



**Ohio Power!**

**A Parent's Guide to School Libraries**

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## **A School Library Mission**

What type of person is likely to be successful in today's information-rich and technology-based world? What type of learner is likely to be successful in the world of the future insofar as we can foresee that world?

When an exemplary library program is in place, every young person can become:

### ***Reading Literate***

An avid and capable reader

### ***Technology Literate***

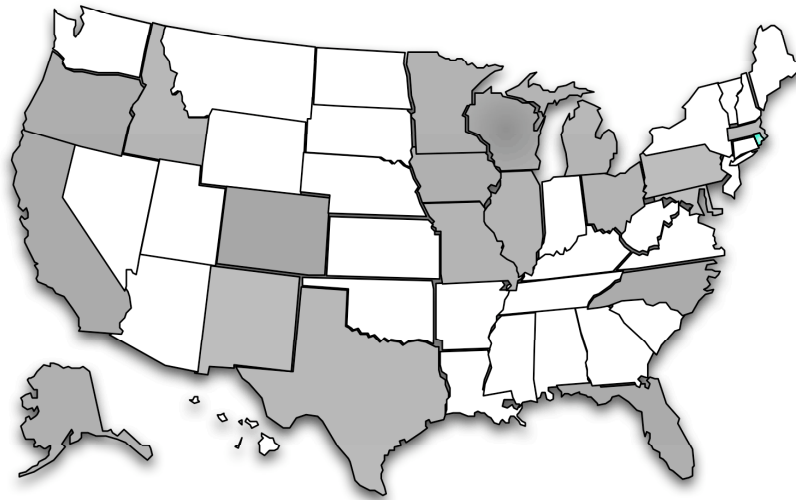
A skilled user of technology tools  
An efficient learner

### ***Information Literate***

An organized investigator  
A critical thinker  
A creative thinker  
An effective communicator  
A responsible information user

## Research on School Libraries: A National Picture

Since 1999, twenty-one states have commissioned studies<sup>1</sup> about the impact of school libraries. In every instance, good school library media programs are linked to higher academic achievement—one part of a healthy educational diet.



Alaska, 2000  
 California, 2008  
 Colorado, 2000  
 Delaware, 2006  
 Florida, 2003  
 Idaho, 2009  
 Iowa, 2002  
 Illinois, 2006  
 Indiana, 2007  
 Massachusetts, 2002  
 Michigan, 2003  
 Minnesota, 2002  
 Missouri, 2003  
 New Jersey, in progress  
 New Mexico, 2002  
 New York, in progress  
 North Carolina, 2003  
 Ohio, 2004  
 Oregon, 2001  
 Pennsylvania, 2000  
 Texas, 2001  
 Wisconsin, 2006

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of these studies, consult Library Research Service at <http://www.lrs.org/impact.php>.

## What Every Parent Should Know About School Libraries and Reading Achievement

The case for readers in the age of information is clear. Studies show that:

*"nearly everyone in the United States can read and write. They just don't read and write well enough. Although basic literacy has been on the increase for the last century, the demands for literacy have been rising faster. Many people clearly don't read and write well enough to handle the complex literacy demands of modern society. The problem is thus not how to bring students to the second- or third-grade reading level; the problem is how to bring them beyond this."*<sup>1</sup>

The many state studies about school libraries provide evidence that school librarians help students do better in their school assignments. The first study to explore this was the Ohio study, which showed that 99.44% of the 13,050 student sample indicated that the school library and its services, including roles of school librarians, have helped them in some way with their learning.<sup>2</sup>

School libraries and reading achievement are clearly linked.

*The quality of school libraries is a significant measure of the caliber of middle, junior, and senior high schools. Major studies during the past five decades substantiate that reading achievement is increased by quality library collections and regular student use of the library.*<sup>3</sup>

In their recent study of schools in Alaska, Pennsylvania and Colorado, Lance and Loertscher found that scores were 10 to 20 percent higher in schools where libraries have strong library specialists who collaborate with teachers, teach information literacy, promote reading, and see to it that collections are current and ample.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Krashen, Stephen D. *The Power of Reading*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries : The Ohio Research Study @

<http://www.oelma.org/StudentLearning/default.asp>

<sup>3</sup> Holland, Earlene L. & Humphrey, Jack W. "Study of Reading in Indiana Middle, Junior, and Senior High Schools," Middle Grades Reading Network, March 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Lance, Keith and David V. Loertscher. *Powering Achievement: School Library Media Programs Make a Difference*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Salt Lake City: Hi Willow, 2002..

## How Does Ohio Compare to the Nation in School Libraries?

In March 2004, the Federal Government released the report: *The Status of Public and Private School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999-2000* available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004313>. While the data is old (federal wheels grind slowly), it is the most recent national statistics we have. How did Ohio compare to the nation that year? The following table summarizes some of the most important findings:

Characteristic	Source	Ohio	Nation
Public schools that claim to have a library	p. 5	96.9	91.6%
Private schools in the U.S. that claim to have a library	p. 6	Not reported	62.8%
Public schools that have a certificated librarian	p. 9	58.2%	75.2%
Number of schools with a full time librarian at the school	p. 19	43.9%	60.5%
School libraries with paid library aides	p. 23	70.3%	71.6%
Average library expenditures (books and multimedia)	p. 28	\$5,873	\$8,729
Average number of books in the library	p. 29	7,920	10,232
School Average library circulation of materials per week	P. 47	450	605

### Conclusions:

- Ohio has many, many schools that do not have a full-time librarian. This means that many schools share a librarian with another school or several schools. The Ohio Research Study conducted from October, 2002, through December, 2003, sought to understand how students benefit from school libraries. After surveying over 13,000 students in grades 3 to 12 and 879 faculty, the number one recommendation of the study is that *"all school library programs provide instructional intervention, through a credentialed school librarian, which centers on the development of information literacy skills for inquiry learning."*<sup>1</sup>
- In Ohio spending on materials is far below the national average.
- In Ohio collections of books are far below the national average.
- In Ohio, circulation is below the national average, not high enough to give a major boost to literacy.

### Good advice for every parent and grandparent:

- A school library with lots of books and a professional librarian makes a difference to your child's/grandchild's education.
- Find out if your school actually has a professional librarian and good budgets to buy materials your child wants to read.
- Even in hard times, if you cut the library, you decrease your child's chances of succeeding in school.
- Advocate for a great school library. Young minds are this nation's future, impacting your Social Security, Medicare, the job market, and more.

<sup>1</sup> Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries. <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning.htm>



## Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries

The research study, *School Library Through Ohio School Libraries*<sup>1</sup>, conducted from October 2002 through December 2003 looked at 39 different effective school libraries across Ohio. Over 13,000 students in Grades 3 to 12 and 879 faculty were surveyed. This is the largest study to date of how the school library helps students learn. The study sought to understand **how students benefit from school libraries** through elaborating "conceptions of help" and providing some measure of the extent of these "helps" as perceived by students and faculty.

### THE RESULTS

The study linked the academic success of the students with the library services, resources and the professional school librarians. Specifically, 99.44% of the sample (13,050 students) indicated that the school library and its services, including roles of school librarians, have helped them in some way, regardless of how much, with their learning.

- **The data show that effective school libraries in Ohio are dynamic rather than passive agents of learning.**
- **Intervention by the school librarian goes beyond teaching students how to use technology tools to access and evaluate information, but also provides instruction in how to use these tools effectively and reflectively to create products.**
- **An effective school library, led by a credentialed school librarian who has a clearly defined role in information-centered pedagogy, plays a critical role in facilitating student learning for building knowledge.**

**When effective school libraries are in place, students do learn.  
13,000 students cannot be wrong.**

<sup>1</sup> 2004 Ross J. Todd, Carol C. Kuhlthau and OELMA. *Student Learning Through School Libraries*. A summary of the study is available at <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>

## Why a Professional School Librarian?

Questions: "You mean we need a person with a Master's Degree in the school library? After all, can't the books just be checked in and out by a clerk or even a volunteer parent?"

Answer: "Absolutely not if you want to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The school librarian of today is a teacher who administers a very complex print and digital information environment and serves as an information coach for teachers and students."

Here are a few things professional school librarians do:

- ◆ They help teachers create exciting learning experiences in an information-rich and technology-rich environment.
- ◆ They help every student get the best information to fulfill their assignments.
- ◆ They build and maintain a digital school library open to your children/teens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from anywhere in the school and from home. And, they are interested in "smaller," "safe," and reliable information rather than the whole Internet.
- ◆ They guide and teach students to evaluate information - particularly from the Internet. "Who's saying what to me, for what reason, and with what credibility?"
- ◆ They teach students the research process in a world full of information overload and data smog.
- ◆ When teachers bring classes to the library, the librarian serves as a second teacher so that every student gets individual attention.
- ◆ And, by the way, they are still reading's best friend.

"Trying to staff a library with only a clerk is like trying to run a hospital entirely with nurses."

### Requirements to be a professional school librarian in Ohio

- Have a valid elementary or secondary OH teaching credential.
- Complete School Library Licensure Program

### Is your school library staffed by a PROFESSIONAL school librarian?

Ask the pointed question: "Are you a credentialed school librarian?" If your school does not have such a person, ask why it doesn't. Remember that in twenty-one major studies since 2000 in over 9400 schools with professional school librarians, scores were 10 to 20% higher than in schools without these professionals.

## Ohio Academic Content Standards and K-12 Library Guidelines

In 2004, Ohio, under the direction of the Ohio Department of Education, developed new academic standards to prepare students for the future. The standards describe what a student should know and be able to do in each subject and at each grade level. They outline a connected body of understandings and competencies and are a comprehensive foundation that all students should learn.

The State of Ohio K-12 Library Guidelines have seven standards: Library Management; Collection Development & Curriculum; Literacy & Reading Support; Library-based Technology (the four program based standards) and Information Literacy; Technology Literacy; and Media Literacy (the three instructional standards.) The three instructional standards are directly aligned with all academic content areas, providing a multitude of opportunities for collaboration between credentialed library media specialists and classroom teachers.

The Ohio K-12 Library Guidelines reflect the philosophy of the National Standards. (<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=340&ContentID=13952&Content=31719>)

### The Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning<sup>1</sup>

#### **Information Literacy - The student who is information literate:**

- accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- evaluates information critically and competently.
- uses information accurately and creatively.

#### **Independent Learning - The student who is an independent learner:**

- is information literate and pursues information related to personal interests.
- is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information.
- is information literate and strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation.

#### **Social Responsibility - The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society:**

- is information literate and recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society.
- is information literate and practices ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology.
- is information literate and participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

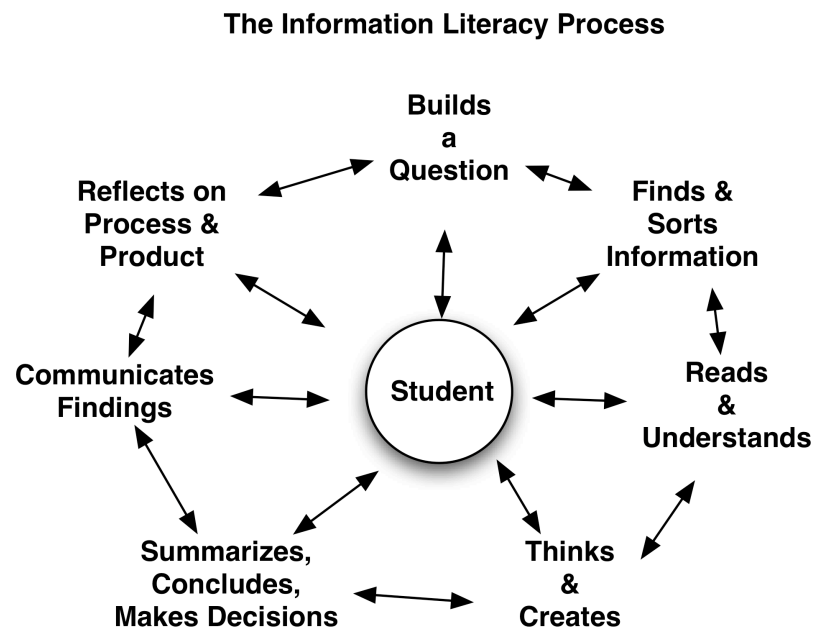
<sup>1</sup> American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology. *Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning*. American Library Association, 1998. For more information about the nine information literacy standards, see the American Association of School Librarians web page at <http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/informationpower/informationliteracy.htm>

## Information Literacy: A Life Skill

Whether your child is a kindergartner, a high school senior, or anywhere in between, school library media specialists can help them learn to locate, evaluate, and use information on science, social studies, or any other school topic.

The challenge for the students of today is to sort through all the information and voices crowding into their world in order to make sound decisions, evaluate information, and prepare for jobs and careers.

Given a topic, a problem, an assignment, a paper, or just a personal quest, the child or teen might follow the process pictured below. It's a messy, sometimes frustrating process, requiring lots of work and hard thinking.



# DIALOGUE

## Information Literacy Model

INFOhio, a statewide cooperative school library and information network, developed the DIALOGUE Model for Information Literacy Skills. This model is used in many Ohio schools.

### Define

#### Explore/Identify the need for the information

- Identify the assignment
- Focus on the topic

#### Determine the basic question

- Brainstorming
- Class/Student participation

### Initiate

#### "Distressing ignorance"

- Assignment is due tomorrow
- This will affect my grade
- I really want to know!

### Assess

#### Identify keywords, concepts, and possible resources

#### Consider information literacy skills

#### "Tapping prior knowledge" and "Building background"

### Locate

#### Identify possible sources of information [Develop a *search strategy*]

- Library OPACs vs. Electronic databases vs. Web sites

#### Locate and retrieve available resources

### Organize

#### Identify the best and most useful information sources [Evaluate the information retrieved]

- Analyze, arrange, categorize, examine, generalize, group, interpret, infer, integrate, select, synthesize, and ... think

**Guide**

**Search log or journal [Student assistance and review]**

- "Collaborative grouping!" and "Cooperative learning!"

