

NEW JERSEY POWER!



**A Parents' Guide to
School Libraries**

**David V. Loertscher
Donna McMullin**

New Jersey Power!

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David V. Loertscher
Donna McMullin

DRUM ROLL!
And, Introducing
Us Cats



Brigham

You don't have
to be so
dramatic, Kid



Wednesday

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

New Jersey Power! A Parent's Guide to School Libraries is available two ways:

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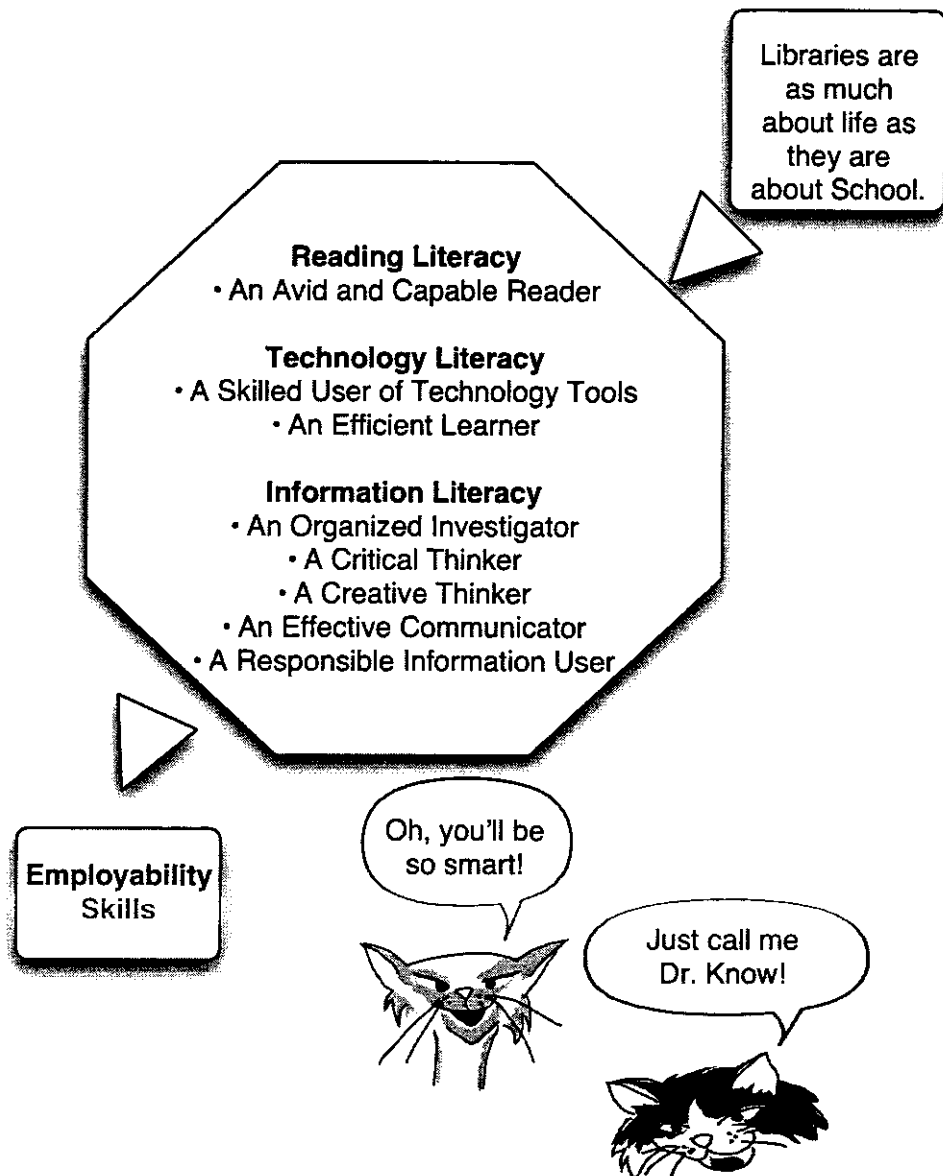
Appreciation

Numerous school librarians made suggestions for topics in this book. They are very anxious to connect with parents to provide the very best service they can. And thanks to the smart aleck cats, Wednesday (the Siamese) and Brigham for their snide remarks throughout the manuscript.

A School Library Agenda for Your Child/Teen

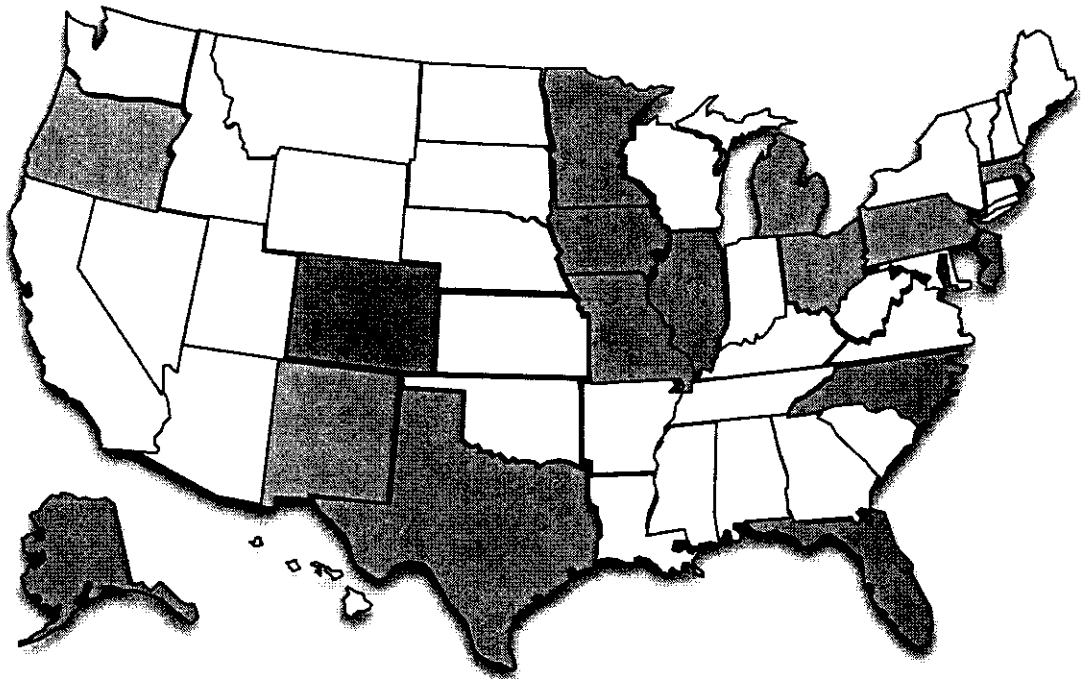
What type of person is likely to be successful in today's information-rich and technology-based world? What type of learner is likely to be successful in the world of the future insofar as we can foresee that world?

