

# teacher | librarian

THE JOURNAL FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS

april 2014

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### **THE PUPIL INVESTIGATOR MODEL: A DULL DAY IN A FIFTH-GRADE CLASSROOM**

Scott L. Hunsaker and Rebecca Haslam-Odoardi, authorities in the field of education for the talented and gifted, present a unique perspective on inquiry which the Common Core Standards has brought to the fore. The authors present a scenario which includes close collaboration between teacher librarians and classroom teachers.

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### **ENGAGING STUDENTS IN THE HERITAGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS LEARNING COMMONS**

Pippa Davies provides insight into the melding of the virtual and physical learning commons and the philosophy underlying them. Her experience (and success) is inspiring and offers many guideposts for others to follow.

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### **EXCITING TIMES -- A TRANSFORMATION OF MEDIA CENTERS, MEDIA SPECIALISTS, AND LEARNING: A DISTRICT'S PHILOSOPHY**

Joanne Sobolik, Elizabeth Russell, Holli Klatt, Debbie Thompson, Kim Jones, and Stephanie Wieczorek, teacher librarians in the Kettle Moraine School District, offer a district-wide look and program to turn school media centers into 21<sup>st</sup> century learning commons. Elementary, middle, and high schools were included in the planning and execution of a great team/district plan.

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### **MOVING DOWN THE PATH AND HITTING STRIDE: MORE ON THE TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL LIBRARY TO LEARNING COMMONS**

Christina A. Bentheim continues her series of articles recounting her yearlong effort to transform her middle school library into a vibrant learning commons. This installment also offer some great ideas for activities, collaboration, and curriculum.

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### **THE BADGE OF EXCELLENCE: WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF WINNERS?**

TL coeditors Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux and David V. Loertscher address some of the aspects of excellent programs through a look at some schools named exemplary by the Partnership for the 21st Skills. They also present some from a teacher librarian whose students have excelled in the prestigious Intel science competition.

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### **CURATION OF DIGITIZED ARTIFACTS IN THE STUDY OF HISTORICAL FICTION**

Ewa McGrail and Kevin Powell note the virtually endless amount and types of information available today, including such digital artifacts as texts, photographs, and video clips of tools and objets d'art of the past. Citing the need for curation, the authors offer high-quality websites with digitized artifacts online; recommend social bookmarking sites that can be used to curate online collections of artifacts; and recommend projects that can encourage authentic research and thinking about artifacts and connect their students to the historical fiction and nonfiction they read.

#### **On the cover:**

Students work in the learning commons at Heritage Christian School, Kelowna, BC. See p. 16 for article.

# EVENTS

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Bowie, MD 20718-0958

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Fax: 301-805-2192

E-mail: editor@teacherlibrarian.com

Web site: www.teacherlibrarian.com

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3650 West Market Street • York, PA 17404  
717.505.9701  
E-mail: info@theygsgroup.com

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www.enterlinedesign.com

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Teacher Librarian is owned by  
E L Kurdyla Publishing LLC.

U.S. POSTMASTER: Teacher Librarian (ISSN 1481-1782 USPS #9-407) (Publications Mail Registration Number 40028609) is published bimonthly except July/August for \$60.00 per year by E L Kurdyla Publishing LLC, Box 958, Bowie, MD 20718-0958. Periodicals postage paid at Bowie, MD, and at additional mailing offices.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS: Send address corrections (covers only) to Subscriptions, Teacher Librarian, Box 958, Bowie, MD 20718-0958.

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## NOTEBOOK



# Excellence

David V. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

This issue highlights many great educational opportunities for students today and illustrates how teacher librarians can make a difference in the quality of students' learning experiences.

This issue isn't about having a large budget or a large infrastructure—it is about what can be done in your particular situation. There are illustrations to help you decide what might work, as well as suggestions for how to improve education for students.

We hope you will take the time to read about the various award winners discussed in these articles and consider what part of their programs you might want to incorporate into yours. We show you how to start small and start friendly and include examples of what might happen if you do. We discuss individual school progress and exemplary programs, as well as district programs. We take you through all of the grades in schools today and even have examples of how things might look in both private and public education. These professionals are just like all of us—they work hard at what they do, and some even get recognized for that hard work. Many of us don't, but we still work hard.