**Educator assistance and review**

**Use**

**Determine presentation format [Present results]**

**Communication information**

**Evaluate**

**Evaluate the project/results [Evaluate the process]**

**Assess the teaching and learning**

Copyright © 1998 by INFOhio - The Information Network for Ohio Schools

What information literacy model is your student using? If you don't know, ask your school librarian.

## Helping Your Child/Teen with Information

As young people do various assignments/projects requiring the finding and use of information, parents can help and support what the school librarian is teaching. Here are some ideas as the research process develops.

The Research Task	What the Librarian Teaches	How Parents Can Help
<b>Builds a Question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building background knowledge about a topic.</li> <li>• The difference between a good question and a poor question.</li> <li>• Narrowing a topic.</li> <li>• Forming key words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find books on the topic with lots of pictures to share together.</li> <li>• Explain concepts about the topic and define terms.</li> <li>• Help narrow a topic to something manageable in the time available.</li> </ul>
<b>Finds and Sorts Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search strategies.</li> <li>• Locating resources.</li> <li>• Skim, scan and consider.</li> <li>• Evaluate resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep asking about the quality of the information being used.</li> <li>• Is this source the best information?</li> </ul>
<b>Reads and Understands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading strategies.</li> <li>• Actively read, view and listen.</li> <li>• Reading pictures.</li> <li>• Use features of non-fiction text.</li> <li>• Note-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep asking and helping to find the "main ideas" and the "supporting ideas" as reading/viewing/listening occurs.</li> </ul>
<b>Thinks and Creates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using graphic organizers.</li> <li>• Sorting, comparing, and classifying information.</li> <li>• Looking for patterns and trends.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help make logical connections between ideas across the various sources being used.</li> </ul>
<b>Summarizes, Concludes, Makes Decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to summarize ideas.</li> <li>• Drawing conclusions.</li> <li>• Making decisions.</li> <li>• How not to plagiarize.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the conclusion, decision, or summary follow logically from the information collected?</li> </ul>
<b>Communicates Findings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Techniques of presenting information in print or multimedia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ideas presented are more important than how flashy the presentation is.</li> </ul>
<b>Reflects on Process and Product</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to reflect: what I know and am able to do.</li> <li>• How well did I do?</li> <li>• How can I do better over time?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No matter the grade, what do you know and what are you able to do?</li> <li>• How can you do better next time?</li> </ul>

## Cut and Paste (Plagiarism): A Major Problem

The number one complaint of teachers and librarians today is that students cut and clip information from the Internet, books, and other resources and then pass it in as if it were their own work. There are services available on the Internet where for a fee, the student can download a research paper to print out and hand in. The impact on learning is devastating. There is no learning.

Replace **CUT and Paste** with:  
**Cut, Paste, THINK!**

Let's get a few things straight:

1. It's OK to cut and clip articles, pictures, quotes, or anything else as you assemble information for a project.
2. Hint: When cutting and clipping, be sure that the source (or citation) follows the information, so you don't lose the author, title, date, Internet URL, etc.
3. When we use information from a source, we cite it properly with the author, title, publisher, date or Internet URL. If we don't, we have plagiarized.
4. We may quote and summarize the ideas of others, but it is our own creative thought, analysis, and decisions that will be evidence of learning.
5. "How to THINK" is the true objective of learning and it is the life-blood of our society.

You can help by asking good questions as your child's/teen's project develops. Question starters will stimulate discussion and perhaps some appropriate advice.

1. Are you recording the sources as you find information?
2. What is the difference between what this author says and what you think?
3. How did your teacher or librarian teach you how to record the sources of the ideas you have gathered?
4. How do you weave the ideas of others and your own into a finished product?



## Judging an Internet Site: A CRITICAL SKILL

Use this guide to help decide whether specific web pages are reliable sources for research. Need help? Ask your teacher-librarian.

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Site URL: \_\_\_\_\_

### Authority:

Who is the sponsoring organization for the website? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the author or organizational author identified? Yes      No

(Look at the top & bottom of the page for a name. Check other pages on the site for an author.)

Does the author list occupation, education, or other credentials? Yes      No

(What makes the author an expert on this topic?)

Can you contact the publisher/author from the site? Yes      No

### Purpose/Bias:

Is this site trying to: Sell something? \_\_\_\_\_ Inform? \_\_\_\_\_ Persuade? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the purpose affect the accuracy of the information? Yes      No

### Domain:

What is the site's domain type?

.gov \_\_\_\_\_ .com \_\_\_\_\_ .edu \_\_\_\_\_ .org \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

(What does the domain name tell you about the purpose of the site?)

### Accuracy:

Are the sources of the facts documented? Yes      No

Can you verify the facts from other sources? Yes      No

Are there any errors on the page, including spelling or grammar errors? Yes      No

Does the author provide a bibliography, works cited page or footnotes that tell us where he/she got the information? Yes      No

### Currency:

When was the Web page created? \_\_\_\_\_ Revised/update? \_\_\_\_\_

If statistics are included, how old is the data? \_\_\_\_\_

### Design:

Is the page easy to navigate? Yes      No

Are the graphics distracting? Yes      No

Are the links helpful and relevant? Yes      No

Do the links work? Yes      No

Is the page well organized? Yes      No

## Internet Safety for Kids

Here are a few tips from the FBI about Internet Safety.



There are some very important things that you need to keep in mind when you're on your computer at home or at school.

- First, remember never to give out personal information such as your name, home address, school name, or telephone number in a chat room or on bulletin boards. Also, never send a picture of yourself to someone you chat with on the computer without your parent's permission.
- Never write to someone who has made you feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Do not meet someone or have them visit you without the permission of your parents.
- Tell your parents right away if you read anything on the Internet that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are. Someone who says that "she" is a "12-year-old girl" could really be an older man.

To read more about new privacy rules, visit the Federal Trade Commission's Web site at <http://www.ftc.gov>. There is a special section just for kids.

Also, download the FBI's "A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety" either in English or Spanish at <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguide.htm>.

## Help Your Student Become an Expert: Start at the School Library

"I've been crazy about frogs since I was a kid. I collected them along with snakes, ants, and other critters, and even joined the Wisconsin Herpetological Society as a charter member—at age 14. Now, as a zoologist-photographer, I get to combine my two great passions. For a guy like me, an assignment to cover Brazil's Atlantic forest was a ticket to Frog Heaven."

~ Mark W. Moffett, "Frog heaven," *National Geographic*, March, 2004, p. 24.

On winning the Academy Award for 2004, Peter Jackson, the Director of *The Lord of the Rings* movies said, "Thanks to my parents who gave me an 8mm movie projector at age nine."

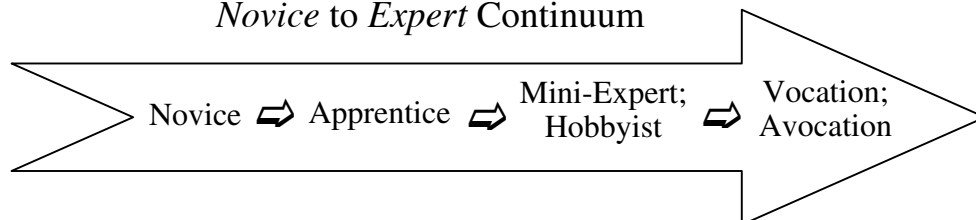
Due to the demands of standardized testing, the focus of your student's education may be limited to learning only basic knowledge in a variety of curricular areas. Projects, research, and natural curiosity may lead your child into investigations beyond the confines of the curriculum.

When your child becomes interested in the Antarctic, whales, dinosaurs, science fiction, inventions, or a myriad of other topics, talk to the school librarian about ways to push an interest into expertise.

Libraries are Keys to Becoming Experts:

- ❖ Explore the school library first.
- ❖ Explore the public library.
- ❖ Explore the Internet.
- ❖ Link to experts.
- ❖ Gain access to advanced collections.
- ❖ Do experimentation and research.
- ❖ Question all information in libraries.

### *Novice to Expert Continuum*



## A Creative Thinker

Is your child/teen creative? All of us have creative capacities and they can be improved. Creativity can also be squashed. Consider the definition in the box on the right<sup>1</sup> and an advertising poem used by Apple Computer.<sup>2</sup> School libraries are full of creative ideas and books that stimulate creativity. Enjoy!

### To the Crazy Ones

Here's to the crazy ones.

The misfits.

The rebels.

The troublemakers.

The round pegs in the square holes.

The ones who see things differently.

They're not fond of rules.

And they have no respect for the status quo.

You can praise them, disagree with them, quote them,  
disbelieve them, glorify them or vilify them.

About the only thing you can't do is ignore them.

Because they change things.

They invent. They imagine. They heal.

They explore. They create. They inspire.

They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.

How else can you stare at an empty canvas and see a work of art?

Or sit in silence and hear a song that's never been written?

Or gaze at a red planet and see a laboratory on wheels?

We make tools for these kinds of people.

Because while some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius.

And it's the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world,  
who actually do.

**Think different.**

c. 1997. Apple Computer Inc.

### The Creative Process

First Insight

↓  
Saturation

↓  
Incubation

↓  
Ah-Ha!

↓  
Verification

<sup>1</sup> The creative process is Getzel/Kneller's description in von Wodtke, Mark. *Mind Over Media: Creative Thinking Skills for Electronic Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993. P 11.

<sup>2</sup> ©1997, Apple Computer, Inc. Used by permission.

## A Critical Thinker

Library media specialists see critical thinking as one of the major components of the information literate person. The Ohio state test and other national tests such as the ACT and SAT have many items that test not only factual knowledge, but also the ability to think critically about a concept. Instead of advocating an add-on to the curriculum (a new scope and sequence or curriculum to be taught) critical thinking is best integrated with content.

Teachers and library media specialists should teach critical thinking strategies within the context of content-area projects, lessons, and information use. The objective is to create neither students who are sponges (believing everything they read, view, and hear), nor cynics (believing nothing they read, view, and hear), but healthy skeptics (using evidence and authoritative sources to judge believability).

### CRITICAL THINKING CONTINUUM

Sponges - - - - - Healthy Skeptics - - - - - Cynics

### A Major Challenge: Evaluating Information on the Internet

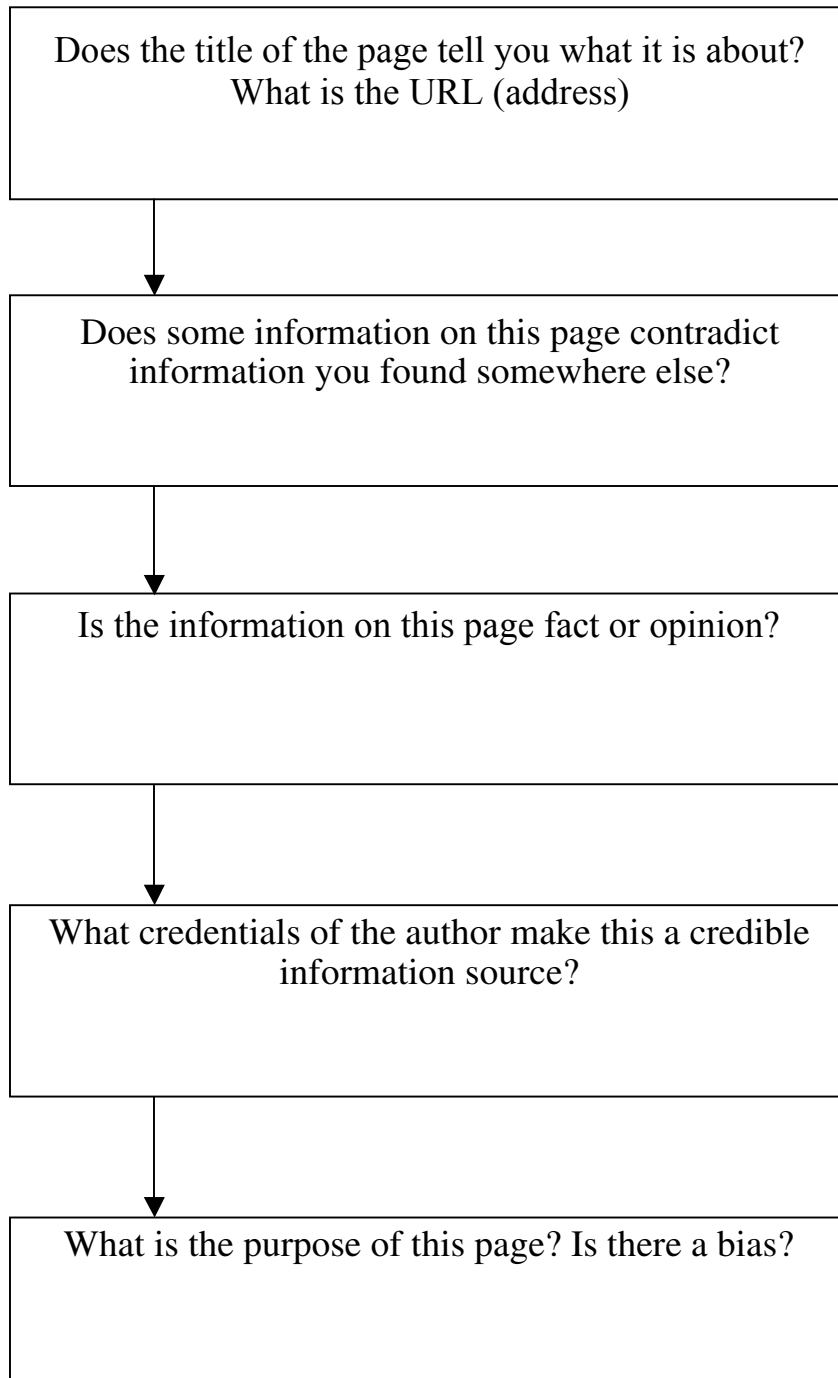
One of the major challenges, for example, is to educate learners to evaluate information they find on the Internet. Teachers and library media specialists should work together to teach learners these evaluative skills. Very young users may simply be asked to decide whether a site seems to be on the right topic or whether it is easy to understand. As learners develop cognitively, becoming more sophisticated in their use of online resources, teachers and library media specialists should respond with increasingly sophisticated lessons about authority, bias, currency and accuracy.

