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**Learning Commons
Coteaching and
Collaboration
Professional Development
Genius Hour**



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AT THE CORE OF THE COMMONS: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Violet H. Harada, eminent professor emeritus in the University of Hawaii's Library and Information Science Program, presents a personal reflection about what is truly central to the learning commons—in this article originally prepared as a paper presented at the final Treasure Mountain Retreat. In the process, she notes many pieces published by esteemed colleagues in our field and in the larger educational world. This is an important contribution to the literature of the learning commons.

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COTEACHING AND THE LEARNING COMMONS: BUILDING A PARTICIPATORY SCHOOL CULTURE

David V. Loertscher and Carol Koechlin provide another collaboration addressing the roles of teacher librarians in 21st century learning and teaching. While arguing the importance of collaboration and coteaching, Loertscher and Koechlin also argue for creating a more participatory culture for students as a way to improve real learning.

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THE YEARS OF OUR LEARNING COMMONS: A SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PERSPECTIVE

Jessica Kohout and Karen Gavigan discuss the conception, planning, execution, and assessment of a district-wide effort to transform traditional libraries into learning commons. The article relates the efforts to create learning commons in all 29 schools in the Lexington County School District Number One in South Carolina, a daunting task. There is much to admire and learn from their efforts.

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PROJECT PALS: ENSURING SUCCESS IN LIBRARIES FOR PATRONS WITH AUTISM

Amelia Anderson and Nancy Everhart introduce Project PALS, a project which provides a series of evidence-based, online training modules for librarians to increase their understanding of—and better serve—their library patrons with autism. With the continuing rise in the reported rate of children with autism, this is an important and beneficial program for all professionals.

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GENIUS HOUR IN THE LIBRARY

Elizabeth Barrera Rush recounts her discovery and investigation of the genius hour concept and her subsequent introduction of it in her library and school, Nichols Elementary in San Antonio, TX. Rush explains the concept and provides a good, detailed account of her experience. This is an exciting concept, and this article offers practical steps we can take to implement our own genius hours.

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ACADEMIC COMMONS AT PROVIDENCE DAY SCHOOL, CHARLOTTE, NC

Nicole Collins describes the newly designed and renovated Academic Commons, particularly the young adult space, at Providence Day School, where she serves as head and upper school librarian. Collins also explains the planning process, including student participation, for this very impressive facility.

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WHEN A HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARIAN AND AN ENGLISH TEACHER TEAM UP, ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN: A YEAR-LONG COLLABORATION WITH STRUGGLING STUDENTS AND THE PA COMMON CORE

Kathleen Chambers Pagano, librarian, and Kelly Merritt, English teacher and reading specialist, collaborated on a year-long project to integrate more nonfiction texts and argumentative writing into a program that focuses on struggling secondary students. Pagano presents her perspective, then Merritt present hers. The authors show yet another example of successful teacher librarian and classroom teacher collaboration.

EVENTS

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NOTEBOOK



Thank You and Adieu

David V. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

This issue of Teacher Librarian is the "changing of the guard" issue. Dr. David Loertscher and Dr. Betty Marcoux are exiting as co-editors and want to thank everyone for their kind support and wishes over the past years. We very much appreciate your insights and your wisdom – we believe that you have made this journal even stronger!

We want to welcome the new editors to Teacher Librarian – Dr. Debbie Levitov and Dr. Christie Kaaland. They both are strong advocates for school libraries and have done much work and writing to that end. Together they have created a site on school library advocacy (www.schoollibraryadvocacy.org) with which many of you probably are familiar. Debbie is the former editor of another school library journal and has many years in the profession as both a school librarian and administrator. Christie is on the faculty of Antioch University in Seattle and has partnered with many surrounding school districts to develop school library certification programs. She has many years as a teacher and school librarian also.

This issue has some wonderful articles. We hope you will take the time to read them and fit what they say into your practice.

Dr. Harada is featured on why the concepts of the Learning Commons are central to what education can be today. She is followed by an article (Loertscher and Koechlin) about the nature of the Learning Commons and its participatory learning strategies. Gavigan and Kohout talk about how they have incorporated the tenets of the Learning Commons into their school district work, and how it has helped create an environment in which students can thrive and learn (and it hasn't been without effort). Everhart and Anderson talk about Project PALS, a project that has led to practicing what is important when working with autistic students, a rapidly growing population in schools today. Rush takes us on her journey of introducing and using the concepts of the Genius Hour as it applies in the school library.

