for those having a brush with the law.
4. Lists of social agencies that can help with all types of family problems.
5. Books and resources for teen parents.
6. Career information for all ages.
7. College and university information.
8. Scholarships, grants, and other monies for education and training.
9. Guides to parenting.
10. Information on divorce or other dysfunctional family problems.
11. Divorce and its affects on children and teens.
12. Gay and lesbian issues.
13. Cultural issues such as surviving as a minority in a majority environment.
14. Materials in the languages you speak and read.
15. Family finances, investing, insurance.
16. Information on major family purchases such as buying cars, appliances, homes, and insurance.
17. Health and medical information.
18. Eating disorders, dieting, bulimia, anorexia.
19. Death or coping with death of a friend or family member.
20. Books to cheer you up, make you laugh, comfort you, or just a good read for the beach.
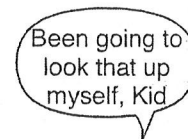
P.S. Parents, you are encouraged to use the school library media center just as you use the public library.
You pay for both of them through your taxes!

Best Books Lists for Your Child/Teen

There are hundreds of best books lists for children and teens. Here are just a few recommended sources on the World Wide Web:

1.	Association of Library Services for Children (American Library Association) Sponsors the famous Caldecott, Newbery Awards and Pura Belpre, plus Coretta Scott King Awards.	http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/literaryrelated.htm
2.	Young Adult Library Services Association (American Library Association).	http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.htm
3.	*Booklist*. Books for Youth; Adult Books for Young Adults; Media (Audio, Video, CDs).	http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm
4.	*Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books*.	http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/
5.	International Reading Association.	http://www.reading.org/
6.	National Council for the Social Studies.	http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/
7.	National Science Teachers Association.	http://www.nsta.org/ostbc
8.	*Horn Book* Parents' Page.	http://www.hbook.com/parents.shtml
9.	*Children's Literature Choices* (annual Top Choices List).	http://www.childrenslit.com/clc.htm
10.	*Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children* (National Science Teachers Association).	http://www.nsta.org/ostbe
11.	*School Library Journal* best books lists.	http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/community/857/Best+Books/23305.html
12.	Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site.	http://www.carolhurst.com
13.	Children's Literature Web Guide.	http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/
14.	History of Children's Literature web site by Kay Vandergrift.	http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander
15.	Multicultural Resources for Children.	http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/multipub.htm
16.	New York Public Library: 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know.	http://kids.nypl.org/reading/recommended2.cfm?ListID=61
17.	Jim Trelease's Book Lists.	http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/video_biblio.html#pagetop
18.	Celebrations – African American History Month.	http://kids.nypl.org/holidays/february.cfm
19.	SouthEastern Initiatives Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR*TEC) Reading Resources for Parents.	http://www.itrc.ucf.edu/other/seirtec/parentpages
20.	SUNLINK – Check under "reading" on parents' page.	http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/parents

I just hate URLs.

Il saves trees, Kid.

Anyway, it keeps more dogs busy.
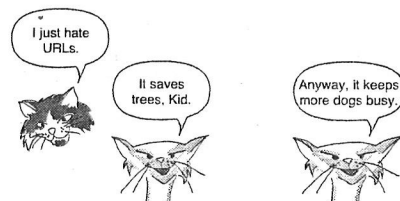
We're Poor—Can the Library Help? YES!

School and Public Libraries are Free, Free, Free!

Many parents, especially if they're new to this country, don't realize that their families can use the school library media center and public libraries for free! That means as we work and pay taxes, some of our tax money goes to support the libraries we use. It is one of the most wonderful things about living in America.

gratuit
gratuito
frei

I get it, Kid.

