

assessing learning, collection management, and battle of the books

ASSESSING LEARNING: LIBRARIANS AND TEACHERS AS PARTNERS

Violet H. Harada and Joan M. Yoshina

If you have a limited budget to buy professional books this year, make sure to purchase this one immediately. Harada and Yoshina have added a major book to the school library literature that deserves widespread study and discussion. For years, this profession has urged collaboration with teachers to enhance the learning that goes on in libraries. The arguments against collaboration center on lack of time. However, there may be a more basic problem, which is that our professionals may not know what contributions they can actually make during the collaborative experience.

Those who have studied the *Understanding by Design* movement pioneered by Wiggins and McTighe (ASCD, 2004) know that their "backwards planning" of a learning experience fits perfectly into what can and should go on in a learning experience, whether conducted solely in the classroom or brought into the information- and technology-rich environment of the library. Wiggins and McTighe's model recommends that a learning experience begin with an outline of what students should know and be able to do at the end of the learning experience. Teacher-librarians know that these goals should come from state standards documents, and they should remind their teacher partners of this fact.

The second step Wiggins and McTighe recommend is to build the assessment of learning together as partners. We ask how, as partners, will we know whether students know and are able to do what we expect. The answer is that only after the assessment is planned will the activities in the library be planned by our teacher and teacher-librarian team. Harada and Yoshina

concentrate their book on the assessment piece of the learning process and focus their strategies at the learner level. They ask the question, How do we know that Sandra, Juan, or Nancy learned anything in both the classroom and in the library? To answer this question, our authors provide guidance on the construction of various kinds of assessment instruments, including rubrics, conferences, logs, personal correspondence, graphic organizers, competence in the steps of the information literacy process, measurement tools from elementary through secondary grades, and portfolios. They describe each assessment technique, give real examples from actual schools, provide the data-collection tools, and describe the analysis to be done. In the final chapter, they discuss ways to communicate the results of the various assessments to the stakeholders, including the partner teacher, the parent, the administration, and other interested parties.

This is a great study book for meetings of teacher-librarians in a school district or at larger conferences. In fact, we understand that there will be a regional conference of the American Association of School Librarians studying this topic with the authors during 2006. We recommend that a group study start with the final chapter focusing on the dissemination of assessment data, then start looking at the various assessment tools, then develop the measures, collect the data, and report it.

Harada and Yoshina's volume joins the Todd and Loertscher book, *We Boost Achievement!* (Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2004), containing major techniques for assessing the impact of the library program. Todd and Loertscher's book provides measures at the organizational level, the teaching unit level, and the learner level. Harada and Yoshina's volume concentrates

on the learner level. Together, they provide a dynamic tool for measuring impact. (Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 168 pp. \$40. 1-59158-200-8.)

Bottom line: One of the most important books of the year. Highly recommended.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH: RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF LEARNERS

Sandra Hughes-Hassell
and Jacqueline C. Mancall

Collection development for elementary and secondary schools has been greatly affected by two powerful elements: the digital revolution centered on the Internet and a change in educational philosophy known as constructivism. Hughes-Hassell and Mancall, both well-respected library educators, build a different view of collection development they title "Learner Centered," based on the constructivist idea that the learner is and should be the central focus of building an information-rich environment. For the traditional school where the textbook and lecture reign supreme, the authors see traditional collection development principles as a healthy plan. However, when constructivism reigns and the focus turns more to inquiry and to the learner gaining more control over what content to master, then a different strategy of collection development is needed.

They begin by asking teacher-librarians to know their community of learners well and then—through a collaborative process of looking at various parts of the curriculum—to focus collections on information that will satisfy their learners' needs at the time needed. The process is marketed and owned by the community of educators and is budgeted according to learners' needs. Hughes-Hassell and Mancall provide a number of tools to gain mastery over the community, the curriculum, learners' needs, and budgets, and then urge users to follow practical strategies already well-known in the library community to focus their collections. For example, they do not teach how to place an order with a jobber, unpack the books, and check the invoice. Rather, they help the teacher-librarian gain a philosophy of working on collections in the constructivist environment.

A different philosophical view of collection development is the book's strength.

