PENNSYLVANIA POWER!

A Parents' Guide to School Libraries

David V. Loertscher
with Joyce Kasman Valenza

Pennsylvania Power!

A Parent's Guide to School Libraries

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With
Joyce Kasman Valenza

DRUM ROLL!
And, Introducing
Us Cats

Brigham

You don't have
to be so
dramatic, Kid

Wednesday

To the Purchaser of This Book

The purpose of this book is to get the message out to parents about school libraries and their impact on education.

Pennsylvania Power! A Parent's Guide to School Libraries is available two ways:
  As a book and CD Set $35.00
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  As a CD only: $15.00   (Note: the CD has all the pdf files for each page)

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Contents

Organizational Issues

Appreciation

A School Library Agenda for Your Child/Teen

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 be equipped with:

Libraries are as much about life as they are about School.

Reading Literacy
• An Avid and Capable Reader

Technology Literacy
• A Skilled User of Technology Tools
• An Efficient Learner

Information Literacy
• An Organized Investigator
• A Critical Thinker
• A Creative Thinker
• An Effective Communicator
• A Responsible Information User

Employability Skills

Oh, you'll be so smart!

Just call me Dr. Know!

Research on School Libraries: A National Picture

Since 1999, sixteen states have commissioned studies[1] 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.
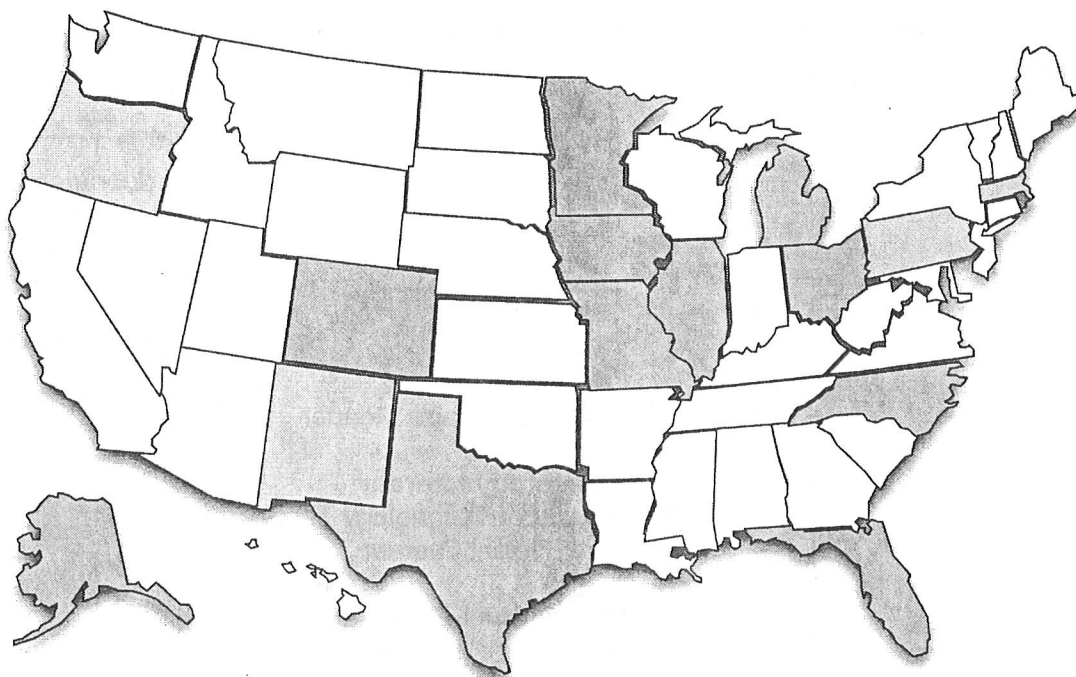
Alaska, 2000
Colorado, 1993, 2000
Florida, 2003
Illinois, underway
Iowa, 2002
Massachusetts, 2000
Michigan, 2003
Minnesota, 2002
Missouri, 2003
New Mexico, 2002
North Carolina, 2003
Ohio, 2004
Oregon, 2001
Pennsylvania, 2000
Rhode Island, 2004
Texas, 2001

It's like milk in your cat dish

Mmm!

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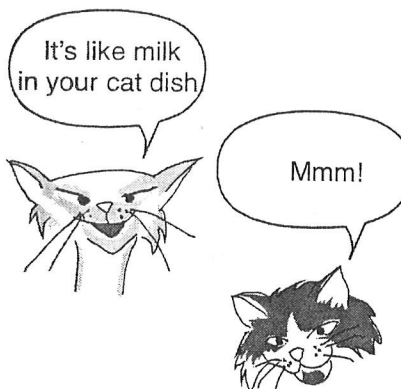
[1] For a complete list of these studies, consult http://www.davidvl.org under "Research" or the Colorado State Library at http://www.lrs.org/impact.asp.

What Every Parent Should Know About Pennsylvania School Library Programs And Achievement

In 2000, a major study conducted by Keith Curry Lance, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell of Pennsylvania school library media programs discovered the following.

Basic Findings

Library Media Program Development

Pennsylvania reading test scores at the 5th, 8th, and 11th grade rise with increases in:

- School librarian and support staff hours.
- Networked computers linking school libraries with classrooms, labs, and other instructional sites taking advantage of the Access Pennsylvania Database, licensed databases, and the Internet.
- The amount of time librarians spend teaching cooperatively with teachers, teaching information literacy skills independently, providing inservice training to teachers, serving on standards committees, helping on curriculum committees, and managing information technology.

How much will a School's test scores with specific improvement in its school library program? The answer depends on the program's current status, what it improves, and how much it is improved. When all library predictors are maximized; e.g., staffing, library expenditures, information resources and technology, and information literacy activities of library staff; PSSA reading scores tend to run 10 to 15 points higher.[1]

Variables	Elementary Through High School		
	25 Highest scoring schools	25 Lowest scoring schools	Percent Difference (lowest to highest)
5th Grade Reading Scores (mean, see p. 54)	90.02	76.40	18%
Staffing Weekly librarian hours (mean, see p. 54)	34.31	29.36	17%
Weekly support staff hours (mean)	25.92	12.48	108%

Another way to see the differences
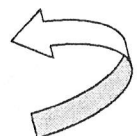
[1] Measuring up to Standards: The Impact of School Library Programs and Information Literacy in Pennsylvania Schools, by Keith Curry Lance, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell, Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries, 2000: (p. 6-8) Available at http://www.statelibrary.state.pa.us/libraries/lib/libraries/measuringup.pdf These findings cannot be explained away by school differences, including: school expenditures per pupil, teacher characteristics (education, experience, salaries), teacher/pupil ratio, and student characteristics (poverty, race, ethnicity) or community differences such as adult educational attainment, families in poverty, and racial/ethnic demographics.

8th Grade Reading Scores (Mean, see p. 55)	88.93	73.50	21%
Weekly librarian hours (mean, see p. 55)	38.40	37.63	2%
Weekly support staff hours (mean)	30.30	15.80	92%
11th Grade Reading Scores (Mean, see p. 56)	86.75	74.73	16%
Weekly librarian hours (mean, see p. 56)	45.06	43.25	4%
Weekly support staff hours (mean)	49.57	19.28	157%

Notice that the major difference comes when you add support staff to the professional staff. This gives the professional librarian time to concentrate on teaching and learning.

What librarians do that make a difference
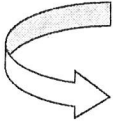
From the Study (p. 58):

When you find a professional librarian with support staff, you are more likely to find:

- Teaching cooperatively with teachers
- Teaching information literacy independently
- Providing inservice training to teachers
- Serving on standards and curriculum committees
- Managing technology

Reading Scores and the Best School Libraries

Students at the highest-scoring schools averaged reading scores in the upper 80's while their counterparts at the lowest-scoring schools averaged scores at the mid 70's.

School Library Expenditures

Higher achieving schools often spend twice as much – more – on their school library programs as lower achieving schools...affecting the size of the school library program's collection of information resources.

Information Technology

The most dramatic statistical difference between lower and higher achieving schools is in the area of information technology networked to the school library:

        Elementary: 40-50 computers vs. 6-10
        High School: 75-100 computers vs. 20-25

Other differences of note (p. 52-53)
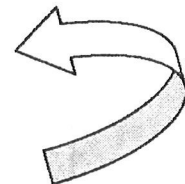
How Does Pennsylvania Compare to the Nation in School Libraries?

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/pubs2004/2004313.pdf While the data are old (fed wheels grind slowly), they are the most recent national statistics we have. How did Iowa compare to the nation that year? The following table summarizes some of the most important findings:

Characteristic	Source	PA	Nation
Public schools that claim to have a library	p.5	94.2%	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	94.8%	75.2%
Number of schools with a full time librarian at the school	p. 19	70.9%	60.5%
School libraries with paid library aides	p. 23	64.7%	71.6%
Average library expenditures (books and multimedia)	p. 29	$8,908	$8,729
Average number of books in the library	p. 28	11,900	10,232
Average library circulation of materials per week	P. 47	559	605

Conclusions:

- 70% of Pennsylvania school libraries are staffed with a professional librarian – 10% above the national average.
- Almost all schools that have professionals also have some support staff. Remember that more aide time given a professional librarian predicts more impact on achievement.
- In other statistics, Pennsylvania is just above the national average for school library programs.

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 you 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 – and your Social Security and Medicare, and the only hope for a better economy, and its future as a world nation.

Why a Professional School Librarian?

"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 an aide or even a volunteer parent?"
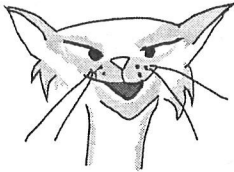
"I'm afraid not, Kid. The school librarian of today is a teacher who administers a very complex print and digital information environment and serves as an information coach for teachers and students."

Here are a few things professional school librarians do:

1. They help teachers create exciting learning experiences in an information-rich and technology-rich environment.
2. They help every student get the best information to fulfill their assignments.
3. 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.
4. They guide and teach students to evaluate information—particularly from the Internet (world wide web): "Who's saying what to me, for what reason, and with what credibility?"
5. They teach students the research process in a world where information overload is the norm at all ages.
6. When teachers bring classes to the library, the librarian serves as a second teacher so that every student gets individual attention.
7. And, by the way; the library is still reading's best friend.

Requirements to be a professional school librarian in Pennsylvania

- Have a teaching credential
- Complete a school library certification program
- Pass the following PRAXIS assessments: PPST Reading, PPST Writing, PPST Mathematics, Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge, and Library Media Specialist

In order to earn Instructional II, or permanent certification, the school librarian must take 24 post-baccalaureate credits and possess three years of successful school library teaching experience in Pennsylvania. School librarians must continue to earn 180 approved continuing education hours every five years. *Many* school librarians possess Masters degrees in Library Science.

"Trying to staff a library with only an aide is like trying to run a hospital entirely with LPN s."

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 not. Remember that in the Pennsylvania study of school libraries, professional librarians with more support staff make the largest difference.

Information Literacy: A Life Skill

Doing research in the world of information whether a kindergartner or an advanced high school senior is what librarians help every student do as they study 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. Though overwhelming, they must learn to make sound decisions, evaluate information, and prepare for jobs and careers.