When an exemplary library program is in place, every young person can be equipped with:

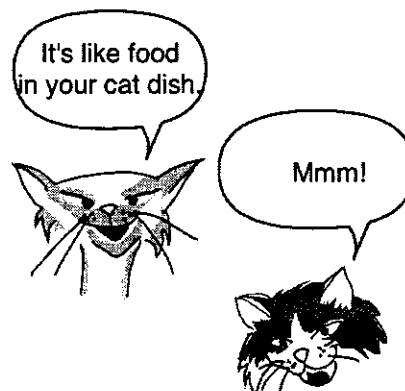


Research on School Libraries: A National Picture

Since 1999, seventeen states have commissioned studies¹ 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 Jersey, underway
 New Mexico, 2002
 North Carolina, 2003
 Ohio, 2004
 Oregon, 2001
 Pennsylvania, 2000
 Rhode Island, underway
 Texas, 2001



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

New Jersey 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 (federal wheels grind slowly), they are the most recent national statistics we have. How did New Jersey compare to the nation that year? The following table summarizes some of the most important findings:

Characteristic	Source	New Jersey	Nation
Public schools that claim to have a library	p.4	92.8%	91.6%
Private schools in the U.S. that claim to have a library	p. 6	na	62.8%
Public schools that have a certificated librarian	p. 8	90%	75.2%
Number of schools with a full time librarian at the school	p. 18	77.1%	60.5%
School libraries with paid library aides	p. 22	54.7%	71.6%
Average library expenditures (books and multimedia)	p. 28	\$8,994	\$8,729
Average number of books in the library	p. 28	10,518	10,232
Average library circulation of materials per week	P. 46	451	605

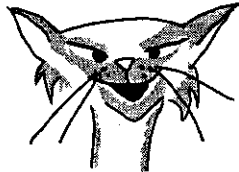
Conclusions:

1. New Jersey has many more professionals at work in school libraries than the rest of the nation. This is something the parents of the state can be proud of.
2. While school libraries are staffed with professionals, the number of clerical support personnel is below average. This means that the professional must take precious time away from helping students and teachers just to keep the library operational. This is a drag on the test scores of the state since the librarian has less time to support teaching and learning.
3. Spending for materials and collections sizes are slightly above average but circulation is far too low - a puzzle.
4. New Jersey can be proud that it leads the nation in some aspects of school libraries, but the important factor is whether your child in your local school is receiving the information, reading, and technology support they deserve.

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's 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 home and from anywhere in the school. 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.

And, by the way, the library is still reading's best friend.

Requirements for a School Media Specialist in New Jersey

- Complete 36 graduate credits in library studies
- Possess a Masters Degree
- Hold or obtain a standard teaching certificate



"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 it doesn't. Remember that in the Texas study of school libraries, schools with professionals had 10% more of the students pass the state achievement test.

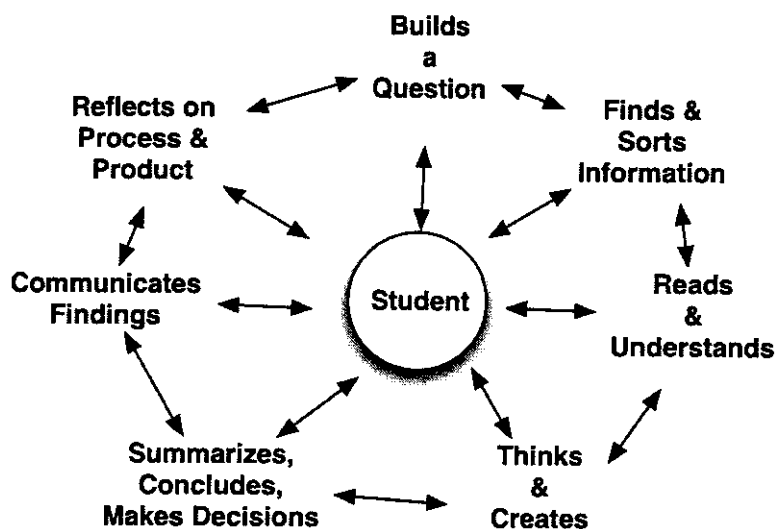
Information Literacy: A Life Skill

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

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

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

The Information Literacy Process



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building background knowledge about a topic. • The difference between a good question and a poor question. • Narrowing a topic. • Forming key words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search strategies. • Locating resources. • Skim, scan and consider. • Evaluate resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about the quality of the information being used. • Is this source the best information?
Read and Understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading strategies. • Actively read, view and listen. • Reading pictures. • Use features of non-fiction text. • Note-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep asking and helping to find the "main ideas" and the "supporting ideas" as reading/viewing/listening occurs.
Think and Create	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using graphic organizers. • Sorting, comparing, and classifying information. • Looking for patterns and trends. • Compare and contrast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help make logical connections between ideas across the various sources being used.
Summarize, Conclude, Make Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to summarize ideas. • Drawing conclusions. • Making decisions. • How not to plagiarize. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the conclusion, decision, or summary follow logically from the information collected?
Communicate Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Techniques of presenting information in print or multimedia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the ideas presented more important than how flashy the presentation is?
Reflect on Process and Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to reflect: what I know and am able to do. • How well did I do? • How can I do better over time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matter the grade, what do they know and what are they able to do? • How can they do better next time?

Cut and Paste (Plagiarism)—A Major Problem

Many teachers and librarians find that students today liberally cut and paste information from the Internet, books, and other resources and then pass it in as if it were their own work. The ease of cutting and pasting in a digital environment has blurred the lines of what's acceptable to today's youth.

The "Fair Use" provision of our country's copyright laws does permit students to use copyright protected work if they follow all these guidelines:

- **Purpose** - It has a non-profit, educational purpose.
- **Nature** - Your use is a summary or brief quote attributed to the original.
- **Amount** - It's OK to use a small part of a published work by citing its source but never the whole thing without the author's permission.
- **Effect** - Your use will not prevent the creator from making money.

What can you do as a parent to encourage ethical use of published resources?

1. Understand "fair use" and help your child to work within its guidelines. Even very young children can understand the concept of fairness and ownership.
2. As quotes or summaries are done, make sure your child records full source information so it is available for inclusion at the end of paper or project.
3. Help your child build and report their own ideas rather than just quote others.
4. Make sure your child is clear about citation requirements or format being required by the teacher.
5. The sources of any commercial photographs or drawings should also be included in the "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" of any assignment.

Thinking makes my head hurt!



Better than getting your butt kicked, Kid



Can't You Just Find That on the Internet?