Such a philosophy was well on its way until standards-based education seemed to throw the entire educational community back toward direct instruction of a prescribed curriculum with strict goals for scores on high-stakes tests. Such a shift has not favored a collaborative stance between teachers and teacher-librarians, nor has it boosted the goals of constructivism. Hughes-Hassell and Mancall are applauded for their views; constructivism may be quashed at the moment, but it is certainly not dead. This book is a must read for every instructor of collection development in the school area, for district leaders concerned with collection development, and for individual teacher-librarians who find themselves fortunate enough to be in a constructivist environment. It provides a foundational element of thinking in the world that will hopefully emerge post-No Child Left Behind. (American Library Association, 2005. 120 pp. \$35. 0-8389-0894-2.)

Bottom line: A must read for every instructor of collection development in the school area.

BRIDGING SCHOOL AND HOME THROUGH FAMILY NIGHTS: READY-TO-USE PLANS FOR GRADES K-8

Diane W. Kyle, Ellen McIntyre,
Karen B. Miller, and Gayle H. Moore

Back to school night is held in virtually every school. These authors provide a plan for much more parent involvement during such events. In the family nights proposed in this book, the authors plan an hour-long event that teaches parents and students to work together with the teacher on certain vital strategies that make a difference in the child's education. These ideas can be used at all levels of education. The chapters show how to get parents involved in family night events that include scrap-booking night, book-reading-and-enjoyment-night, meet-our-pets night, family-math-fun night, game-making-and-writing night, meet-famous-people-through-biography night, sharing-hobbies-and-talents night, poetry night, science night, fun-language-activities night, and health-activities night.

Instead of a cute program where students perform, these activities teach families how to have fun together in a learning activity that focuses on literacy. For the teacher-librarian, this is the perfect opportunity to involve parents in information literacy activities that will prove to be an enormous benefit to the entire family. For example, what about an Internet night that emphasizes Internet safety? Even if readers do not particularly like the activities presented by this group of authors, they will still benefit from the suggestions for meaningful ways that educators can connect with families. (Corwin Press, 2005. 192 pp. \$69.95. 1-4129-1466-3.)

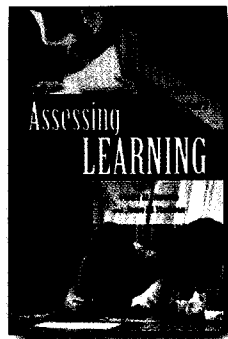
Bottom line: Highly recommended.

OUR OWN SELVES: MORE MEDITATIONS FOR LIBRARIANS

Michael Gorman

There was an interesting crowd around the ALA Bookstore the first time Michael Gorman's book of meditations, *Our Singular Strengths: Meditations for Librarians* (American Library Association, 1998), was published and available at the conference. The comments ranged from disbelief to snide joking and on to, "isn't that a great idea." Our own spiritual leader helping us to think daily about (in his now

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES



ASSESSING LEARNING

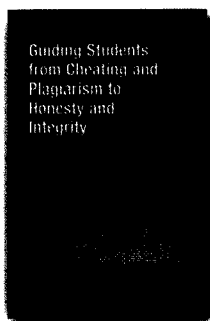
Librarians and Teachers as Partners

By Violet H. Harada and Joan M. Yoshina

Focusing on the role of library media specialists in assessing student learning, this is the first full-length book written to address its practical application in the school library media center.

2005 • 168 PAGES • 1-59158-200-8 • \$40.00

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GUIDING STUDENTS FROM CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM TO HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

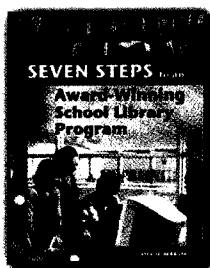
Strategies for Change

By Ann Lathrop and Kathleen Foss

Cheating is a national epidemic; this book provides the antidote:

proven strategies and rationales for creating a school culture that supports honesty inside the classroom and out.

2005 • 144 PAGES • 1-59158-275-X • \$35.00



SEVEN STEPS TO AN AWARD-WINNING SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM

By Ann M. Martin

Foreword by Ruth Toor

An in-depth look at providing a framework for program implementation that can lead to

national award-winning recognition, this book serves as a blueprint to construct an award-winning program that will enhance the learning experience for your students, with or without applying for the AASL award.

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second volume) reading and books; places (libraries that make us shiver with pride); people (like ABC's person-of-the-week tributes); values; literary services, then and now; technology; and other topics Gorman cares about. Each meditation covers a page and a half and is great leisure reading. (American Library Association, 2005. 240 pp. \$28. 0-8389-0896-9.)