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

The Information Literacy Process

Builds a Question

Reflects on Process & Product

Finds & Sorts Information

Communicates Findings

Student

Reads & Understands

Summarizes, Concludes, Makes Decisions

Thinks & Creates
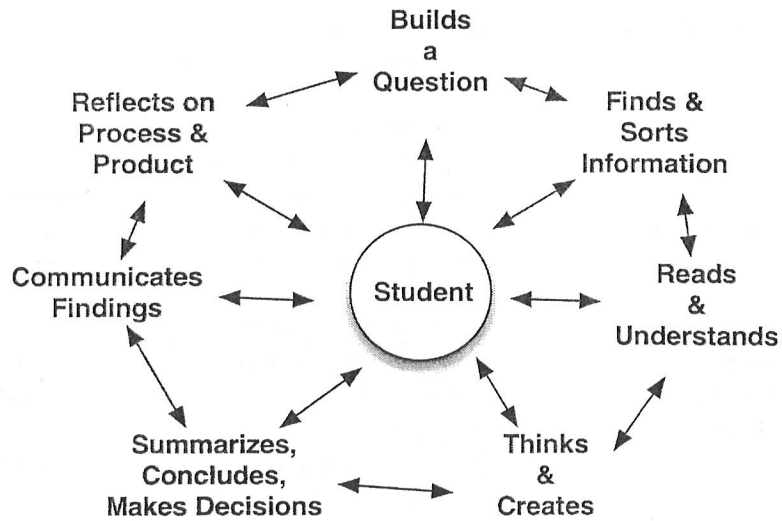
You expect me to do all that?

Keep it a secret, Kid, it's called learning.

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
Build a Question	• Building background knowledge about a topic • The difference between a good question and a poor question • Narrowing a topic. • Forming key words	• Find books on the topic with lots of pictures to share together • Explain concepts and define terms • Help narrow a topic to something manageable in the time available
Find and Sort Information	• Search strategies • Locating resources • Skim, scan and consider • Evaluate resources	• Ask about the quality of the information being used. • Is this source the best information?
Read and Understand	• Reading strategies • Actively read, view and listen • Reading pictures • Use features of non-fiction text • Note-making	• Keep asking and helping to find the "main ideas" and the "supporting ideas" as reading/viewing/listening occurs
Think and Create	• Using graphic organizers • Sorting, comparing, and classifying information • Looking for patterns and trends • Compare and contrast	• Help make logical connections between ideas across the various sources being used
Summarize, Conclude, Make Decisions	• How to summarize ideas • Drawing conclusions • Making decisions • How not to plagiarize	• Does the conclusion, decision, or summary follow logically from the information collected?
Communicate Findings	• Techniques of presenting information in print or multimedia	• Are the ideas presented more important than how flashy the presentation is?
Reflect on Process and Product	• How to reflect: what I know and am able to do • How well did I do? • How can I do better over time?	• No matter the grade, what do they know and what are they able to do? • How can they do better next time?

No excuses then?

You're doggon' right!

Cut and Clip (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. Zero learning.

Replace CUT and CLIP with:

Cut, Clip, 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 the life-blood of our society.

Thinking makes my head hurt!

Better than getting your butt kicked, Kid

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. Have you recorded 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 yours and other's ideas into a finished product?

Students can borrow from the works of others!

As long as you document when you:

Quote: Quotes are the exact words of an author, copied directly from a source, word for word. Quotations must be cited!

Paraphrase: When you rephrase the words of an author, putting his/her thoughts in your own words. When you paraphrase, you rework the source's ideas, words, phrases, and sentence structures with your own. Paraphrased material must be cited!

Summarize: When you put the main idea(s) of one or several writers into your own words, including only the main point(s). Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material. Summarized material must be cited!

Remember to keep careful records of your sources and quotes *as you research*. It may be very hard to retrace your research steps!

About In-Text Project Documentation

What it is: The brief information in in-text documentation should match full source information in the Works Cited page

Purpose: to give immediate source information without interrupting the flow of a paper or project.

Why bother? The academic world takes in-text documentation seriously. Readers look for *authority* in your writing.

Inaccurate documentation is as serious as having no documentation at all.

How to do it: Parenthetical citations are usually placed at the end of a sentence,

- Cite the author's last name and the page number in parenthesis. (Smith 72)

- In the absence of an author, cite the title and the page number. (Citing Sources 72)

- If you are using more than one book by the same author, list the last name, comma, the title, and the page. (Smith, Citing Sources 72)

- If you identify the author and title in the text, just list the page number: *According to Smith in Citing Sources, citing is critical when you refer to statistics (72).*

- When citing a Web source in-text, you are not likely to have page numbers, just include the first part of the entry. (Smith)

Confused? Check our school style sheet or consult your teacher-librarian for more information!

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM ?

AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE!

A guide to academic integrity!

Your School Library

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, ideas, images, sounds, or other creative expression of others as your own.

IF: you have included, copied or downloaded the words and ideas of others in your work and neglected to cite,

IF: you have turned in someone else's work,

IF: you have had help you wouldn't want your teacher to know about,

You have probably plagiarized!

Remember your teachers expect honesty! They know your work; they consult with each other; they check suspicious work in Web search tools.

Two types of plagiarism:

Intentional

- Copying a friend's work
- Buying or borrowing papers
- Cutting and pasting blocks of text from electronic sources without documenting
- Media "borrowing"

Unintentional

- Careless paraphrasing
- Poor documentation
- Quoting excessively
- Failure to use your own "voice"-- your work should be original!

Academic Integrity Counts!

- Education is not an "us vs. them" game!
- When you copy, you are cheating yourself; you limit your own learning!
- The consequences are not worth the risk! Your academic reputation follows you.
- Giving credit to authors whose ideas you use is the right thing to do!
- Citing gives the information you present authority.
- Citing makes it possible for your readers to locate your source.
- Cheating is unethical behavior.

It's not worth the possible consequences:

- "0" on the assignment
- Parent notification
- Referral to administrators
- Suspension or dismissal from school activities-- sports and extracurricular
- Note on student record
- Loss of reputation in our school community

But do I have to cite everything?

NO! Facts that are widely known and information and judgments that are considered **"common knowledge"** do NOT have to be documented!
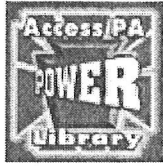
If you see a fact in more than five sources, it is likely to be "common knowledge."

You don't need to cite when you are writing about your own experiences, observations, conclusions, and reactions.

When in doubt, cite!

From *Power Tools Recharged*, by Joyce Kasman Valenza. Published by American Library Association. Reprinted with

Welcome to the POWER Library

Pennsylvania Online World of Electronic Resources

The ACCESS PA POWER is a service of Pennsylvania's public libraries, school libraries and the State Library. Login at school or at a participating public library. Login from home with the barcode on your public library card. Find a login location at: http://www.powerlibrary.net/Find.htm

ACCESS	**Access Pennsylvania Database** Catalog holdings of almost 3,000 Pennsylvania school, public, academic and special libraries are included in this database. Search by author, title, subject or keyword to locate over 44 million items.
Multimedia Archive	**AP Multimedia Archive** More than 500,000 current and historical photographs, searchable by date, place and subject. More than 800 photographs are added daily.
DartClix	Brodart Automation's DartClix: Collection of professionally selected, cataloged, high-quality websites designed to enhance curriculum.
EBSCO HOST	**EBSCO Publishing:** The rich suite of databases includes: *Funk & Wagnall's New World Encyclopedia* *MasterFILE Premier:* huge general interest database of magazines, reference, biographies, documents, photos, maps, and more *MAS Online Plus:* General interest and current events magazines *Middle Search:* resources for middle and junior high research *Primary Search* (resources for elementary research) *Searchasaurus* For children, a general encyclopedia, encyclopedia of animals, magazine articles, dictionary, photos, maps and flags. *EBSCO Animals* *Professional Development Collection* and *ERIC*: for educators *Health Source Plus—Consumer Edition* and *Nursing/Academic Editions* *Newspaper Source:* regional and international newspapers and wires *Business Source Premier* *Clinical Pharmacology* *Auto Repair Reference Center* *EBSCOhost Español* *BookSource: Nonfiction :* full text and abstracts for 1000 popular nonfiction books *Book Index with Reviews*
FACTS for LEARNING	**Facts On File News Services: Facts for Learning** (for children) Elementary and Middle School modules offer reference, current events and e-books on states and nations. Content includes Weekly Reader publications.
GA	**Gale Group: Contemporary Authors** Biographies of current writers.
GROVE ART GROVE MUSIC	**Grove Art Online**: complete 34-volume reference set **Grove Music Online**: complete 29-volume reference set
	H.W. Wilson: Biography Reference Bank: Profiles and articles on over 470,000 individuals
netLibrary	**netLibrary** collection of more than 50,000 e-books, full-text and searchable.
OXFORD Reference	**Oxford Reference Online** general reference works on language, quotations, science and medicine, humanities, social science, business, and more
LitFINDER	**Roth Publishing: LitFinder (Poem Finder, Story Finder, and Essay Finder)** Full-text literature and material about it, including author biography, images, and explanations.
SIRS Discoverer	**SIRS Discoverer** (For children) Includes full text articles and images from over 1,600 domestic and international newspapers, magazines and government documents, reading levels noted.
streaMed	**wired.MD - streaMed Patient Education Solution** Patient education videos,

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting

Students *can* borrow from the works of other writers as they research. Good writers use three strategies—summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting—to blend source materials in with their own, while making sure their own voice is heard.

Quotations are the exact words of an author, copied directly from the source word for word. Quotations must be cited!

Use quotations when:
- You want to add the power of an author's words to support your argument
- You want to disagree with an author's argument
- You want to highlight particularly eloquent or powerful phrases or passages
- You are comparing and contrasting specific points of view
- You want to note the important research that precedes your own

Paraphrasing means rephrasing the words of an author, putting his/her thoughts in your own words. A paraphrase can be viewed as a "translation" of the original source. When you paraphrase, you rework the source's ideas, words, phrases, and sentence structures with your own. Paraphrased text is often, but not always, slightly shorter than the original work. Like quotations, paraphrased material must be followed with in-text documentation and cited the on the Works Cited page.

Paraphrase when:
- You plan to use information on your note cards and wish to avoid plagiarizing
- You want to avoid overusing quotations
- You want to use your own voice to present information

Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) of one or several writers into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summarized ideas are not necessarily presented in the same order as in the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

Summarize when:
- You want to establish background or offer an overview of a topic
- You want to describe common knowledge (from several sources) about a topic
- You want to determine the main ideas of a single source

Changing the Questions: Moving Beyond the Report!

Brainstorm two topics related to the unit we are studying. Use the cues to develop essential questions that will help you focus your research. You don't need to fill in every box.[1]

	Topic #1_____	Topic #2_____
Which one? (Collect information to make an informed choice.) E.g. Which 20th Century president did the most to promote civil rights?		
How? (Understand problems and perspectives, weigh options, and propose solutions.) E.g. How should we solve the problem of water pollution in our neighborhood?		
What if? (Use the knowledge you have to pose a hypothesis and consider options.) E.g. What if the Declaration of Independence abolished slavery?		
Should? (Make a moral or practical decision based on evidence.) E.g. Should we clone humans?		
Why? (Understand and explain relationships to get to the essence of a complicated issue.) E.g. Why do people abuse children?		

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[1] Adapted from *Power Tools Recharged*, by Joyce Kasman Valenza. Published by American Library Association. Reprinted with permission.

SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST:
A Tool for Student Researchers

1. Clearly state the hypothesis, question or problem your research attempts to address or answer.

2. Write a three- to five-sentence abstract summarizing your research.

3. I have fulfilled all the requirements listed on the assignment sheet. ___Yes ___No

4. My thesis or question is adequately answered and supported by evidence ___Yes ___No

5. My evidence is logically organized. ___Yes ___No

6. My introduction and conclusion clearly explain my question/thesis. ___Yes ___No

7. I have carefully checked spelling, grammar, and punctuation. ___Yes ___No

8. My verb tense is consistent throughout. ___Yes ___No

9. I have varied sentence structure to make the text more readable. ___Yes ___No

10. My paragraphs have topic sentences. ___Yes ___No

11. Transitional sentences link my paragraphs. ___Yes ___No

12. I have effectively and responsibly quoted, paraphrased, and summarized

(All facts not commonly known are documented.) ___Yes ___No

13. My documentation is correctly formatted for our school style sheet ___Yes ___No

14. I have used a *balanced* and adequate number of relevant resources. ___Yes ___No

15. My project is neatly published and appealing to the reader. ___Yes ___No

16. I have chosen an effective method of presentation. ___Yes ___No

17. My own voice, as a writer, is clearly heard. ___Yes ___No

18. I have not plagiarized any of the material in this project. ___Yes ___No

URLs as Clues to Content

How can a student assess the validity of a source?

You can use the end, or suffix of a domain name to help you judge the validity of the information and the potential bias of a website. Remember, this strategy is only a guideline. People can easily purchase domains that do not reflect their actual purpose.

- **.com**=commercial sites (vary in their credibility)
- **.store**=retail business
- **.biz**=a business
- **~**=personal site (be a little suspicious of personal sites.) (They are not endorsed by the institution on whose server they reside. For example, many college students have personal websites posted on their college's site.)
- **.name**=individual Internet user
- **.pro**=professional's site
- **.org**=organization, often non-profit. (Some .orgs have strong bias and agendas)

- **.int**=international institution
- **.museum**=museum
- **.gov**=U.S. government site
- **.ca .au .us**= Country Host such as Canada, Australia, USA (.us is commonly assumed)
- **.mil**=U.S. military site
- **.edu**=school or university site (Was it created by a K-12 class? By a college student? By a university department? By a scholar?)
- **.ac**=educational institution, usually higher education (like .edu)
- **.net**=networked service provider, Internet administrative site

If the page you are on gives few clues about its value, truncate (or cut back) the URL to each of the next slash marks to see where the site originates.

Also be on the lookout for sponsored, or paid results. The creators of these sites pay to have their sites listed more prominently in search engine results.

Be wary of documents from free hosting sites: Geocities, AOL Members, and Tripod. Recognized institutions generally host reliable sites and professionals tend to pay for their Web hosting services. Your teacher will likely question such sites in your works cited pages.

SEARCH TOOLS SPECIES: A FIELD GUIDE

Get your family out of its search engine rut! There's a relative jungle of search options out there! To help you choose the right search tool *species* for your information needs, here's a field guide. (Remember you'll often want to use a combination of search tools.)

Search Engines

Search engines offer a *keyword approach* to searching. Search engines are *large* databases of Web documents that rely on *robots, spiders or crawlers,* automated programs to match words and phrases to Web documents, Search engines depend on *you* to do the work through the use of *syntax,* the particular searching language of the search engine. Search engines determine relevance, or the way their result lists are ordered in different ways. Tip: Search engines offer greater precision in their Advanced Screens!

Examples of Search Engines:

Google	http://google.com
Alltheweb	http://alltheweb.com
AltaVista	http://altavista.com
Hotbot	http://hotbot.com
Teoma	http://teoma.com
WiseNut	http://wisenut.com

Meta-Search Engines

Meta-search engines have no databases of their own. They search across the databases of a variety of other search tools. More advanced meta-search engines collate your results, and eliminate repetitive hits. Some combine results into one unified list, others report each search engine's results separately.

Examples of Meta-search engines:

Vivisimo	http://vivisimo.com/ (Great for its subject clustering!)
IxQuick Metasearch	http://www.ixquick.com/
Dogpile	http://dogpile.com
Ithaki Metasearch	http://www.ithaki.net/indexu.htm
Search.com	http://www.search.com

Subject Directories

Subject directories are catalogs of Web sites collected, organized, and maintained by HUMANS, not robots or spiders. Directories are usually arranged in "trees" or hierarchies, which attempt to organize information into large and progressively smaller subcategories. Subject directory editors often review and select sites for inclusion based on established criteria.

Subject directory examples:

KidsClick!	http://www.kidsclick.org
Google Directory	http://directory.google.com
Yahoo! Directory	http://dir.yahoo.com/
About.com	http://about.com

More academic directories:

Librarian's Index to the Internet	http://lii.org
WWW Virtual Library	http://vlib.org/Overview.html
Infomine	http://infomine.ucr.edu/
Mulnomah County Library Homework Center	http://www.multcolib.org/homework/
Internet Public Library	http://www.ipl.org
Academic Info	http://www.academicinfo.net/

Invisible Web

The Invisible Web is the term used to describe the huge amount of Web content that is difficult or impossible to find using traditional search tools. This content includes databases—both free and subscription--special file types (like PDFs and spreadsheets), sites that require logins, and sites that block robots or spiders.

Directories for the Invisible Web:

Invisible Web Directory	http://invisible-web.net/
Profusion	http://www.profusion.com/
IncyWincy	http://www.incywincy.com/
Geniusfind	http://www.geniusfind.com/
Complete Planet	http://completeplanet.com

Use the subscription databases offered by you school and public libraries—EBSCOhost, GaleNet, Facts.com, BigChalk, WilsonWeb, CQ Researcher, LexisNexis, etc.

Examples of Invisible Web databases:

GEM: Gateway to Educational Materials	http://thegateway.org
Healthfinder	http://www.healthfinder.gov/
American Memory Collections, Library of Congress	http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/

Some search tools are specifically designed for students:

KidsClick!	http://kidsclick.org
AskJeeves for Kids	http://ajkids.com/
Ithaki for Kids	http://kids.ithaki.net/
Yahooligans!	http://yahooligans.com
Homework Spot.com	http://homeworkspot.com

Tip: Try Debbie Abilock's NoodleTools: Choose the Best Search for Your Information Need
http://www.noodletools.com/debbie/literacies/information/5locate/adviceengine.html

Judging an Internet Site: A Critical Skill

Use this guide to help decide whether or not the web pages are reliable sources for research. Need help? Ask your school librarian.

URL: _____

Author:	Based on the information you found, rate this source:
Who is the author? (Can't find a name? Look at the top and bottom of the page. Click through other pages on the site looking for an author).	
What makes the author an expert on this topic? What do you learn about the author's **occupation**, years of **experience, education**, or other facts that make him an expert?	**Credible**
List any **connection the author has to a university, research laboratory, governmental agency, or other reputable organization** related to the topic.	**Not Credible**

Purpose:	Based on what you found out about the purpose, rate this source:
What is the **purpose of the website**? To **sell** something? To **provide information**? To **convince** you of something? What does the **domain name** (.com, .gov, .org, .edu, .info) tell you about the purpose of the site?	
If only **one side of the argument** is presented, what side is left out?	**Biased**
What is **another resource** or type of resource that might provide the **other side** of the story?	**Not Biased**

Accuracy:	This information is
Note any **obvious errors** on the page, including **spelling** or **grammar** errors. What does this suggest about care in producing the page?	**Accurate**
How does the **information factually compare to information from other sources** you've already read?	**Not Accurate**

Content and Currency:	This information is
If statistics are provided, **how old is the data**?	**Current**
How **recent is the other information** on the page? Does this make the information more or less valuable?	**Cited**
When was the page **written**? **When** was it last **revised**?	**Not Current**
Does the author provide a **bibliography, works cited** page, or **footnotes** that tell us where he got the information?	**Not Cited**

Summary:	The best reasons for using or rejecting this website are:

Internet Safety for Kids

Here are a few tips from the FBI about Internet Safety
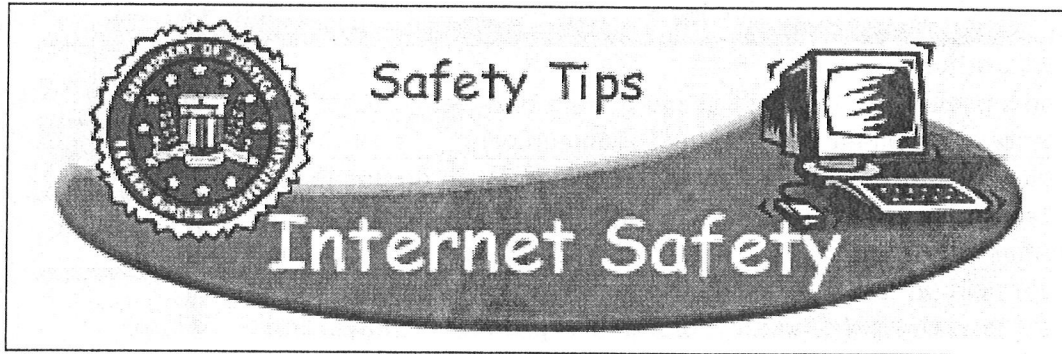
There are some very important things that you need to keep in mind when you're on your computer at home or at school.

- 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 Child/Teen 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."

Depending on the school your child attends, the focus of education may be on gaining basic knowledge about many topics. Projects and research or natural curiosity may lead your child into topics far beyond the expertise of teachers or the school's curriculum.

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

You and your child might:
  ❖ Explore the school library first
  ❖ Explore the public library
  ❖ Explore the Internet
  ❖ Link into experts.
  ❖ Gain access to advanced collections.
  ❖ Do experimentation and research
  ❖ And, question all information in libraries. Your child might be in the forefront of something great.

Novice to Expert Continuum

Novice → Apprentice → Mini-Expert; Hobby → Vocation; Avocation

Black Holes suck.

Oh?
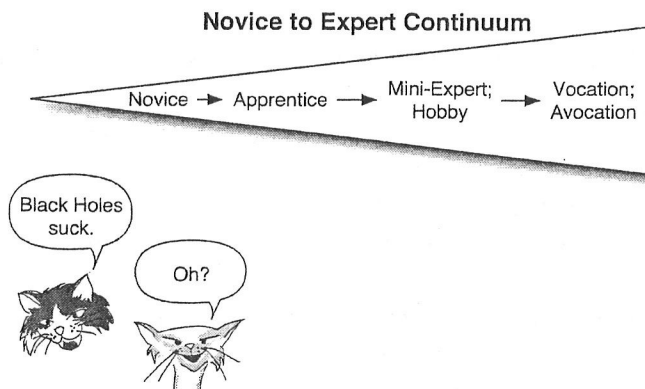
A Critical Thinker

Educators have long valued the power of critical thinking in the learning process. Indeed, there is a major body of literature on the topic. Librarians see critical thinking as one of the components of building an information literate person. The objective is to create neither students who are sponges (believing everything they read, view, and hear), nor skeptics (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

Becoming a healthy skeptic is one of the life skills librarians try to build rather than an idea just for school. One of the major challenges, for example, is to educate children and teens to evaluate information they find on the Internet. Parents will want help their children ask:

Who is saying **what** to me, **for what reason**, and **when** was it said?

Repeat: Who, When, Where, Why

For the 1,000th time...