> I went to the library. They gave you books for nothing. You had to bring them back, but when you did, they let you take others.
> - Barbara Cohen, *Gooseberries to Oranges*, 1982

School library media centers and public libraries may have:

1. Books to help learn the language.
2. Tutoring programs to help both parents and children.
3. After-school programs for homework, tutoring, and extra learning.
4. Computer terminals to use the Internet and the digital library.
5. Programs that teach, help, or entertain, such as storytelling.
6. Books, books, and more books.
7. Books in other languages.
8. Magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets.
9. Information to solve my problems.
10. Materials to help my children with their school work.

School and public libraries are the best bargain around!

We Feel Discriminated Against.
Can the Library or Library Media Center Help?

Everyone Feels Discrimination At One Time or Another

It is sad but true that in every society worldwide, discrimination is alive and well. It may be because of he color of your skin. It might be the people discriminate because they think you are too tall, too short, or because you are Jewish, speak Arabic, go to the "wrong" church, are overweight or underweight, or are just plain ugly. If others don't find something in you to dislike, they will invent it.

I hear Siamese are persnickety

So what's your point, Kid?

What can a library possibly do?

1. Libraries and school library media centers provide books, magazine articles, videos, and audio recordings of folks just like you who are experiencing discrimination. The authors will recount their stories and tell you how they coped with the hand dealt them. They could be angry, encouraging, or resigned to their fate.
2. They provide materials to help you find out your rights in employment, in courts, in society, in housing, and in financial matters.
3. You can find self-help suggestions for dealing with any problem you encounter.
4. You can learn how to excel in a field from library materials. Competence and hard work have been keys to opening doors in sports, music, film, politics, education and the business world.
5. Read and read until you learn self-defense mechanisms to deal with others: What do I say when they say this? What do I do when they do that?
6. Find organizations that deal with the discrimination you face.

Responsibility, Fines, and Bringing Books Back

A perennial problem in every library is lost, missing, and overdue materials. No other issue makes so many library enemies. The digital library has advantages because physical items do not have to circulate. Nevertheless, just as soon as children come to Kindergarten, they may check out books, take them home, and bring them back. An amazing feat indeed!

> Took my books back!

> One less face lick, Kid.

We all try to help children and teens learn responsibility. They must also have books to read— and lots of them. Can we do both? **YES!** If a child doesn't handle materials very well, shall we deny access to books? **NO!** Literacy must always win.

Children and teens must have lots of books in their possession if they are to learn to read and continue reading. And they need to learn responsibility. Parents can help!

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Get acquainted with the library media specialist and understand the rules of circulation, policies for lost books, fines, and check-outs. Make special arrangements if necessary, but support the work of the school library media center.
2. Do the same for public library materials.
3. Have a family conference at the beginning of the school year about library books, textbooks, notes, and other things that must go from school to home to school. Set up a reminder system so that everyone helps everyone else.
4. Have a few special places at home where library books are stored: a box beside your child's bed, a box in the family room where books are generally shared, a special "library" shelf, a personal bookcases or space on the family book shelves.
5. Have an appropriate container with identification on it—a bag or backpack or wheelie cart—to transport items to and from school.
6. Teach children how to care for books or other materials. The school library media specialist will probably do this, so you can review those tips with your child.
7. Decide as a family what to do about lost books and fines. Since the solution is not to cut off book borrowing, how can the whole family help? Can children earn the fines or replacement cost? How?
8. If a book is lost, don't shout. It happens to most of us at one time or another. Figure out a solution. Dwell on that solution, not the lost book.
9. **The main objective is to build a life long reading habit**, and the second objective, to teach young people to be responsible.