Bottom line: If you need that spiritual lift in the morning to fortify you throughout the day against belligerent teens, sassy and disrespectful kids, snappy teachers, and critical administrators, read Gorman.

MURDER IN RETROSPECT: A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO HISTORICAL MYSTERY FICTION

Michael Burgess and Jill H. Vassilakos
Intrigue with a historical twist. How fun, how delicious, and how mainstream with all the interest in *The Da Vinci Code*. In this annotated bibliography arranged by the author, we quickly flip to the Bs, and in disbelief to the title index, only to find—*it's not there!* Our authors concentrate on books for older teens and adults, and with mystery an extremely popular genre, how can we forgive them for omitting what is probably the number one seller in the past century if not in world history (you are probably right that *Christie* sold more)? Oh well, there are plenty of other books listed having excellent annotations. A subject index at the end makes this bibliography valuable to teacher-librarians who are in search of a good read-aloud for junior and senior high school students when we must capture their attention before a serious research project. In addition to the teens, all mystery-reading adults can check their favorite titles and find other delicious morsels. (Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 424 pp. \$60. 1-59158-087-0.)

Bottom line: Worth a look.

AUTHORS IN THE KITCHEN: RECIPES, STORIES, AND MORE

Sharron L. McElmeel
with Deborah L. McElmeel

Here is a winner for anyone doing author studies and wanting to connect children to food through specific authors' books. McElmeel and McElmeel provide brief biog-

raphies, quick stories, and other interesting facts about each author's books and then provide a recipe connected to an author's book. A sample list of authors includes David Adler, Caroline Arnold, Bob Barner, Ashley Bryan, Eve Bunting, Tony Buzzeo, Eric Carle, Pat Cummings, Diane Dillon, Gail Gibbons, Paul Goble, Stephen Kellogg, Jane Kurtz, Jacqueline Briggs Martin, Yuyi Morales, and Matthew Winslow Parker—to mention just a few among many more. As you can see, these are authors of children's literature, but if teens are using picture books and need a project, here is a book report complete with a suggested tasty morsel that aims to please. Now, while you are ordering this book, I am off to the kitchen! (Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 228 pp. \$25. 1-59158-238-5.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

BALANCING READING & LANGUAGE LEARNING: A RESOURCE FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, K-5

Mary Capellini

An open letter to the author: The title of your book is intriguing, promising relief from the skill, kill, drill mentality of No Child Left Behind. It reaches for all the great ideas of linking kids with the best of the reading strategies, the best of literature, and the best of writing prompts. Yes, you have exhaustively covered everything we have heard about and more as your chapters include setting up the learning environment; knowing each English-language learner; welcoming parents as partners; reading to, with, and by children; and using thematic planning. Also included are resources for read-alouds; shared reading with primary and upper-grade students; guided reading with emergent readers, early learners, and early fluent readers; independent reading and literature circles; and individual instruction.

All good ideas, clever ideas, tested ideas. So what is the problem? There are two references to libraries in the entire 320 pages. One is to developing a classroom library that will be the do-all and end-all of access to the best of everything that any classroom of students could hope for, and the other is a mention of some form of a morning visit to a library. Haven't you heard about the very best ally to reading in the school? We refer

to a strong centralized library program staffed by a credentialed teacher-librarian. Haven't you heard about a central collection packed with thousands and thousands of books that suit every student's reading ability and reading preference? Haven't you heard about a professional who tirelessly provides access to books by the ton for every student in the school or the professional teacher-librarian who promotes the love of reading to every single child in the elementary school? Why would you ignore the most valuable ally literacy has in the entire school? Then it dawns on us. You are from California, a state that has never heard of professional teacher-librarians at the elementary level; a state that has book rooms tended by a clerk at best.

We do appreciate your good ideas. We respect your methods of helping kids learn to read, but we have an assignment for you. Visit six elementary schools that have a wonderful professional teacher-librarian and take notes from teachers, kids, parents, and administrators. Then write an additional chapter to your book titled "The Magic of the School Library and the Reading Program." Then, and only then, will we consider recommending your book to the thousands and thousands of faculty members we serve. (Stenhouse Publishers, 2005. 344 pp. \$30. 1-57110-367-8.)

Bottom line: Not recommended.

