

TL

teacher | librarian

The Journal for School Library Professionals

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School Librarians Transform Learning:

A snapshot of today's school library programs.

Writing for Teacher Librarian:

The submission guideline requirements for *Teacher Librarian*.

Impact of a Less Restrictive Circulation Policy

Increasing check out numbers to promote reading.

#CreateYourHype

Resources teacher librarians can use to promote and advocate for their programs.





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School Librarians Transform Learning: Advocacy Begins with You! by Priscille Dando, Michelle Folk, and Deborah Levitov

Audrey Church's AASL 2016-17 Presidential Initiative is "School Librarians as Learning Leaders." This article, written by Church's initiative task force, gives a snapshot of today's school library programs. It also provides an overview of the AASL Presidential Initiative and how it can be a catalyst for effective conversations between school librarians and their administrators and other stakeholders.

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Writing for *Teacher Librarian*: A Guide to the Process by Christie Kaaland and Deborah Levitov

This article outlines the submission guideline requirements for *Teacher Librarian* and provides helpful hints on the writing process in order to promote a smoother editorial process. The article was prompted by a session offered at the AASL 2017 National Conference entitled, "The Write Stuff" where representation of various school/library publications (including *Teacher Librarian*) provided more abbreviated information on the submission process.

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Comparing a New and Veteran Teacher Librarian by Buffy Edwards and Kelsey Barker

Two award-winning teacher librarians—one 'new' and one 'veteran'—compare their respective first years and find an amazing number of similarities. Although there were many changes related to school libraries, (e.g., format of resources, equipment for teaching and learning, etc.), there was also one constant over time. Each librarian used AASL standards alongside Oklahoma state standards to guide and support their program. Their reflections reveal professional dispositions that have met the test of time.

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Tips & Tactics: #CreateYourHype by Tracey Wong

Within the hectic whirlwind of the school library, many well-meaning teacher librarians inadvertently disregard advocating for their libraries until it is too late. Wong provides examples of several resources teacher librarians can use to promote and advocate for their programs through collaborative partnerships, digital footprints, and social media accounts.

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Dr. David V. Loertscher is conducting a research study of the impact that teacher librarians have on co-taught learning experiences with classroom teachers.

Participation requires very little time and offers a technique to track your impact in your own school. He has prepared a website that explains the simple process. Please indicate your interest by emailing him at reader.david@gmail.com

Participation can happen any time during the 2017-18 school year.

You can see the website for the research at: <https://sites.google.com/view/dowemakeadifference/home>

is committed to collaborative partnerships for improved student learning through thought-provoking and challenging feature articles, strategies for effective advocacy, regular review columns, and critical analyses of management and programming issues.

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NOTEBOOK



The Ripple Effect

Deborah Levitov and Christie Kaaland

To hear how an article inspired a TL reader is a golden moment for editors and authors—which is exactly what was provided by a post on June 23, 2017, by Jamie Gregory for the blog, “52 Weeks of Guided Inquiry.” Jamie wrote,

This past February, I read “Doubling Up: Authentic vocabulary development through the inquiry process” by Leslie Maniotes and Anita Cellucci published in the February 2017 issue of *Teacher Librarian*. (A new fiscal year is starting soon; be sure to get your subscription to *Teacher Librarian*!) When I saw this article and read the first paragraph, one word came to mind: genius! I knew I wanted to implement the keyword log introduced in the article because *it just made sense*, like the GID model. And I found just the teacher willing to collaborate with me on this project (<http://52guided inquiry.edublogs.org/2017/06/23/keyword-inquiry-log/>).

This is confirmation of how authors and publications can make a difference. When Leslie Maniotes saw this post, she immediately sent us the link. The subject of her email was “Ripples in the profession” and she said, “Thanks for the opportunity to make a difference...” (email of June 23, 2017). What a perfect example of the power of sharing your story...the “ripple effect.” We, in turn, say thank you to our authors, like Leslie and Anita, for taking the time to share their work. We don’t often know or hear when an article has an impact, but we continue to believe that is the core importance of professional publications and is what makes our work so rewarding.