As a first step, learners should do a quick scan of the site to determine the general purpose of the site. Is it meant to:

- **INFORM** e.g., about current events, new information, etc.
- **EXPLAIN** e.g., teach, instruct, etc.
- **PERSUADE** e.g., change your mind, sell you something, etc.

## A Critical Thinker (cont.)

As students become more sophisticated, so will the questions we ask of them.



## Tips for Homework Help

### Homework: A Concern for the Whole Family

#### How to Help: Show that you think education and homework are important!

- ❖ Set a regular time for homework.
- ❖ Pick a place.
- ❖ Remove distractions.
- ❖ Provide supplies and identify resources.
- ❖ Set a good example.
- ❖ Be interested and interesting.

#### How to Help: Monitor assignments

- ❖ Ask about the homework policy.
- ❖ Be available.
- ❖ Look over completed assignments.
- ❖ Monitor and limit time spent viewing TV and playing video games.

#### How to Help: Provide guidance

- ❖ Help your child get organized.
- ❖ Encourage good study habits.
- ❖ Talk about the assignments.
- ❖ Watch for frustration.
- ❖ Give praise.

From: "Helping Your Child with Homework." U.S. Dept. of Education, Accessed March 2, 2004 at: <http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework/index.html>

The entire manual is available for downloading in a number of formats.

### Know How the School and Public Library Can Help

#### Resources:

- ❖ Know the open hours of school and public libraries since homework time often surpasses those hours.
- ❖ Know what's available on the digital school library (school site) and at INFOhio ([www.infohio.org](http://www.infohio.org)).
- ❖ Expect lists of the best websites to be available on your school and public library websites. Several well-chosen websites will save countless hours of searching.
- ❖ Know if there is a "virtual reference service" available—a librarian online to help at any time of day or night. The state of Ohio uses Homework Now ([www.homeworknow.org](http://www.homeworknow.org))
- ❖ Know that INFOhio (an online database resource collection) is available to any Ohio student at no charge and obtain, if necessary, any password needed to get access.

#### Advice:

- ❖ Be a supportive guide on the side.
- ❖ Help your child with organizational skills and timelines for the assignments.
- ❖ Help the child meet milestone deadline dates along the way for longer projects.
- ❖ **Don't do the projects for your child!**

## Virtual Homework Help



The goal of **HomeworkNow** is to help students find solutions online, anytime. It is a service of the State Library of Ohio and your public library.

**HomeworkNow** is a live online information service provided free of charge for the citizens of Ohio by the State Library of Ohio and your local public library. Professional librarians are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer your reference questions and assist you in finding information. Once logged on with your Ohio zip code, you and a librarian engage in a "chat" session. The librarian "pushes" high quality, authoritative online resources to your screen. You can watch and participate as librarians skillfully navigate the Internet to find precise answers to your questions. At the conclusion of each **HomeworkNow** session, you will receive a complete transcript of your session via email including links to all the online resources shared during that session.

**HomeworkNow** is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. General Reference assistance is available during all hours. Specialists in the subjects of business, foreign languages, genealogy, government information, health, history, law, literature, music and art, science, technology and the social sciences are available from 9:00 am to 5:30 pm Monday - Saturday.

**HomeworkNow** is made available free of charge to all residents of Ohio through a federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio.

Connect to **HomeworkNow** at  
<http://www.homeworknow.org/about.php>.



## The Library and the Textbook

Textbooks are extremely expensive sources of information. Check with your school, but many schools budget anywhere from \$60 to \$100 per year per student to keep the textbooks somewhat current. With the rise of students who are learning English or who are poor readers, it would not be uncommon to have 60% of a class that could not read and understand the textbook for any given course or class.

Textbooks constitute a core element of most schools in the United States because they provide structure, even content, and guidance for teachers on how to teach a course. In recent years, textbooks have been "dumbed down." That means their reading level has decreased and the content simplified as compared to the same textbooks you had in school. Yet the amount to be learned each decade continues to increase because knowledge is expanding.

A typical teacher faced with 60% of the class who cannot read and understand the textbook has one significant alternate information source: the library. If your child does not read well, then the library is the only hope to provide understandable content.

The rest of the United States looks to Texas and California for the textbooks they use because these two states make exacting demands on textbook publishers. Since these two markets are so large, what these two states want is what the rest of the country buys.

Typically, for less than half the budget of textbooks, the library collection will contain:

1. Multiple reading levels.
2. Depth of subject treatment vs. the breadth of treatment found in textbooks.
3. Pictures, diagrams, charts, and real objects.
4. Multimedia such as videos, audio, and computer software.
5. Periodicals, maps, atlases, and reference books.
6. A wide variety of perspectives such as cultures and opinions.

The point is not to cancel the textbook. The point is to supplement any textbook with a fine collection of library materials that can support every learner—your child included. Schools with the most at-risk students should have the best libraries if we really expect every child to "pass the test."

## School Libraries and Technology Departments

When microcomputers first came into school, the person who was usually put in charge was the person in the school who had any interest in the new contraptions—the science teacher, the math teacher, sometimes the librarian. In early computer years, there developed a split between the library and the technology department with its networks and computer labs. Today, there is a trend toward merging libraries and computer labs, but staffing is still a problem since no one person can do it all and keep it all running efficiently.

Librarians are most interested in what's ON the wires rather than being fascinated by the wires themselves. Their focus is on:

- ❖ Online databases containing periodicals and factual information.
- ❖ Linking to the best Internet sites.
- ❖ Tools students can use to do their assignments.
- ❖ Access in the library, the classroom, and at home.
- ❖ Portability of computers for differing classroom/library uses.
- ❖ Wireless access to library information systems anywhere in the school.
- ❖ Helping teachers create exciting learning experiences using technology as a teaching and learning tool.

No matter how the school is organized, whether libraries and technology staffs are separate or merged, parents will want results rather than excuses.

Determine the state of information systems in the school that are needed to support your child's education. Ask about:

- ❖ The state of computer equipment (age, software, operating systems).
- ❖ The reliability of the information systems. (Are they working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?)
- ❖ Equitable access to computers for every child (home access to school networks, extended hours, loaner systems for home use).
- ❖ Software needed for your child to do excellent work.
- ❖ Databases and digital periodical collections to easily locate high quality information (students are encouraged to use Infohio).
- ❖ Collections of the best Internet sites targeted at school topics and age levels.
- ❖ Filters to protect against advertising, pornography, and predators, yet open enough to find the information your child needs.

## The Digital School Library

More and more school libraries have web pages available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Find out your school library's URL and use it yourself and guide your child or teen to its features. Here is a list of features you might find useful:

<b>Connections to Assignments</b>	When assignments by teachers involve the library collections, links to those assignments with lots of helps is a common school library web page feature. <a href="http://lib.centerville.k12.oh.us">http://lib.centerville.k12.oh.us</a> . Click on any school.
<b>Bibliographies to Complete Assignments</b>	Many librarians try to save learners time by posting the best web sites, tips, guides to helpful books, or online databases. <a href="http://www.leeca.org/bayhigh/index.htm">http://www.leeca.org/bayhigh/index.htm</a>
<b>Tips on Research</b>	A wide variety of helps might be available such as tips on citing sources, where to go to find information, helpful experts to consult, and mini-tutorials on parts of the research process. <a href="http://www.ipl.org/div/aplus">http://www.ipl.org/div/aplus</a>
<b>Online Periodical Collections</b>	The web page should lead to students to digital magazines either purchased by the school, the public library, or the state. These digital collections will be invaluable in finding current articles on almost any topic. Passwords are needed. Ask your school librarian for one. <a href="http://www.infohio.org/er/secure/ebsco.asp">http://www.infohio.org/er/secure/ebsco.asp</a>
<b>Online Databases</b>	Databases might contain all sorts of factual data such as weather information, science data, population statistics, lists of government agencies, or other current factual or experimental data. <a href="http://www.infohio.org/ER/ERcore.asp">http://www.infohio.org/ER/ERcore.asp</a>
<b>Selected Internet Sites</b>	Instead of turning the students loose in the ocean of the full Internet, many librarians select a body of "the best" of the web for use by their students. <a href="http://www.oplin.org/ohkids/index.htm">http://www.oplin.org/ohkids/index.htm</a>
<b>Best Book Lists</b>	There are hundreds of recommended lists of good books for kids and teens to read. The librarian might link to some of these and encourage students to post lists of their favorites for others to access. <a href="http://www.oplin.org/page.php?Id=64-45-65&amp;msg=">www.oplin.org/page.php?Id=64-45-65&amp;msg=</a>
<b>Published Student Work</b>	Many students create very high quality papers, poetry, fiction, or other projects and these can be posted on the library web site for other students to enjoy. <a href="http://www.siec.k12.in.us/cannelton/echoes/">http://www.siec.k12.in.us/cannelton/echoes/</a>
<b>Connections to Other Libraries</b>	There may be connections to other school libraries, public libraries, academic libraries, state libraries, and national libraries to link students to the best of the entire world. <a href="http://lib.centerville.k12.oh.us">http://lib.centerville.k12.oh.us</a>
<b>Homework Helps</b>	Virtual reference - a service providing online help 24 hours a day is beginning to emerge in many communities. The school library web page would link to these kinds of services available to your area. <a href="http://www.homeworkknow.org">http://www.homeworkknow.org</a>
<b>Testing Aides</b>	The library web page might link to information that helps students prepare for tests. Ask your school librarian for a password. <a href="http://www.infohio.org/ER/secure/LearningExpress.asp">http://www.infohio.org/ER/secure/LearningExpress.asp</a>
<b>Parent Help Pages</b>	Tips and helpful resources for parents might include emergency information, helping with homework, educational opportunities, and sources for scholarships. <a href="http://www.infohio.org/Parent/default.html">http://www.infohio.org/Parent/default.html</a>
<b>Resources For Teachers</b>	While the teachers could use all the information sources listed above, special helps might include special subject web sites, professional development opportunities, and tips for busy teachers. <a href="http://www.oplin.org/">http://www.oplin.org/</a> click on OH TEACH

## INFOhio: Ohio's Virtual Library

INFOhio, Ohio's Virtual Library is a collection of commercial databases and other information resources, which is provided at no cost to all Ohio students. Ohio students who have Internet access at school or home can access INFOhio. To logon to INFOhio, point your web browser to <http://www.INFOhio.org>. Residents of other states may have similar services available to them.

Anything that you might find in a magazine or journal plus Websites, pamphlets, images, almanacs, and library catalogs is available on INFOhio. Some of the more popular databases for elementary schools are SIRS Discoverer and EBSCO Animals. High schoolers and Middle schoolers like World Book Online, Science Online, Newsbank and the EBSCOhost magazine databases.

The databases are updated regularly. The currency of the databases varies by product, with some (such as newspapers) being updated daily.

In addition to offering the students of Ohio access to commercial databases, INFOhio also provides links to quality resources elsewhere on the Internet, including many sites of local interest. Links include:

- Art & History - Ohio museums and historic sites
- Careers & Employment - jobs for students/adults
- Government - Ohio & national
- Reference - dictionaries, encyclopedias, libraries, phone/email
- Trees - identify trees from leaf/fruit
- Kids - websites for kids and homework help
- News and Media - Ohio online newspapers

### Why use INFOhio instead of Google?









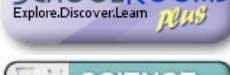
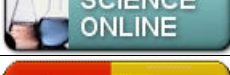
INFOHIO contains a collection of resources that have been selected, organized and endorsed by educators. The information on INFOhio is:

- ❖ AUTHORITATIVE, with quality information from recognized publishers/sources.
- ❖ SAFE, with little chance of children getting to inappropriate sites.
- ❖ FREE to all Ohio students..

You can learn more about INFOhio by talking with your school librarian. Remember, INFOhio is FREE to Ohio students and is accessible at HOME and SCHOOL. INFOhio is funded in part through an Institute of Museum and Library Services LSTA grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio.

## INFOhio Core Collection

INFOhio's Core Collection includes encyclopedias and dictionaries in English, Spanish, and French full-text magazine and newspaper articles, and a large collection of maps pictures and charts. Students can use INFOhio 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from any Internet accessible computer from home or the public library.

	The ART Collection. Online image collection of paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, textiles, costumes, jewelry and more, from earliest times to the present.
	Biography Reference Bank. Articles about more than a half-million people, most in full text, from around the world, both living and dead.
	The Ohio Area Instructional Media Centers Digital Video Collection includes hundreds of digital videos that have been made available at no cost to Ohio K-12 districts.
	EBSCOhost. Articles from more than 6,000 magazines and newspapers are indexed, most in full text, from children's magazines to professional research.
	Enciclopedia Estudiantil Hallazgos. Online Spanish language encyclopedia that is appropriate for younger Spanish-speaking students and students just learning the Spanish language.
	L'Encyclopédie Découverte. Online French language encyclopedia that is appropriate for younger French-speaking students and students just learning the French language.
	LearningExpress Library. More than 100 programs to learn, practice and prepare for tests on a variety of subjects in elementary, middle and high school.
	Literature Online From Chadwyck-Healey. Full-text, searchable works available online to supplement your library's print collections. Poetry, drama and fiction are included.
	NewsBank Newspapers. A collection of full-text newspapers available online. More than 15 titles are Ohio publications.
	Oxford Reference Online: Premium Collection. More than 175 complete reference titles, fully indexed and cross-searchable, from a wide range of disciplines.
	SchoolRooms Plus has thousands of K-12 Web sites to explore! Use INFOhio's Core Collection username and password, if needed.
	Science Online. Thousands of essays on major topics and issues in science, math and technology, along with illustrations, experiments, activities and biographies.
	SIRS Discoverer. Database of full-text articles for the young researcher. Students can read stories, learn about important people, find fun projects to do, and much more.
	World Book Web. Encyclopedias for three levels: World Book Kids (K-5), World Book Online Reference Center (6-8), and World Book Advanced (HS and college)

<http://www.infohio.org>



## For Parents -- Getting Started With INFOhio


INFOhio, is the state’s “virtual” library and information network for all PreK-12 Ohio schools. And now, it’s available to parents. INFOhio is just one more way you can help your children learn and succeed in school.