GOING PLACES WITH YOUTH OUTREACH: SMART MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR YOUR LIBRARY

Angela B. Pfeil

This slim volume provides numerous suggestions for public librarians who are seeking ways to reach out to the children and teens in their communities who never come to the public library. There are many excellent ideas here, but why should this matter to the teacher-librarian? Because the public library will be school students' library for life, and we must link them to the public library. Pfeil has a host of ideas for doing so. We suggest reading these ideas and then approaching the public librarian in your community with the aim of doing joint activities that promote the best of both programs. (American Library Association, 2005. 120 pp. \$32. 0-8389-0900-0.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

ELEMENTARY BATTLE OF THE BOOKS AND MORE

Sybilla Cook, Frances Corcoran, and Beverley Fonnesbeck

In an attempt to encourage reading over the years, the battle of the books idea has enjoyed spotty popularity. The idea is rather simple. A group of students is given a large list of books and challenged to read as many as they can. Then, a kind of TV quiz show is staged where questions are fired at the contestants, giving clues to the books in the pool. Like a spelling bee, contestants battle until the winner who has answered the most questions with the correct book title emerges. The authors of this collection provide several chapters on how to set up such contests, how to relate the contests to curriculum, how to keep them fun, and other operational matters.

The bulk of the book contains several hundred titles with ready-to-use clues. The books span the grades of elementary school and cover current titles and older favorites. The larger question is, of course, whether such an activity is worth the time and effort put into it and what percentage of the school will participate and benefit from such an activity. Good readers and avid readers will love it. What about those who struggle? And, should we penalize reluctant readers by not having something they will enjoy? As one of many activities, there is a place for battle of the books if it is managed properly and if it is one of many options in the school that promotes reading. The authors have done a credible job in describing a battle of books program and in providing techniques to make it effective. (Upstart Books, 2005. 142 pp. \$19.95. 1-932146-09-1.)

Bottom line: Recommended. A good resource for support staff and volunteers to use to make this program a success as a reading program feature.

INSTANT LIBRARY LESSONS, KINDERGARTEN

INSTANT LIBRARY LESSONS, FIRST GRADE

INSTANT LIBRARY LESSONS, SECOND GRADE

Karen A. Farmer Wanamaker

Wanamaker has provided three books of instant and traditional "library lessons" connected to literature. The assumption is that students are coming into the library periodi-

cally to exchange books and to have a little lesson before going back to the classroom. Each lesson is independent of all the others and features some or several titles appropriate for the grade level. Users will need to purchase featured books or pull them from the collection and then match them with the instant lessons to serve as a "kit" complete with activities, patterns, supplies, and so forth.

For the professional teacher-librarian to take time to teach and use a series of books like this is not recommended because they are not connected to any specific curriculum. However, they can be used for teaching by support staff or volunteers. Sharon Coatney, a past president of the American Association of School Librarians, for many years had a program of similar activities that was taught by her support staff while she spent the bulk of her time collaborating on units of instruction. She planned the titles and activities—that served to boost reading comprehension and literature enjoyment—in collaboration with the teachers, reading teachers, and the principal to fulfill the literacy program of the school and to see that every student was introduced to a wide variety of titles and genres. Thus, the professional directed the program but did not spend much time doing it. Such an approach is superior to one in which the professional spends the bulk of the day doing quick short book activities. The series is valuable as a pattern of how to set up short activities and can be used by a creative staff support member to build a program that integrates into the local reading program. However, these books are not recommended to be used as the principal element of the library instructional program. (Upstart Books, 2005. 120 pp. \$16.95. 1-932146-14-5; 1-932146-12-1; 1-932146-13-X.)

Bottom line: Good models for short book activities to be used by library support staff or volunteers.

PERSPECTIVES, INSIGHTS & PRIORITIES: 17 LEADERS SPEAK FREELY OF LIBRARIANSHIP

Norman Horrocks, ed.

If you are getting gray hair, you will probably remember the time when your mother made you take cod liver oil every day during the winter just to make sure you were getting your vitamin D. Then that wonderful experience was replaced by the vitamin D milk we

all drink. So, when you feel your spirits weighed down by the problems of the day and you need a shot of library vitamin D, try reading one of these brief essays, written by luminaries in the field, about the profession as a whole. Reading these essays is like inviting a keynote speaker to a professional conference and listening to a little philosophy mixed in with a challenge to action on some of the more global issues confronting libraries.