Classroom Collections, School Library Media Centers and Public Libraries

Sources of Reading Materials

Classroom

Public Library   The Reader   School Library

Home

Bookstore
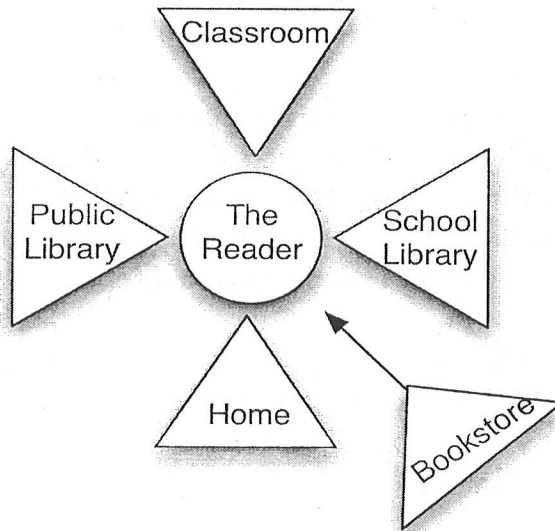
Where should children/teens have access to reading materials? The simple answer is EVERYWHERE! Yet sometimes things happen in schools that prevent logical programs from happening. Sometimes parents can help.

The classroom collection has become quite popular in the past few years with funding coming from states and the federal government—sometimes at the expense of the school library budget.

The advantage of the classroom collection is that it is close at hand for students to use while school library media centers and public libraries are either down the hall or some distance from the school.

The disadvantage of many classroom collections is that they are too small and too static. They become uninteresting soon after the school year begins and cannot hope to compete with the larger collections close by.

There is a simple solution—create rotating collections from the school library and perhaps even the public library in the classroom. Every few weeks, a fresh supply of materials replaces an older set.

Such an arrangement can work with students taking the leadership to check out and return collections to and from the school or public library. Perhaps parents can help organize such a system and streamline it until it works.

The goal is to have something fresh to read at arm's length so that more is read. And this translates into a reading habit—producing higher achievement. It works.

Everywhere I look there's another litterbox

Purr

Money, Money, Money: What You Can Do?

It would be nice to report that school library media centers cost very little and could be run by volunteers. But you know that old saying: "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." Good information systems cost money. And what's free on the Internet—well, you get what you pay for.

First, ask the library media specialist how much per student the school/district spends for library materials. Enter that figure here: _____

Second, ask how much per child is spent from federal, state, and other sources for the LMC. Enter that figure here: _____

Total spent per student for library media materials: _____

Consider this:
- Just to stay afloat, a library media center needs to add one book per student per year ($20-$30 a book).
- To build a collection, the library media center needs to add two books per student per year ($40-60 for two books)

How much money would your school library media center need to either build or just maintain its collection over and above what it gets now?

_____

Here are a few things you could do:

1. Contribute $20-30 each year for a birthday book for your child.
2. Ask grandparents to do the same.
3. Ask your child to "earn" the cost of a book and contribute it to the library media center.
4. Talk to the administrators about funding the library media center better and get a commitment for the school to do it.
5. Work on a grant for the library.
6. Talk to community organizations that would be willing to help.
7. Support your school's Book Fairs and other library fundraisers.
8. Talk to legislators about the importance of school library media programs and why they should provide adequate funding.

I thought libraries were free!

Get a clue, Kid.

Volunteering at the School Library Media Center

Many parents or grandparents or other community members would like to help out in spare moments and wonder what they can do for the school library media center.

1. **Be a Subject Expert.** From firemen to business executives, to chemists, to homemakers, many students doing topical research could benefit from parental expertise and experience. Volunteer to be a person that students can interview, offer a tour or virtual tour of your place of employment, volunteer to be a guest speaker or library resource assistant, or offer to answer questions by email or telephone.

2. **Help with the Nitty-Gritty and More.** There are seemingly hundreds of jobs in any library media center begging to get done if you have one or several hours to devote. Here are some things you might help with:

    a. Shelving books and filing materials.
    b. Repairing books and other materials.
    c. Helping students who are having trouble accessing library databases.
    d. Outlining/writing a grant.
    e. Helping a child read or understand a web site.
    f. Organizing a reading celebration.
    g. Heading a library fund-raising campaign.
    h. Serving as a library advocate on a PTA parent council.
    i. Shepherding a bill through the state legislature to fund library databases and better library media materials for every child in the state.
    j. Being an artist-in-residence based in the library.
    k. Storytelling or reading aloud to classes as they come to the library.
    l. Serving as a one-on-one tutor in the library.
    m. Helping students make a library quilt or other crafts to be auctioned for the library fund.
    n. Finding experts to help students with sophisticated research.
    o. Finding free sources or inexpensive supplies needed by the library.
    p. Repairing a piece of equipment.
    q. Helping paint the library or repairing a worn spot in the carpet.
    r. Installing anti-theft devices on the library computers.
    s. Leading, organizing, or training parent volunteers for the library.