P.S. Watch for more on how Jamie Gregory took an idea from these TL authors and put it into practice in her article in an upcoming issue of *Teacher Librarian*. It is truly a ripple effect.

The Umbrella Creation Model

David V. Loertscher

Author's note: In the previous issue of *Teacher Librarian* (June 2017, p 45), I discussed a comprehensive model known as the Umbrella Question Model, where classroom teachers and teacher librarians partner to teach topical inquiry in any of the disciplines, such as science or social studies. However, there is another type of learning experience that I think has been ignored by many as a part of general inquiry. The Umbrella Creation Model in this column is designed around project-based learning, where the learners are creating, inventing, and trying to think outside the box. So, if you have a makerspace or would like to have one, or if you feel left out of some of the most fascinating learning experiences in the school, I offer this model as one way to carve out a major impact on teaching and learning in the school.

THE UMBRELLA CREATION:

A Quick Tour of Project-Based Learning, Design Thinking, and Creativity When There Is a Merger of the Classroom, the Library Learning Commons, the Makerspace, and the Laboratory

Many educators want to give individuals and groups of learners a chance to create, invent, and reinvent something they are passionate about. Some schools have genius hours, where students get credit for a project of their own design. Other schools have capstone projects done in the senior year of high school. Schools from elementary through high school might emphasize such projects as one way of capturing student interest and encouraging self-directed learning. During this kind of learning experience, the learners might have a variety of projects across many topics and interests. The one thing they have in common is the process that creative minds, designers, problem solvers, and inventors go through to get from point A to B. Thus, in this model, adult mentors emphasize process as a way of building content knowledge, outcomes, products, etc.

In genius hour courses, individual students or small groups meet regularly to report their progress on their projects even though the topics might be different. They try to examine ways to make substantial progress, next steps, skills they all need, help they require, and soft skills such as mindfulness, persistence, problem solving, design thinking, and creative thinking. They all need information, access to expertise, encouragement, and ways of dealing with failure.

The following poster—known as the uTEC Maker Model—created by Bill Derry, Leslie Preddy, and David V. Loertscher, illustrates the path that many individuals and groups take from being users of a system/technology into the tinkering phase, into the stage of serious experimentation, and finally into the building of an actual creation (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. The uTEC Maker Model

The following example might help adult mentors, such as the classroom teacher and teacher librarian, who have decided to work as commenters, plan and execute such a learning experience.

Sample Umbrella Question: What might I/we create to make the world a better place for ourselves, family, school, community, state, or nation?

Step 1: Generate interest among learners for self-directed projects, problems to solve, opportunities, and building passion about personal interest. Here, the mentors work hard with many learners who claim no interest in anything or have little experience with self-directed learning opportunities.

Through discussion, videos, and reports from peers, the mentors take advantage of significant issues, events, disas-

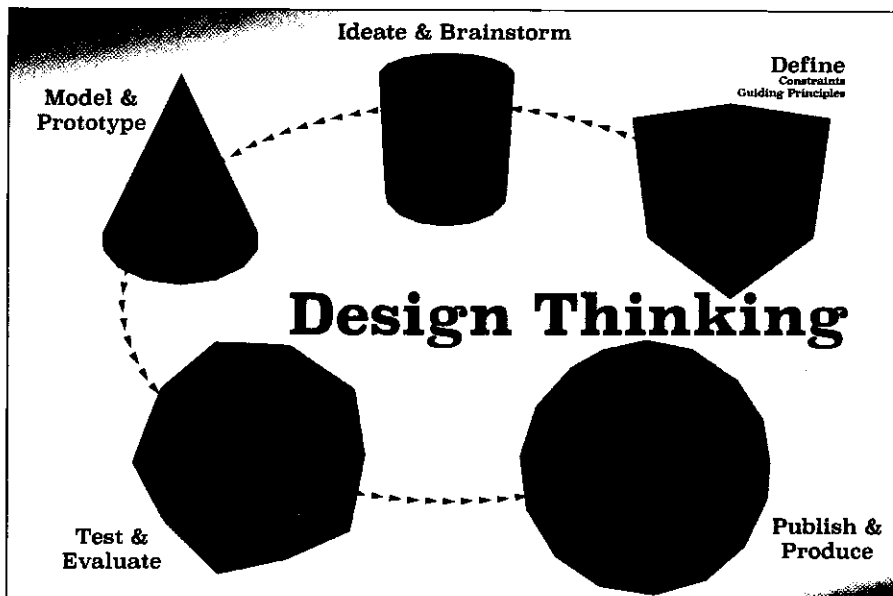


Figure 2. The Design Thinking Model.