Editor Norman Horrocks, professor emeritus of the School of Library and Information Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, has brought together a wide cross section of the field with names that anyone who has been around for a while will recognize, including John N. Berry III, Mary K. Chelton, Leigh S. Estabrook, Michael Gorman, Ken Haycock, Patrick Jones, and many other notable professionals. The topics can be discerned from the article titles: "The Library Professional"; "Libraries: The Best Public Value"; "The Fog of My Career: Some Reflections and Lessons Learned"; and "Why Do Libraries Matter in the 21st Century?" (Scarecrow Press, 2005. 152 pp. \$24.95. 0-8108-5355-8.)

Bottom line: Recommended for a 10-minute shot in the arm.

COLLABORATIVE LIBRARY LESSONS FOR THE PRIMARY GRADES: LINKING RESEARCH SKILLS TO CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Brenda A. Copeland and Patricia A. Messner

Taking us up one step on the collaboration ladder, Copeland provides library lessons aimed at the primary grades that are linked to national standards and that have definite roles for both the teacher and the teacher-librarian to play in the teaching of a particular skill. In addition, each lesson not only treats a "library" or information literacy skill but is also connected to a content standard in science, social science, or language arts. Almost all lessons presume a print library. For example, the lessons on encyclopedias do not include access to online encyclopedias although such an inclusion would be easy to do if the teacher-librarian liked the lesson activity idea. There are good ideas here: Collaborate and team teach a library skill connected to a content area, and center the teaching in a state or national content standard. Such a combination has been a challenge for many

in the profession to accomplish. Copeland's work gets us into the collaboration mode but then disappoints with the level of the actual activity and the lack of an assessment to determine if the standards were achieved.

Most of the activities concentrate on learning a few facts. For example, in a lesson about print encyclopedias, students look up animal facts to write on cards and then share. In another activity students color on a U.S. map the various states that class members or the teacher traveled to during the summer. In a third lesson students use the computer to discover what subject heading is used to find their favorite pet. To all of these low-level activities we ask, Why? What is the point? Where are these activities leading? How will we know whether the students have arrived? Such is the challenge of the profession as we move from an activity-based program in the library to a more high-level and challenging trek that will directly push achievement. (Libraries Unlimited, 2004, 176 pp. \$35. 1-59158-185-0.)

Bottom line: Not recommended.

THE LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO DEVELOPING CHRISTIAN FICTION COLLECTIONS FOR CHILDREN

Barbara J. Walker

Is there a place for Christian fiction in your library collection? If so, then this book is a must-read introduction to the field. Here is guidance on many issues, and a reading of the table of contents gives us the reason this book is important: "How to Understand the Christian Fiction Genre"; "How to Build Christian Fiction Collections"; "How to Market Christian Fiction Collections"; "Key Book Titles (a core collection)"; "Key Series"; "Key DVDs and Videos"; "Christian Fiction Award Winners"; "About Christian Fiction Authors"; "Christian Fiction Publishers"; and "Review Sources for Christian Fiction Publishers." If the teacher-librarian determines that Christian fiction is to be a part of the collection, then Walker provides excellent guidance, particularly for the novice in an area often neglected in collection development courses. Both school and public librarians will find much in these pages to assist in adding titles, the reasons to add them, and the best of the lot. (Neal-Schuman, 2005. 150 pp. \$55. 1-55570-546-4.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

MORE BOOKTALKING THAT WORKS

Jennifer Bromann

Yes, there still is a place for booktalking. Bromann provides a second volume of her booktalks to help a teacher-librarian build a repertoire to share at a moment's notice. The first section of the book is a valuable introduction to the art of booktalking, giving some background, suggestions, and methods to use. The bulk of the book is a collection of 200 booktalks. All are brief introductions that will fit on a 4×6-inch card with your own notes on the back as Bromann recommends; such would be a valuable file. Are Bromann's talks compelling? You be the judge as she booktalks the familiar title *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963* (Delacorte, 1995). Raise your hand if your family has an eight-track player in the car? A radio? A cassette player? A CD player? A satellite radio? Well, in title *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, the father of two boys prepares the car for a road trip by installing a record player called the Ultra Glide. The family is going on a trip to Birmingham because the oldest son keeps getting into trouble. He uses store credit to buy cookies when they hardly have money to eat, and he is constantly causing problems. His punishment—or the way to try to reform him—is to send him to his grandmother's place in another state. They drive straight through only to get to a city where there are lots of racial issues and bombings of churches.

Sometimes it is helpful to read someone else's booktalk and then write your own, making it compelling to the audience you serve. That is the suggested use of this book, rather than to paste the booktalks on cards and then just read them verbatim. Most talks are aimed at upper-elementary through high school and the titles are current. (Neal-Schuman, 2005. 200 pp. \$49.95. 1-55570-525-1.)