Another way of involving young people is to make them answer questions about a source before they can use it in their projects/research papers. We want the questions to become second nature so that as adults, they discriminate among the flood of messages they encounter.

Evaluative Questions for Judging Quality Information

❑ Is the source authoritative? (Trustworthiness is a key factor.)
❑ Is the information current? (Current insofar as the topic requires the latest information.)
❑ Is the information fact or opinion? (Opinions are fine as long as we recognize them as such.)
❑ Is the information accurate? (Ah, most difficult to ascertain such as an Enron report to stockholders several years ago.)
❑ Is the information easily understood and useful? (This is a critical factor for children and teens who lack the time or skill to plough though complex information sources.)
❑ Does the provider of the information have an agenda? (Beware of the information source that is really out to sell the reader something, or is propagandizing the reader.)

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
- ❖ 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 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 on the digital school library and the digital public library.
- ❖ Expect lists of the best websites to be available on the 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.
- ❖ Know what online databases and digital periodical collections (ACCESS PA POWER Library?) can be accessed from home including any passwords needed for 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!**

Ch-ch-ch-ch-changes . . .For Parents
About Changing Expectations for Student Research

As parents you may have noticed some changes in the type of research challenges your students are facing and the expectations teachers have for student research products. And you've probably wondered, *what's going on?*

The big picture:
Information has never been more available. Students must now evaluate information in ways never required of us when we were in school. The journal articles and books we spent hours finding, were pre-filtered for quality by editors and publishers and selected by librarians. Now the act of accessing information is turbo-charged. But because the Web is a self-publishing medium, the responsibility for evaluation is squarely in the hands of students. The Web affords students a great deal of independence, often removing adult consultation from the research process. Developmentally, students may be unaware of the "research holes" or the important sources missing from their projects. They may not distinguish sources of high quality from those of dubious value. Their facility with word processing and their ability to manipulate digital content may tempt them to produce cut and paste efforts, lacking the student's own original voice.

The response:
Many schools are changing their expectations for student research specifically linked to state and national standards for information literacy, as well as standards for technology and content area learning. These expectations are directly concerned with enhancing student achievement.

We are teaching students to discern and use resources of high quality both online and off. We expect balance in student source lists. For some topics it makes sense to use the *free* Web exclusively. For most, it does not. It is likely that a whopping 90% of the books on your library shelves are not on the "free web," the Web that most students access through standard search engines. Beyond this relatively small part of the Web, students have access to a wealth of full-text books, journal and newspaper articles, documents, and broadcast transcripts through online subscription services that librarians promote when students visit with their classes and that are available to them at home through passwords.

We expect students to engage in thoughtful research based on inquiry. You are not likely to see your students engaged in *topical research*. *Topical* projects like the traditional country, the state, the planet, the president or the element report are not likely to be *ingested* into a student's system. Instead you are likely to see students asked to develop essential questions—questions that do not have easy answers. Questions that inspire them to compare, analyze, debate, evaluate, judge, predict, construct, or propose a solution. (Instead of write a report about a disease, students will likely be asked to defend which major disease is most worthy of government research funding.) Often students are required to develop a thoughtful thesis--a clear, specific assertion relating to the assigned topic that the student will support with strong evidence. To succeed in this task, the student writer's voice must be heard through his or her careful analysis. Cut and paste efforts are unlikely to make the grade.

Research projects are not mere busy work. In addition to training students to be effective writers, the research process trains students for adult problem solving and decision-making. It prepares students for the world of academics and the world of work and helps students prepare to answer such questions as:
- Which car should I buy and how much should I pay?
- Which candidate will best represent my interests?
- How can I convince my boss to accept my proposal?
- Whom should I believe?

So, what's a parent to do?

You can help us address the information literacy initiative, by helping your student create quality research products and by encouraging your student to reflect on his or her work. For many children, the Web has increased their feelings of self-efficacy, practically removing adults from the research process. Above all, you can help us by **intruding**.

Please:

- Ask your student if he or she has used subscription databases in his/her research. Make sure your student has a password list. Students who rely on the free Web *only* ignore such wonderful

databases as <u>*EBSCOHost*</u>, <u>*GaleNet*</u>, <u>*AP Photo Archive*</u>, <u>*SIRS*</u>, <u>*Facts.com*</u>, netlibrary with their high quality book, magazine, newspaper, and reference article content. Most of these databases are available from your school or public library web page.

- Ask to help as your student brainstorms potential research questions and thesis statements. If your student needs to develop a working thesis, can it pass five tests?

    1. Does it inspire a reasonable reader to ask, "How?" or Why?" (It should!)
    2. Would a reasonable reader respond with "So what?" or "Who cares?" (He or she shouldn't!)
    3. Does it include general phrasing and/or sweeping words such as "all" or "none" or "every"? (It shouldn't!)
    4. Does it lead the reader toward the topic sentences (the subtopics needed to prove the thesis)? (It should!)
    5. Can the thesis be adequately developed in the required length of the paper or project? (It should!)

Ask to check students' works cited and works consulted pages for balance and quality. Have they used the Web exclusively? Have they ignored books? Of the websites they have cited, how many appear to have been produced by universities, museums, and recognizable organizations? Do any of them have suspicious domain names, like Geocities or AOL Members? Good researchers search for credibility, authority, accuracy, and relevance. Good researchers are fussy!

Look for "research holes." Quite simply, kids don't know what they don't know. Though the Web gives them great independence, they may not recognize the best words to use in a search and they may not recognize the best documents in a result list when they see them. However clever they are, in your travels as an adult, you are likely to know things your thirteen-year-old does not. Encourage your student to research with "peripheral vision," to be on the lookout for these related terms, names, and organizations. In a subscription database that means using the controlled language, or thesaurus, to find the appropriate subject headings. In a search engine, that means browsing through annotations for additional vocabulary or making use of features like "more like this" and "similar pages" when they appear near really good results. Suggest names or events or

keywords worth searching that might not necessarily be in your student's realm of knowledge. If you suspect important content has been overlooked, it is likely the teacher will too.

Is your student in a search engine rut? Is he or she relying on a certain "fictional butler" way too much? All search boxes are not the same. Students have a wide variety of search options: search engines; a growing number of *smarter* search engines (Google, Vivismo, Wisenut, Teoma, and many more); specialized search engines (like Scirus, for science); and subject directories—like KidsClick! or Librarian's Index to the Internet--for the one-concept search or when they want to get to the good stuff quickly.

Did your student document all non-original ideas--quoted, paraphrased or summarized? For further information on how to responsibly borrow the ideas of others, consult your school's style sheet.

If you proofread your students' work, can you hear their own voice—their own original thought and analysis--among the quotes?

And finally, does your student need to put the laptop down and get a lift to a library? It's not all on the Web. Don't allow your students to ignore the value of books and other print content. A two-page printout cannot compete with in-depth biography, scholarly nonfiction, or contemporaneous reporting of the history of the last few decades produced BDE (Before the Digital Era).

The Library and the Textbook

Textbooks are extremely expensive sources of information. Check with your school, but many schools budget anywhere from $60-$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.

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.

Yet, a typical teacher faced with 60% of the class who cannot read and understand the textbook has only one 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 makes exacting rules 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 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

As your school's *information technology experts*, librarians are more interested in what boxes and wires can do rather than the boxes and wires themselves. Among librarians' many specialties are:

- ❖ Selecting and guiding students through the use of online databases containing periodicals, reference materials, broadcast transcripts, and factual information.
- ❖ Linking to the best Internet sites, subject portals, and search tools
- ❖ Creating virtual librarians and online pathfinders to guide students through information choices
- ❖ Teaching the effective use of the productivity and presentation tools students need to communicate the results of their research
- ❖ Promoting access in the library, the classroom, and at home
- ❖ Providing portability of computers for differing classroom/library uses.
- ❖ Offering wireless access to library information systems anywhere in the school.
- ❖ Helping teachers create exciting learning experiences using technology and the Web as teaching tools

By asking your child/teen and then interviewing the school librarian, you will be able to ascertain 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)
- ❖ If the information systems are reliable and working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- ❖ Equitable access to computers for every child, for every learning need
- ❖ Software my child needs to do excellent work in all media formats
- ❖ Peripherals my child can use—scanners, printers, digital cameras, drives
- ❖ Databases and digital periodical collections to easily find high quality information, especially the ACCESS PA POWER Library!
- ❖ Collections of the best Internet sites targeted at school topics and age levels

This handheld connects using Bluetooth

Huh?

The Digital School Library

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

Connections to Assignments	When assignments by teachers involve the library collections, links to those assignments with lots of help is a common school library web page feature. Many libraries now offer access to their catalogs online.
Bibliographies or Pathfinders to Complete Assignments	Many librarians try to save learners time by posting the best web sites, search tips and strategies, guides to helpful books, or online databases.
Tips on Research and Documentation	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.
Online Subscription Databases	The web page should lead to students to digital databases either purchased by the school, the public library, or the state. These digital collections will be invaluable in finding current materials on almost any topic. These databases contain full-text magazine and newspapers, broadcast transcripts, e-books, historical articles and images, and age-appropriate materials specifically published for children. Most library sites will link your child to the ACCESS PA POWER Library.
Selected Internet Sites	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, often in the form of online pathfinders.
Best Book Lists	There are hundreds of recommended lists of good books for kids and teens to read, including our own Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice and our Young Adult Top Forty. The librarian might link to some of these and encourage students to post lists of their favorites for others to access.
Published Student Work	Many students create very high quality papers, poetry, fiction, book reviews, or other projects and these can be posted on the library web site for other students to enjoy.
Connections to Other Libraries	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. You can search the ACCESS PA DATABASE of library holdings: http://www.accesspa.state.pa.us/
Homework Helps	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 accessible in your area and appropriate for the level of students.
Connections to School Activities	The library web page would link to the school web page, school activities, sports events, competitions, and important school announcements.
Parent Help Pages	Tips and helpful resources for parents might include emergency information, helping with homework, educational opportunities, college search advice, and sources for scholarships.
Resources For Teachers	Librarians help teachers teach with leads to special subject web sites, lesson planning, assessment, and professional development resources.

Great resource: The ACCESS PA Database is accessible at: http://www.accesspa.state.pa.us/
To find a local POWER Library login: http://www.powerlibrary.net/Find.htm
See exemplary Pennsylvania digital school libraries at: http://www.school-libraries.net/usa/pa.html

HOW TO SCORE MORE POINTSWITH YOUR POWERPOINTS (AND OTHER MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATIONS)!

More and more students are presenting the results of their research in multimedia. Here are some tips for presenting effectively.

- *Content* counts big time!
    - Begin by preparing a storyboard or use the program's outlining tool to help make sure your project is logically structured and that it effectively delivers your message.
    - Focus on your content. Make sure your presentation shows evidence of solid research and your own high level thought.
    - Know your message. What is the essential question? What is your thesis? Your audience does not need to know "everything you know about X."
    - Spelling errors look even worse when projected! Proofread over and over.
    - Respect copyright by citing every piece of borrowed text, as well as every piece of media you use, other than copyright-free clip art. Unless items are cited throughout, the last slide should list your Works Cited, no matter how informal the presentation. Use only small portions of media elements. The Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Multimedia,[1] sets limits for the amount of borrowed material acceptable for use in student and teacher products.