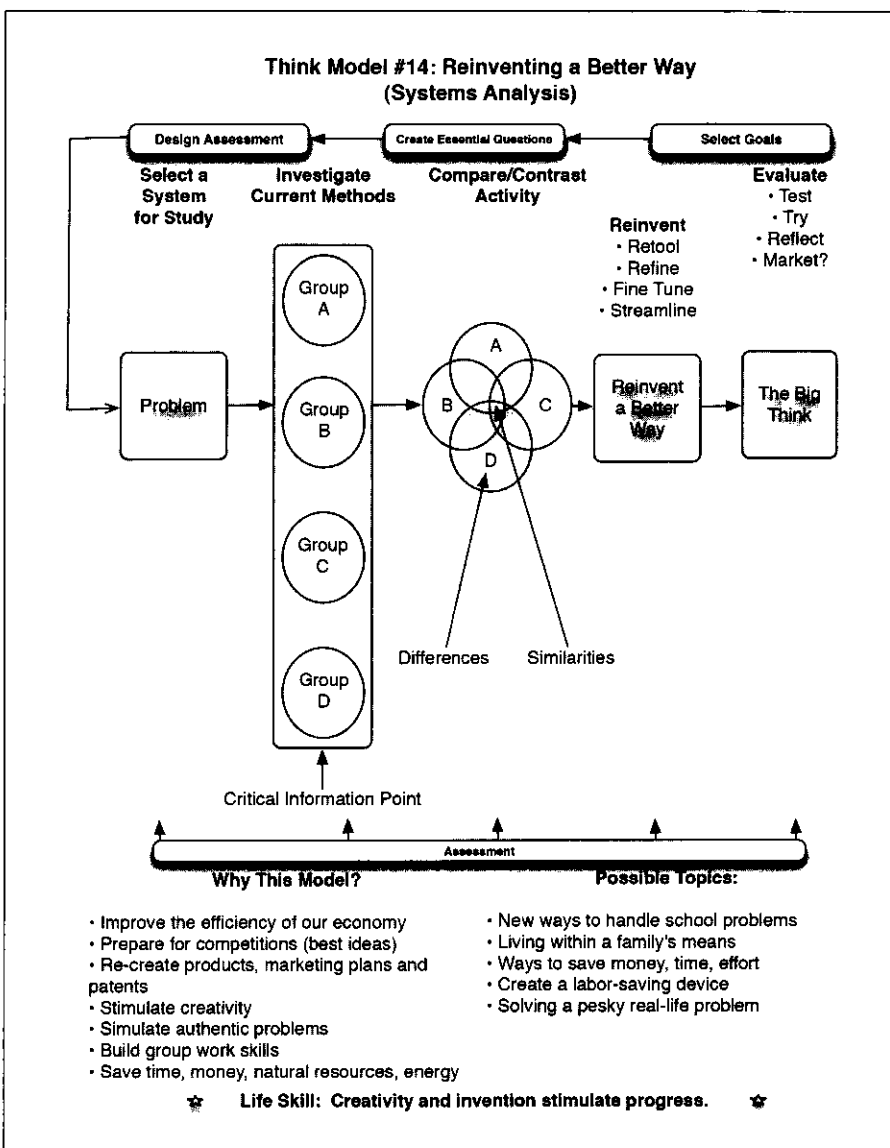


Figure 3. Think Model.

ters, controversies, and examples to introduce the idea of how to make a difference in the world. The learners start complaining about some of the rules and problems they have at school; they make a list of those problems and ponder how they might solve them. In a second meeting, the list is refined, and students are invited to team up or work individually on a problem they are interested in.