Bottom line: Recommended for those who need a booktalk starter or simply a list of recent titles to booktalk.

TEEN READING CONNECTIONS

Tom K. Reynolds

Reynolds, a teen librarian, provides some interesting ideas for working with teenagers in the public library and for moving across the line into school library territory for a cooperative venture. Each chapter of the book is

a topic designed to connect teenagers with books and libraries, including fiction, popular nonfiction, booktalking, book promotion, school resources, print and electronic resources, reader's advisory, and sensible library policies.

Each chapter gives a wide variety of practical tips, obviously from Reynold's repertoire or from other programs he has observed. Reynolds knows how to connect both with the urban and suburban teen and to the school libraries in the neighborhood—that is the strength of his ideas. For professionals serving teens, this book is worth comparing your own ideas to the author's to discover and refine what you are already doing. The short but good bibliographies are good checklists for your own collection. (Neal-Schuman, 2005. 115 pp. \$49.95. 1-55570-506-5.)

Bottom line: Recommended for teacher-librarians who want to connect with the public library in more meaningful ways and for public librarians.

MOTIVATIONAL DESIGN: THE SECRET TO PRODUCING EFFECTIVE CHILDREN'S MEDIA

Marilyn P. Arnone

Ever since the audiovisual revolution in the 1960s, the opportunity for involving young people in the creation of media of all types has been a wonderful opportunity to connect learning and media. With the advent of simple tools such as Garage Band and iMovie, we see students begin to be music, movie, and web developers in ways that amaze and engage. We are all familiar with the unmotivated student who when given an opportunity to work with and teach a new technological gizmo to others blossoms as never before. How many teens have graduated from high school because someone wise enough to connect them to production and technology helped them to find relevance in school, a purpose in life, and a leap into a career?

Arnone's book raises a whole host of questions about the role of media creation as a way to enhance learning. Media production is time consuming, and who can afford that time in today's achievement race? Many teach a few principles of creating a PowerPoint presentation or working with a few digital photographs and then push forward with stuffing content into kids' heads. Arnone sees

a great deal of benefit in not just teaching the five buttons that need to be pushed in the correct sequence but also in using intense motivation strategies to help kids experience excellence. Using the ARCS model, the author teaches us to build Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. In other words, the production of a quick documentary video or even a PowerPoint slide show can be an intense learning experience in itself, reaching every child who is involved.

We have long known that when kids encounter a new technology their motivation rises. Arnone teaches us how to corral that natural curiosity and channel it for personal growth. Certainly, offering a variety of educational activities is a major factor that will keep kids pushing toward the major instructional goals of the school, but the time factor is still there. When teens are documenting the annual bug catch done in biology, are they learning more about bugs or about video production? Whatever your answer or solution to the mix of technology, time, and types of activities, Arnone is a worthy read that reminds us how to structure a production activity to achieve maximum benefits. If two weeks are allotted to the production phase of a major unit of instruction, how do we structure that two weeks to go far beyond just getting the job done? In today's achievement race, Arnone is a good read because it forces us to reconsider media production, its role, and most importantly, how to use it as an effective tool. Highly recommended for all of us who think we know everything there is to know about media production and are too overconfident to recall the basics and take a fresh look at our activities and strategies. It is also an excellent read for the novice who wishes to build effective strategies for using media production. (Scarecrow Press, 2005. 192 pp. \$24.95. 0-8108-5037-0.)
Bottom line: Highly recommended.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS IN SPANISH FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS: 2000 THROUGH 2004

Isabel Schon

Isabel Schon is a national treasure. Long before anyone worried about the number of Spanish speakers from all over the world in our classrooms, Dr. Schon was documenting, recording, and annotating the best books in

Spanish for children. In the current volume, Schon concentrates on the best books published in 2000–2004. She covers reference works, nonfiction, easy fiction, and chapter books for the elementary school, or that are of particular value for those who want to use children's literature as a tool to teach Spanish to high schools students. Trying to find the best book in Spanish is difficult even in the automation days of electronic selection lists created by vendors to assist teacher-librarians. Schon's book helps not only in identifying titles, but also in forcing us to find the publishers and the distributors that we must link to in order to have a Spanish-language collection. If you have not had an opportunity to attend one of her summer institutes at the University of California, San Marcos, located in San Diego, you have missed a great experience. (Scarecrow Press, 2004. 432 pp. \$45. 0-8108-5196-2.)
Bottom line: Highly recommended for anyone building even a small collection of books in Spanish.