- **Present powerfully! PowerPoint is most powerful in the hands of an effective speaker.**
    - Practice! Rehearse even if it feels silly. Use family, friends, pets, as well as your mirror.
    - Engage your audience by making frequent eye contact.
    - Tell stories. Personal anecdotes and relevant examples are far more compelling than bullets.
    - Grab your audience by starting with a clincher—a powerful quote, story, anecdote, statistic, or a surprising fact.
    - Speak clearly and slowly. Avoid using slang and filler words (Uh... Ya know, etc.)
    - Look good. Dress appropriately. Dress like you care what others think.
    - Be flexible. Do not read straight from your notes and slides.
    - Keep it simple. Summarize rather than cram. Limit the number of points per slide, so the audience does not struggle, reading to keep up. Unless you are quoting, full sentences and paragraphs have no place in your presentation.
    - End with the exact point you want your audience to remember.
    - Convey your own excitement and enthusiasm for your presentation. Consider every presentation as a valuable present, a gift for your audience. What you give them should change them in some way. There are no magic bullets.

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[1] http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/ccmcquid.htm

- Make your design matter.
    - All graphic elements are messages. Your medium should match your message. Choose a consistent look that enhances rather than detracts from your theme. All slides and transitions should look as if they are part of the same presentation. Understand both your message and the audience and adjust your text and art accordingly. A presentation on the Holocaust could be destroyed with cute fonts and silly cartoons.
    - Use sounds and animations cautiously. They can distract from your message. Reserve multimedia for emphasizing important points.
    - All bullets should be readable from the back of the room. Check your font size. Check for text on the top and bottom of your slides. Combinations of upper- and lower-case letters are the most readable.
    - Create and use original art. Your own drawings and digital photographs pack far more punch than tired clipart. Why spend hours searching for the perfect image of a flower when you could far more effectively draw one or shoot one with a digital camera? If you must use clipart, consider combining it with other elements - for instance, incorporating clever thought bubbles.

- Consult your teacher's rubric to make sure you understand exactly what he or she expects.

Equip Your Child/Teen with the Right Tech Tools

Every year, computer technology makes advances and the industry all hopes we will upgrade our home and school information systems. Some schools have found the money to provide every child a laptop computer linked to school networks, the school library and the public library. Experimentation is underway to link information systems with hand-held devices that double as phones, personal data assistants, and Internet access. Certainly wireless technology is the current favorite system so students have access to information systems anywhere in the school.

What system is pretty basic that will work for my child?

No gourmet catfood for six months, Kid

I'm worth it

- ❖ A basic computer with a current operating system that can access school networks: computer, keyboard, mouse, monitor, memory sticks, floppy or zip or a CD burning drive are nice.
- ❖ A way to connect to the school and the school library network: either a dial-up modem (slow), a DSL line (getting more reasonable but not available everywhere), cable modem, or home wireless system. Speed (bandwidth) is the critical thing here. (It's like the difference in size between a garden hose or a fire hose in downloading and uploading information.)
- ❖ A reliable printer. Now days, the printer costs little but the ink/toner will be very expensive (industry plot). Find an inexpensive source of supplies and be sure you ask how much it costs to print before you buy.
- ❖ Software. It is best to have the same or similar software package that your child/teen will be using at school. An "office" package" and a graphics program will be essential.

What if I can't afford a system like the one discussed above?

- ❖ The school may supply one.
- ❖ Find a place your child/teen can use a computer – school library after hours, public library, computer lab.
- ❖ Ask the school librarian for advice. Some schools have programs to help equip students at very inexpensive costs. There will always, however, be costs associated with computer systems such as supplies, and connection fees and no school we know of will bear those costs.

How old should a child be to have their own computer? There is no right answer to this question. Some start early, some later. Your choice.

The School Library, Reading, and Your Child

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

Duh!

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, nonfiction, comics, newspapers, magazines, 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 and uses library card (school and public).
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. (dinosaurs, skateboards, 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 from a dime to 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.

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[1] Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. Libraries Unlimited, 1993; McQuillan, Jeff. *The Literacy Crisis*. Heinemann, 1998. Also: Cunningham, Anne E. and Keith E. Stanovich. "What Reading Does for the Mind," *American Educator*, Spring/Summer, 1998, p. 1-8.

Finding a Good Book for Pennsylvania Children 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?

There's nothing like curling up with a book and you!

Here are two best book lists to recommend to your child or teen and the good thing about Pennsylvania is that every year, your child can participate in choosing the best.

PENNSYLVANIA YOUNG READER'S CHOICE AWARD

Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award

Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade

Pennsylvania Young Adult Top Forty

Middle, Junior, and High School

Find information on how to participate, as well as current Pennsylvania reading lists and past winners of the awards at:
http://www.psla.org/association/committee/mediaselectionandreview/mediasandr.php3
(or: ask your school or public librarian)

Celebrate Reading

Celebrating reading is appropriate any time. No excuse necessary, but should you really want one:

February	Library Lovers Month
March	Read Across America, March 2 Freedom of Information Day, March 16
April	National Poetry Month School Library Week National People's Poetry Week TV Turn-off Week National Library Week National Poetry Month Young People's Poetry Month World Book and Copyright Day International Children's Book Day
May	Get Caught Reading Month
September	Library Card Sign-Up Month International Literacy Day, September 8 Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read
October	International School Library Day National Book Month National Storytelling Festival (Jonesborough, TN) Teen Read Week
November	Children's Book Week Family Literacy Day, November 1

If these don't work for your community, invent something!
Celebrating reading is appropriate anytime.

Advice about Reading and Your Child

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

1. **How do you get a child excited about reading and keep them that way through teenage years?** The tried and true methods include:
   a. Read to your child every day from birth.
   b. Make frequent trips to the public library.
   c. Give books as gifts.
   d. Talk about books, and talk, and talk, and talk.
   e. Have something to read all around the house: newspapers, magazines, books – materials that your kids <u>want</u> to read
   f. Make reading a pleasant thing – not the enemy.
   g. Share lots of suggestions for better and better books.
   h. Read what your child/teen is reading and talk, talk, talk.
   i. Maximize access to school and public libraries.

2. **My child reads nothing but series books. Should I worry?** Probably not. Many of us older folks grew up on Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys and turned out all right. Children or teens often go through reading phases but get tired of the same hackneyed plots. Instead of fighting against series books, read aloud better books and have access to lots of better titles. Reading *Holes* as a family and then seeing the movie, might be one way to introduce variety.
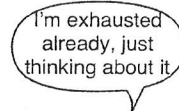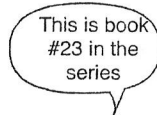
3. **My son reads nothing but science fiction and fantasy. Should I worry?** This literature is escapist for many boys and if they are participating in normal life activities, there is little to worry about. Dare we suggest reading a title they recommend and having a family discussion?

4. **Many of the teen novels seem to be so graphic about dysfunctional families, drugs, sex, and legal trouble. What should we do?** A number of excellent writers treat teen lives realistically in their books. It all depends on your family values 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 talk, talk, talk.

5. **What are librarians doing about the various ways young people are taught to read?** Librarians often don't take sides in the reading wars (phonics, whole language, balanced reading, etc.) because they serve teachers of all stripes. What they do emphasize is the LOVE of reading. Their belief is that there is no one right way to teach reading and that just plain "reading a lot" will compensate for any flaws in the prescribed skill program. If children or teens can read but don't, librarians are not happy about their graduation to aliteracy (a person who can read but doesn't).

If We Believe the Reading Research, What Should the Teacher, the 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 contributions to reading should be most noticeable when young people have few reading materials in their homes, and when they are in the lowest quartile of reading scores. Is your school library program providing the following:

Skill-Based Reading Program

Tons of books to take home.

Tons of books to create rotating class-room collections from the LMC.

Choice:

Books kids and teens want to read.

+

Books adults believe they should read.

Reading materials in all formats including books, magazines, paperbacks, newspapers, e-books, web sites.

Motivation

Library reading activities that build reading enjoyment – concentrating on "reading is fun."

Leadership / Support of Initiatives
• **Sustained Silent Reading**
• **Reading Aloud**
• **Motivational programs**
• **Reading discussions**
• **Reading events**

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 the library resources?

If We Believe the Reading Research, What Should Teachers and the Library Media Center (LMC) 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.

Topical Unit of Study

Lots of books on the topic with high reader appeal.

Temporary ollections borrowed from other libraries and interlibrary loans.

Choice:

Books kids and teens want to read on the topic.

+

Books adults believe they should read on the topic.

Reading materials in all formats including books, magazines, paperbacks, newspapers, e-books, web sites.

Motivation

Library reading activities that build reading enjoyment during the content-area study.

Bottom line: The library contribution to reading in the content 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 the library resources as your child/teen explores required and non-required topics?

You, Too, Can Raise a Non-Reader!

It is much easier to raise a non-reader than a reader. Here are a few critical suggestions:

1. Don't let your child see you reading.

2. Use TV and videos as the primary babysitter.

3. Don't buy books for your child – they're too expensive.

4. If your child has a library fine or loses a book, cut off the library privileges.

5. Don't take your child to the public library or to the bookstore.

6. Talk about TV and movies but never about books.

7. Keep your child away from those pop culture magazines, series books, and picture books (after the 2nd grade).

8. Don't allow reading in bed and don't get a bed lamp.

For other similar suggestions, see: "Unlucky Arithmetic: Thirteen Ways to Raise a Nonreader" by Dean Schneider and Robin Smith. *Horn Book*, March/April 2001. Find at www.hbook.com in the archives. Also: "Ten Ways to Prevent Reading by the Parent," LEA Working Parties, at http://www.stockportmbe.gov.uk/docs/literacy/leaparties/repleasure/adult/t3.htm. And thanks to Lynne Michels for sharing her list.

I'm a Reader—And I Don't Apologize

Daniel Pennac in his wonderful book entitled *Better Than Life*[1] 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

[1] 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'd 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
❖ Turn pages, name things, name colors; attention span will be at a minimum.
❖ Have frequent, short book encounters – don't worry about short time span.
❖ Have some regular times for reading: bedtime, quiet time, every time grandma comes.
❖ Repeat favorites.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

Developing Readers
❖ Repeat sounds, words, and phrases.
❖ Use favorite books regularly but also introduce new ones.
❖ Use a variety of books to improve the richness of your child's language development.
❖ Note that attention spans are growing as well as understanding of story lines.
❖ Talk about the story.
❖ Remember that children will begin to recognize letters and words. You need not press them to read.
❖ Note that listening vocabulary is more developed than reading vocabulary.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.
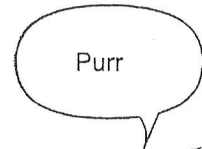
Beginning Readers
❖ Remember that word and letter sounds can be a regular part or reading, but not the focus.
❖ Blend the two readers: you and the child. Sometimes the child reads, sometimes you.
❖ Encourage expression by questions, phrasing, and vocally mimicking story characters.
❖ Read aloud stories above their reading level to enrich the child's language.
❖ Talk about the story; predict what will happen; ask what just happened; ask what they like and don't like.
❖ Always make reading time a pleasant experience.

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

My Child/Teen 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.

I read 100 books. You owe me $100

Almost all children/teens will read something they really want to know about. Find the hook.[1] Of course there are exceptions for dyslectic kids or other physical or emotional problems.

Nice try, Kid

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

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[1] 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*. Libraries Unlimited, 1993. One hundred years of research about reading can't be wrong.

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

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. The library is an American gem. Everyone contributes the cost of one or several books through tax dollars and we have the "free" public library.