Step 2: Introduce or remind students about tools they might use to reinvent, re-create, or solve problems.

The students are introduced to some models that have been used by experts to solve problems. For example, the Design Thinking Model is used in many organizations and businesses not only to solve problems in a community or organization but also to invent new products and strategies to move forward. The Design Thinking Model is illustrated in Figure 2.

Another common older model is systems thinking, where a person or group tries to invent a new way of doing something because the old way is no longer making a difference. The mentors can show how every system tries to change something, but there are also unintended consequences that might be worse than the way things were happening before. An example is the Flint, Michigan, water engineers who were trying to save money by using river water instead of the more expensive source . . . and . . . well, what a disaster! Figure 3 is a think model that might be used to guide everyone through the project at hand. Learners are urged to use a model or invent one of their own that will help keep them on track during their project.



JUNIOR FICTION

LIFE CHANGES

Frazier, Sundee T. **Cleo Edison Oliver in Persuasion Power.** Arthur A. Levine Books, 2017. 256 p. \$16.99. ISBN: 9780545822398. Grades 3-7. Cleo Oliver, a fifth-grade go-getter, has two dreams. She really wants to meet her idol, powerful and glamorous business woman, Fortune A. Davies, and maybe even appear on her TV show! Cleo's started a lot of businesses, but she's sure the newest one (Passion Clips, personalized hair barrettes made by her and her best friend) will catch Fortune's attention!

More than that, though, she longs to meet her birth mother. Cleo's brothers see their birth mom and get mail from her, but all Cleo has is a photo, some jewelry, a baby outfit, and her stuffed purple bear. What would it be like to have two black parents? To know your family history? Will she ever know? Then her birth father surfaces, after reading the letters and seeing the photos Cleo's adopted mom sends every year to the adoption agency. He wants to meet her! But does Cleo want to meet him?

Kurtz, Jane. **Planet Jupiter.** Greenwillow Books, 2017. 278p. \$16.99. ISBN: 9780060564865. Grades 3-7. Jupiter and her brother Orion have never really lived anywhere. Since their dad ("the Prince of Adventure") doesn't want to be tied down, they've spent life in their family's bus, the Paddy Wagon, busking [playing music and singing on street corners and at fairs] for a living and depending on Topher, an old family friend, to help them out in tight spots.

Now, though, Paddy Wagon is broken down (maybe for good), their dad has moved on without them, they're stranded in Oregon, and Mom wants to live in a rented house, at least for a while, to care for her sister Amy's adopted seven-year-old Ethiopian daughter while Amy undergoes chemo treatment. Even worse, Orion stayed behind - he has a real job now - and Topher wants to take Dad's place. Jupiter's world is spinning out of control, and she isn't sure how to deal with it. Contains snippets of folk song lyrics in each chapter.

Pincus, Greg. **The Homework Strike.** Arthur A. Levine Books, 2017. 264p. \$16.99. ISBN: 9780439913010. Grades 3-7. Growing up between a brother whose trophies and plaques have their own corner in the school's showcase and a sister who's already taking online high school classes isn't easy, but Gregory's best friend, Kelly, and his poetry get him through - until Kelly moves, and middle school piles on so much homework he has no time for his writing or for open mic night.

He's not alone! Benny can't practice his violin. Ana can't paint. They average three hours of homework a night, not counting big projects that they are assigned! So, Gregory decides something has to change. If you do well on tests and in classroom participation, not doing homework shouldn't affect your grade much. Gregory decides to strike. No more homework! This is great! Until his parents find out. And his history teacher. And the school principal. And the local news.....Contains snippets of poetry in every chapter and brief info about strikes in history.

Weeks, Sarah. Varadarajan, Gita. **Save Me a Seat.** Scholastic Press, 2016. 240p. \$16.99. ISBN:9780545846622. Grades 3-7. Joe thought fifth grade would be ok (despite struggling with Auditory Processing Disorder) until his best friends moved and his mom ruined his favorite part of school by becoming a lunchroom monitor.