The world wide web has become a very popular reference tool for many students. It's available 24/7. It provides multi-media files at your fingertips, and it's fun. While the Internet is definitely not a replacement for the library, it has certainly become the reference tool of choice for today's youth.

Because 21st century students gravitate toward the screen, computer research has definite appeal. It is only natural for young people who communicate, shop, and find entertainment on the Internet to want to do their homework using the Internet too.

The Internet's strengths—sound, image and video files—are the learning preferences of today's students. These multimedia resources do enhance the learning process and add a wealth of relevant resources to supplement print resources.

Research by the Pew Foundation in 2001 states that both teenagers and their parents feel that the Internet is vital to completing school projects. It also states that 74% of online teens said that they used the Internet as the major source for their most recent school project. Most school libraries recognize this and have integrated digital literacy and Internet research into their programs. School librarians are instructing students to make sense of the World Wide Web and to take advantage of the best the web has to offer.

By carefully searching the "Open Web", your child can access a wealth of information including:

- Multi-media files including images, sound, and video.
- Recent news, current events, and time-sensitive information.
- Consumer information including business and finance, health and medicine, and travel.
- Information from federal, state, and local governments.
- Information from non-profit organizations including community organizations, schools, and professional organizations.
- Corporate web sites that provide information on companies as well as on goods and services.

- College and university web sites that provide information for potential students as well as information of interest to enrolled students.
- Information on sports and entertainment.
- Educational materials published by commercial and non-profit organizations.
- Information in the fields of science and technology.

However, it is very important to note that not all the information your child will need to be successful in school is available online for free. You still cannot access most fiction and non-fiction books (including almost all encyclopedias and reference books) still under copyright, nor can you access full-text magazines and newspaper articles published before 1994. To take advantage of these important reference tools, students should become acquainted with the many subscription databases available—at no cost—to residents of New Jersey.



Through **New Jersey Clicks** - <http://www.jerseyclicks.com> - students in NJ can use their library card number to access over 25 subscription databases that have resources on such topics as current events, US and World history, Native Americans, health, business, literature, authors, and other curriculum related topics.



If you still can't find what you need, try **Q and A**, - <http://www.qandanj.org> - an Internet service provided by the New Jersey Library Network. Professional librarians from across the state are available online to help you with your information needs.

Virtual Reference Desk. New Jersey Statewide Reference Desk.
<http://www.camden.lib.nj.us/dbtw-wpd/reference.htm>

"The Virtual Reference Desk contains annotated links to websites that will help you answer many common reference questions. It has been modeled after *the Librarian's Index to the Internet*, but with more focus on New Jersey information. "

Need resources for that school report about New Jersey? Try Hangout NJ: The Next Generation. New Jersey's official website for students, Hangout NJ has lots of information specific to the state, as well as games and fun activities. http://www.state.nj.us/hangout_nj

Also Netstates provides a wealth of information for students on the Garden State. <http://www.netstate.com/states/index.html>

The Internet and Education: Findings of the Pew Internet and American Life Project. September 2001.
http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/39/report_display.asp

What's Fair, What's Not

The Heartland Area Education Agency has a wonderful one-page pdf document called "Brief Notes: Multimedia Copyright". Please contact them and ask about permission to reproduce on the page following plagiarism. It is the best explanation I have seen.

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FAX: 515-270-5383

http://www.aea11.k12.ia.us/downloads/copyright_poster.pdf

Brief Notes: Multimedia Copyright

	You can copy	What you can't do
Facts	Facts (usual) information is in the public domain	
Multimedia-Print	Up to 10% or 1,000 words Other poems if less than 250 words 250 words or a longer poem 5 poems by different poets from a collection 3 poems (or excerpts) per poet, maximum 10% or 2 pages from a short children's book Can make alterations if it supports an instructional objective (note a change was made)	Can't make or distribute multiple copies of project unless individual copyright permissions are received Can't copy to avoid purchase Must use lawfully acquired copy
Multimedia-Motion	Up to 10% or 3 minutes Can make alterations if it supports an instructional objective (note a change was made)	Can't make or distribute multiple copies of project unless individual copyright permissions are received Can't copy to avoid purchase Must use lawfully acquired copy
Multimedia-Illustrations	1 photo or illustration 5 images from one artist, maximum 10% or 15 images from a collection Can make alterations if it supports an instructional objective (note a change was made)	Can't make or distribute multiple copies of project unless individual copyright permissions are received Can't copy to avoid purchase Must use lawfully acquired copy
Multimedia-Music, lyrics	Up to 10% or 30 seconds Can make alterations if it supports an instructional objective (note a change was made)	Don't change the basic melody or fundamental character Can't make or distribute multiple copies of project unless individual copyright permissions are received Can't copy to avoid purchase Must use lawfully acquired copy
Multimedia-Numerical data sets	Up to 10% or 2,500 fields or cell entries Can make alterations if it supports an instructional objective (note a change was made)	Can't make or distribute multiple copies of project unless individual copyright permissions are received Must use lawfully acquired copy
Software	Read and follow the licensing agreement Follow the guidelines for commercial, shareware, or freeware software Make one backup copy of program you own Use backup only if original fails Adapt a program by adding content or escaping to another language	Can't sell or distribute adapted version Can't make multiple back-ups Can't make one copy for home and one copy for school use Can't create a copy for a friend (unless public domain)
Internet	Follow fair use and multimedia guidelines When posting a Web site, be sure you have rights for graphics, designs, logos, and photos Consider asking for permission to use a URL to a Web site if traffic will be high Check if district has policy on school-sponsored publications	Can't copy source, HTML, or frames code Can't file share pirated materials Shouldn't use logos/trademarks as a trademark on your page Avoid copy theft
AP Multimedia Archive http://ap.azduma.net (password protected)	Print images for reports, papers, handouts Use images in multimedia projects	Can't use in newspapers, magazines, newsletters, posters, yearbooks, playbills, newsletters, e-news, brochures, promotional items
ClipArt.Com http://members.ariadny.com (password protected) OR http://school.ariadny.com (IP authenticated)	Multimedia presentations Web site buttons, backgrounds, cutouts, and other graphics Students can download unlimited clipart images, stickers, and Web art images for educational use	Can't use images of people/animals as endorsement or with a product Can't add to Web site with intention to re-distribute
EBSCO http://search.ebsco.com (password protected)	Generally follow guidelines for print Include bibliographic citation	

For multimedia projects:

Credit the source even if it is a fair use.
Credit and copyright information can be in a separate section.
Include: author, title, publisher, place and date of publication.
The opening screen must include a statement that credits materials are included under the fair use and educational multimedia guidelines and further use is restricted.