Today, school library collections serve curriculum needs and public library collections serve more diverse needs for all ages. School libraries reach 90% of the U.S. youth - public libraries, fewer. Using both collections provides both diversity of information and depth in selected topics.

School librarians are anxious to introduce children to the public library. They want students become acquainted with services for nights, weekends, and vacation periods. Public library collections will be their collection for life and public librarians are the information professionals who will guide them.

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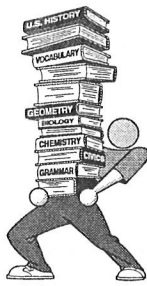
The public library is three dogs away

It's worth it, Kid

- ❖ 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, software, and printers, especially wonderful for those without home access.
- ❖ Special programs such as story hours, term paper clinics, guest speakers, workshops, children's, teen and summer book clubs.
- ❖ Comfortable study and reading areas.
- ❖ After school programming; homework help.
- ❖ Special assistance for home schoolers.

Launch Your Child with Book Bags, Curiosity Kits, and Theme Bags:
Three Ideas for Parents and Teachers to Consider for K-2

Goal:		Result:
Each child from kindergarten through 2nd grade reads **500+** books per year.		Every reader will read at or above grade level and develop a reading habit.

Book Bags. Each classroom acquires enough canvas book bags (either from commercial sources or by making them) for each child in the classroom, plus a few extras. Each book bag is numbered and can be decorated. Once a month, the class goes to the library, where the children help select the books for the book bags. Into each book bag goes a book that children can "read for themselves" (a wordless picture book, an alphabet book, books with a few words, highly illustrated books, etc.) and one book that can be read to the child by an older sibling, parent, friend, or caregiver (a good read-aloud picture book, a folktale, a nonfiction animal book, etc.). Back in the classroom, the book bags are hung on hooks or in cubbyholes. Each day as the children go home they take a different book bag, rotating throughout the month. The teacher keeps a list on a clipboard to record the book bag number next to the child's name. The homework for a kindergartner through second grader is to read two books a day. If the child forgets to bring the book bag back, the spares can be used. In no case is a child denied access to a book bag, because reading practice is considered essential. The management of this program is considered a success when both the teacher and the library media specialist agree that the system requires very little monitoring. At the end of the month, the class revisits the LMC, where the books are exchanged for new ones. Books in the book bag program are checked out to the room. No individual circulation records are kept for these books.

Schools using this system report extremely low damage and loss rates, counting the cost as the cost of doing business. In addition to using the book bags, the class comes to the library once a month to choose books for the classroom collection (a minimum of 100 books at a time). And the students make other visits during the month to select their own personal books to take home in addition to the book bags. The typical kindergartener, first or second grader should have read a minimum of 500 books during the school year and then linked into the public library system for regular reading during vacation periods.

Curiosity Kits. A variant on the book bag program is the creation of curiosity kits where each child creates a book bag filled with 2+ books on a theme that they think other members of the class might be interested in: whales, riddles, drawing books, hobbies, paper airplanes, kite flying, etc.

Theme Bags: During a month when the students will be studying a topic, children fill a third or half the bags with books on the topic.

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 sometimes 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 other children in a class or school. They might, for example, ask that a book be removed from the library.

Almost all school libraries have a "Materials Selection Policy" that explains 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 a library removed all objectionable materials, there would be nothing left on their shelves. Here are a few other tips:

1. Help your child understand the family's values and know how to recognize objectionable materials and ideas.
2. Help your child to deal with 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 many 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.

5. Talk, talk, 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. Read the books your children/teens are reading and discuss them as a family.
8. Be sympathetic to librarians and teachers who may understand the specific needs of your child but are also 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.

The American Library Association (ALA) provides 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/Template.cfm?Section=if

ALA opts for the most freedom, while respecting 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 controversial ideas, some of them dangerous. 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 your community to handle ideas as they conflict with values. Intellectual freedom is a gift of our form of government and it's a reason we choose to live here and not somewhere else.

The world is full of dangerous ideas, Kid.

I know. That's why I have you.

Picture Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful picture books for the younger age 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 – any titles*
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin
- *The Little Engine that Could* by Watty Piper
- Richard Scarry – any titles
- Maurice Sendak – any titles (Nutshell Library one example)
- Rosemary Wells – any titles
- Stephen Kellogg – any titles
- Gene Zion – any of the *Harry the Dirty Dog* books
- Mother Goose books – pick out several with good illustrations
- *Changes, Changes, Changes* by Pat Hutchins
- David Wiesner – any titles – for example: *Tuesday.*
- P.D. Eastman – any titles such as *Go Dog Go!*
- Frances Hoban – the Frances books (a bear)
- 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
- Wordless picture books – ask for them at the library
- Any of the Little Golden Books – they have been republished again after all these years
- There are alphabet books by the hundreds. Get most of these at the library; animal ABCs are very popular
- Board books are popular because young kids can handle the pages – look for titles on colors, shapes, animals, etc.
- Counting books – many titles
- A child's pictionary (a beginning dictionary with hundreds of pictures)

For Kids a Bit Older

- Patricia Polacco – any titles (*Pink and Say* is amazing)
- *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* by Verna Aardema
- *Seymour Simon – any titles about science and space*
- *How Much is a Million* by David M. Schwartz
- *The Red Balloon* by Albert Lamorisse
- 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
- David Macaulay – any books – for older viewers (Castle, Pyramid)
- Aesop's Fables – find a collection with pictures you like
- Chris Van Allsburg – any titles such as *The Polar Express*
- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein and others of his poetry
- Bill Peet – any titles
- Ed Emberley – any titles
- Arnold Lobel – any titles (*Frog and Toad* books)

Picture Books for Teens/Everybody

- *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere.* By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, illustrated by Christopher Bing
- *When Marian Sang* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida
- *Crazy Horse's Vision* by Joseph Bruchac

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)

- Eric Carle: www.eric-carle.com
- Caldecott Award Site: the annual award for the most distinguished American picture book for children http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsschola rships/literaryawds/caldecottmedal/calde cottmedal.htm

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
- Laura Ingalls Wilder – any titles – still classics
- Beverly Cleary – any titles – still as good as ever
- Marc Brown – any of the Arthur books
- Dav Pilkey – Captain Underpants series

For Older Readers
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- J.K. Rowling – the Harry Potter books (if witchcraft doesn't bother you)
- *Catherine Called Birdy* by Karen Kushman among other titles
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis; also, his *Bud Not Buddy*
- Richard Peck – numerous titles
- Lawrence Yep – any titles
- C.S. Lewis – any titles
- Madeleine L'Engle – any titles
- DiCamillo, Kate. *Because of Winn Dixie;* also, *The Tale of Desperaux: Being the Story of a Mouse*
- *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park
- *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse
- *Holes* by Louis Sachar; also other titles of his
- Brian Jacques – Redwall series
- *Witness* by Karen Hesse
- E.L. Konigsburg – any titles
- Jane Yolen – any titles
- Cynthia Voigt – any titles
- Lois Lowry – any titles
- *The Hundred Penny Box*
- *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* by Avi
- *Freak the Mighty*
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- Katherine Paterson – any titles
- Roald Dahl – any titles
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Shiloh by Phyllis Naylor*
- *Sounder* by William Armstrong
- *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford

- Lemony Snicket – any of the Unfortunate Events books
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Bronx Masquerade* by Niki Grimes

Non-Fiction Winners
- *The 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
- *An Extraordinary Life: The Story of a Monarch Butterfly* by Laurence Pringle
- *Leonardo da Vinci* by Diane Stanley
- *The Truth About Great White Sharks* by Mary M. Cerullo.
- *The World at Her Fingertips: The Story of Helen Keller.* By Joan Dash
- *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman
- *Navajo Code Talkers* by Nathan Aaseng
- *Homesick: My Own Story* by Jean Fritz
- *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr
- *The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours* by Jane Goodall
- *Hidden Worlds: Looking Through a Scientist's Microscope* by Stephen P. Kramer & Dannis Kunkel
- *Animals in Flight* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakastsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- *This Land Was Made for You and Me: The Life and Songs of Woody Guthrie* by Elizabeth Partridge

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)
- Lois Lowry: www.loislowry.com
- Newbery Award Books: http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/litera ryawds/newberymedal/newberymedal.htm

Teen Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful teen books that we could not resist recommending some of our favorites:

- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton – still a classic
- Chris Crutcher – any titles – particularly good for boys
- *October Sky* by Homer H. Hickam (a good movie-book discussion)
- Richard Peck – almost any title
- *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850* (Non-fiction)
- Gary Paulsen – almost any title. The *Brian* books are popular with boys
- *Slake's Limbo* by Felice Holman
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey
- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- Robert Newton Peck – *A Day No Pigs Would Die* and sequels
- Margaret Craven. *I Heard the Owl Call My Name*
- John Hersey. *Hiroshima.* – Lest we forget
- Milton Meltzer – many titles
- Maya Angelou – Many titles. Don't miss *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- *Go Ask Alice* – drugs decimate
- Alice Childress. *A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich*
- William Sleator – almost any title
- *Deathwatch* by Robb White
- *The Pigman* by Paul Zindel – and other teen titles he wrote
- Will Hobbs – many titles
- Walter Dean Myers – many titles
- Cynthia Voigt – many titles
- *Buried Onions* by Gary Soto

Science Fiction/Fantasy

- J.R.R. Tolkein – 11 Acadamy Awards can't be wrong
- Ray Bradbury – many titles
- Isaac Asimov – many titles
- Robert Heinlein – early books; later ones weird
- Marion Zimmer Bradley – many titles
- Ursula K. LeGuin – any titles
- Anne McCaffrey – the Dragon books
- Robin McKinley – wonderful retellings of fairy tales such as *Beauty*
- Orson Scott Card – numerous titles
- Philip K. Dick – many titles
- Frank Herbert – the Dune books
- Jane Yolen – any titles

Adult Books for YAs

- Agatha Christie. Yes, still read and worth it
- Tony Hillerman – Mysteries of the Indian Reservation
- Jane Austen – all writings - a classical favorite
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – tough to beat the Sherlock Holmes titles
- *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell
- Louis L'Amour's westerns still appeal
- Stephen King – one of the most popular authors with YAs
- John Grisham – any of the legal novels
- Jeffrey Archer – many titles – one of England's best
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok plus other titles

YALSA award lists:
http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklist sawards/booklistsbook.htm

Reluctant Reader?   Try Information Books.

Just because kids are not novel readers, doesn't mean they have to be non-readers. Try nonfiction (information books). There are now better information-based 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 books on:

- ❖ Space and space exploration
- ❖ Animals, animals, animals
- ❖ "Eyewitness Books" published by Dorling Kindersley
- ❖ Insects – the more close-up photos, the better-- giant spiders, snakes
- ❖ The morbid – the terrible things that have happened—true crime, disasters, shipwrecks, earthquakes
- ❖ Projects, experiments and cookbooks of things to make, like slime
- ❖ Sports non-fiction – record books, how to play, equipment, biography
- ❖ The Human Body (sexuality fascinates young people)
- ❖ *The Guinness Book of World Records* and derivative titles in their series
- ❖ Cars, rollerblades, snowboards, motorcycles, extreme sports
- ❖ Drawing
- ❖ Cut-away picture books showing the insides of castles, submarines, pyramids
- ❖ Fashion
- ❖ Websites of museums, art galleries, Northwest Indian masks
- ❖ Cookbooks (experiment with them)
- ❖ Wars
- ❖ Airplanes and missiles
- ❖ The latest technology toys.
- ❖ Rocks, minerals, and jewels
- ❖ Diseases
- ❖ Coping with death and loss
- ❖ Jokes and riddles and puzzles

This list will never end. Once your kids get started on a topic, they will exhaust every library and bookstore in town. Now that's a shame!

