

teacher | librarian

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATIONAL MAKERSPACES: PART 1 OF MAKING AN EDUCATIONAL MAKERSPACE

R. Steven Kurti, Debby L. Kurti, and Laura Fleming provide an excellent discussion of the maker movement and makerspaces, the rationale behind them and the benefits they produce. The important article is very informative and very persuasive. This is a must read for teacher librarians.

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BUILDING A CULTURE OF CREATION

Andy Plemmons offers firsthand experience introducing maker culture and activity to his library and students. Starting simple and moving to robotics and 3D printing, Plemmons demonstrates realistic ways to start and grow making in school libraries.

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MAKE IT SO: YOU CAN START A MAKER CLUB AT YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY!

Rebecca Sofferman Buerkett recounts her route to making in an informative and useful article. Buerkett covers goals and planning, space, funding, volunteers, and technical expertise.

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SCHOOL LIBRARY MAKERSPACES: MAKING IT UP AS I GO

Ana Canino-Fluit shares her experience and success in establishing a maker club in her small school. She also related maker activity to both AASL's *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner in Action* and the CCSS Anchor Standards.

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REALITY CHECK: AUGMENTED REALITY FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Marybeth Green, Joy Hill Lea, and Cheryl Lisa McNair argue that augmented reality for school libraries is closer than we think. The authors discuss research related to augmented reality in learning environments and strategies for implementation in school libraries as a plan for research or a product of research. Strategies include create, curate, locate, and gamify. A very interesting article on an important topic.

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WHY DO I STILL NEED A LIBRARY WHEN I HAVE ONE IN MY POCKET? THE TEACHER LIBRARIAN'S ROLE IN 1:1/BYOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Jennifer LaGarde and Doug Johnson have produced an important "call-to-arms" for teacher librarians. The article addresses the challenge to teacher librarians to remain relevant—and employed—as the world of information and information technology threaten traditional roles and practices. The authors present several ideas and actions that can be used to change, adapt, and survive.

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WHY A MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNING COMMONS?

Chad Stephenson and Jason Stone address the question "Why a Learning Commons?" for librarians, administrators, technology coordinators, and other middle school teachers. The article tells the story of the learning commons created by the San Francisco Friends School, among the first for middle school students in the United States.

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LOOKING BACK ON A YEAR OF TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL LIBRARY TO LEARNING COMMONS

Christina A. Bentheim finishes her year-long series of articles reporting on the transformation of her traditional library into an innovative and vibrant learning commons.

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NOTEBOOK



Summer

David V. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

A hhh – summer! The “break” to which we have been looking forward. Yes, time to pause, but also time to refresh and rethink!

As most educators know, the “summer break” isn’t only a time to relax and enjoy a respite from Monday to Friday workdays, but it also is a time to contemplate what next year is going to look like.

We believe this issue can help you with your reflection. One of the hottest topics to emerge recently is the Maker Movement and Makerspaces. We have included multiple articles that may help you think about the potential for a makerspace at your school, what will work with your situation, and how to begin or continue this process. Several schools are holding events that involve many concepts of the makerspace agenda; some schools are collaborating with public libraries and other community organizations to create an opportunity for students to enjoy the concepts of creation. Look for something in your community.

Kurti et al have spent much time developing thoughts and strategies about the makerspace movement, and they have put them on paper for all of us to enjoy. This article is a thoughtful, insightful, and important analysis of the philosophy and pedagogical underpinnings of the movement. Their analysis and argument are strong, and the benefits they tout are inspiring. The authors will follow up with two more articles on the maker movement which will be published in the next two issues of TL and posted on our website. Continuing with the maker theme, both Plemmons and Buerkett offer thoughts about what tools and resources might be needed, how to acquire them, and how to use them effectively. Canino-Fluit offers a reality check about implementing the concepts of creation/makerspace while aligning such activities with both the AASL and CCSS standards. Worthwhile reading to consider how these ideas may fit into what already is your very full plate.

This issue also draws from several field experts who offer suggestions for how to increase the viability and visibility of the school library in a technology-influenced world. Green, Lea, and McNair talk about the concepts of augmented reality and how it can be considered when planning for research. They offer strategies addressing both creation and curation. LaGarde and Johnson discuss the challenges faced by teacher librarians in the shadow

Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

Bahde, Anne, Heather Smedbert, and Mattie Taormina, eds. *Using Primary Resources: Hands-On Instructional Exercises*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 136p. \$50 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-434-6.