Hunsaker and Haslam-Odoardi present us with an inquiry model that they use in their work with gifted and talented students. It is a model that works well with all students and the Common Core. The scenario they present involves concerted collaboration between the classroom and the school library.

Davies takes the concepts of the virtual learning commons and the physical learning commons and meshes them together into one philosophical understanding. She shows us how to do this by sharing her successful experiences.

Bentheim has a well-illustrated article that is the next in her series of articles about her yearlong effort to transform her traditional library setting into a learning commons setting. She offers ideas about encouraging collaboration, participating in activities, and examining the curriculum in general.

Six teacher librarians from the Kettle Moraine School District in Wisconsin describe their district-wide effort to transform traditional school libraries/

# Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

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H. Lynn Erickson, and Lanning, Lois A. *Transitioning to Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction: How to Bring Content and Process Together*. Corwin Press, 2014. 224 p. \$32.95. 9781452290195.

These two seasoned professionals have been working on high level learning experiences for many years. This book is the best one they have published and it is a must read for every teacher librarian. For the first time I have seen, they divide a learning experience into two parts: the concepts to be learned and the skills required to learn them. For teacher librarians who are collaborating with classroom teachers, this model makes so much sense, because it helps both adult partners build both kinds of goals and objectives and follow them through an entire learning experience. Thus a topic on U.S. history contains topical mastery along with the inquiry and technology skills needed to boost the content knowledge. Perfect for co-teaching experiences. No, we are not mentioned as partners, but we can assume this and capitalize on their ideas that should make sense to the teachers. I would name this as one of the very best professional books of the year thus far and worth more than a casual look. *DVL*

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Danielson, Charlotte. *The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2013 Edition: The Newest Rubric Enhancing the Links to the Common Core State Standards, with Clarity of Language for Ease of Use and Scoring*. The Danielson Group, 2014. 112 p. \$20. 9780615747002.

Is your school or district using the work of Danielson? You probably already know. We review this just in case you don't have a copy readily available. There is much discussion in teacher library circles about how to adapt this framework into something that can be used to assess job performance alongside that of the classroom teacher. Recently, I listened to an hour and a half lecture by Danielson at the ASCD conference in Los Angeles. I was struck by

how tentative Danielson is about this continuing work and how she thinks that folks should use the various levels of her tool to measure teacher effectiveness. That is why there are annual editions, as her team struggles to improve a very controversial system. She does not recommend a rigid installation of her system as the end-all measurement tool. After her presentation, I gave her greetings from the teacher librarian community and she reminded me that she had created a measurement tools for librarians in her 2007 book, *Enhancing Professional Practice*. I had forgotten about her tool but she said again: It is a starting place, not a definitive research-based tool. So, you might look that effort up. When teacher librarians are co-teaching alongside the classroom teacher or teaching alone, then Danielson's framework applies. It may be only one measure of the job we have, but it is an important one. Recommended for those facing ongoing evaluations of job performance. *DVL*

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Ragains, Patrick, ed. *Information Literacy Instruction That Works: A Guide to Teaching by Discipline and Student Population, Second Edition*. ALA-Neal Schuman, 2013. 360 p. \$85.00. 9781555708603.

This overpriced volume focuses on various examples drawn from academic libraries across the country who are partnering with professors to teach information literacy jointly across a wide variety of disciplines. For the teacher librarian in college prep schools, it is worth seeing how the current crop of academic librarians is integrating infolite into actual curricular units rather than teaching it separately or just on demand for information location. If you as a teacher librarian are looking ahead for a group of students, this might be a valuable resource, but it is not for the K-12 market. *DVL*

---

Bartlett, Wendy. *Floating Collections: A Collection Development Model for Long Term Success*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 128 p. \$55.00. 9781598847437.

If you share a collection with other district schools, other school districts, or public libraries, this is an interesting book. Floating collections, once known as decentralized or shared collections, have long been in existence, with differing successes. This book reemphasizes the concept and charts a plan for implementation. The infrastructure of such a collection is discussed, but more importantly, the philosophies of when and how to do this are discussed. There are pros and cons for this idea. The book helps chart the decision-making process and outlines a concrete collection development strategy needed to be successful. Buy-in is paramount; continuity is essential. This book offers some good and practical information. Recommended. *BM*

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Albitz, Becky; Avery, Christine; Zabel, Diane; editors. *Rethinking Collection Development and Management*. Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 402 p. \$60.00. 9781610693059.