The various departments and columns offer a truly eclectic mix of information for teacher librarians. From reading about many types of literature and technology in various areas to learning more about the Learning Commons (Diggs gives us insight into the beginnings of the Learning Commons at her school, and Marcoux discusses organizing for learning with the Learning

Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

Fleming, Laura. *Worlds of Making : Best Practices for Establishing a Makerspace for Your School*. Corwin Press, 2015. 80 p. \$11.95. ISBN: 9781483382821

This easy-to-read introduction to makerspaces is a quick guide for teacher librarians to read and share across the school. Here are the basic reasons for, the hows and whys, and ideas for getting started. If you add a virtual makerspace created by the reviewer and graduate students at San Jose State University at: <http://tinyurl.com/oay5hq6> you will be on your way in both the physical and virtual worlds of creativity, making, building, and perhaps even transforming young people into makers.

The dispositions, the opportunities to embed making and makers into cotaught learning experiences, the push toward creative and critical thinking are exciting new ways to reinvent what is happening in the library learning commons. Laura knows what success looks like. Highly recommended. *DVL*

Joudrey, Daniel N, Taylor, Arlene, and Miller, David P. *Introduction to Cataloging and Classification*, 11th ed. Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 1050 p. \$90. ISBN: 9781598848571.

Moulaison, Heather Lee and Wiechert, Raegen. *Crash Course in Basic Cataloging with RDA*. Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 164 p. \$45. ISBN: 9781440837760

The first book, originally authored by Bohdan Wynar, followed many editions later by Arlene Taylor, and now with a team of authors, is considered the bible of cataloging. It is everything you wanted to know or not to know about the "right" way of doing everything all wrapped up in a five pound tome! If you are a district level cataloger, this is probably your staple and will join the other ten editions already on your shelf. The other cataloging manual is much shorter and concentrates on the use of RDA in cataloging records. You probably already know if your OPAC uses RDA, and if so, for school librarians who have a fair amount of cataloging to do, this is a solid up to date manual. Both of these books aside, the Library of Congress has announced that it will begin a system shortly where you can download cataloging records directly from it into your OPAC. Watch the news and ask your OPAC vendor to keep you up to date on this development. The most important thing you

do as a school library cataloger is to provide subject headings for the items you have in your collection. If you are genrefying the collection, then the subjects on the bins and in the catalog ought to match as one more way to locate a physical item in the collection. The best advice is to order as much as you can with processing already done and don't pay much attention to "correct" everything as official catalogers would have us do. In libraries that genrefy, is anything except author, title, date, and shelf subject really needed? I know this is heresy, but classification is now fading as subject searching is the predominant way of locating information. Better to use the time saved by quick cataloging rather than full cataloging to use coteaching alongside classroom teachers. None of us will be remembered on our tombstone for correcting Dewey numbers or spending time changing LC headings to Sears. It is just one more warehousing responsibility to streamline. "The times they are a changing." *DVL*

Kepple, Sarah. *Library Robotics: Technology and English Language Arts Activities for Ages 8-24*. Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 140 p. \$45. ISBN: 9781440835582.

Combine language arts with robotics? Unheard of. Talk about embedding skills into skills by taking a highly motivating activity and using it to push reading, vocabulary, thinking, and technology. If this book was used as a coteaching guide between teacher librarian and language arts teacher, I suspect it would be a marriage made in heaven. Sample units include the standards, the inquiry, suggestions for real projects, ideas, needed technology and supplies...everything to get the idea underway. If used as a "curriculum" for the librarian to use for library time...forget it. One other danger might be the over-use of instruction that actually would discourage creativity rather than boosting it. However, trying this technique a few times and watching the learners closely and doing reflective Big Thinks with them after the project is over, would be a sound way to examine the power of this idea alongside others in our creative bag of tricks. Highly recommended for elementary and middle schools. *DVL*

Rutherford, Paula. *Active Learning and Engagement Strategies*. Just Ask Publications, 2015. 164 p. \$ 24. ISBN: 978-0983075646

This publisher has released quite a few of these collections that help teachers and librarians with quick ideas and strategies that are ready to use. Many of the idea pages are adapted from the major thinkers in the education world. Because they are one-page ideas, the adaptation of a major idea is often so condensed that it becomes simplistic. However, it is something like a cheat sheet for the initial idea that can then be researched much more in depth from original sources... something like a Wikipedia of educational practice. This collection actually has a number of good ideas that, as the title suggests, gets kids involved, talking, thinking, and doing. There is not much structure to the collection, so you just go through, looking for ideas and put sticky notes on the ones to try with your favorite teacher. Here is a brief list to give you an idea: Collaborative strategies in reading, fact and folklore, frame of reference,

interactive notebooks, manipulatives, take a stand, SQ3R, etc. When you are looking for a quick idea, this collection is recommended to just stimulate your thinking *DVL*

Spisak, J. **Multimedia Learning Stations: Facilitating Instruction, Strengthening the Research Process, Building Collaborative Partnerships.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 225 p. \$45. ISBN: 9781440835179.