<p>Fair use guidelines</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose and character of the use Nature of copyrighted work (i.e. fiction or technical) Amount to be used relative to the whole Effect of the copying on the potential market 	<p>Exclusive rights of the copyright owner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reproduce the work Prepare a derivative work Distribute the work Perform the work publicly Display the work publicly 	<p>How to request permission to copy</p> <p>Request permission to copy by phone, e-mail, or letter. Keep written proof of the permission. Address the request to the permissions department of the publisher/producer or directly to the copyright holder and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title, author, author address, and address of material Exact material to be copied (giving sentence and page numbers) URL, book title, etc. Number of copies to be made How to be used or the copied material Whether or not the copies are to be sold Type of request (classroom, digital resource, book, photostats, etc.) Don't ask for student permission to copy. <p>Submit online requests by requesting permission to use a Web site via e-mail:</p> <p>http://www.landmark-project.com/permissions_students.php http://www.earth-wednet.edu/copyperm.htm (Web site includes site permission)</p>
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Judging an Internet Site: A Critical Skill

Anyone with a computer and access to a web server can be a web author. Unlike the world of book publishing, there are no "publishing standards" for these authors. It's up to the individual web author to provide quality information.

Since the World Wide Web has no single person or organization to "edit" or check web content, the job of determining quality of web resources is left to the users of the web.

There are many lengthy checklists available online to guide students through website evaluation. This very engaging web animation from Los Angeles County Office of Education explains the hows and whys of website evaluation:

[http://teams.lacoe.edu/documentation/classrooms/gayle/evaluate/evaluate.](http://teams.lacoe.edu/documentation/classrooms/gayle/evaluate/evaluate)

Web evaluation standards are only helpful if students use them. Prepare your child with a quick, easy, "rule of thumb" to help them in the evaluation process. The Media Awareness Network publishes "The 5Ws (and the 1 H) of Cyberspace for Knowing What's What and What's Not."

<http://www.media-awareness.ca>

5 W's of Evaluating Internet Sites

WHO provided the content for the web site?

Can you easily locate the name of the person who authored the web content? Is contact information available for that person? What organization takes responsibility for the site? Is the organization a credible, authoritative source of unbiased information?

WHAT information are you actually getting on the site?

Is the web content accurate and without errors? Is the content without bias? Can you verify this information in another source?

WHEN was the site created?

When was the site posted? When was it last updated? Do the external links still work?

WHERE is the site posted?

The web site's "URL" (uniform resource locator) can tell a lot about the site. Even the top-level domains such as .com or .org can give some insight about the value of a site.

WHY are you on the web and not in the library?

Is this the best source available for the information needed? Would there be better information in a traditional print resource in the library? Does the web content add anything to the information you already have, such as an interesting detail or multi-media enhancement?

A Note to the Web Consumer

People publish on the web for a wide variety of reasons. As a result, web content varies depending upon the author's audience and purpose. Sometimes it's very easy to tell why and for whom a particular website was posted, but in some cases, it's difficult to tell why a website was created. Basically, web authors publish to 1) inform; 2) educate or instruct; 3) persuade or sell; and/or 4) entertain their web audience.

Sometimes people even deliberately publish misinformation on the web to deceive or misrepresent facts. In some cases, fraudulent Internet *scams* can result in financial loss to users who become involved in these web dealings. Other times, biased information is used to persuade readers to believe information that is slanted to a particular position and is not accurate.

The Media Awareness Network offers a web game "Jo Cool or Jo Fool" to help your students make informed decisions about their web transactions.
http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/special_initiatives/games/joecool_joefool/index.cfm

Internet Safety for Parents and Kids From the New Jersey State Police



New Jersey State Police

Internet Safety Tips

The New Jersey State Police High Technology Crimes and Investigations Support Unit recommends the following internet safety tips.

Internet Guidelines for Parents and Guardians

- Place the computer in a common area of the residence rather than a bedroom. This will encourage online time to be a family-oriented activity.
- Become familiar with the people and web sites your children are interacting with on the internet, just as you would get to know all of their other friends.
- Choose a family-oriented Internet Service Provider or Online Service and use Parental Controls or software to regulate the type of information and material your children can access on the Internet. Most of the Parental Controls and software allow adults to restrict access to age appropriate levels. In the event the children do receive objectionable material, teach them to avoid responding to messages that are suggestive, obscene, threatening or that makes them feel uncomfortable. Make sure they are comfortable in making you aware of these types of messages. Immediately notify your Internet Service Provider of the receipt of such material.
- Try to select non-descriptive Account Names and Screen Names for your children. Their online names should not be too specific or identify or describe them in detail.
- Remind your children not to provide their real name, phone number, address, or other personal information to anyone to whom they meet online, and never to meet face to face with anyone they have met through the internet without your permission. If you do permit such a meeting, it should be in a public place, and you or another responsible adult should accompany your child.
- The computer should not be thought of as a "babysitter." Set reasonable guidelines for your children's time online and remember that these guidelines should be age appropriate. What is acceptable for a teenager may not be acceptable for a younger child.
- Remind your children that the rules are the same for any computer they use, whether at home, school, a friend's house, or the public library.
- Assure your children that they can talk with you about things that happen on the internet. If they fear that they will lose their internet access, they may be reluctant to talk about anything bad that happened on the internet.

Internet Guidelines for Teenagers

- Never give out your personal information, your real name, address, or phone number, or any personal information about your family or friends without their permission.
- Be careful in chat rooms. Don't get involved in fights or use obscene language. You could be reported and have your internet service suspended or cancelled.
- If you are in a chat room and someone uses offensive language, attempts to start a fight with you, or makes you feel uncomfortable, leave the room.
- Ignore obscene or offensive messages. Replying may cause the sender to continue to send such messages.
- Be careful in joining mailing lists, some may make your personal information public. Don't provide an address or phone number. The information for which you are signing up is sent to the e-mail address you provide, so they don't need your address or phone number.
- Beware of offers for free items, get rich quick, or weight loss offers. They may be scams.
- Beware of e-mail from people you don't know or e-mail you weren't expecting. It may contain a virus designed to damage your computer or send your account name and password back to the sender.
- Never send your picture to someone you don't know or trust. Remember, the internet allows people to become anyone they want to be, and they may be someone you don't really want to know.

Internet Guidelines for Children (10 years old and younger)

- Never give your name, address or phone number to anyone on the internet.
- Do not go into chat rooms without your parent's help.
- If you get a message that makes you feel uncomfortable, don't respond to it, and be sure to tell your parents.
- Don't join a mailing list without your parent's permission.
- Don't open e-mail from anyone you don't know. It might be a virus which could damage your computer.
- Don't believe everything people on the internet tell you. Since you can't see the other person, you don't know who they really are.
- Never agree to buy or trade anything on the internet without your parent's permission.
- Never agree to meet anyone in person that you met on the internet, and never send pictures of yourself over the internet.