Another collection development book, this one more emphasizes collection management, especially as it relates to change. More



for academic libraries, there are some good ideas that can be considered at the school library level, and certainly it is good to know what is expected regarding the collection of an academic or public library. Changes about funding and facility are discussed - both huge issues in school libraries. Publishing at-will and electronic collection development are considered. Recommended. *BM*

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Wolfe, Hillary. *Writing Strategies for the Common Core: Integrating Reading Comprehension into the Writing Process, grades 6-8*. Capstone, 2014. 230 p. \$29.95. 9781625215246.

The author takes tried and true strategies (e.g., balanced literacy) and works them into how best to use them with the Common Core Standards. The author's strategies are good; they work to assist students with both their reading and writing. This book also offers formative and summative assessments that can help drive the lessons according to student needs. Well put together and not just for 6-8 grades. We can all learn from them. Recommended. *BM*

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Freeman, Marcia. *Nonfiction Writing Strategies Using Content-Area Mentor Texts*. Capstone, 2014. 160p. \$24.95. 9781625215123.

It is always a challenge to include quality and effective writing strategies for the younger student. Freeman has done it. The author presents writing with strategies that will work well with K- 3 grades, and she makes a case for using these strategies with older students. While this book centers on nonfiction, some of the models and strategies will work well for fiction. This book seriously addresses the book, but many of the strategies could be used with electronic pictures and information. Practical and informative. Recommended. *BM*

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Dierking, Connie. *Linking K-2 Literacy and the Common Core: Mini-Lessons That Work* (second edition). Capstone, 2014. 176 p. \$29.95. 9781625215086.

The material in this book has been updated to reflect the Common Core standards and to align its content with them. There is good information here for both standard aligning and simply practicing good habits with early learners. The book is a series of mini-lessons that can be taught to early learners in a variety of settings. They speak to connecting what is being read to what can be interpreted from reading/listening to what is happening in the text. There are references to being able to teach "smarter" with what face time is allowed. It would be good for this book to include strategies that might work when not having "face time." An index is needed. *BM*

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Weber, Elaine; Schofield, Cynthia; Newnum, Gerri. *Reading to the CORE: Learning to Read Closely, Critically, and Generatively to Meet Performance Tasks*. Capstone, 2014. 160 p. \$24.95. 9781625215222.

Another Common Core publication on reading. The four/five essential questions are good ones, applying both to nonfiction as well as fiction. They mirror many information literacy questions. The most interesting part of this book is the collection of tools used for both formative and summative assessments and evaluations. These can be used with more than reading. This entire book will benefit from a comprehensive index. *BM*

## GRAPHIC NOVELS

### THRILLING COMICS

Cliff, Tony. **Delilah Dirk and the Turkish Lieutenant**. First Second, 2013. 176p. \$15.99. 9781596438132. Grades 3 and up. Mr. Selim is a longwinded, middle-ranked officer in early-nineteenth-century Constantinople. His pastimes include borderline poverty and making the finest tea anyone has ever tasted. Miss Dirk is an inventor, adventuress, and the most accomplished thief anyone has never heard of—because she always gets away. When Selim's lord thinks that Selim must have helped Dirk steal his priceless library, Dirk also steals Selim, sweeping him into her world of one-liners, swordplay, and, now, very good tea.

Acker, Ben and Blacker Ben, and others. **The Thrilling Adventure Hour**. Archaia, 2013. \$19.95. 9781936393961. Grades 7 and up. A Victorian time traveler who cleans up the mess of the fellow who created fire. A World-War-II fighting American icon whose sidekick has been killed, so he gets another one, who then helps him re-kill the original sidekick who has been turned into a zombie by people who are...not so American. A spot-on Lovecraftian parody of *The Thin Man*, complete with derring-do and heavens-don't. Every story in this collection is a hit, a perfect blend of witty action and quick humor.

Harris, Joe and Walsh, Michael. **X-Files Season 10 Vol. 1**. IDW, 2013. 124p. \$24.99. 97811613777510. Grades 9 and up. Although they haven't gone by those names in years, Agents Scully and Mulder are back at the center of a conspiracy that runs so deep, it is able to unearth their new names from the banks of the FBI's protected list. When one of the monsters chasing them reveals that it's actually William—Scully's son, long ago given up for adoption—whom they want, she realizes that hiding is no longer an option, and a new chapter in the X-Files is born.