Ravi used to be a star pupil at his school in Bangalore, India, where everyone admired him, until his dad's IT company promoted him and they moved to New Jersey. Now, no one likes him or understands his English—and his clothes, his hobbies, even his packed lunches, just don't fit in.

Both boys have something in common, though: They need friends, and they're both being targeted by Dillon, the class bully. Can they work through their differences and stand up to Dillon? Maybe fifth grade won't be so bad after all.

The story, told by both boys in alternating chapters includes two glossaries (Indian and American slang), plus recipes for apple crisp and naan khatais [an Indian cookie].

Step 3: Guide individuals/groups through the formulation of a problem, question, project, or invention they are passionate about.

Here is where the first steps of inquiry kick in, as learners try to build enough background knowledge in order to form a solid question or goals and objectives that will launch them into their project. For example, when there was a school shooting in a community nearby, everyone, including the students, was asking whether they were safe. But before they could get started on that question, they needed all kinds of information about how visitors gain access to their school, district policies, state laws, and whether the current system was really enforced before they could develop a more focused question about the system of access at their school. They discovered that they needed not only to question the system that got visitors into the front door of the school, but they also needed to look for other ways that someone might get in other doors, fences, or parts of the school property. The real question was more complex than they had thought before.

Step 4: Help learners discover the knowledge and skills they will need in order to accomplish their task.

As students begin to attack their project or problem, they often discover that they do not know enough or have the skills they need to make any headway. In a real example from a middle school in Denver, Colorado, the principal visited a class where project-based learning was getting started and announced that the city had just called him, wanting to do something about the stinky

swamp at the edge of school property that neighbors were complaining about. The city was proposing that the swamp be paved over. So the principal asked the class what they thought. About half the class wanted to help conduct an investigation, but they soon discovered that they needed to know:

- The history of the swamp
- What made it stink
- City regulations about such matters, including environmental concerns
- What kind of expertise they would need from the community

Step 5: Have regular meetings/conferences to note progress and problems and to teach process skills.

In one private school in Vancouver, B.C., the adult mentors created eight lessons about the process of inquiry that they taught during the duration of the project. The first time, these lessons followed in a very systematic way. The second time, they relaxed their direct teaching approach to help individuals or small groups “just in time.” Reflecting back, they decided that the first approach was too rigid and the second too lax. They are regrouping to try to find the best mix of teaching process skills for their students.

Step 6: Clear the path and be an ombudsman for the difficulties learners might encounter.

For the stinky swamp project, the adult mentors, the principal, and the school board had to get involved to help the students when these middle schoolers discovered that the swamp was on the original bird migration path through Denver, and they proposed that the

swamp be restored, so that birds could use it again. All kinds of roadblocks had to be overcome by the adults to get such a restoration project under way.

Step 7: Celebrate success and challenges overcome.

What seemed like just a stinky swamp problem turned into a major community project. They needed to restore the swamp, raise funds, do the work, and get experts to help. When the whole project was complete, there was a major community celebration planned by the students.

Step 8: Develop a culminating experience.

During the celebration of the new swamp, the students created various poster stations where other students in the school, parents, and community members could stop and listen to the young docents explain various parts of the project from beginning to end. The students rotated through the poster stations, because every student could explain any of the activities represented on the posters.

Step 9: Conduct a Big Think.

After the celebration was over, the students conducted a reflection seminar with their mentors and experts who had participated. What did we learn? How well did we do? If we were going to tackle some other project like this, what would we do differently? When can we expect our first birds? And how will the swamp be tended, so that it will be around for many years? Their discussion centered on the “so what” And the “what’s next.”

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Students could be challenged to invent a useful product in their library learning commons makerspace.

Students could be challenged to build enough skill in art, music, literature, or other performance project to be a part of “listening lunches” in the library learning commons throughout the school year.

STEM or STEAM projects could lead to exhibits at a local MakerFaire.

Students could be challenged to invent something to help various students with disabilities in their school. As an example, check out a major conference of young people focused on creativity at <https://tinyurl.com/yb-kvzhex>.