Essential book: Jobe, Ron and Mary Dayton Sakari. *Info-Kids: How to use nonfiction to turn reluctant readers into enthusiastic learners.* Stenhouse, 2002.

Self-Help at Your School and Public Library

Need help as a parent or as a child/teen? Try the school and public library. Here are just a few of the topics available for the asking.

1. Sex, drugs, alcohol, child abuse—prevention, treatment, case studies.
2. Sexually-transmitted diseases—prevention, reality.
3. Legal information for those having a brush with the law.
4. Lists of social agencies that can help with all types of family problems.
5. Books and resources for teen parents.
6. Career information for all ages.
7. College and university information.
8. Scholarships, grants, and other monies for education and training.
9. Guides to parenting.
10. Information on family issues.
11. Divorce and its effects on children and teens.
12. Gay and lesbian issues.
13. Cultural issues such as surviving as a minority in a majority environment.
14. Materials in the languages you speak and read.
15. Family finances.
16. Information on major family purchases such as buying cars, appliances, homes, and insurance.
17. Medical information.
18. Books about dieting and eating disorders.
19. Books to cheer me up, make me laugh, comfort me, or just a good read for the beach.

Is catnip addictive?

Been going to look that up myself, Kid
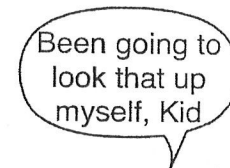
P.S. Parents are encouraged to use the school library
just as they use the public library.
You pay for both of them through your taxes.

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.

1.	Association of Library Services for Children (American Library Association) Sponsors the famous Caldecott, Newbery Awards and Pura Belpre, plus Coretta Scott King Awards.	http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alsc.htm
2.	Young Adult Library Services Association (American Library Association) Booklists	http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists book.htm
3.	*Booklist.* Books for Youth; Adult Books for Young Adults; Media (Audio, Video, CDs)	http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm
4.	*Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books*	http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/
5.	Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice	http://www.psla.org/association/committee/mediaselection andreview/pyrcamenu.php3
6.	International Reading Association	http://www.reading.org/
7.	National Council for the Social Studies	http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/
8.	National Science Teachers Association	http://www.nsta.org/ostbc
9.	*Horn Book* Parent's Page	http://www.hbook.com/parents.shtml
10.	*Children's Literature Choices* (annual Top Choices List)	http://www.childrenslit.com/clc.htm
11.	*Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children* (National Science Teachers Association)	http://www.nsta.org/ostbe
12.	*School Library Journal* best books lists	http://www.slj.com/ search for "Best Books"
13.	Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site	http://www.carolhurst.com
14.	Children's Literature Web Guide	http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/
15.	History of Children's Literature web site by Kay Vandergrift	http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander
16.	Internet School Library Media Center	http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/multipub.htm
17.	New York Public Library: 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know	http://www.nypl.org/branch/kids/gloria.html
18.	Jim Trelease's Book Lists	http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/video_biblio.html#pagetop
19.	Celebrations – African American History Month	http://www.nypl.org/branch/kids/february.html
20.	Planet Esmé	http://www.planetesme.com
21.	Nancy Keane's Booktalks	http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/
22.	Children's Picture Book Database	http://www.lib.muohio.edu/pictbks/search/
23.	KidsReads	http://www.kidsreads.com/
24.	Award Winning Children's Literature	http://www.dawcl.com/
25.	Reading is Fundamental: Reading Planet	http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/
26.	Out of the Ordinary Teen Booklists	http://tln.lib.mi.us/~amutch/jen/index.html

I just hate URLs.

It saves trees, Kid.

Anyway, it keeps more dogs busy.

Times Tough? Can the Library Help? YES!

School and Public Libraries are

Free, Free, Free!

What many parents don't realize, particularly if they have just come to this country, is that families can use school and public libraries for free! That means, as we work and pay taxes, some of our tax money goes to support the libraries we use. It is one of the most wonderful things about living in America.

gratuit
gratuito
frei

I get it, Kid.

> I went to the library. They gave you books for nothing. You had to bring them back, but when you did, they let you take others.
> - Barbara Cohen, *Gooseberries to Oranges*, 1982

School and public libraries will have:
1. Books to help learn the language
2. Tutoring programs to help both parents and children
3. After-school programs for homework, tutoring, and extra learning
4. Computer terminals to use the Internet and the digital library
5. Programs that teach, help, or entertain such as storytelling
6. Books, books, and more books
7. Books in my language
8. Magazines, newspapers, pamphlets
9. Information to solve my problems
10. Materials to help my children with their school work
11. *Information people* (librarians!) to help guide you through your information needs

School and public libraries are the best bargains around!

We Feel Discriminated Against. Can the Library Help?

Everyone Feels Discrimination At One Time or Another

It is sad but true that in every society worldwide, discrimination is alive and well. You may feel it for a variety of reasons: the color of your skin, whether you are tall or short, because you are Jewish, speak Arabic, go to the "wrong" church, or because you are overweight. If others don't find something in you to dislike, they will invent it.

I hear Siamese are persnickety

So what's your point, Kid?

What can a library possibly do?

1. Books, magazine articles, videos, and audio recordings of folks just like you describe discrimination. The authors will recount their stories and tell you how they coped with the hand dealt them. They could be angry, encouraging, or resigned to their fate.

2. Research your rights in employment, in courts, in society, in housing, and in financial matters.

3. Find self-help suggestions for dealing with the problems you encounter.

4. Use the library to learn how to excel in a field. Competence and hard work have been keys to opening doors in sports, music, film, and the business world.

5. Read and read until you learn self-defense mechanisms such as: What do I say when they say… What do I do when they do that?

6. Find organizations that address the discrimination you face.

Responsibility, Fines, and Bringing Books Back

A perennial problem in every library is lost, missing, and overdue materials. Of course, books must return so they are available to all users. But no other issue makes so many library enemies. The digital library has advantages because physical items do not have to circulate. 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.

Took my books back!

One less face lick, Kid.

We all try to help children and teens learn responsibility. Yet they must 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.
2. Do the same for public library materials.
3. 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.
4. Have a few special places at home where library books are stored – a box beside the child's bed; a box in the family room where books are generally shared; a special "library" shelf, or personal book cases.
5. Have an appropriate container – a bag or backpack or wheelie cart to transport items to and from school – with identification on it.
6. Teach children how to care for books or other materials. The school librarian will probably do this, so you can review those tips.
7. 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? Can children earn the fines or replacement cost? How?
8. 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 that solution, not the lost book.
9. Responsibility counts online too. Read your school's acceptable use policy with your children to ensure they understand their privileges and their responsibilities.
10. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO BUILD A LIFE-LONG READING HABIT, and second, to be responsible.

Classroom Collections, School and Public Libraries

Sources of Reading Materials
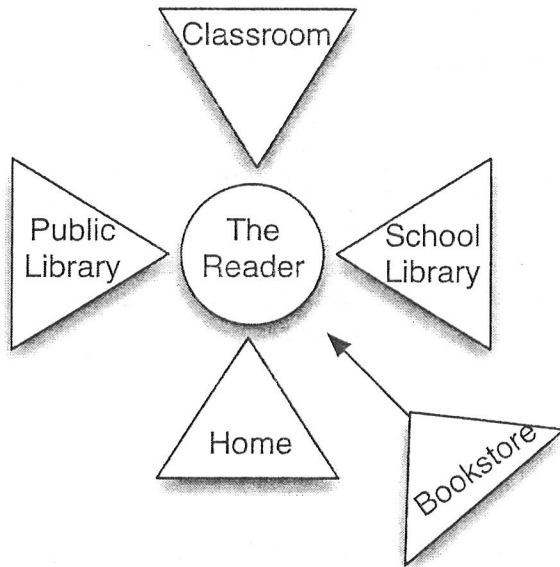
Where should children/teens have access to reading materials? Everywhere is the simple answer, yet sometimes things happen in schools that prevent logical programs from happening. Sometimes parents can help.

The classroom collection has become quite popular in the past few years with funding coming from states and the federal government—sometimes at the expense of the school library budget.

The advantage of the classroom collection is that it is close at hand for students to use while school and public libraries are either down the hall or some distance from the school.

The disadvantage of the static classroom collection is that it is too small, becomes uninteresting soon after the school year begins and cannot hope to compete with the larger collections close by.

There is a simple solution—create rotating collections from the school library and perhaps the public library in the classroom. Every few weeks, a fresh supply of materials replaces an older set.

Such an arrangement can work with students taking the leadership to check out and return collections to and from the library in the school or public library. Perhaps parents can help organize such a system and streamline it until it works.

The goal is to have something fresh to read at arms length so that more is read. And this translates into a reading habit—producing higher achievement. It works. It can work in your child's/teen's classroom.

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—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 is spent from federal, state, and other sources for the library. 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)

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

_____

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.
7. Support Book Fairs and other library fund raisers.

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 students doing research could benefit by parental expertise. Volunteer to be a person students can interview, be a tour-guide of your place of employment, or supply answers to questions by email. You might be asked to be a guest speaker or 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 More.** 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 tasks 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 or help 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 read 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 experts to help students with sophisticated research.
   l. Find sources for free or inexpensive supplies needed by the library.
   m. Repair a piece of equipment.
   n. Help paint the library or repair a worn spot in the carpet.
   o. Install anti-theft devices on the library computers.
   p. Lead and organize/train the parent volunteers for the library.

> **School Safety and Volunteers**
> Don't be surprised in today's world if there is a fair amount of red tape and scrutiny involved in volunteering in any school or being on school grounds during school hours, let alone the concerns about insurance and liability. Safely concerns are paramount in all schools.

Please don't meow when you see me in the library today.

I wouldn't dream of it, Kid

What school libraries don't need.

1. Cast-off equipment that doesn't contribute to the curriculum or the updating of school technology.
2. Book drives that result in old, outdated titles that will fill up shelves but never get read.
3. Persons with an ax to grind, something to sell, or a political agenda.
4. Persons who take up more of the librarian's time than the help is worth.
5. Volunteers who accept the responsibility to run a library when there is no professional librarian.

Advocate for the School Library

Most school children live with their school library for 3-6 years. They have little voice in what goes on there, how large the collection is, who is on the staff, 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 for 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.

I see you're meowing at Tabby, again.

She's on the school board, Kid.

Advocacy requires constant and steady pressure over time. There is no such thing as an instant or one-time library fund allocation that solves all the problems. Parents who demand the best education must demand over and over and over.[1]

Adequate funding and staffing are probably the two most at-risk factors in good school library service. As budgets fluctuate, and the pressure for cuts increases, libraries are regularly on the chopping block. Your child's or teen's critical information system is on the chopping block. Suppose the library online database bill is not paid every year? It's like gas in the school bus. No gas. No go. What does it cost your child when the only information available is outdated or simply non-existent? What is the cost of ignorance and misinformation?

Advocacy requires strong, steady voices. It requires accompanying the librarian to the board meeting presentation of library needs; requires vigilance; requires speaking to administrators regularly. Yes, good school libraries cost money. Plenty of it. There is no alternative. No free lunch. No instant solution. Sorry, the Internet is not the answer.