Source: <http://www.njsp.org/tech/safe.html>

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, standardized 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, because knowledge is expanding, the amount to be learned each decade continues to increase.

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 make exacting rules for textbook publishers. Since these two markets are so large, whatever these two states want taught is what publishers print and 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."

This textbook is BORING!



Where's your library card?



A Critical Thinker

Numerous educators have been interested in the idea of critical thinking in the past decade. 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. One of the major challenges is to educate children and teens to evaluate information they find on the Internet. Parents will want to 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 plow through complex information sources.)
- Does the provider of the information have an agenda? (Beware of the information source that is out to sell the reader something or is propagandizing the reader.)

A Creative Thinker

Is your child/teen creative? All have creative capacities that can be improved. Creativity can also be squashed. Consider the definition at the right¹ and an advertising poem used by Apple Computer.² School libraries are full of creative ideas and books that stimulate creativity. Enjoy.

To the Crazy Ones

Here's to the crazy ones.

The misfits.

The rebels.

The troublemakers.

The round pegs in the square holes.

The ones who see things differently.

They're not fond of rules.

And they have no respect for the status quo.

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

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

Because they change things.

They invent. They imagine.

They heal.

They explore. They create.

They inspire.

They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.

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

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

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

We make tools for these kinds of people.

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

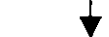
And it's the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world,
who actually do.

Think different.

c. 1997. Apple Computer Inc.

The Creative Process

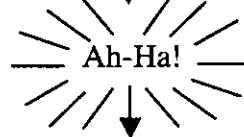
First Insight



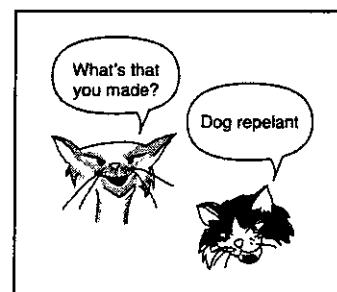
Saturation



Incubation



Verification



¹ The creative process is Getzel/Kneller's description in von Wodtke, Mark. *Mind Over Media: Creative Thinking Skills for Electronic Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993, p. 115.

² © 1997, Apple Computer, Inc. Used by permission.

* *New Jersey Power!* © 2005 Hi Willow Research & Publishing. Available at <http://www.lmcsource.com> *

Tips for Homework Help

Homework: A Concern for the Whole Family

How to Help: Show That You Think Education and Homework Are Important

- ❖ Set a Regular Time for Homework.
- ❖ Pick a Place.
- ❖ Remove Distractions.
- ❖ Provide Supplies and Identify Resources.
- ❖ Set a Good Example.
- ❖ Be Interested and Interesting.

How to Help: Monitor Assignments

- ❖ Ask about the Homework Policy.
- ❖ Be Available.
- ❖ Look over Completed Assignments.
- ❖ Monitor 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 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!**

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."

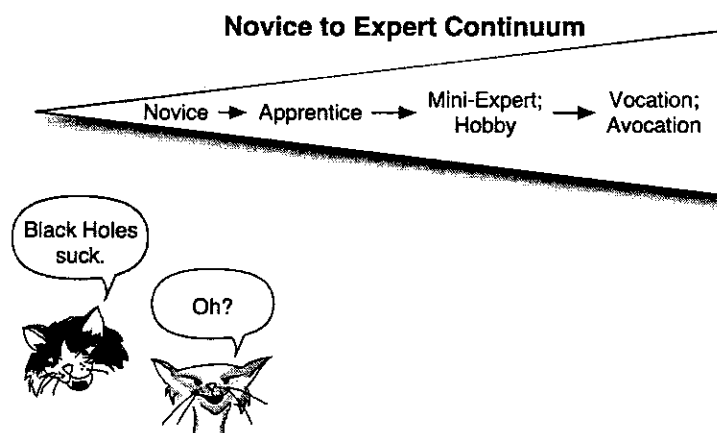
Depending on the school your child attends, the focus of education may be on gaining basic knowledge about many topics. Projects and research or natural curiosity may lead your child into topics far beyond the expertise of teachers or the school's curriculum.

When your child becomes interested in the Antarctic, whales, dinosaurs, science fiction, inventions, 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.
- ❖ Question all information in libraries.

Your child might be in the forefront of something great.



Building World-Class School Libraries for Your Child: What Would It Take?

New Jersey children and teens are being prepared to compete globally for the best jobs, careers, and public service. They will live and work in a different economic environment than their parents have experienced because the world of information and technology are vastly different than the previous generation's. What does it take in this new world to provide a world-class education?

Information and books cost money as does electricity, gas for school busses, and competent teachers. We cannot depend on benevolent funding (donating to the library when there are surplus funds); it has never worked and will never work.

What would it take to realistically support the information needs of New Jersey kids? Consider this proposal:

The state/federal government should provide every child in New Jersey with:

A \$5.00 per day information ticket

This ticket could be claimed by the school each day the child was in attendance at school. Public libraries could claim the ticket for home-schooled children.

What would the information ticket fund?

- \$2.00 - all textbooks and supplementary materials.
- \$1.00 - all library materials including books, multimedia and online databases.
- \$2.00 - a connection device to the digital school library intranet (a PDA or notebook computer replaceable annually).

No salaries or network costs here—just information and a connection device. With a professional library media specialist and technology specialist in every school, such money would be spent wisely so that every child would have the opportunity to learn to read, to succeed, and to become information literate.

School Libraries and Technology Departments

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

Fortunately, librarians are more interested in what's ON the wires rather than the wires themselves. Their focus is on:

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

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

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

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

This handheld connects using Bluetooth



Huh?



The Digital School Library

Many school libraries have web pages available "24/7" to help your child successfully locate appropriate resources while working from home. If your child's school does not have a website, or if more extensive resources are needed, try the children's page of your local or county library's website. Here is a list of features that might be available on a school or public library website:

Project Connections	When assignments by teachers involve the library collections, librarians will post book lists and web resources to support the assignment. Data collection sheets and directions might also be available.
Topical "Webliographies"	Many librarians try to save learners time by posting the best web sites on curriculum topics, or to support classroom assignments.
Research Tips	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 Periodical Collections	Many school websites provide access to subscription databases that contain magazine and newspaper articles. Using login information provided by the librarian, students can find articles on almost any topic.
Online Reference Databases	Other subscription databases that provide access to digitized reference sources might also be available. These include general reference works and such specialized resources as biographical, historical or scientific encyclopedias with links to multimedia files.
Reference Links	Many librarians include links to appropriate search tools as well as to pre-selected websites sites to assist the student with online research
Best Book Lists	There are hundreds of recommended lists of good books for kids and teens to read. The librarian might link to some of these and encourage students to post lists of their favorites for others to access.
Published Student Work	Many students create very high quality papers, poetry, fiction, or other projects and these can be posted on the library web site for other students to enjoy.
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.
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 for the level of students and those accessible to your area.
Connections to School Activities	The library web page would link to the school web page, school activities, sports events, competitions, and school announcements.
Parent Help Pages	Tips and helpful resources for parents might include emergency information, helping with homework, educational opportunities, and sources for scholarships.
Resources For Teachers	While the teachers could use all the information sources listed above, special helps might include special subject web sites, professional development opportunities, and tips for busy teachers.