**It’s easy to use.** If you can “point and click,” you can tap into a host of electronic resources that are age-appropriate, curriculum-related, librarian-tested and teacher-approved. The information you retrieve will be useful and accurate instead of “surfing the Web” finding large quantities of unverified information. The 14 available databases include newspapers from Ohio and around the world, thousands of full-text magazines geared to the curriculum, as well as magazines you might enjoy, biographies, language arts, math, science, technology, social studies, foreign languages and more

**It’s free.** There is no charge to use the service.

**It’s always there.** Before school. During school. In the evenings. On the weekends. INFOhio is available 24/7. The INFOhio library is never closed.

**What do you need to get started?** All you need is a computer with Internet access and a user name and password, which is available from your child’s school librarian, and the following tips:

<b>INFOhio Home Page</b>	To access INFOhio’s home page, go to <a href="http://www.infohio.org">www.infohio.org</a> .
<b>INFOhio Core Collection</b>	Click on the Core Collection button to see the list and descriptions of the 14 electronic resources. Click on the  button beside each resource to go to a <i>Help</i> page that includes getting started guides, links to tutorials, and other useful information about that resource.
<b>INFOhio Parent Page</b>	Click on the Parent button in the upper right corner of the INFOhio home page and you will find several resources just for parents: <a href="#">Homework Help Tools</a> -- tips for using INFOhio resources by topic <a href="#">HomeworkNow</a> -- a free, statewide online reference service available all day, every day to help with homework <a href="#">How to Use INFOhio’s Core Collection</a> -- specific suggestions for various materials, such as encyclopedias, magazine articles and Web sites <a href="#">Internet Safety</a> -- links to sites that will help you understand safety in an electronic environment and what you can do as a parent <a href="#">Links for Parents</a> -- links to helpful information for parents of all school age children Keep checking back -- New information is added throughout the year.
<b>Core Collection by Grade Level</b>	INFOhio categorizes the 14 resource collections by what is most useful and appropriate to K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grade levels. Just click on the buttons on the home page to see the resources for the various grade levels.

**Enjoy using INFOhio!**

**For more information contact your school librarian.**

## Research Project Calculator

INFOhio's *Research Calculator* provides students with help writing an essay or report, creating a PowerPoint® presentation or producing a video. When students provide a starting and due date for the project, the Calculator will help organize the assignment step by step, along with providing helpful process suggestions.

The Calculator guides students through the research process. Your student can begin using the *Research Calculator* at [www2.infohio.org/projectcalculator](http://www2.infohio.org/projectcalculator).

### Step 1: Question

- What do you know about our assignment?
- What do you know about your topic?
- What do you want to know?
- What's the question or problem you will focus on?

### Step 2: Gather

- Where will you look for information?
- What keywords will you use?
- How will you identify the best sources?
- How will you record what you find?
- How will you give credit to your sources?

### Step 3: Conclude

- What did you learn from reading, listening, and viewing?
- How will you organize the information you found to answer your question or defend your hypothesis?

Step 4: Communicate - These subpoints are for a PPT presentation. Video and essay can also be selected resulting in different subpoints.

- Oral presentation with slides
- Storyboard
- Create visuals
- Create slides
- Rehearse
- Present

### Step 5: Evaluate

- How did you do?
- How can you improve next time?

The Research Project Calculator is an INFOhio project based on the MINITEX project, which used open source software developed by the University of Minnesota Libraries.

## Equip Your Student with the Right Technology Tools

Every year, computer technology makes advances and the industry hopes we will upgrade our home and school information systems. Computer-based technology at home can extend learning beyond the classroom and school day. When connected to the world-wide-web, the potential for learning is great. Indiana was the first state to engage in a large-scale project to test the impact of home-based technology to extend learning. One of the lessons learned is that it is not enough to simply provide "technology stuff," that it is important to follow through with training, guidance and frameworks for learning to ensure that the technology is used wisely and for educational purpose. Since 1998, INFOhio has been available for Ohio students, providing top quality information from leading publishers in several, easy-to-search databases. (Log on at <http://www.infohio.org>)

Getting connected requires some basic technology: a computer with keyboard, display, and mouse. A printer is one of the first useful additions (peripherals) for a home system. This allows you to create "hard copy" of letters written, drawings made, or web information found on the computer. One of the biggest expenses (after the initial purchase, of course) will be for ink or toner cartridges for printers. Teach your child to be a responsible user of family resources.

Connecting to the Internet requires a phone line at minimum. For a fast home connection, look into DSL, cable or satellite modems. (Check with your cable or phone company for options in your area.) The speed of the connection (sometime referred to as "bandwidth") will determine how quickly you connect and are able to retrieve information with your computer.

Software is the name for programs that allow you to do things on the computer. Look for an "office suite" set of programs that includes word processing, spreadsheet/database, and presentation features. If you can obtain one that is compatible with the one used at your child's school, it will make it easy for your student to start and finish projects at either location.

### **What if I can't afford a system like the one described above?**

- Check with your school principal or librarian. Some schools offer loaner computers for the use of their students.
- Investigate use of extended hours at the school library or computer lab. Also check to see what special technology training programs are available for students and families at your school.
- Most public libraries in Ohio have computer systems available for patron use.

### **My child is very young. When should I introduce technology use?**

There are many instructional activities that are enhanced by computer use even at preschool levels. As the child matures into a young adult, early exposure to appropriate and proper use of computer technology will result in confident and competent technology users. **IMPORTANT ADVICE!** It is important to supervise use and provide boundaries for all age learners while they use technology and communicate via the Internet. Discuss and enforce rules of use in your household to ensure productive learning while avoiding trouble.



## Some Ohio Web Resources for Students & Parents

Ohio has many bountiful resources for learning available through the worldwide web. We have already discussed the INFOhio databases, which are very useful for student as well as adult research. A few other notable resources of particular interest to Ohio parents and students might include:

- ❖ <http://www.ode.state.oh.us> The Ohio Department of Education web site includes information about our state's academic standards (expectations for student performance by grade level and content area) as well as reports on the academic achievement of Ohio schools as measured by our state tests each year. Link from this site to find specific information about your child's school or even to compare your school's performance with others from around the state.
- ❖ <http://www.netwellness.org> Netwellness provides the highest quality health information and education from Ohio's major medical centers.
- ❖ <http://www.ohiokids.org> The Ohio Historical Society maintains a great resource for children about the history of Ohio.
- ❖ <http://www.ohiohistory.org> Older students and adults will find useful Ohio history information and links at the main site of the Ohio Historical Society.
- ❖ <http://www.ohiomemory.org> Discover Ohio historical treasures in this online scrapbook of primary sources.
- ❖ <http://www.oplin.org> The Ohio Public Library Information network provides access to many Ohio resources that are useful for school projects or general information about our state.
- ❖ <http://winslo.state.oh.us> The State Library of Ohio offers a large collection on a wide range of topics. Included are collections devoted to family history (genealogy), county histories and American history as well as public policy, management and economics. Visit this site to view a thorough description of the collections available through onsite visits or via use of online databases.
- ❖ <http://www.infohio.org/ER/secure/LearningExpress.asp> This database provides more than 100 free test programs for elementary, middle and high school students, as well as adults. An INFOhio password is needed for access. Ask your school librarian for one.

## The School Library, Reading, and Your Child

Krashen and McQuillan<sup>1</sup> reviewed 100 years of reading research and came to the following startling conclusion: The more a child/teen reads, the better they are at:

**Comprehension, Spelling, Grammar, Vocabulary,  
Writing Style, Verbal Fluency, General Knowledge**

**Thus, how well your child reads is the number one predictor  
of how well they will do in school!**

The most powerful reading your child can do is “free voluntary reading”—the kind they want to do rather than what they are required to do. Fiction, comics, newspapers, magazines, and stuff on the Web all contribute.

Here are a few tips for helping a child/teen want to read more:

1. See that your child/teen has a library card at the school and public library.
2. Demand unlimited checkout privileges at the school library. Your child should be able to check out all that can be handled responsibly.
3. See that there is a bed lamp and a safe place to store borrowed books at home. Even a cardboard box by the bedside will do. Encourage the “read-yourself-to-sleep” habit to form. It is a gift for life.
4. Read to your pre-school child every day. This can continue as long as it is a pleasurable experience - even into teenage years. The child/teen can read to you as their skill develops.
5. Talk about what everyone in the family is reading. Movie-book tie-ins are one strategy (ex.: *Holes* the book vs. *Holes* the movie).
6. If you have reluctant readers, keep looking until you find material they are interested in reading, such as dinosaurs, skate boards, cars, space, fantasy...
7. Do everything you can to make reading a pleasant experience. Kids may be getting skilled-to-death at school, so they learn to hate reading.
8. Buy books so that every family member has a personal library. They can often be had for 10 cents or a buck at sales. Books as gifts are always appropriate.
9. Above all, make reading and reading time a pleasant experience.
10. Remember, the school librarian and the public librarian are your best friends in helping your child to become a capable and avid reader.

<sup>1</sup> Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Libraries Unlimited, 2006; McQuillan, Jeff. *The Literacy Crisis*. Heinemann, 1998; Cunningham, Anne E. and Keith E. Stanovich. “What Reading Does for the Mind,” *American Educator*, Spring/Summer, 1998, p. 1-8.

## **The School Library, Reading and Your Child: A Principal Shares What's Possible**

As a parent, you may ask, "How can this library and its library media specialist help my child to read? Isn't that the job of the classroom teacher?" The school library and its library media specialist are critical partners in your child's reading program. In the library you will see the library media specialist providing motivation for reading, modeling good reading skills, helping teachers design and deliver quality reading instruction, and teaching your child information literacy skills.

Children begin to be successful readers when they have the motivation to read. Library media specialists lead Sustained Silent Reading sessions, and they orchestrate special events that excite children to read, like "Read Across America Day" and "Dress as Your Favorite Book Character" day. They make reading a fun, social event. They display collections of popular books on themes children love, and they advertise books during story times. Your child receives help in selecting fascinating books because the library media specialist remembers your child's unique interests and encourages him or her to explore other areas. In addition, media specialists design incentives to encourage students to read for fun at home.

Children are great mimics. As she reads to students during story times, the library media specialist models good reading skills by first setting a purpose for reading and connecting what will be read to a question, problem or event in the children's lives. Then the library media specialist will go about asking students to predict, developing vocabulary, and giving students a sense of story. The librarian will ask "I wonder" questions and make "That reminds me of when..." connections to show students how to interact with text as they read. The librarian's engaging expression, eye contact with each child, and use of puppets or other visuals during the session will invite the child to try reading the book, just that way, on his or her own.

Library media specialists devote hours to helping teachers create and deliver lessons that engage students in reading. They co-plan with teachers to integrate technology, objects, guest speakers, and other resources into classroom reading lessons. They suggest sets of books for literature circles and design web site collections for science and social studies projects. They select books around the themes the children are reading. They gather classroom libraries to match the needs, interests, and reading levels of the class members.

Finally, and most importantly, the library media specialist teaches the information literacy skills which your child will use throughout life to make good decisions about what he or she reads. Using the classroom curriculum, the library media specialist develops children's abilities to formulate questions, seek, sort, organize and produce information for others. Your child learns to read with the eye of a critic and the ear of an audience.

In summary, the library media specialist brings the resources of the library to the reading classroom and welcomes the child into the reading community, which exists in the school library.

*Susan Robinson*

Elementary Principal/AASL Distinguished Administrator

## Your School Library Supports the Reading Program!

A school's library media center provides a rich variety of print and electronic resources, computers and other technology resources, and an accessible environment conducive to instilling the link between reading and lifelong learning. The teacher-librarian is the center's most valuable resource. A natural co-teacher of reading, the librarian collaborates with teachers on the strategies and skills taught in the classroom to promote a lifelong love of reading and learning. The librarian, develops a partnership with classroom teachers and works directly with students and teachers to achieve the bottom line: higher reading proficiency of all students.

A position statement from the International Reading Association (IRA) recognizes that "credentialed school library media professionals promote, inspire, and guide students toward a love of reading, a quest for knowledge, and a thirst for lifelong learning." Research from both literacy and library fields shows that librarians, through collaboration and programming, can build on classroom instruction in multiple ways, from providing access to reading material to supporting students through the complex processes of inquiry and research.

Use this checklist to determine how the school library program supports reading in your school.

Sustained silent reading in every classroom once a day, K-12.

- A program to read aloud to every student once a day, K-12.
- Motivational programs and challenges to encourage reading.

Parent involvement in the total school reading initiative.

A program to build a school-wide community of readers.

Use of technology to assist reading; the assists should increase reading time and amount read (educational television, CD-ROM and eBooks).

Celebrating reading as milestones are reached.

Creating a sense that reading is fun!

## Sample Problems/Sample Solutions of Library Media Center/Reading Integration

**When library collections and classroom collections are two separate entities and both are weak.**

Assure that classroom and library collections are seen as a single entity and that classroom collections are rotating from the library collection. Teachers and students should assist in selecting reading materials so that everyone, particularly readers, will win. Put students in the classroom in charge of seeing that the classroom collection contains both materials of interest and materials helpful to their studies. They can manage the collection and see that it rotates often. The position of room collection managers can rotate throughout the year and can assist the adults in the responsible use and responsible circulation of the materials to the home.