> **Idea:**
> Join the Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries

> How well your child reads and handles information will predict academic achievement. It's that simple. The school library is an essential key.

[1] Helpful publication: *Toolkit for School Library Media Programs: Messages, Ideas And Strategies For Promoting The Value Of School Library Media Programs And Library Media Specialists In The 21st Century @ Your Library.* American Library Association, 2003. Available at http://ala.org

School Library Horror Stories: A Dilemma

We have heard many horror stories from students about school libraries. Your children may tell you others:

1. The computers in the library don't work or are sadly outmoded.
2. The librarian is rushing around in a dither doing three jobs at once and so there is no personal help.
3. The collection is so old and outdated that our research is flawed and there is nothing in the library we want to read.
4. The library is a social center for goofing off.
5. The staff is unfriendly, not helpful.

Contrast these statements with the good things kids say about the best school libraries in Ohio.[1]

"I needed help doing a project for government that had to do with presidents and they had so many books and then the librarian helped me find web sites. But then they gave me ways of sorting through all the ideas to extract the key points so I could get my head around it all."

"I needed to write a paper and I went to the Library where I was ultimately able to write a paper successfully. My ideas were a mess and talking to the librarian gave me a way to organize my ideas and present the argument. I did really well!!! I've never forgotten that – used it to do many other assignments."

"I remember when I came up to the school library for math. We turned the library into a co-ordinate grid. It was sooooooooooooooooooo cool!!!!!!!! And I could know about grids in my tests."

"It helped me find info on racism for a 10th grade project, and made me really think about that, especially I didn't realize how racist some of my ideas were."

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[1] Todd, Ross. *Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries: The Ohio Research Study Review of the Findings, 2002-2003.* PowerPoint Presentation, Feb., 2004. (at: http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning.htm) 13,000 students in 39 schools that had "excellent" school libraries were polled about the help they received from the library. The overwhelming majority had very positive things to say.

"We had a big research project my sophomore year of high school. I had to do my report on heart attacks and the library helped me out with PowerPoint and finding information. I actually learned the food I eat is not so good for me, so I've made a few changes there."

So what?

When you as a parent demand a good school library, you are saying loudly: "I want my child to succeed!" If your child has a good teacher and a good school library, the door is wide open to success. Ask, encourage, advocate, yell, scream, demand—It's your child's life and opportunity window.

Students, teachers, and parents: Above all, don't accept the argument that "We can't afford it." Remember the saying "A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste!"

No School Librarian? What to Do

The national research on school libraries links the professional school librarian with achievement.[1] Staffing the school library with only a clerk or a aide does not make a difference in test scores.[2] Why? Because the professional concentrates on teaching and the use of information while aides concentrate on the organization.

You will meet the new librarian today

It's all your fault

Purr

If the library is considered just 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, 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 LPNs 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 administrators do not have a school librarian as a 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? -grants, special state or federal programs? If there hasn't been a school librarian in the school, it takes a 3-5 pilot year program to get operating at maximum power.
6. If there really is no state allocation for a librarian, why not? A number of states have allocations for a school librarian in every school by state law.
7. Understand what really takes money vs. a realignment of priorities.
8. Don't take no for an answer.

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[1] Keith Lance speech, White House Conference on School Libraries. At:
http://www.imls.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/keithlance.htm
[2] See the Alaska Study at http://www.davidvl.org under Research.

How Parent Groups Can Help the School Library

Many parent groups such as the PTA have a library committee and library issues are presented to 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.
    a. School funds
    b. District funds
    c. State/federal funds
    d. Grant funds
    e. Parent group funds
2. Understand the budgetary needs of a library program in order for it to operate and provide the service your children must have.
3. Make plans to close the gap between what governmental sources are providing and what parent groups can do. (Governments should fund at least 90% of the needs.)
4. Set up a volunteer program to help the librarian.
5. Help plan and conduct various library activities:
    a. Book fairs
    b. Reading motivation activities
    c. Research project clinics for parents/students
    d. Helping every child to have a public library card and access to their databases. Some neighboring academic libraries might also welcome students.
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. Have a "contributions jar" always prominently displayed.
7. Whenever school funding is discussed, never forget the library.
8. Create a library fund account and monitor that the money is actually spent for the library. Pass out "how to contribute" book marks at all meetings in the library and elsewhere.
9. 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.
10. If there is no librarian, lobby tirelessly for one—a good one.
11. Lobby for help for the librarian. One person can't do it alone.
12. When the subject comes up, say something good about the library.

Bilingual Children/Teens: How Can the School Library Help?

Schools throughout the United States are filled with students who are learning English. The school and public library can help. Here are a few tips:

1. Check out books from school and public libraries in both languages. Have many of these books in your home. They can be checked out free.
2. Books from the public and school library can be checked out free as long as your child brings them back on time. If books are not back on time or lost, there might be a fee. Help your children/teens be responsible.
3. Reading a lot in English will help your child learn English fast.
4. Read in English with your child/teen. Teach each other as you read.
5. 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.
6. Have a bilingual dictionary handy such as a Spanish-English, English-Spanish dictionary. You can look up words in either language for help.
7. If your 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.
8. Meet and talk to the librarian often. When the librarian understands what you and your child need, you can expect help.
9. Ask the librarian for help in finding web sites both in English and the child's first language.
10. Ask the librarian to let your child watch videos on the topic the class is studying. The visuals in the film will help the child understand the concepts being taught.
11. If you do not have many books in your home, ask the librarian to help you find inexpensive or free books your child would like to read.
12. See that your child can visit the school library several times or more per week.
13. Take your children to the public library often.

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 coach of technology; a co-creator of exciting learning experiences with your child's/teen's teacher. When the majority of his or her day is spent on these tasks, your child will receive an important boost. Research demonstrates that it is the professional who makes the actual difference in achievement.[1]

At least one full time paraprofessional/clerical

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

At least one full time technical assistant

Why: This person keeps the networks, computers, web sites, communication systems, student access, filters, passwords, equipment and software maintenance and upgrades. When it 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: in books not read; poor research habits; rampant plagiarism; surfing, surfing the Pacific Ocean web of the Internet; and, ultimately low test scores. The more your child needs help in school, the more critical the school library will be. Note: In schools over 1,000 students, staffing needs are greater.

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[1] The Alaska Study can be read at http://www.davidvl.org under research.

Great Quotes About Libraries and Reading

Books were my pass to personal freedom. I learned to read at age three, and soon discovered there was a whole world to conquer that went beyond our farm in Mississippi - Oprah Winfrey.

I started reading. I read everything I could get my hands on... By the time I was thirteen I had read myself out of Harlem. I had read every book in two libraries and had a card for the Forty-Second Street branch. - James Baldwin.

No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. - Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, letter 1753.

You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them. - Ray Bradbury.

My most prized possession was my library card from the Oakland Public Library - Bill Russell, basketball player.

It was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read. - Frederic Douglass, *Escape from Slavery*.

I cannot live without books - Thomas Jefferson.

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

Reading aloud is the best advertisement because it *works*. It allows a child to sample the delights of reading and conditions him to believe that reading is a pleasureful experience, not a painful or boring one. - Jim Trelease. *The New Read-Aloud Handbook*, p. 9.

To me, nothing can be more important than giving children books. It's better to be giving books to children than drug treatment – Fran Lebowitz. *The Columbia World of Quotations.* 1996.

When I got my library card, that was when my life began. - Rita Mae Brown.

What in the world would we do without our libraries? - Katharine Hepburn.

I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library. - Joge Luis Borges.

It is a man's duty to have books. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life. - Henry Ward Beecher.

Did it ever occur to anyone that if you put nice libraries in public schools you wouldn't have to put them [15 year-olds] in prisons? Fran Lebowitz, The Columbia World of Quotations. 1996.

I went to the library. They gave you books for nothing. You had to bring them back, but when you did, they let you take others. - Barbara Cohen, *Gooseberries to Oranges*, 1982.

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

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. - Richard Stele.

If we would get our parents to read to their preschool children fifteen minutes a day, we could revolutionize the schools. - Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools, 1981.

The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them. - Mark Twain.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some are to be chewed and digested. - Francis Bacon. *Essays* 1625.

Good books may not save the world but they are one of the reasons the world is worth saving – Bernice E. Cullinan

Bibliography of Additional Reading

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- ❖ Jobe, Ron and Mary Dayton-Sakari. *Info-Kids: How to Use Nonfiction to Turn Reluctant Readers into Enthusiastic Learners*. Stenhouse Publishers, 2002. Many tips for using non-fiction and kid's natural curiosity to stimulate reading.
- ❖ Trelease, Jim. *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. 5th ed. Penguin Books, 2001. A classic book about reading and your child.
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- ❖ Kropp, Paul. *How to Make Your Child a Reader for Life*. Broadway Publishing, 1995.
- ❖ Codell, Esmé Raji. *How To Get Your Child to Love Reading*. Algonquin Books, 2003.

School Libraries

- ❖ Loertscher, David V. *Reinvent Your School's Library in the Age of Technology: A Guide for Principals and Superintendents*. Hi Willow, 2002.
- ❖ Loertscher, David V. and Douglas Achterman. *Increasing Academic Achievement Through the Library Media Center: A Guide for Teachers*. 2nd ed. Hi Willow, 2003.
- ❖ Lance, Keith. "What Research Tells Us About School Libraries." White House Conference on School Libraries, June 4, 2002. at: http://www.imls.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/whitehouse.htm
- ❖ American Association of School Librarians. Issues & Advocacy page. At: http://www.imls.gov/pubs/whitehouse0602/whitehouse.htm See the "advocacy" link for materials on how to promote a good school library media program at your school. There are also other valuable resources on information literacy and intellectual freedom.
- ❖ *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. by the American Association of School Librarians and AECT. American Library Association, 1998. This book contains the national standards for school libraries and is available from the American Library Association at: http://www.ala.org/

Information Literacy

- ❖ Rose, Colin and Malcolm J. Nicholl. *Accelerated Learning for the 21st Century: The Six-Step Plan to Unlock Your Master-Mind*. Dell, 1997. A wonderful read not only to understand what school librarians mean by information literacy, but also to stimulate your own adult mind about how to learn best in an information world. Terrific.
- ❖ Koechlin, Carol and Sandi Zwaan. *Build Your Own Information Literate School*. Hi Willow, 2003. Commonsense methods of teaching novices, apprentices and info-stars how to tackle information and win. Excellent for teachers, librarians, and parents.
- ❖ Valenza, Joyce Kasman. *Power Research Tools*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2003. Tools for teachers, parents, and students to designed to teach and maintain habits of information literacy.
- ❖ *Library Skills for Children*. DVD/Video series. Includes: *Using the Dewey Decimal System, Using the Library*, and *Using the Internet*. Schlessinger Media, 2003.

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Technology

❖ *National Education Technology Standards for Students.* International Society for Technology in Education, 2001. At: http://www.iste.org These standards explain what young people should know about technology as a basis for success in the 21st century.

❖ Pflaum, William D. *The Technology Fix: The Promise and Reality of Computers in Our Schools.* ASCD, 2004. Available at http://www.ascd.org/ Pflaum documents his visit to 20 schools around the country – some that had excellent technology integration and some that did not. He tries to understand why some schools are successful and others not, then gives his recommendations. An eye-opener.

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