Practical and useful in many ways. Not only is the concept of the multimedia learning station explained, but it also gives good examples of how to use them. Mainly for upper school libraries, many of the ideas can be tailored to fit with more elementary school learners. There is correlation between the work these stations can do and how it fits with school library standards. Would be even more valuable if someone correlated more of the examples with other standards being used in school districts. Good index (although sparse) and good references (again, sparse). If you aren't up to being creative, this book offers concrete examples of how to use learning stations. Recommended. *BM*

Schmidt, R.; Giordano, M.; Schmidt, G. **A Guided Inquiry Approach to Teaching the Humanities Research Project.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 180 p. \$45. ISBN: 9781440834387.

The foreword and the preface to this book alone make it worth a detailed look. Aligned with Common Core standards, something many schools are very much using, this book takes teacher librarians and teachers into developing research projects that involve the guided inquiry approach. The Humanities Research Project is carefully explained, showing how it aligns with the ISP or Information Search Process, and lends itself to being assimilated into Senior Projects, etc, as it fits much of the criteria for other types of research work. The process of searching for information is outlined carefully. The workshops develop the package - don't miss this one! Excellent index and citations. Highly recommended. *BM*

Catalano, A. **Collecting for the Curriculum: the Common Core and Beyond.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 241 P. \$85. ISBN: 9781610699679.

This book covers many K-12 special needs of the curricula, and special needs of children. It draws on current research and information (anecdotal) from practicing librarians. It shows clear correlations between collection work and Common Core standards. Diverse teaching strategies are showcased, so a professional will often find one that matches her style while exploring other styles. The appendix is large and divided into curricular/subject areas. Dating could be a problem with this book unless the regularly updated website is used. *BM*

Cano, L. **3D Printing: A Powerful New Curriculum Tool for Your School Library.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 187 p. \$45. ISBN: 9781610699778.

Part of the series, Tech Tools for Learning, this book takes 3D printing and begins to correlate its possibilities with standards-based curricula. In addition to giving information about the concept of 3D printing and how to use it, this book offers guidance into its place in the curriculum and how to use it effectively. Taking a tool that can easily become valuable in a student's life, to seeing that it doesn't become just another fad and not an add-on to information, this book offers suggestions about how to engage students in the curriculum. There is information about policy and guideline development for using this tool. Includes a basic glossary, great index, and good resources that point the reader to other information on 3D printing. *BM*

Charbonnet, L. **Public Library Buildings: The Librarian's Go-to Guide for Construction, Expansion, and Renovation Projects.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 222. \$65. ISBN: 9781440838583.

It isn't the role of this journal to review public library books, but this one has some tips that seem very appropriate to schools and students. This book provides a place

to explore ideas and advice about making your school library a relevant and exciting place for student and teacher alike. Take information about what will work for you - look at the new building ideas even if you are only renovating, look at the concepts of space for both the student and adult learner, review the developmental issues surrounding your community—then go and give your wise input about what needs to happen. If you are in the planning stages of a facility update or remake, this book might be for you. *BM*

Piepenburg, S. **Digitizing Audiovisual and Nonprint Materials: The Innovative Librarian's Guide.** Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 136 p. \$50. ISBN: 9781440837807.

Without any copyright guidance, this book offers simple instructions about how to digitize information into formats currently in use. The works that deserve this conversion have already been vetted and imagined as valuable as a research/information item, and therefore valuable enough to convert. How to consider this is discussed in this book. Digitizing can also offer hope for material that is deemed valuable but is decaying and in need of a format upgrade. The types of technologies and software to use for digitizing are discussed. The concerns of metadata are discussed also, and even media—other than what is discussed as digitizable in this book—are mentioned. *BM*

Fichtelberg, S. **Encountering Enchantment: A Guide to Speculative Fiction for Teens.** 2nd ed. (Genreflecting Advisory Series) Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 393 p. \$ 55. ISBN: 9781610691130. *BM*

The second edition updates titles in fantasy, paranormal, and science fiction which have been published since 2006, when the original edition was published. Covering grades 6-12, this book offers a wide selection of titles that will work with various levels of readers, and includes ideas about alternative media formats that will give even more diversity of use. The good detailed subject index will be useful, but will date quickly. *BM*