> **School Safety and Volunteers**
> *Don't be surprised in today's world if there is a fair amount of red tape, screening and scrutiny involved in volunteering in any school or being on school grounds during school hours. As a parent and a taxpayer, you understand that schools must be concerned with safety, insurance and liability.*

Please don't meow when you see me in the library today.

I wouldn't dream of it, Kid

What school libraries don't need:

1. Old equipment that doesn't contribute to the curriculum or the updating of school technology.
2. Book drives that result in old, outdated titles that will fill up shelves but never get read.
3. Persons with an ax to grind, something to sell, or a political agenda.
4. Persons who take up more of the library media specialist's time than the help is worth.
5. Volunteers with no training who accept the responsibility to run a library without a librarian.

Advocate for the School Library Media Center

It may seem odd, but many library media specialists feel helpless as they try to provide first-rate information systems for very little money. Can you imagine a winning football or basketball team or school band without a parent's booster club? Neither can we. Likewise, a single voice in the school pleading for better information systems—more relevant and current materials, state-of-the-art technology, and improved staffing—often goes unheard. Library media programs need advocates.

I see you're meowing at Tabby, again.

Advocacy requires constant, steady, positive pressure over time. There is no such thing as an instant or one-time library media fund allocation that solves all the problems. Parents who demand the best education must be involved and make their voices heard over and over and over.[1]

She's on the school board, Kid.

Adequate funding and staffing are probably the two most at-risk factors in good school library media services. As budgets fluctuate and the pressure for cuts increases, school library media centers are regularly on the chopping block. That means your child's or teen's most critical information system and collection are on the chopping block. Suppose the library media center's online database bill is not paid every year? It's like gas in the school bus. No gas. No go. What is the *real* cost to your child when the information available is outdated or simply non-existent? What is the cost of ignorance and misinformation?

Advocacy requires strong, steady voices. It requires accompanying the library media specialist to the board meeting for a presentation about the library media center's needs. It requires vigilance. It requires speaking to school administrators regularly. Yes, good school library media centers cost money—plenty of it. There is no alternative. No free lunch. No instant solution. Sorry.

> How well your child reads and handles information will predict academic achievement. It's that simple. The school library is an essential key.

[1] Helpful publication: *Toolkit for School Library Media Programs: Messages, Ideas And Strategies For Promoting The Value Of School Library Media Programs And Library Media Specialists In The 21st Century @ Your Library*. American Library Association, 2003. Available at http://ala.org

* *Florida Power!* © 2004 Hi Willow Research & Publishing. Available at http://www.lmcsource.com

No School Library Media Specialist? What to Do!

The national research on school libraries links the professional school library media specialist with student achievement.[1] Staffing the school library with only a clerk or a volunteer will **not** make a positive difference in test scores.[2] Why? Because the professional library media specialist concentrates on students, teaching, and the use of information, while aides and volunteers concentrate on the organization of materials.

If the library media center is just a room full of books to be circulated to students, no special expertise is needed. If, however, reading, test scores, achievement, information literacy, and technology skills are to be emphasized, then a professional, certified library media specialist with advanced university training is essential.

Sadly, many schools in Florida, particularly at the elementary level, do not have professional library media specialists. At the very time when children are learning to read and learning to find and use information—skills that will be important throughout life—there is no professional to help them. Reading, test scores, and achievement all suffer when there isn't this vital professional in the school. It is like trying to staff the school with a school secretary but no principal; a hospital with LPNs but no doctor; an airline with ticket agents but no pilots.