**When the collection of the library is outdated, old, or worn out from use.**

Every school should add a minimum of *one book per year per student*. Schools with small enrollments should double this number. Dreadfully outdated collections will require two books per student until the collection is relevant again.

**When the students are checking out only one book a week from the library but it is just not enough to affect the reading scores.**

Students should have many, many books checked out at any one time. In grades K-2, every student should be taking at least two books home each night—one to “read” and one to be “read to.” All students need to have the opportunity to have numerous titles checked out—as much as personal responsibility can allow. Revamp the entire policy to figure out how thousands of books a week can be circulated and re-shelved not only from the library but also from every classroom. It will require many hands and some ingenuity, but it must happen.

**When circulation policy and computer automation systems have locked out certain students who owe fines or have lost a book from ever checking out another book.**

There are two issues here: responsibility and literacy. Literacy should win! It must! Book loss is the cost of doing business. Make a pact with teachers to maximize reading and to help children shoulder the responsibility for public property. Students can pay service hours for fines and lost materials if the family cannot afford replacement costs. It is a crime to prevent a child from learning to read!

### Bottom Line:

**The organization must serve the cause of literacy.  
Don't let the tail (organization) wag the dog.**

## Celebrate Reading—Ohio Style

Celebrating reading is appropriate any time. Ohio is fortunate to have a creative group of authors and illustrators producing exciting books for children and young adults including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry for all ages. Consider inviting one to your school. Information about Ohio authors for all ages can be found at the web site for The Ohio Center for the Book, <http://www.ohiocenterforthebook.org>.

Introducing children to Ohio authors is an excellent way of sharing the authors' books but also inspiring future authors and illustrators. You might begin with one of the following:

- **Jaime Adoff**, author— <http://jaimeadoff.com>  
Sample Titles: *Jimi & Me*; *Names Will Never Hurt Me*; *The Song Shoots Out of My Mouth*.
- **Sharon Draper**, author— <http://sharondraper.com>  
Sample Titles: *Tears of a Tiger*; *Copper Sun*; *Romiette and Julio*; *Forged by Fire*.
- **Nikki Giovanni**, author/poet— <http://nikki-giovanni.com>  
Sample Titles: *The Genie in the Jar*; *The Sun is so Quiet*; *Rosa*
- **Margaret Peterson Haddix**, author—  
<http://library.thinkquest.org/J0110073/Author.html>  
Sample Titles: *Just Ella*; *Among the Hidden*; *The Girl with 500 Middle Names*; *Running Out of Time*; *Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphrey*
- **Angela Johnson**, author—  
[http://www.visitingauthors.com/authors/johnson\\_angela/johnson\\_angela\\_bio.html](http://www.visitingauthors.com/authors/johnson_angela/johnson_angela_bio.html)  
Sample Titles: *The First Part Last*; *Heaven*; *Tell Me a Story, Mama*; *Toning the Sweep*.
- **Trudy Krisher**, author -- <http://www.trudykrisher.com>  
Sample Titles: *Spite Fences*; *Kinship*; *Kathy's Hats: A Story of Hope*; *An Uncommon Faith*
- **J. Patrick Lewis**, author — <http://www.jpatricklewis.com>  
Sample Titles: *Wing Nuts: Screwy Haiku*; *Blackbeard the Pirate King*; *Heroes and She-Roes: Poems of Amazing and Everyday Heroes*; *Please Bury Me in the Library*.

## Finding a Good Book for Ohio Kids and Teens

What should we choose at the library? What book should I buy my grandchild? There are so many books and too little time. Where should we start?

A great place to start is at the library. School and public librarians always have access to book reviews and recommended reading lists. Librarians are trained to help you search by reading level or personal interest. In Ohio, students get to participate in choosing the best of the best, when they select the Buckeye Children's or Teen Book Award.

- ◆ The Buckeye Children's Book Award program is designed to encourage children in Ohio to read literature critically, to promote teacher and librarian involvement in children's literature programs, and to commend authors of such literature. The BCBA has been awarded over 35 times. Visit the web site at <http://www.bcbookaward.info>
- ◆ Students in grades 9-12 can similarly vote for the Buckeye Teen Book Award. More information can be found at <http://www.bcbookaward.info/teens> .
- ◆ The Internet Public Library Kidspace has a great reading zone full of book lists and author links. <http://www.ipl.org/kidspace/browse/rzn0000> .
- ◆ Likewise, The Internet Public Library Teenspace also links to many reading lists, poetry wikis, and guides to graphic novels. <http://www.ipl.org/div/teen>
- ◆ For many years, members of the American Library Association have selected the best story for children, the best picture book and more recently the best young adult book of the year. Visit the ALA site for information on such well-known awards as the Newbery and Caldecott or more obscure awards such as the Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award. <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=bookmediaawards>
- ◆ Many librarians and authors devote countless hours to maintaining web sites designed to inspire children and teens to read. Visit Planet Esmé to discover all kinds of reading tips and book lists for children. <http://www.planetesme.com> In the words of author Esmè Raji Codell, "Children's literature is our country's best hope for equalizing education in America."

## Advice about Reading and Your Student

Here are a few common questions about reading and some possible solutions.

**Q. How do you get a student excited about reading and keep them that way?**

**A.** The tried and true methods include:

- Reading to your child every day from birth.
- Maximizing access to school and public libraries.
- Giving books as gifts.
- Engaging your student in conversations about books.
- Having materials to read all around the house: newspapers, magazines, books—materials that your student will **want** to read
- Letting your student see you reading.
- Sharing lots of suggestions for a variety of books, skill levels and topics. Your school's teacher-librarian can help!
- Reading what your student is reading and sharing your thoughts.

**Q. My student reads nothing but series books. Should I worry?**

**A.** Probably not. Children often go through reading phases but get tired of the same familiar plots after awhile. Instead of fighting against series books, read aloud from a variety of books and make sure your student has access to lots of titles.

**Q. My son reads nothing but science fiction and fantasy. Should I worry?**

**A.** This literature is appealing for lots of boys and if they are participating in normal life activities, there is little to worry about. Perhaps you could read a title they recommend and have a family discussion.

**Q. Many of the teen novels seem to be so graphic about dysfunctional families, drugs, sex, and legal trouble.**

**A.** There are a number of writers who treat teen lives realistically in their books. It depends on your family's values and experiences whether you want to allow, encourage, or restrict such literature for your own teens. Our best advice is to read what your teens are reading and have a discussion.

**Q. What are teacher-librarians doing to encourage and promote reading?**

**A.** Teacher-Librarians concentrate on the LOVE of reading. Most believe that there is no one right way to teach reading and that just plain "reading a lot" will provide students with opportunities to improve reading skills.



## Ohio Links to Great Reading Resources

There are many wonderful reading initiatives nationally and in Ohio. The difficulty is choosing those that will enhance and push the local agenda. Listed below are but a few of those available:

**American Library Association** provides a number of reading initiatives, tons of booklists, and other information through its main website at <http://www.ala.org> and through its divisions: ALSC (Association for Library Services for Children), YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association), and AASL (American Association of School Librarians).

**Children's Book Council** is a non-profit trade organization dedicated to encouraging literacy and the use of enjoyment of children's books and is the official sponsor of Young People's Poetry Week and Children's Book Week each year. At <http://www.cbcbooks.org>

**Ohio Center for the Book** - The Ohio Center for the Book @ Cleveland Public Library is an online center dedicated to promoting and celebrating books, reading, literacy, and libraries to Ohio's citizens and the book community at large. <http://www.ohiocenterforthebook.org/>

**The Big Read** - The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The NEA presents The Big Read in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest. <http://www.neabigread.org/>

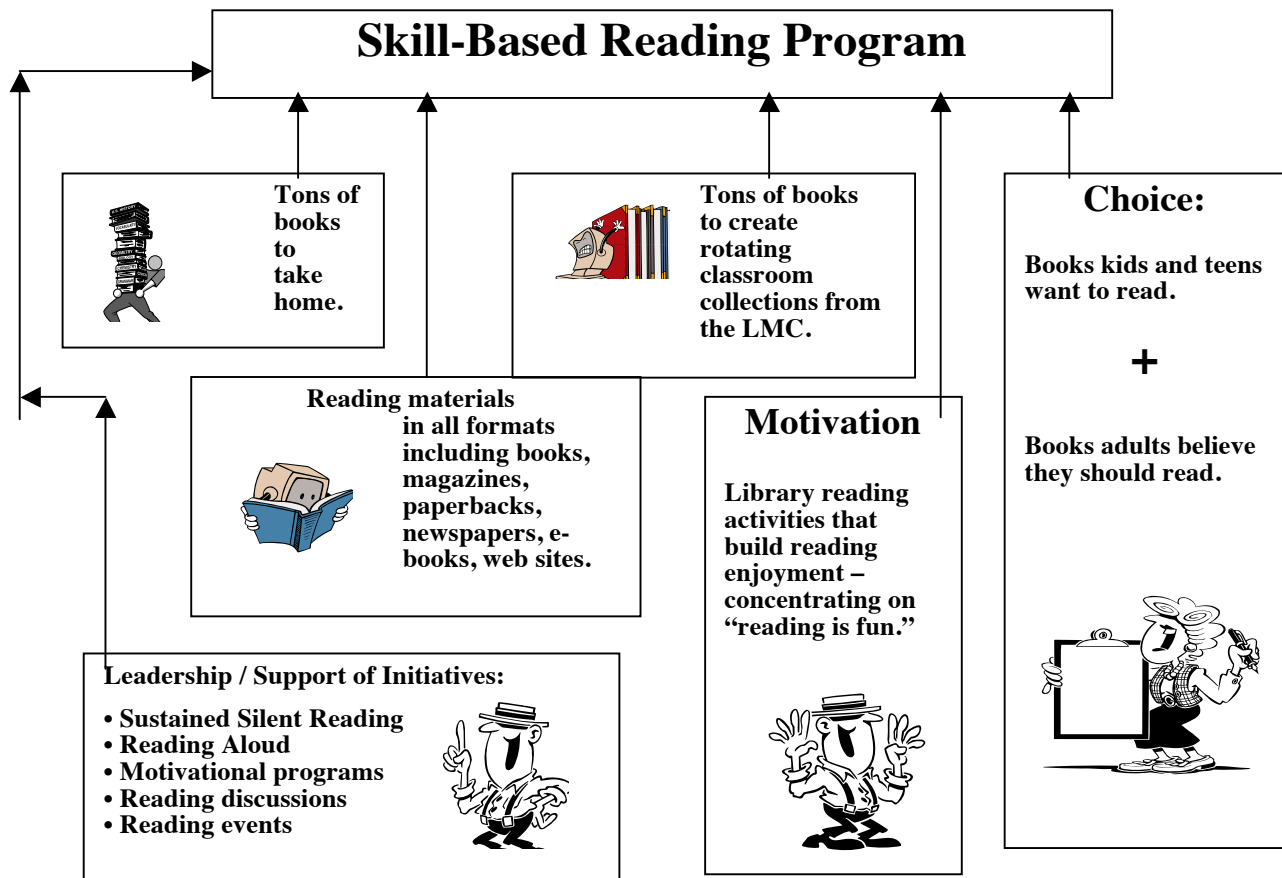
**The Ohio Literacy Network** The Ohio Literacy Network is committed to building Ohio's workforce by strengthening adult and family literacy education. <http://ponderas.iserver.net/oln/>

**The Ohio Literacy Alliance** - OLA is an initiative comprised of educators and researchers who are committed to enriching the literacy community and creating a literacy bridge across the lifespan. The Alliance community will work to remove barriers that divide us so we can build a bridge to learn with and from each other about the literacy challenges in Ohio. <http://www.ohioliteracyalliance.org/>

**Reading is Fundamental** helps deliver children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate school-age children to read regularly. At <http://www.rif.org>