There is high interest in using primary resources in the education setting, whether it be early elementary or higher education locations. This interest is evident in this compendium. Techniques to develop interest in primary resources are explored and the exercises contained in this publication allow classes and learners to be exposed to the world of primary sources in meaningful ways. The strategies and tactics used to involve learners in the "quest" for primary information are appreciated. Use it to open the eyes of learners to the possibilities of these sources and facilities. Recommended. *EM*

Benson, Jeffrey. *Hanging In: Strategies for Teaching the Students Who Challenge Us Most*. ASCD, 2014, 191p. \$26.95 Trade pb. 978-1-4166-1755-6.

Do you have students who have challenges that can be helped by special education professions? Do you have these students in your learning commons? If so, this book of stories about young people with serious challenges is a good read. We suggest that it is a good book to read one chapter a week. Not only is there the story, but also ways to cope, help, and work with others to reach out a helping hand. Benson is a seasoned professional who believes that in telling stories about young people who have challenges, we can open our heads to build some strategies and also remember those strategies as we meet the various and very different students in our schools. We are reminded of our heroine, Sue Kawalski in her New York middle school who invites every kind of student to be on her tech squad of the learning commons. We have witnessed a severely disabled student in her care who thrives as he serves in the LC. The skills that Sue has developed to make this young man comfortable and productive are amazing. Do you need to sharpen your skills to deal with challenged students? If so, we highly rec-

ommend this book as an easy and interesting read that will mentor you through a variety of strategies and approaches. *DVL*

Carroll, Joyce, and Edward. *The Critical Writer: Inquiry and the Writing Process*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 118p. \$35 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-237-3.

A well-written and substantiated publication with authentic examples. The concepts and the strategies offered are excellent. Up-to-date and relevant in all educational settings, K-12 or professional development. Theory is discussed and substantial but not to the detriment of practical advice that leads the educator to action. Highly recommended. *EM*

Clark, Craig, and Richard Fox. *Read On . . . Sports: Reading Lists for Every Taste (Read On Series)*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 167p. \$38 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-357-8.

Like others in the series, this publication offers annotated lists of books that are on a specific subject, this one is sports. There are both fiction and nonfiction titles, and gender neutral in their presentation. Looking for a single sport or an issue around a sport? The index will help. If a sport is something that can cause a reading connection, then these lists are for you. Interesting that this book contains a category called "moods" that defines the perception/mindset of a sport related issue. Action, drama, challenges - all are in the various titles listed. Reading levels are left to you. Recommended if you need it. *EM*

Fisher, Douglas, and Nancy Frey. *Better Learning Through Structured Teaching: A Framework for the Gradual Release of Responsibility (2nd ed)*. ASCD 2014. 158p. \$24.95 Trade pb. 978-1-4166-1629-0.

Fisher and Frey are champions of traditional top down teaching methods often known as direct teaching but which they term the gradual release model. They view the teacher as in command of what and how content or skills are being taught. And what they mean by gradual release is to have the student take more and more responsibility to do exactly what has been asked of them. Thus, we produce students doing exactly what they are told to do. This is, of course, a part of real life. In many of the jobs out there, workers are given directions by their superiors and are expected to carry them out precisely and we all rely on such workers who prepare our hamburgers, make cars that work and last a long time, and construct a home that doesn't leak. Such teaching and the resultant testing is the life blood of what goes on in many classrooms as students are given assignments and strict rubrics and follow-up assessments to ensure that mastery happens. However, such a robot workforce won't keep a first world nation first world. There have to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, creators, inventors, and those who can see new ways of working and doing. Fisher and Frey have no room for such learners or for the kinds of technology that helps learners become creators. So, do you need to read this book? If you want a source that defends directed teaching, then this is one choice. Otherwise, as teacher librarians, we can

cooperate with teachers who see the world in such terms, but we can also develop the learning commons in such a way that the opportunities for bored learners abound in our physical and virtual spaces. If you are doing the later, skip this book. *DVL*

Howard, David, and Amy Hunter. *Teaching the Video Production Class: Beyond the Morning Newscast*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014, 217p. \$49 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-374-5.