You'll meet the new library media specialist today!

It's all your fault

Purr

Here are a few tips:

1. Understand what a good school library media program can do for your child.
2. Know what the research says about the contribution of a good school library media program to achievement.
3. Find out why the administrators do not have a school library media specialist as a priority for hiring.
4. Find a great school library media program and visit it. Then take others with you: parents, administrators, board members, and community leaders.
5. Begin to lobby for a school library media specialist. It is usually a matter of priorities rather than money. What will it take to make the library media program a priority? If there hasn't been a school library media specialist in the school, it may take 3-5 years to get operating at maximum power.
6. Don't take no for an answer.

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[1] Keith Lance speech, White House Conference on School Libraries. At: http://www.imls.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/keithlance.htm
[2] See the Alaska Study at http://www.davidvl.org under Research.

How Parent Groups Can Help the School Library Media Program

Many parent groups such as the PTA or PTO have a school library media center committee. They work with the school library media specialist to bring library media issues to the entire group for suggestions, recommendations, and action. Consider the following checklist for your parent organization dealing with library issues:

1. Understand how the school library is funded.
   a. School funds
   b. District funds
   c. State/federal funds
   d. Grant funds
   e. Fundraisers (bookfairs, candy sales, etc.)
   f. Parent group funds
2. Understand the budgetary needs a library media program must have to operate and provide the service your children must have.
3. Make plans to close the gap between what governmental sources (local, state and federal) are providing and what parent groups can do. (Governments should fund at least 90% of the needs.)
4. Set up a volunteer program to help the school library media specialist.
5. Help plan and conduct various library activities:
   a. School bookfairs.
   b. Reading motivation activities.
   c. Research or term-paper clinics for parents/students.
   d. Helping every child receive a public library card with access to their databases and the Florida Electronic Library. Some neighboring community college and university libraries might also welcome students.
6. Every time a politician or school board member comes to the school, have the meeting in the library media center and have a large poster showing the needs that library program has. Whenever school funding is discussed, never forget the library media program.
7. Create a library media fund account and monitor that the money is actually spent for the library.
8. Sponsor a birthday book contribution program and provide a way for families who can't afford $25/$30 to earn birthday books. Don't forget the out-of-town grandparents as a source of these gifts.
9. If there is no school library media specialist, lobby tirelessly for one—a good one.
10. Lobby for help for the school library media specialist. One person can't do it alone.
11. When the subject comes up, say something good about the library media program and its resources.

What Kids Say about Good School Library Media Programs

Researchers in Ohio went directly to students to find out if school library media programs were helpful to them. They said:

> *"I needed help doing a project for government that had to do with presidents and they had so many books and then the librarian helped me find web sites. But then they gave me ways of sorting through all the ideas to extract the key points so I could get my head around it all."*

> *"I needed to write a paper and I went to the Library where I was ultimately able to write a paper successfully. My ideas were a mess and talking to the librarian gave me a way to organize my ideas and present the argument. I did really well!!! I've never forgotten that. (I've) used it to do many other assignments."*

> *"I remember when I came up to the school library for math. We turned the library into a co-ordinate grid. It was sooooooooooooooooo cool!!!!!!!! And I could know about grids in my tests."*

> *"It helped me find info on racism for a 10th grade project, and made me really think about that, especially I didn't realize how racist some of my ideas were."*

> *"We had a big research project my sophomore year of high school. I had to do my report on heart attacks and the library helped me out with PowerPoint and finding information. I actually learned the food I eat is not so good for me, so I've made a few changes there."*

When you as a parent demand a good school library, you are saying loudly: **"I want my child to succeed!"** If your child has a good teacher and a good school library media center, the door is wide open to success.

Ask, encourage, advocate, yell, scream, demand!—It's your child's life and opportunity window.

Above all, don't accept the argument that "We can't afford it." How can you NOT afford it? Remember the saying, "A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste!"