## If We Believe the Reading Research, What Should the Teacher, Parent, and the Librarian Provide to: "Learn to Read"

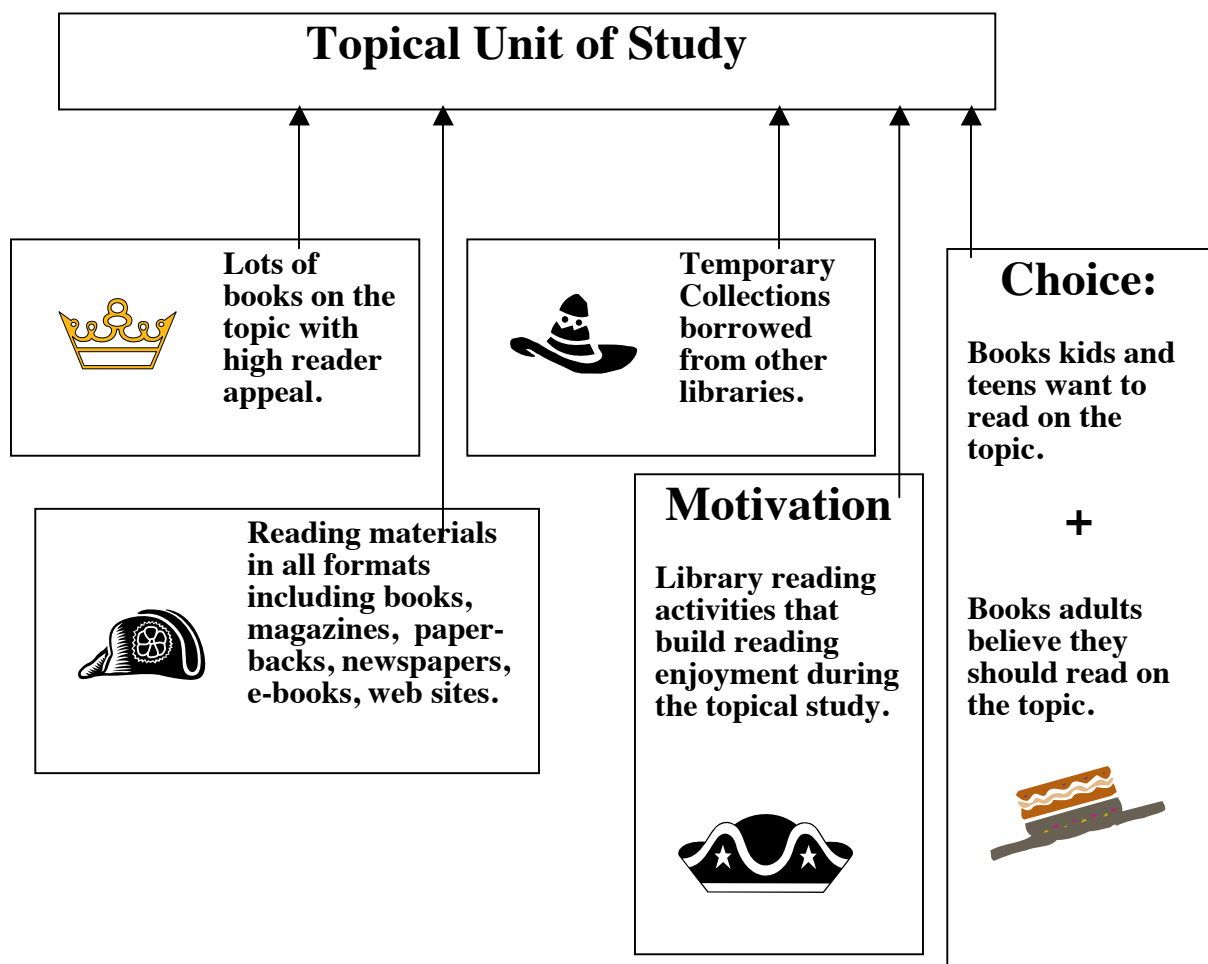
If a school community really believes the research saying that "amount counts," then the school and public library should have an extensive collection of reading materials young people want to read. So many school libraries in the nation have outdated, ragged, and uninteresting reading collections that young people ignore them. When reading collections are large, current, attractive, and easily accessible, good things happen. The best results of library media contributions to reading should be most noticeable when young people have few reading materials in their homes, and when they are poor readers. Is your school library media center program providing the following?



**Bottom line:** The library contribution to reading should plug the holes in whatever skill-based program exists toward the goal of 100% avid and capable readers. Does your school’s library reading program measure up? Are you, as a parent, taking advantage of library resources?

## If We Believe the Reading Research, What Should Teachers and the Library Media Center Provide to: “Read to Learn”

As skill in reading builds, the concentration of the reading program shifts to using reading as a tool to learn as well as reading for enjoyment. The school library program has much to contribute to all subject disciplines as content knowledge is expected to mushroom. This will be particularly true in middle schools and high schools where reading is integrated into the entire curriculum and into all departments.



**Bottom line:** The library contribution to reading in the topical areas should stimulate more expository reading and thus more in-depth knowledge and understanding. Does your school's library reading program measure up? Are you as a parent taking advantage of library resources as your student explores required and non-required topics?

## Don't Leave Summer Reading to Chance

**"The best predictor of summer loss or summer gain is whether or not a child reads during the summer."** [Anne McGill-Franzen & Richard Allington. 2003 "Bridging the Summer Reading Gap." *Instructor* (May-June): p. 17-20.]

Parents should not only encourage their children to read over the summer, but they should actively look for reading opportunities. Reading practice helps ensure higher reading scores. Lack of practice results in summer loss, especially among intermediate and middle grades students.

The following are some ideas for parents to promote summer reading.

**Plan A: Summer Reading Lists.** Many school districts develop lists of recommended books for students to read over the summer. Check the school or district web site for summer reading lists, often developed by the school librarian, an expert on the popular books in each grade level.

**Plan B: Public Library.** Most public libraries have a summer reading program for children and for young adults. Encourage your child to participate and make sure it is easy for your child to visit the library often to replenish their stack of summer reading fun. Check the library web site for digital books to download to MP3 players. Studies show that listening to books increases student vocabulary and helps them develop their imaginations.

**Plan C: Book Discussion clubs.** If there isn't a book club in your neighborhood, start one! At the very least, choose a book for the entire family to read and discuss.

**Plan D: Bookstore Events:** Take advantage of author visits or special events at local bookstores. Have your child invite a friend to go along.

**Plan E: Read to the Sick or Elderly:** If you have a child who is a good reader, encourage them to devote some time at a nursing home, reading to those who can no longer enjoy books due to illness or eyesight problems. Hearing a good reader is a joy at any age. And of course, practice is the best way to improve reading skills.

## How to Raise a Reader!

Robert Frost once said the best way to get children to read is to surround them with so many books they stumble over them. Raising a reader demands that you surround your child in literacy. Here are 21 steps for building a literate environment in your family:

1. Read books/articles aloud to one another.
2. Talk about books you read.
3. Keep books and magazines around the house.
4. Give books and magazines subscriptions as gifts.
5. Encourage children to obtain a library card.
6. Make regular visits to the school and public library.
7. Help a child compile and illustrate a book.
8. Reread a book you loved as a child then share it with a child.
9. Make reading a regular family event.
10. Visit a bookstore with a child.
11. Help a child set up a personal library.
12. Help children choose books they want to read.
13. Use television and radio to encourage reading.
14. Talk about local events reported by the media.
15. Encourage children to write—stories, a diary, thank-you notes, email messages.
16. Participate in a summer reading program.
17. Set family reading goals.
18. Give favorite books to other children.
19. Pack books for family trips.
20. Read together about travel destinations.
21. Visit a literary landmark.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from an article, “Twenty-one Steps to Building a Family/classroom of Readers,” developed by Sharron L. McElmeel. Reprinted with permission.

## I'm a Reader—And I Don't Apologize

Daniel Pennac in his wonderful book entitled *Better Than Life*<sup>1</sup> lists the following rights:

### The Reader's Bill of Rights

1. The right not to read  
\*
2. The right to skip pages  
\*
3. The right to not finish  
\*
4. The right to reread  
\*
5. The right to read anything  
\*
6. The right to escapism  
\*
7. The right to read anywhere  
\*
8. The right to browse  
\*
9. The right to read out loud  
\*
10. The right to not defend your taste

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<sup>1</sup> Pennac, Daniel. *Better Than Life*. Pembroke Publishers (Canada); Stenhouse Publishers (U.S.) (<http://www.stenhouse.com>) "Anyone who loves to read and wants our young people to develop a similar passion will savor *Better Than Life*—an enchanting, beautifully written and wise book. – Regie Routman.

## Reading to Your Child: A Few Tips

Reading time is a special time. Hold your child in your lap. Cuddle. Be close. And this works with a small child, a big child, and more teens than you might expect. Reading together is a special time and the consequences of togetherness are far-reaching. Here are a few suggestions for that special time.

### For Young Children

- ❖ Frequent, short book encounters—don't worry about short time span.
- ❖ Turn pages, name things, name colors; attention span is minimal.
- ❖ Have some regular times for reading: bedtime, quiet time, every time grandma comes.
- ❖ Repeat favorites.
- ❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

### Developing Readers

- ❖ Repetition of sounds, words, and phrases helps.
- ❖ Variety will improve the richness of language development.
- ❖ Attention spans are growing as well as understanding of story lines.
- ❖ The child will begin to recognize letters and words. You need not press them to read.
- ❖ Use favorites regularly but introduce new ones also.
- ❖ Talk about the story.
- ❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

### Beginning Readers

- ❖ Word and letter sounds can be a regular part of reading, but not the focus.
- ❖ Blend the two readers—you and the child—sometimes the child reads, sometimes you read.
- ❖ They read a line; you read a line.
- ❖ Expression begins—questions, phrasing. Mimic story characters with the voice.
- ❖ Read aloud stories they can't read to display the richness of language.
- ❖ Talk about the story, predicting what will happen, and asking what just happened and what they like and don't like.
- ❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

### Reading Aloud

- ❖ It's ok to become emotional.
- ❖ Read aloud even if you don't read well.
- ❖ Read with fluency—your listener will pick up on your smooth delivery and the beauty of language.
- ❖ Use expression in your voice—get excited, sad, loving, and angry, as the story requires.
- ❖ Act out real parts or have the child do that acting at the appropriate times.
- ❖ Always make reading aloud time a pleasant experience.

## My Adolescent Hates Reading! Is That Really So?

### My child/teen doesn't read:

- ❖ Novels.
- ❖ Assigned textbook chapters.
- ❖ Any book I recommend.
- ❖ Anything that is "required."

### However, the other day, I caught that kid reading:

- ❖ The Sports Page.
- ❖ An Internet site.
- ❖ A rollerblade magazine.
- ❖ A comic book.
- ❖ A car-repair manual.
- ❖ A fashion magazine.

### What to do:

- ❖ If you discover an interest, feed it.
- ❖ Don't belittle or say such things as "You're dumb, you can't read."
- ❖ Don't talk about your child's reading problems or lack of reading interest when family, friends, or strangers are around.

**Reading is its own reward.**

**No need to bribe, beg, threaten, or cajole.**

Almost all children/teens will read something they really want to know about. Find the hook.<sup>1</sup> Of course there are exceptions for dyslexic kids or students with other physical or emotional problems.

If your child/teen really has reading skill issues, find a knowledgeable tutor with a good track record. But mostly, have lots of things your child/teen wants to read within arm's length and see that there is a good school and public library close by.

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<sup>1</sup> Fader, Daniel. *The New Hooked on Books*. Putnam, 1977. The classic of the field. Fader worked with kids in prison and got them to read. Check a library. It's now out of print. Also: Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Libraries Unlimited, 2006. One hundred years of research about reading can't be wrong.



## Public and School Libraries: A Winning Combination: Take Advantage of Both

Today, school library collections serve curriculum needs and public library collections more diverse needs for all ages. Using both collections provides both diversity of information and depth in selected topics.

School librarians are anxious to introduce children to the public library so that students become acquainted with services for nights, weekends, and vacation periods, because the public library collection will be the collection for life.

Check out some of the services of the public library that might be vital to your child's/teen's success:

- ❖ Digital collections of periodicals and databases that can be accessed usually from home.
- ❖ Special in-depth collections such as local history.
- ❖ Large fiction and nonfiction collections.
- ❖ Virtual reference services (the general public can ask questions over the Internet and library staff are on duty to help almost any time of day or night).
- ❖ Internet terminals.
- ❖ Special programs such as story hours, term paper clinics, guest speakers, workshops, children's or teen book clubs.
- ❖ Comfortable study and reading areas.
- ❖ After-school programming; homework help.
- ❖ Special assistance for home schoolers.

### Check It Out - Ohio Memory Scrapbook

Ohio's libraries are filled with treasures, including written and visual records of the state's history and culture. Ohio libraries are using digital technology to preserve these valuable resources and provide access via the Internet to the historical and cultural heritage of Ohio.

<http://www.ohiomemory.org/>

## When Parents and Books Cross Swords: A Few Tips

The ideas in books have always stirred controversy. The treatment of religion, politics, swearing, sex, violence, and stereotypes such as culture or race can stir anger and resentment as these ideas conflict with parent and family values. One thing to always keep in mind:

### **There is no such thing as a non-controversial book!**

Throughout world history, the ideas in books have been dangerous. Reading the Bible has been banned, books have been burned, and parents have requested that certain titles be removed from libraries.

Schools, teachers, parents, and librarians respect a parent's right to limit the exposure of their children to certain ideas and will try to help both the child and the parent to work on ways to carry out those wishes. The trouble comes, however, when parents insist that certain ideas not be available to all children in a class or school.

Almost all school libraries have a "Materials Selection Policy" that spells out how materials of all types are selected for the school library collection. Ask to see a copy of that policy so that you begin to understand how the professional library community tries to deal with ideas and controversial materials of all types in various communities. This policy will usually spell out ways for parents to register objections to materials in an orderly fashion. Remember, that if any library removed all objectionable materials, there would be nothing left on their shelves. Here are a few other tips.

1. Your children should understand the family values and know how to recognize objectionable materials and ideas.
2. Help your child to face objectionable ideas and materials when encountered. (Close the book/stop reading; "that's what you might think, that's not what I think;" "I don't read that kind of material.")
3. Ask both teachers and librarians for alternatives to books or materials that have been assigned. There are hundreds of alternative titles for literally any topic that is being studied.
4. Respect the right of other parents to allow their children to encounter ideas other than those you value.

## When Parents and Books Cross Swords (cont)

5. Talk, talk, and talk to your children about the ideas they encounter daily in school, with friends, from the mass media, and from books. Give them strength to stand up for what they believe and value.
6. Help children and teens understand that just because everyone else is reading something, doesn't mean they need to participate. There is nothing wrong with being different.
7. Be sympathetic to librarians and teachers who may understand the specific needs of your child but also are dealing with 500-1000 other individuals and their needs. There is no way to drive on the highway without some risk even though we buckle up and follow all the rules.
8. Read the books your children/teens are reading and discuss them as a family.

The American Library Association (ALA) provides a lot of guidance both to librarians and the general public on the topic of intellectual freedom. In their words:

**Intellectual Freedom** is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. It is a core value of the library profession and a cornerstone of democracy.  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/basics/intellectual.cfm#ifpoint1>

ALA opts for the most freedom, yet respects community values. No librarians we know of would stock hundreds of anti-Catholic books in a Catholic school. Neither would they interleave *Playboy* among the picture book collection. We live in a world of unpopular ideas. The issue, of course, is when, where, and how our children will learn to handle those ideas. Work with your school, your librarian, teacher, principal, and in your community to handle ideas as they conflict with values. Intellectual freedom is a gift of our form of government and why we choose to live here and not somewhere else.