Find Your New Jersey School Library on the Web:

<http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/stpages/newjer.html#top>

<http://www.school-libraries.net/usa/nj.html>

<http://www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Reference/njlibs.php>

Equip Your Child/Teen with the Right Tech Tools

Every year, the computer technology industry makes advances in 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 to information systems with hand-held devices that double as phones, personal data assistants, and Internet access. Wireless technology enables students to have access to information systems from anywhere in the school.

What system that 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, floppy disk and a CD burning drive.
- ❖ A way to connect to the school and the school library network: either a dial-up modem (slow), a DSL line (faster, but not available everywhere), a cable modem, or a 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: the school library after hours, the public library, or the computer lab.
- ❖ Ask the school librarian for advice. Some schools have programs to help equip students at very inexpensive costs. However, there will always 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 McQuillan¹ reviewed 100 years of reading research and came to the following startling conclusion: The more a child/teen reads, the better they are at:

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



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

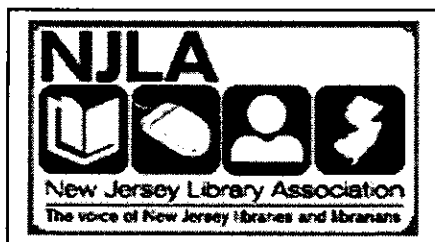
The most powerful reading your child can do is "free voluntary reading," the kind they want to do rather than what they are required to do. Fiction, nonfiction, comics, newspapers, magazines, stuff on the Web all contribute.

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 your child to form the "read-yourself-to-sleep" habit. 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 is 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 purchased for 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.

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.

New Jersey and Reading ... Perfect Together



The Garden State Book Awards, sponsored by the Children's Services Section (CSS) of the New Jersey Library Association, is New Jersey's way of recognizing and highlighting the best in children's literature. A highly qualified panel of judges, New Jersey's

students in grades K-12, selects the winners of this annual award.

The award given for children's books is based on literary merit and popularity with readers. The four categories of this award are 1) easy-to-read; 2) easy-to-read series; 3) children's non-fiction and 4) children's fiction. Winners are selected in each category. The award given to books for older students is based on teen appeal and the quality of writing. Nominated titles are selected from the various "Best Books" list of the previous year. Categories for teens include fiction 6-8; fiction 9-12; and non-fiction.

A CSS committee nominates twenty titles for both the children's and the teen's awards. These nominations serve as "the official ballot" for the final selection process—student judges. Ballots are distributed to schools and public libraries in New Jersey and students select the winner in each category. The ballot is also available on the NJLA website:

<http://www.njla.org/honorsawards/book/2005GSCBAballot.pdf>

Sample Past Winners for 2003:

- Carl Meister and Rich Davis for *Tiny Goes to the Library* – Easy to Read Category.
- Judith St. George and David Small for *So You Want to be President?* – Children's Nonfiction Category.
- Megan McDonald and Peter Reynolds for *Judy Moody* – Children's Fiction Category.
- Jerry Spinelli for *Stargirl* – Grades 6-8 Fiction Category.
- Louise Rennison for *Angus, Thongs & Full-Frontal Snogging* – Grades 9-12 Fiction Category.
- Joshua Piven for *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook* – Teen Nonfiction Category.

Find current reading lists and past winners of all the awards at:

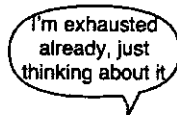
<http://www.njla.org/honorsawards/book/index.html>

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 want 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 child reads nothing but science fiction and fantasy. Should I worry?

This literature is escapist for many kids 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?

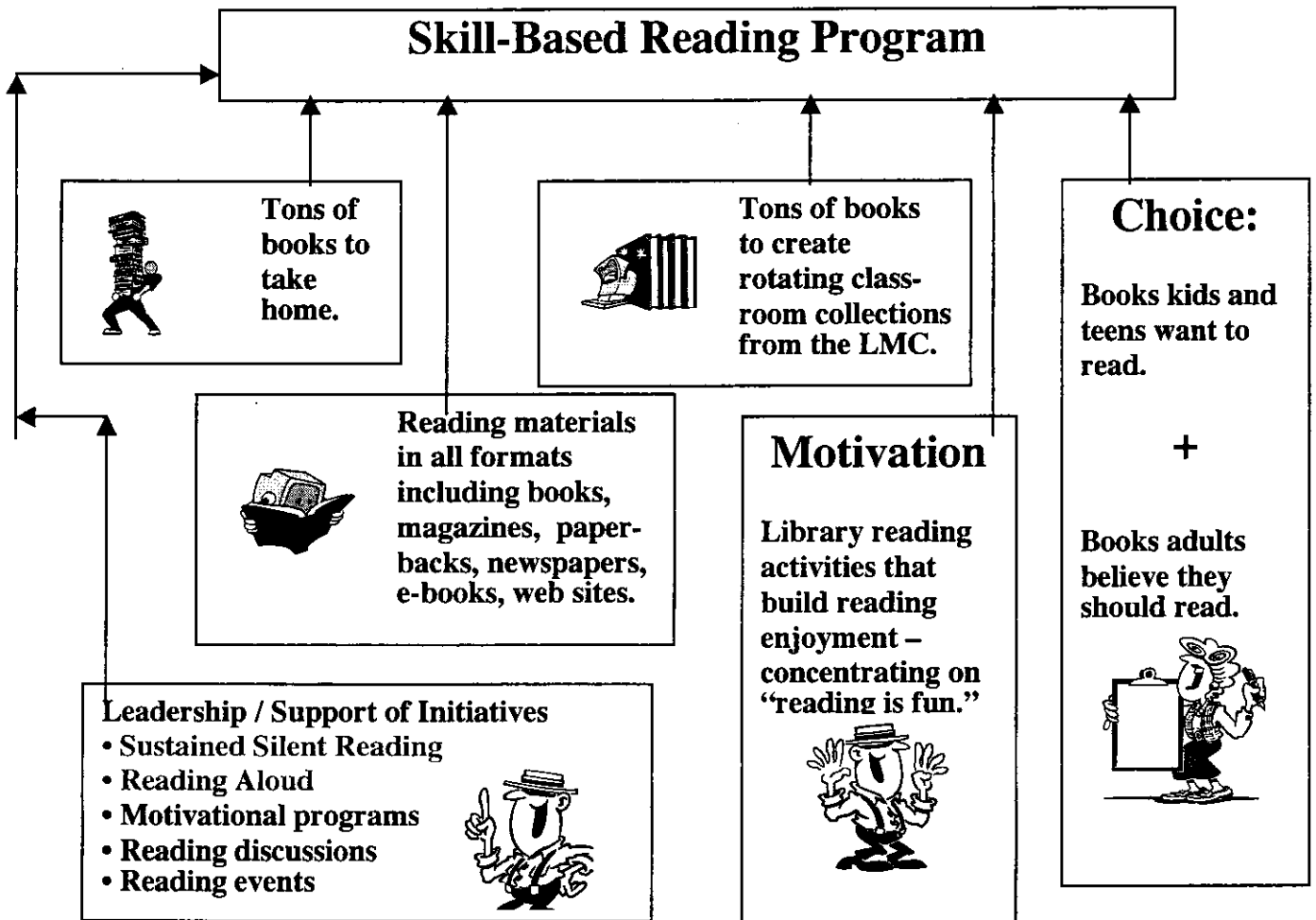
A number of writers treat teen lives realistically in their books. It all depends on your family values whether you want to allow, encourage, or restrict such literature for your own teens. Our best advice is to read what your teens are reading and talk, talk, talk.