Bilingual Children/Teens:
How Can the School Library Media Center Help?

Many schools in the Florida are filled with students who are learning English. The school library media center and public library can help. Here are a few tips:

1. Check out books from the school library media center and public libraries in both languages. Try to have some of each in your home all the time.
2. Books from the both public library and school library media center can be checked out free as long as your child brings them back on time. If books are lost or returned late, there might be a fee. Help your children/teens be responsible.
3. Reading a lot in English will help your child learn English fast.
4. Read in English with your child/teen. Teach each other as you read.
5. Find lots of "picture" books at the library about the topics your child is studying in school. Look at the pictures together and name what you see in English.
6. Have a bilingual dictionary handy such as a Spanish-English/English-Spanish dictionary. You can look up words in either language for help.
7. If your teen has trouble understanding the textbook, find an easier children's book on the topic of the textbook chapter. It will help your child get the main idea about the topic.
8. Meet and talk to the public librarian and school library media specialist often. When they know you and understand what you and your child need, you can expect help.
9. Ask the librarian and media specialist for help in finding web sites both in English and the child's first language.
10. Ask the library media specialist to find videos or computer software on the topic the class is studying. Visual and sound may help the child understand the concepts being taught.
11. If you do not have many books in your home, ask the librarian or library media specialist to help you find free or inexpensive books your child would like to read.
12. Be sure that your child visits the school library media center several times or more per week, with the class or independently.
13. Take your children to the public library often.

> SUNLINK is a Florida project that lets you search for materials in school library media centers by language and format as well as title, author, subject, reading level and more.
>
> **http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu**

School Library Media Center Staffing: Good News, Bad News

Today's school library media center has become the complex information, reading and technology hub of the school. Here is the staffing scoop!

Every school library media center needs:

At least one full time professional, university trained library media specialist.
Why? The school library media specialist is a teacher: a teacher of reading; a teacher of information-handling and research skills; a coach of technology; and a co-creator of exciting learning experiences with your child's/teen's teacher. When the majority of a library media specialist's day is spent on these tasks, your child will receive an important boost academically. Research demonstrates that it is the well-trained professional who makes the difference in achievement.[1]

At least one full time paraprofessional/clerical support person.
Why? These people keep the facility and materials running and organized. They assist with the many time-consuming functions of circulation, retrieval, shelving, discipline, materials processing, traffic control, facility monitoring and decorating. Nothing works if it isn't organized.

At least one full time technology coordinator.
Why? This person maintains the student access, networks, computers, web sites, communication systems, filters, passwords, servers, and software maintenance and upgrades. When technology doesn't work, it doesn't count! Net learning? Zero!

Rationale: The trio of library media staffing will provide an unbeatable team in working across the school to provide equitable access to information, to help and support each child and teacher in dealing with information and technology, and to serve as reading's best friend. The bad news is that a full team is expensive.

To not staff sufficiently[2], or to hire only a clerk or aide to "run the library" negates the impact of the place, and your child will suffer! But the suffering is often in silence: books not read; poor research habits; rampant plagiarism; surfing (not searching) the Internet; and ultimately, low test scores. The more your child needs help in school, the more critical the school library media program will be.

Note: *In schools of over 1,000 students, staffing needs are greater.*

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[1] The Alaska Study can be read at http://www.davidvl.org under research.
[2] See results of the Florida study at http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/makingthegrade.

Great Quotes About Libraries and Reading

Books were my pass to personal freedom. I learned to read at age three, and soon discovered there was a whole world to conquer that went beyond our farm in Mississippi. - Oprah Winfrey.

I started reading. I read everything I could get my hands on... By the time I was thirteen I had read myself out of Harlem. I had read every book in two libraries and had a card for the Forty-Second Street branch. - James Baldwin.

No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. - Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, letter 1753.

You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them. - Ray Bradbury.

My most prized possession was my library card from the Oakland Public Library. - Bill Russell, basketball player.