## Picture Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful picture books for the younger set and for "children" of all ages. Here is a short list of authors and titles:

### For Beginners

- The *Curious George* books (in various languages)
- Dr. Seuss books
- Ezra Jack Keats - any titles
- *Inch by Inch* by Eric Carle
- *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf
- *The Berenstain Bears* books - many titles
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin
- *The Little Engine that Could* by Watty Piper
- Any of the Little Golden Books - they have been republished again after all these years.
- Richard Scarry - any titles
- Maurice Sendak - any titles
- Rosemary Wells - any titles
- Stephen Kellog - any titles
- Gene Zion - Harry the Dirty Dog books
- Mother Goose books - pick out several with good illustrations.
- *Changes, Changes, Changes* by Pat Hutchins
- David Wiesner - any titles
- P.D. Eastman - any titles such as *Go Dog Go!*
- Frances Hoban - the Frances books (a bear)
- *A Child's Pictionary* (a beginning dictionary with hundreds of pictures)
- Beatrix Potter - all the Peter Rabbit books
- David Shannon - all the David books (he gets in constant trouble!)
- Look for some simple cookbooks designed for small children - and help cook!
- Animal books and more animal books - you can never seem to have enough.

### For a Bit Older Kids

- Patricia Polacco - any titles (*Pink and Say* is amazing)
- *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* by Verna Aradema
- Seymour Simon - any titles about science and space
- *How Much is a Million* by David M. Schwartz
- *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick
- Jon Scieszka - any titles
- Gerald McDermott - any titles
- There are so many wonderful illustrated editions of fairytales such as *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Hansel and Gretel*
- Arnold Lobel - any titles (*Frog & Toad*)
- David Macaulay - any books - for older viewers (*Castle*, *Pyramid*)
- Aesop's Fables - find a collection with pictures you like.
- Chris Van Allsburg - many titles such as *The Polar Express*
- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein and other titles of his poetry.
- *When Marian Sang* by Pam Muñoz Ryan

### Buckeye Children's Book Award - Picture Book Winners

- *Verdi* by Janel Cannon
- *Bark, George* by Jules Feiffer
- *David Goes to School* by David Shannon
- *Dogzilla* by Dav Pilkey
- *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- *Once Upon a Cool Motorcycle Dude* by Kevin O'Malley
- *Muncha! Muncha! Muncha!* by Candace Fleming

## Chapter Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful chapter books for grades 2-6 that we could not resist listing some of our favorites:

### For Beginning Readers

- Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr
- *Dominic* by William Steig
- *Case of the Missing Monkey* by Cynthia Rylant
- *Bunnicula* by James Howe
- Time Warp series by Jon Scieszka
- *Arthur's Missing Envelope* by Marc Brown
- *Ramona series* by Beverly Cleary

### For Older Readers

- *Catherine Called Birdy* by Karen Kushman
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis; also, his *Bud Not Buddy*
- *The Eye, the Ear and the Arm* by Nancy Farmer
- *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park
- *Out of the Dust* and *Witness* by Karen Hesse
- Redwall series by Brian Jacques
- *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi
- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine
- *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech

- Harry Potter books by J.K. Rowling (if witchcraft doesn't bother you)
- *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo
- *Saving Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds
- *Small Steps* by Peg Kehret
- *Ten Kids, No Pets* by Ann Martin
- *Wayside School Gets a Little Stranger* by Louis Sachar
- *Harris and Me* by Gary Paulson
- *Don't Look Behind You* by Lois Duncan
- *Forged by Fire* by Sharon Draper
- *Twisted Summer* by Willo Davis Roberts
- *Strider* by Beverly Cleary

### Non-Fiction

- *Diary of Anne Frank* (there are many great titles about Anne and her ordeal as well as the Holocaust)
- *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine 1845-1850* by Susan Campbell
- *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman
- *Homesick: My Own Story* by Jean Fritz
- *Animals in Flight* by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page
- *Powerful Words* by Wade Hudson

## Teen Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful teen books that we could not resist listing some of our favorites to recommend.

### Favorites

- *The White Darkness* by Geraldine McCaughrean
- *Minnie Swift* by Kathryn Lasky
- *October Sky* by Homer H. Hickam
- *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine
- *Third Eye* by Lois Duncan
- *Slake's Limbo* by Felice Holman
- *Timeline* by Michael Crichton
- *Where the Heart Is* by Billie Letts
- *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Dreamland* by Sarah Dessen

### Science Fiction/Fantasy

- *The Book Without Words* by Avi
- Marion Ziller Bradley - many titles
- Frank Herbert - the Dune books
- *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. LeGuin and other titles
- *Beauty* by Robin McKinley

### Popular Series

- Alex Rider Adventures by Anthony Horowitz
- The Dark is Rising Sequence by Susan Cooper
- The Dragon books by Ann McCaffery
- Gossip Girls by Cecily Von Ziegesar
- Pretty Little Liars by Sara Shepard

### Buckeye Winners: Grades 6-8

- *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini
- *Darkness Before Dawn* by Sharon M. Draper
- *Holes* by Louis Sachar
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

### The Teen Buckeye Book Award

- *Girls in Pants: The Third Summer of the Sisterhood* by Ann Brashares
  - *Eldest* by Christopher Paolini
  - *Uglies* by Scott Westerfield
  - *Things Change* by Patrick Jones
- [www.bcbookaward.info/teens/winners.html](http://www.bcbookaward.info/teens/winners.html)

### Adult Books for YAs

- *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson
- *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson
- *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown
- Dave Pelzer - The *It* books
- Jane Austin - all writings
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- *Genghis: Birth of an Empire* by Conn Iggulden

### Popular Authors

Avi	Christopher Paul Curtis	Chris Crutcher	Sharon Draper
	Margaret Haddix	Walter Dean Myers	Gary Paulsen

## Reluctant Reader? Try Information Books

Just because kids are not novel readers that doesn't mean they have to be non-readers. Try nonfiction (information books). There are now better information books for children and teens than at any time in the history of the world. Visit the school and public library and a large bookstore to find titles on:

- ❖ Airplanes and missiles
- ❖ Animals, animals, animals
- ❖ Cars, rollerblades, snowboards, motorcycles
- ❖ Cookbooks
- ❖ Cut-away picture books showing the insides of castles, submarines, pyramids
- ❖ Disasters - floods, tornados, shipwrecks, earthquakes
- ❖ Drawing
- ❖ Insects - the more close-up photos the better
- ❖ Jokes and riddles
- ❖ Rocks, minerals, jewels
- ❖ Sports record books, how to play, equipment, biography

The few excellent titles below show the range of subjects now available to entice even the most reluctant reader.

- *Animé Mania: How to Draw Characters for Japanese Animation* by Christopher Hart
- *Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life* by Candace Fleming
- *Beyond Beauty* by Jane Pratt
- *Blizzard!* by Jim Murphy
- *A Dinosaur Named Sue: The Story of the Colossal Fossil* by Pat Relf
- *Mosque* by David Macaulay
- *Nic Bishop Spiders* by Nic Bishop
- *The Racecar Alphabet* by Brian Floca
- *Special Effects in Film and Television* by Jake Hamilton
- *Star Wars: Incredible Cross-Sections* by David West Reynolds
- *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies
- *Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon* by Catherine Thimmesh
- *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sis

**Essential book:** Jobe, Ron and Mary Dayton Sakari. *Info-Kids: How to Use Nonfiction to Turn Reluctant Readers into Enthusiastic Learners*. Stenhouse, 2002.

## More Best Books Lists for Your Child/Teen

There are hundreds of best books lists for children and teens. Here are just a few of the recommended lists.

<p><b>Association of Library Services for Children</b> (American Library Association) does a number of excellent book lists each year and sponsors the famous Caldecott and Newbery Awards, Bura Belpre and Coretta Scott King Awards.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alsc.htm">www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alsc.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Young Adult Library Services Association</b> (American Library Association) lists include: Best Books for Young Adults; Quick Picks for the Reluctant Young Reader; Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults</p>	<p><a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.cfm">http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.cfm</a></p>
<p><b><i>The Center for Children's Books</i></b></p>	<p><a href="http://ccb.lis.uiuc.edu/bibliographies.html">http://ccb.lis.uiuc.edu/bibliographies.html</a></p>
<p><b><i>Children's, Teacher's and YA Choices</i></b> (International Reading Association)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices.html">http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices.html</a></p>
<p><b><i>Notable Trade Books</i></b> (National Council for the Social Studies)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/">http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/</a></p>
<p><b><i>Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children</i></b> (National Science Teachers Association)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.nsta.org/ostbc">http://www.nsta.org/ostbc</a></p>
<p><b><i>Horn Book</i></b> Parent's Page</p>	<p><a href="http://www.hbook.com/resources/parents/">http://www.hbook.com/resources/parents/</a></p>
<p><b>The Christopher Awards Books for Young People</b> to books "which affirm the highest values of the human spirit."</p>	<p><a href="http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/%7Edkbrown/christopher.html">http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/%7Edkbrown/christopher.html</a></p>
<p><b>Américas Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature</b> (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, U of WI)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CLACS/aa/index.html">http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CLACS/aa/index.html</a></p>
<p><b>Best Children's Science Picture Book</b> (Giverny Award)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.15degreelab.com/award04.html">http://www.15degreelab.com/award04.html</a></p>
<p><b>Children's Literature Web Guide</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown">http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown</a></p>
<p><b>Chicago Public Library - Books reviewed by teens</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.chipublib.org/forteens/teensbookreviews/index.php">http://www.chipublib.org/forteens/teensbookreviews/index.php</a></p>
<p><b>Chicago Public Library - Books reviewed by kids</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.chipublib.org/forkids/kidsbookreviews/index.php">http://www.chipublib.org/forkids/kidsbookreviews/index.php</a></p>



## Responsibility, Fines, and Bringing Books Back

It's really Benjamin Franklin's fault that we have the public libraries of this country. He convinced folks to bring their one precious book to a room and allow others to check it out. Give one book, get many. Thus began the Library Company of Philadelphia that turned into our public libraries. It is an American gem. Everyone contributes the cost of one or several books through tax dollars and we have the "free" public library.

A perennial problem in every library is lost, missing, and overdue materials. No other issue makes so many library enemies. Nevertheless, just as soon as children come to Kindergarten, they are asked to check out books, take them home, and bring them back. An amazing feat indeed! Teachers often remark that getting anything from school to home and back to school is a miracle.

Everyone has to help children and teens learn responsibility. Yet they have to have books to read—and lots of them. How can we do both? If for example, a child doesn't handle materials very well, shall we deny access to books? **NO!** There is no alternative. Literacy must always win. Children and teens must have lots of books in their possession if they are to learn to read and continue reading. And they need to learn responsibility.

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Get acquainted with the librarian and understand the rules of circulation, lost books, fines, and check-out periods. Make special arrangements for your child's or teen's needs. Do the same for public library materials.
2. Have a family conference at the beginning of the school year about library books, textbooks, notes, and other things that must go from school to home to school. Set up a reminder system so that everyone helps everyone else.
3. Have a few special places at home where library books are stored—a box beside the child's bed; a special "library" shelf, or personal bookcases.
4. Have an appropriate container—a bag or backpack or wheelie cart to transport items to and from school—with identification on it.
5. Teach children how to care for books or other materials.
6. Decide as a family what to do about lost books and fines. Since the solution is not to cut off book borrowing, how can the whole family help?
7. If a book is lost, don't shout. It happens to most of us at one time or another. Figure out a solution. Dwell on the solution, not the problem.
8. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO BUILD A LIFE-LONG READING HABIT, and second, to be responsible.

## Classroom Collections

Where should children/teens have access to reading materials? Everywhere is the simple answer, yet sometimes strange things happen in organizations that prevent logical things from working. Sometimes, parents can help.

Classroom collections have become quite popular in the last few years. The notion is that books and information should be at hand in addition to the repository down the hall in the library media center. Sometimes conflict develops over inventory, who owns what, and other matters. Resolution of such conflicts is not difficult when the larger vision of a school-wide print-rich environment is presented and implemented. In the age of technology, the conflict disappears as electronic sources go online.

### Advantages of Print Classroom Collections

- Print-rich = more reading
- Close at hand
- Close at hand
- Close at hand

### Disadvantages of static (i.e. permanent) classroom collections

- Interesting to students the first few weeks of school and not thereafter.
- Too small to have any significant variety.
- Cannot contain any in-depth information needed for research on various reading levels and in a variety of formats.
- Take up too much room as the collection grows.
- Another management problem for the teacher.

### Solution: ROTATING Classroom Collections

- Teachers work with the library media specialist to create rotating classroom collections using the LMC as the warehouse.
- The rotating collection should be as large as the classroom can handle.
- Some items might be semi-permanent, others rotating every few weeks.
- The collection would contain materials for free voluntary reading chosen by students.
- The collection would contain materials to be used in a curricular unit.
- Materials could be circulated from the classroom to the home.
- The collection would contain materials in many kinds of formats including books, paperbacks, magazines, newspapers, multimedia, etc.
- Every room collection should also contain electronic resources, databases, selected Internet sites, and other digital information and multimedia items flowing from the LMC into the classroom and into the home.
- The electronic classroom collection would contain links to the central LMC collection, local, district, and national resources.