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"

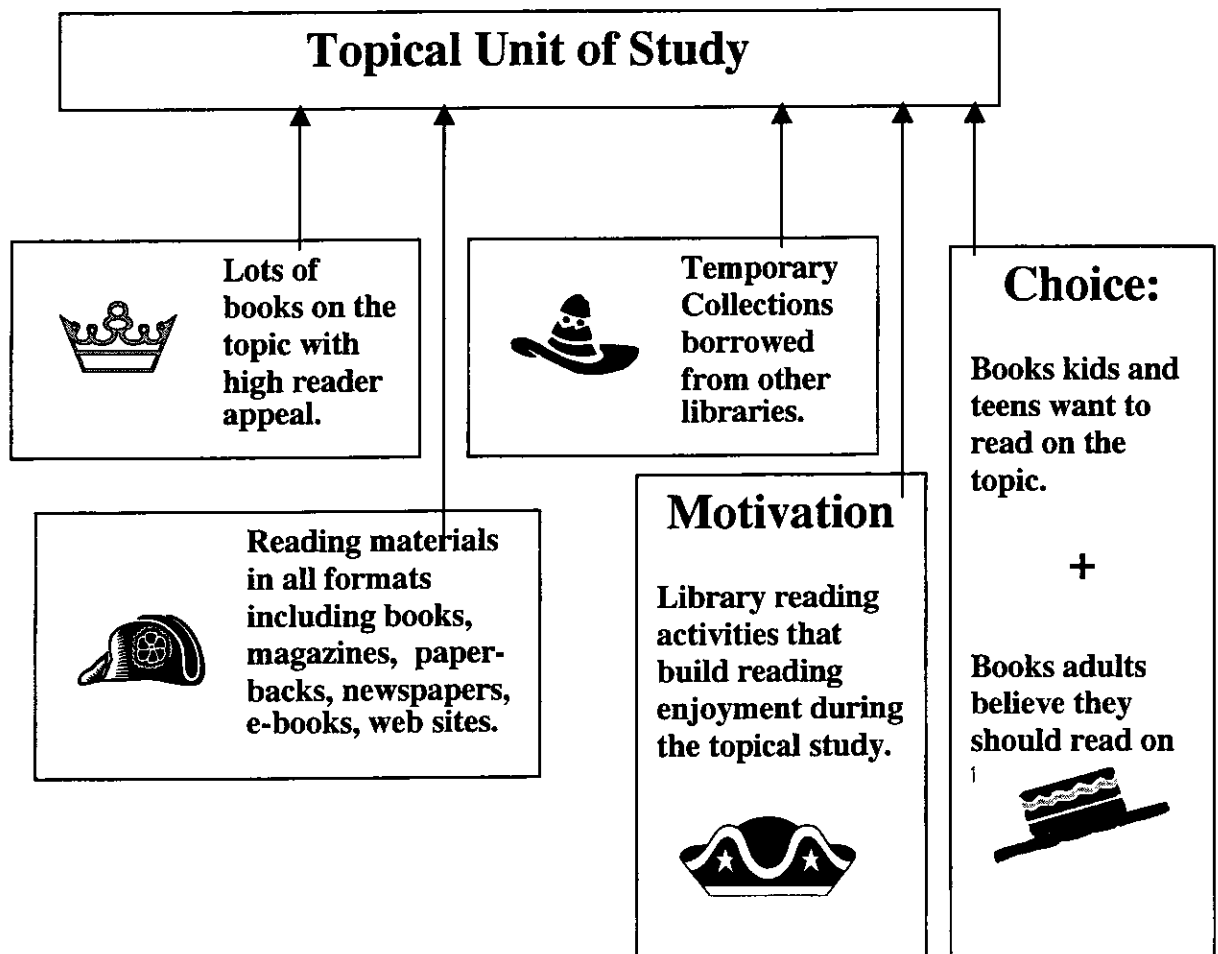
If a school community really believes the research saying that "amount counts," then the school and public library should have an extensive collection of reading materials young people want to read. So many school libraries in the nation have outdated, ragged, and uninteresting reading collections that 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:



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.



Bottom line: The library contribution to reading in the topical areas should stimulate more expository reading and thus more in-depth knowledge and understanding. Does your school's library reading program measure up? Are you as a parent taking advantage of 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 or get a bed lamp.¹

You didn't do any of these things



I care, Kid



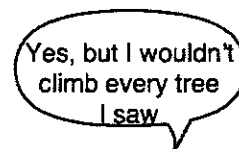
¹ For other similar suggestions, see: "Unlucky Arithmetic: Thirteen Ways to Raise a Nonreader" by Dean Schneider and Robin Smith. *Horn Book*, March/April 2001. Find at www.hbook.com in the archives. Also: "Ten Ways to Prevent Reading by the Parent," LEA Working Parties, at <http://www.stockportmbe.gov.uk/docs/literacy/leaparties/repleasure/adult/t3.htm>. 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. 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, or 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 introduce new ones also.
- ❖ Use a variety of books to improve the richness of your child's language development.
- ❖ Note that children's attention spans are growing as well as their 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 of reading, but not the focus.
- ❖ Blend the two readers: you and the child. Sometimes the child reads, sometimes you read.
- ❖ Encourage expression by questions, phrasing, and vocally mimicking story characters.
- ❖ Read aloud stories above your child's reading level to enrich his/her 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 ok 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 don't know how to read."
- ❖ Don't talk about your child's reading problems or lack of reading interest when family, friends, or strangers are around.