Video production is becoming commonplace with the rise of so many wonderful and free tools that allow almost any student or group to create and edit excellent productions as a part of learning experiences. This book, however, is for the teacher of a structured video production class with high level video equipment. The entire course, step by step, is here, complete with worksheets and directions. So if you teach such a course, this is a guide to consider, but if your students are into video using Animoto or other tools, skip this one. *DVL*

McTighe, Jay, and Grant Wiggins. *Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Student Understanding*. ASCD, 2014. 120p. \$26.95 Trade pb. 978-1-4166-1505-7.

When I heard Jay McTighe give an hour's presentation about this new book, he gave several quizzes to the audience asking them to recognize the difference between an essential question and one that is not. Here is your test. Which of the following are essential questions and which are not:

1. What common artistic symbols were used by the Incas and the Mayans?
2. What key events sparked World War I?
3. Is there ever a "just" war?
4. What steps did you follow to get your answer?
5. Who is a true friend?
6. What are common Spanish colloquialisms?

If you chose questions three and five, you have the idea of essential questions. Questioning is a central element of inquiry both at the beginning of an investigation and at every step through the entire process. In this book, the authors demonstrate time and again how to construct the essen-

tial question with students and for students and then how to follow through to deepen the understanding and skill that the teacher dreams about for every learner at the beginning of every learning experience. This is an easy book to read and follow with a ton of examples and is one of the best books of the year. We also recommend Carol Koechlin and Sandi Zwaan's book: *Q Tasks: How to Empower Students to Ask Questions and Care About Answers* (Pembroke, 2006). *DVL*

Policastro, Margaret Mary, and Becky McTague. *The New Balanced Literacy School: Implementing Common Core*. Capstone, 2014. 140p. \$24.95 Trade pb. 978-1-62521-629-8.

This publication provides support for developing a balanced literacy model if your school doesn't already have one, or if you need help in moving your program forward. It is aligned with the Common Core standards, which is quite helpful to many schools. Contact information and size and date of programs would be helpful. Many students transition rapidly through schools and programs which once worked in the past may need significant changes to them to be successful now. The bibliography of supportive information is helpful—it goes from Goodman and Vgotsky to Darling-Hammond and others, but some research suggesting the power of reading (Krashan) is not included. Use what you need but tread carefully. *EM*

Schmidt, Randell, Maureen Smuth, and Virginia Kowalski. *Teaching the Scientific Literature Review* (2nd ed.). Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 176p. \$45 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-739-2.

Here is a great resource for negotiating standards and how they build inquiry opportunities. Meticulously organized, this predominantly secondary resource reflects great care and understanding of what it is to be thoughtful with research. The "scientific" or "science-based" subjects can easily be turned into whatever subject the user of this resource chooses. Keys are the alignment with standards (specifically CCSS) and how to best approach the plethora of

information with inquiry and understanding of value. Well worth your time. Highly recommended. *EM*

Shaia, Lisa M. *After-School Clubs for Kids: Thematic Programming to Encourage Reading*. ALA, 2014. 192p. \$42.75 Trade pb. 978-0-8389-1202-7.

After-school programs are commonplace across the country and can be an extension of the learning commons program during after school hours. This book is chock full of ideas and directions for activities that connect to various books. The idea is to share a book and then do an activity in ways that will not only extend ideas but attract readers to the book. We sampled a number of the ideas from various topical areas, both fiction and nonfiction for the elementary school age and found them to require a fair amount of preplanning to have the various ingredients, spaces, and a clear set of strategies required to carry them out. You have to love messes to use the ideas here and Shaia is obviously a master at it. As with all idea books, we buy them to stimulate our thinking when we run out of ideas. The book is laid out by topic and weekly visits by children to the club. Topics include mysteries, adventures, school, chillers, boys only, art, and humor among others. We would rather there was a bit more emphasis on solid makerspace challenges rather than the more traditional activity, but get ready for the messy fun here. Recommended for the adventuresome lover of books linked to engagement. *DVL*

Stephens, Claire, and Patricia Franklin. *School Library Day to Day Operations: Just the Basics*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 106p. \$40 Trade pb. 978-1-59884-941-7.

This publication has good information, but is more for the para-professional than the certified teacher librarian. Much of what it contains should be learned during an internship and in graduate classes. The section "processing videos and audiovisuals" is significantly outdated and may lead to practices that are not in sync with student learning goals. Definitely not for anyone thinking about the Learning Commons approach. Not recommended. *EM*