## Why I Support School Libraries: A Letter from a Principal

Dear Parents,

*Throughout my eighteen years as an elementary principal of urban, suburban and rural schools I've often been asked, "Why do you continue to dedicate funds to our library? Why is it so important to you to keep it open and to fill it with resources, when there are so many other pressing needs in our school?" I've wandered countless times through classrooms, cafeterias, playgrounds and libraries, and these are some of my reasons for feeling this particular place is so valuable.*

*Libraries are safe, inviting places where many children choose to go during recesses and other "free" times. Do you wonder why? Hang out there and you'll see small groups of children quietly reading together, sharing their findings, or laughing about a part they think humorous. You'll spot individuals picking books off shelves just because they look interesting. There is no hurry, no competition, no demand for performance, and no stress. It's all about what the child wants to find out for himself.*

*The school library sets the tone of the entire school. Where the library media specialist is observed planning and delivering lessons with teachers, children learn about collegiality and cooperation. Where the technology in the library and book collections are coordinated with what children are learning in the classroom, children can start with a tiny concept and then adventure out to find much more really personally intriguing information than the teacher can deliver. Children are excited with each new bit of information they discover on their own. They develop a sense of adventure and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. Where children engage in brainstorming together to solve problems, they learn to accept different viewpoints, to prioritize ideas, to consider multiple solutions and to test those choices. Where children are allowed to leave the classroom to find something in the library, they learn about independence, trust and responsibility.*

*It is impossible to enter a school library without making questions. What is in here about dogs? Which of these thirty books on dogs will tell me about my dog? What kind of dog is he anyway? Does this book tell me about how much he should eat? Where can I learn to teach him tricks? What else can I find on the computer? What words should I write in the "Search" box? Just by being in a school library your child will engage in creating and refining good questions, in learning to find and sort info, and in making and exploring choices.*

*You see the school library is all about your own child and his or her own personal exploration of ideas. Because of this, every child has a special relationship with the library, which lasts throughout the years he or she will be in this school.*

**Susan Robinson**

Elementary Principal

American Association of School Librarians Distinguished Administrator

## Money, Money, Money: What You Can Do

It would be nice to report that school libraries cost very little and could be run by volunteers. "If it sounds too good to be true, it's too good to be true." Good information systems cost money. And what's free on the Internet is... well, you get what you pay for.

First, ask the librarian how much per student the school/district spends for library materials. Enter that figure here: \_\_\_\_\_

Second, ask how much per child from federal, state, and other sources to buy library materials. Enter that figure here: \_\_\_\_\_

Total spent per student for library materials: \_\_\_\_\_

### Consider this:

Just to stay afloat, a library needs to add one book per student per year. (\$20-\$30 a book)

To build a collection, the library needs to add two books per student per year. (\$40-60 for two books)

*In Ohio expenditures for school library books and multimedia are way below the national average<sup>1</sup>*

H

How much money would your school library have to have to either build or just maintain its collection over and above what it gets now?

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### Here are a few things you could do:

1. Contribute \$20-30 each year for a birthday book for your child.
2. Ask grandparents to do the same.
3. Ask your child to "earn" the cost of a book and contribute it to the library.
4. Talk to the administrators about funding the library better and get a commitment for the school to do it.
5. Work on a grant for the library.
6. Talk to community organizations that would be willing to help.

<sup>1</sup>The Status of Public and Private School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999-2000 available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004313>

## Volunteering at the School Library

Many parents or grandparents would like to help out in spare moments and wonder what they can do for the school library.

1. **Subject Expert.** From firemen to business executives, to chemists, to homemakers, many parents can offer expertise and experience to students doing topical research. Volunteer to allow students to interview you, tour your place of employment, or get answers to questions by email. You might be asked to be a guest speaker, be a resource person in the library when students are doing research, or just be available by telephone or email.
2. **Help with the Nitty-Gritty and Beyond.** There are seemingly hundreds of jobs in any library begging to get done if you have one or several hours to devote. Some are familiar such as shelving or repairing books, but others might require more expertise such as:
  - a. Trouble-shoot a student's problem accessing library databases.
  - b. Outline/write a grant.
  - c. Help a child read or understand a web site.
  - d. Organize a reading celebration; head a library fund-raising campaign.
  - e. Serve as a library advocate on a PTA parent council.
  - f. Carry a bill through the state legislature to fund library databases for every child in the state.
  - g. Be an artist-in-residence based in the library.
  - h. Do storytelling or reading aloud to classes as they come to the library.
  - i. Serve as a one-on-one tutor in the library.
  - j. Help students make a library quilt to be auctioned for the library fund.
  - k. Find sources for free or inexpensive supplies needed by the library.
  - l. Help paint the library or repair a worn spot in the carpet.
  - m. Head up and organize/train the parent volunteers for the library.
  - n. Volunteer for special events, such as inventory or family night.

## Advocate for the School Library

Most school kids live with their school library for 3-6 years. They have little voice in what goes on there, how large the collection is, who the staff are, or how the place operates. They need advocates.

It may seem odd, but many librarians feel helpless as they try to provide first-rate information systems with very little money. Can you imagine a winning football or basketball team without a parent's booster club? Neither can we. Likewise, a single voice in the school pleading for better information systems, materials, and staff is often unheard. Librarians need advocates.

A recent study conducted in Ohio by internationally known researchers, *Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries*, clearly articulates the need for a certified professional librarian at every level. The study states that certified school librarians collaborating with classroom teachers provide activities where students not only learn and achieve, but are also learning the worth of appropriateness of information resources. These are all skills students clearly need in this age of information overload.<sup>1</sup>

Advocacy requires constant and steady attention over time. There is no such thing as an instant or one-time library fund allocation that solves all the problems.

Adequate funding and staffing are the two most critical areas of good school library service. As budgets fluctuate, and the pressure for cuts increases, libraries are regularly on the chopping block. Suppose the library online database bill is not paid every year? What does it cost your child when the primary information source is outdated or unavailable? What is the cost of misinformation?

Advocacy requires strong, steady voices. It means accompanying the teacher-librarian to the board meeting presentation of library needs, being vigilant, and speaking to administrators regularly. Good school libraries cost money— however, this money pays benefits in terms of positive student achievement.

How well your child reads and handles information will predict  
academic achievement.  
The school library is an essential key.

For more information download the "Toolkit for School Library Media Programs" at [www.ala.org/ala/pio/campaign/schoollibrary/schoollibrary.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/campaign/schoollibrary/schoollibrary.htm) and "Toolkit for Promoting INFOhio Resources to Parents" at [www.infohio.org/Parent/Toolkit.html](http://www.infohio.org/Parent/Toolkit.html).

<sup>1</sup> From: *Student Learning Through Ohio Libraries: The Ohio Research Study* by Dr. Ross Todd and Dr. Carol Kuhlthau. At <http://www.oelma.org/studentLearning/default.asp>

## How Parent Groups Can Help the School Library

Many parent groups have a library committee and library issues come before the entire group for suggestions, recommendations, and action. Consider the following checklist for your parent organization dealing with library issues:

1. Understand how the school library is funded—school, district, state/federal/grant/ parent group funds.
2. Understand the budgetary needs a library program must have to operate and provide the service your children must have.
3. Set up a volunteer program to help the librarian.
4. Create a "Friends of the School Library" group.
5. Help plan and conduct various library activities:
  - a. Book fairs
  - b. Reading motivation activities
  - c. Research/term-paper clinics for parents/students
  - d. Tours of neighboring libraries such as getting every student a public library card and get access to their databases
6. Every time a politician/board member comes to the school, have the meeting in the library and have a large poster showing the needs that library has. Always mention library contributions and needs to outsiders, visitors, and other parents.
7. Whenever school funding is discussed, never forget the library.
8. Sponsor a birthday book contribution program. Families who can't afford \$25/\$30 should have a program to earn it. Don't forget the out-of-town grandparents as a source of these gifts.
9. If there is no librarian, lobby tirelessly for one—a good one.
10. Lobby for help for the librarian. One person can't do it alone.
11. When the subject comes up, always say something good about the library.

Resource: Learn more about ways to support your child's school library at <http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/toolkits/whatparentsshould.cfm>

## English Language Learners: How Can the Library Help?

Many schools in the United States are filled with students who are learning English. The school and public library can help.

### What the library offers for free:

- Checkout of books in English and the language in your home. (If books are not back on time or lost, there might be a fee.)
- Access to the Internet.
- Storytelling programs.
- Classes including how to use the computer.
- Instruction on how to search on the Internet for information.
- Videos on topics being studied in class.
- Bilingual dictionary, such as Spanish-English/English-Spanish, to look up words in either language.
- Programs that encourage reading such as a summer reading program.
- Programs during the year that introduce children and teens to new books, poetry, and other materials.

**Check with your public librarian to find out details about programs, services and classes offered at your local library.**

### What you can do:

- Have many books in both languages in your home.
- Take your child to the library to check out books in both languages.
- Encourage your child to read a lot of English.
- Read in English with your child/teen. Teach each other as you read.
- Help your child to be responsible and return their library books on time.
- Find lots of "picture" books at the library about the topics your child is studying in school. Look at the pictures together and name what you see in English.
- If your child/teen cannot understand the textbook, find an easy children's book on the topic of the textbook chapter. It will help your child get the main idea about the topic.
- Meet and talk to the librarian often. When the librarian understands what you and your child need, you can expect help.
- Take your child to the public library often.
- Check at your school to be sure your child can visit the school library several times a week.



## School Library Staffing: Good News, Bad News

The school library has become a complex information hub of the school—not the small book room of yesteryear. Here is the staffing scoop:

### Every school library needs:

#### **At least one full time professional librarian.**

Why: The librarian will be a teacher; a teacher of reading; a teacher of information handling and research skills; a technology coach; a co-creator of exciting learning experiences with your child's teacher. When the majority of their day is spent on these tasks, your child will receive an important boost. Research demonstrates that it is the professional librarian who makes the actual difference in achievement.<sup>1</sup>

#### **At least one full time paraprofessional/clerical person.**

Why: These people keep the warehouse running in its myriad and time-consuming functions of circulation, retrieval, shelving, materials processing, traffic control, facility monitoring and decorating. Nothing works if nothing is organized.

#### **At least one full time technical assistant.**

Why: This person assists with the networks, computers, web sites, communication systems, student access, filters, passwords, equipment and software maintenance and upgrades. When this technology doesn't work, it's a zero.

### Rationale

The trio of library staff will provide an unbeatable team in working across the school to provide equity of access to information, supportive help for every child and teacher in dealing with information and technology, and will be reading's best friend. The bad news is that a full team is expensive. To hire only a clerk or aide to "run the library" negates the impact of the place and your child will suffer, but the suffering is often in silence: information not gained, poor research habits, rampant plagiarism, surfing the ocean web of the Internet, and ultimately, low test scores. The more your child needs help in school, the more critical the library will be.

### How is your school library staffed?

<sup>1</sup> Lance, Keith C., Christine Hamilton-Pennell, Marcia J. Rodney, with Lois Peterson and Clara Sitter. *Information Empowered: The School Librarian as an Agent of Academic Achievement in Alaska Schools*. Revised ed. Juneau, AK: Alaska State Library, 2000.

## No School Librarian? What to Do

The national research on school libraries links the professional school librarian with achievement.<sup>1</sup> Staffing the school library with only a clerk or a paraprofessional does make a difference in test scores.<sup>2</sup> Why? Because the professional person concentrates on teaching and the use of information while clericals or paraprofessionals concentrate on the organization.

If the library is considered just as a room full of books to be circulated to students, no special expertise is needed. If, however, scores, achievement, reading, information literacy, and Internet information systems are to be emphasized, then a professional is needed.

Sadly, many schools, particularly at the elementary level, do not have professional librarians. At the very time when children are learning to read and setting patterns for information use, there is no professional to help them. Scores, achievement, and reading all suffer when there isn't this vital person in the school. It is like trying to staff the classroom with only a clerk or a parent volunteer; the school with a school secretary but no principal; a hospital with nurses but no doctor.

Here are a few tips.

1. Understand what a good school library program can do for your child.
2. Know what the research says about the contribution of a good school library program to achievement.
3. Find out why the school administration does not have a school librarian as a high priority.
4. Find a great school library program and visit it. Then take others with you: parents, administrators, board members, and community leaders.
5. Begin to lobby for a school librarian. It is usually a matter of priorities rather than money. If it is money, what sources are available for any additional school staff? Are there grants, special state or federal programs? If there hasn't been a school librarian in the school, it takes a 3-5 year program boost to operate at maximum power.
6. If there really is no state allocation for a librarian, why not? A number of states have allocations and there is a school librarian in every school by state law.
7. Understand what really takes money vs. a simple realignment of priorities.
8. Don't take no for an answer.

**Ohio ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> in the ratio of librarians to students.<sup>3</sup>  
That equals one school librarian for every 1208 students.**

<sup>1</sup> Keith Lance speech, White House Conference on School Libraries. At <http://www.ims.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/keithlance.htm>

<sup>2</sup> See the Alaska Study at <http://www.davidv1.org> under Research.

<sup>3</sup> Everhart, Nancy. "School Staffing Survey 2000, Looking for Few Good Librarians," SLJ Online, September 1, 2000.

## Great Quotes

"Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always." ~ First Lady Laura Bush

"...as parents, we have to find the time and the energy to step in and help our children love reading. We can read to them, talk to them about what they're reading, and make time for this by turning off the television set ourselves. Libraries are a critical tool to help parents do this." ~ Sen. Barack Obama

"A library takes the gift of reading one step further by offering personalized learning opportunities second to none, a powerful antidote to the isolation of the Web." ~Julie Andrews

"Children and teachers need library resources—especially books—and the expertise of a librarian to succeed. Books, information technology, and school librarians who are part of the school's professional team are basic ingredients for student achievement." ~ First Lady Laura Bush

"What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it thinks about education." ~ Harold Howe, former U.S. Commissioner of Education

"It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers."  
~ James Thurber (1894-1961)

"Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please."  
~ Mark Twain (1835-1910)

"People can lose their lives in libraries. They ought to be warned."  
~ Saul Bellow

"I find television very educational. Every time someone switches it on I go into another room and read a good book." ~ Groucho Marx (1895-1977)

"A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life."  
~ Henry War Beecher

"Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" ~ Choruses from *The Rock*, T.S. Eliot

"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." ~ Groucho Marx

"Information is the currency of democracy."  
~Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

"What in the world would we do without our libraries?" ~Katharine Hepburn

"When I discovered libraries, it was like having Christmas every day."  
~Jean Fritz

"Two forces are successfully influencing the education of a cultivated man: art and science. Both are united in the book." ~ Maxim Gorky (1868-1936)

"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation." ~ Walter Cronkite

"Any book that helps a child to form the habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him." ~ Richard McKenna

"Nothing sickens me more than the closed door of a library." ~Barbara Tuchman, American writer noted for popular histories

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