LIBRARY TEEN ADVISORY GROUPS

Diane P. Tuccillo

For this age group, teen advisory groups are the foundation of any public library program. But they are only as good as the leadership is in creating, encouraging, guiding, and carrying out programming and service projects that essentially promote literacy and personal growth and development for the teens who participate.

Tuccillo has figured out how to make teen advisory committees work and has pulled in advice from teen librarians around the United States to add to her idea repertoire. Herein, we find all the elements covered from the why to the how, sprinkled with plenty of examples drawn from real programs. For the wise school teacher-librarian, here is an opportunity to arm him- or herself with ideas and to then join the advisory committee, making connections whenever possible between things going on at school in order to refer students in the school to public library programs. We are all aware that how much teens read over the summer or during school breaks determines how much they retain of what they are taught in school, and that "break" reading helps maintain reading scores—the biggest factor in achievement. No teacher-librarian can hope to fill all

the needs for teens from the school library, so this title is highly recommended for both school and public librarians, particularly if it leads to real action, excellent programs, and a major draw for teens in the community. In times of drugs and gangs and other major problems, we cannot think of a more important mission for libraries than to help raise the teen animals around them. (VOYA Books, 2005. 192 pp. \$29.95. 0-8108-4982-8.)
Bottom line: Highly recommended for teacher-librarians and public librarians.

DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS IN LITERATURE FOR YOUTH: A GUIDE AND RESOURCE BOOK

Joy L. Lowe and Kathryn I. Matthews

Our civilization is so accustomed to new discoveries and inventions that we often take them for granted. In recent years, the United States has been falling behind on the number of patents granted to its citizens as compared with other nations in the world. We also know that to keep our economy rolling, we must continue to invent new ways of doing things that require less effort, solve substantial problems, and add to our economic well-being. We need creative minds working on the energy crisis, methods for the detection of terrorist bombs, new ways of helping kids learn more in less time, and the like. The compilers of this bibliography capture our attention immediately in their introduction:

For example, Meadan C. J. Walker's hair loss led to her experimentations to find a homemade remedy. Her successful results formed the basis of her hair-care product empire. With persistence, determination, and hard work, she began to make and market hair-care products, eventually becoming the first female African American, self-made millionaire.

Thus, the compilers have searched out biographies, collective biographies, picture books, fiction, everyday life, industry, environment, information technology, media and communications, how things work, the future, references, and inventions to market as the topics under which to list good titles. The annotated bibliography covers K–12 and includes hundreds of titles. Such a bibliography may not be indexed well in the OPAC, so this bibliography becomes of value when we are searching for resources to promote the idea of creativity that is encouraged in every state

curriculum with which we are familiar. (Scarecrow Press, 2004. 350 pp. \$49. 0-8108-4915-1.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

SCHOOL CHANGE AND THE MICROSOCIETY PROGRAM

Cary Cherniss

The use of simulation games and even larger simulations that engage an entire school come and go in education. For example, one elementary school in New Mexico spent the morning learning basic skills they would need to construct an authentic Anasazi village in the backyard of the school. Such full-scale simulations are difficult to imagine in today's rush to produce high test scores. In our example, however, parents

fought to put their children into the school, and the children involved will never forget their authentic experience.

Gary Cherniss provides a guide for creating such a yearlong and intensive simulation of a micro-society in a school. Part of each day is devoted to the living out of an entire economic society complete with industry, trading, businesses, taxes, and the regulatory government to keep it operational. Students are actively involved in creating, managing, and living in their society, and its elements are integrated into the normal curriculum throughout the school day. Done well, such major simulations offer many opportunities for the school library to be part of a real-life experience as research into such a society is conducted and put into

practice. If your school is looking for such a reality experience, Cherniss has a major idea that has been tested and is described in sufficient detail that a study team can use this book to stimulate thinking and planning. There is, however, a wide variety of alternatives that should be considered when contemplating a major involvement project, ranging from a society such as described here, to a major scientific exploration done by the school as a whole, to a major service-learning program, to other kinds of reality experiences. (Corwin Press, 2005. 232 pp. \$67.95. 1-4129-1760-3.)

Bottom line: Cherniss is worth consideration when the skill, kill, and drill curriculum has hit a dead end and the school wants an engaging alternative.

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