It was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read. - Frederic Douglass, *Escape from Slavery*.

I cannot live without books. - Thomas Jefferson.

Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him. - Richard McKenna.

Reading aloud is the best advertisement because it *works*. It allows a child to sample the delights of reading and conditions him to believe that reading is a pleasureful experience, not a painful or boring one. -Jim Trelease, *The New Read-Aloud Handbook*.

When I got my library card, that was when my life began. - Rita Mae Brown.

What in the world would we do without our libraries? - Katharine Hepburn.

We read to know we are not alone. - C. S. Lewis.

I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library. - Joge Luis Borges.

Books can be dangerous. The best should be labeled "This could change your life. - Helen Exley.

It is a man's duty to have books. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life. - Henry Ward Beecher.

A book is a gift you can open again and again. - Garrison Keillor.

I went to the library. They gave you books for nothing. You had to bring them back, but when you did, they let you take others. - Barbara Cohen, *Gooseberries to Oranges*, 1982.

Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation. - Walter Cronkite.

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. - Richard Stele.

If we would get our parents to read to their preschool children fifteen minutes a day, we could revolutionize the schools. - Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools, 1981.

The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them. - Mark Twain.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some are to be chewed and digested. - Francis Bacon, *Essays*, 1625.

Good books may not save the world but they are one of the reasons the world is worth saving. - Bernice E. Cullinan.

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- ❖ Kropp, Paul. *How to Make Your Child a Reader for Life*. Broadway Publishing, 1995.
- ❖ Pennac, Daniel. *Better Than Life*. Stenhouse, 1999. A great book about family reading.
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School Library Media Centers

- ❖ American Association of School Librarians. Issues & Advocacy page. At: http://www.imls.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/whitehouse.htm See the "advocacy" link for materials on how to promote a good school library media program at your school. There are also other valuable resources on information literacy and intellectual freedom.
- ❖ *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. The American Association of School Librarians and AECT. American Library Association, 1998. This book contains the national standards for school libraries and is available from the American Library Association at: http://www.ala.org/
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- ❖ Koechlin, Carol and Sandi Zwaan. *Build Your Own Information Literate School*. Hi Willow, 2003. Commonsense methods of teaching novices, apprentices and info-stars how to tackle information and win. Excellent for teachers, librarians, and parents.
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Public Libraries: Resources for students, Parents and teachers
By June Level

Florida's public libraries are among the best resources for citizens of all ages and backgrounds. Consider this typical scenario:

The school and media center are closed Friday afternoon. Your child has a report due on Monday and this is the first time you have heard about it. Your budget is pretty limited this week and you don't want to go to a bookstore and buy a book. Your computer is "down" and not available. Do not fear, the public library is probably near and open on Saturday and maybe even Sunday. Fortunately a car is available, so you gather child and backpack heading for the public library. You go inside and introduce yourself to the librarian in the children's room or the main reference desk with a pleading look on your face. Is the person behind the desk really dressed in s Superman costume or is it just your imagination?

Public libraries today have access to all kinds of information in various formats for you and your child to use. If every child was assigned to read the same book, you are probably out of luck, but if it's a report on a topic of choice, then you will b e fine. Try a few articles from the library databases, the print collections hoping to find something to print out or take home. If you are really lucky your child will have written down what the teacher expected and instructions for the final product. Don't be surprised if the public librarian already knows this information from the crystal ball on the desk (or perhaps your just the tenth frustrated parent in the same morning).

It's wonderful to find a helpful public library nearby and realize that your taxes have already paid fore their services. While you are there, check out their many other services. You are likely to encounter programs of interest, materials in several languages, resources for persons with disabilities, computer resources, DVDs music Cds and online resources you can access from home. The most important resource there will be the librarian who can guide you to resources around the word accessible through various networks. Have helpful phone numbers handy:

Library Telephone Numbers:

Public Library Reference desk:

Children's room

School Library:

Don't forget to bookmark library URLs on your computer for quick access.

Index