Reading is its own reward.

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

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

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 arm's length and see that there is a good school and public library close by.

I read 100 books.
You owe me \$100



Nice try, Kid



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

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

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 to become acquainted with services for nights, weekends, and vacation periods. Public library collections will be their collection for life.

The public library is three dogs away




It's worth it, Kid



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

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

<p>Goal:</p> <p>Each child from kindergarten through 2nd grade reads 500+ books per year.</p>		<p>Result:</p> <p>Every reader will read at or above grade level and develop a reading habit.</p>
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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 cubby holes. 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 kindergartner, 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 teacher 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 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. For example, they might 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 the 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 or stop reading; Say, "that's what you might think; that's not what I think," or "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 dangerous ideas. The issue, of course, is when, where, and how our children will learn to handle those ideas. Work with your school, librarian, teacher, principal, and community to handle ideas as they conflict with your values. Intellectual freedom is a gift of our form of government and it's a reason we choose to live in this democratic society and not somewhere else.



Helpful source: Texas Intellectual Freedom Handbook:
<http://www.txla.org/pubs/ifhbk.html>

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

- *You're the Boss, Baby Duck* by Amy Hest
- *Tops & Bottoms* by Janet Stevens
- Dr. Seuss - any titles
- Eric Carle - any titles
- *The Story of Ferdinand* - Munro Leaf
- *The Berenstain Bears* series - any titles
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin
- *Wow! It's Great Being A Duck!* - J. Rankin
- *My Little Sister Ate One Hare* by Grossman
- *The Library Dragon* by Carmen A. Deedy
- *Mem Fox* - any titles
- *Rhinos for Lunch and Elephants for Supper!: a Maasai Tale* by Tololwa M Mollé
- *Alistair in Outer Space* by Marilayn Sadler
- *Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock* & others by Eric A. Kimmel
- *Tacky the Penguin* by Helen Lester
- *The Curious George* books
- Ezra Jack Keats - any titles
- *The Little Engine that Could* by W. Piper
- Richard Scarry - any titles
- Maurice Sendak - any titles
- Rosemary Wells - any titles
- Stephen Kellog - any titles
- Gene Zion - any titles
- *Mother Goose* books - pick out several with good illustrations.
- *Changes, Changes, Changes* by P. Hutchins
- David Wiesner - any titles
- P.D. Eastman - any titles
- Frances Hoban - the Frances books
- Beatrix Potter - any titles
- David Shannon - all the David books
- 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
- Alphabet books of all kinds
- Board books of all kinds
- Counting books - many titles
- A child's pictiary (a beginning dictionary with hundreds of pictures)

For Kids a Bit Older

- *The Eleventh Hour* by Graeme Base
- *Rapunzel* by Paul Zelinsky
- *Rapunzel* by Lynn Roberts
- *The Wolves in the Walls* by Neil Gaiman
- *Lon Po-Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China* & others by Ed Young
- *Sam and the Tigers* by Julius Lester
- *The Rough-Face Girl* by Rafe Martin
- *The Talking Eggs* by Robert D. San Souci
- *Pink and Say* & others by Patricia Polacco
- *The Twelve Dancing Princesses* by Marianna Mayer
- *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe
- Verna Aradema - any titles
- Seymour Simon - any titles about science and space
- *How Much is a Million* by D. M. Schwartz
- Jon Scieszka - any titles
- Gerald McDermott - any titles
- David Macaulay - any books
- Aesop's Fables - many editions
- Chris Van Allsburg - any titles
- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein and others of his poetry.
- Bill Peet - any titles
- Ed Emberley - any titles
- Arnold Lobel - any titles
- There are so many wonderful illustrated editions of fairytales such as Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Hansel and Gretel

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

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

- *Junie B. Jones* series by Barbara Park
- *Captain Underpants* & others by Dav Pilkey
- *The Magic Tree House* by Mary P. Osborne
- Laura Engels Wilder - any titles
- Beverly Cleary - any titles
- Marc Brown - any of the Arthur books
- Dav Pilkey - Captain Underpants series

For Older Readers

- *Hatchet* & others by Gary Paulsen
- *Time Warp Trio* series - Jon Scieska
- *Stormbreaker* by Anthony Horowitz
- *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Curtis
- *I Got a D in Salami* by Hank Zipzer
- *Artemis Fowl* and others by Eoin Colfer
- *The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke
- *Stargirl* or *Milkweed* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech
- *Redwall* & others by Brian Jacques
- *What My Mother Doesn't Know* by Sones
- *The Man from the Other Side* by Uri Oriev
- *Shadow Spinner* by Susan Fletcher
- *Mr. Monday* by Garth Nix
- *Sorcery and Cecelia* by C. Stevermer and P. Wrede
- *Shabanu* by Suzanne Fisher Staples
- *Skeleton Man* by Joseph Bruchac
- *No More Dead Dogs* by Gordon Korman
- *Sweetblood* by Pete Hautman
- *Blackwater Ben* by W. Durbin
- *Letters to Anna's Papa* by Anne Ylvisaker [Minnesota author]
- *The Giver* & others by Lois Lowry
- *Holes* & others by Louis Sacher
- E.L. Konigsburg - any titles
- Cynthia Voigt - any titles
- Jane Yolen - any titles
- *Matilda* & others by Roald Dahl
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Mary Casanova*—any titles [MN Author]
- Phillis R. Naylor - any titles [MN author]
- *Nightmare Mountain* & others by Peg Kehret [Minnesota author]
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- J.K. Rowling - the Harry Potter books
- *Catherine Called Birdy* by Karen Kushman

- Richard Peck - numerous titles
- Lawrence Yep - any titles
- C.S. Lewis - any titles
- Madeleine L'Engle - any titles
- DiCamillo, Kate - any titles
- *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park
- *Witness* & others by Karen Hesse
- *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* and other titles by Avi
- Katherine Paterson - any titles
- Roald Dahl - any titles
- *Shiloh* by Phyllis Naylor
- *Souder* by William Armstrong
- *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford
- Lemony Snicket - any of the Unfortunate Events books
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan

Non-Fiction Winners

- *The Diary of Anne Frank* (and other titles of 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* by Russell Freedman
- *Navajo Code Talkers* by N. Aaseng
- *Homesick* by Jean Fritz
- *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr
- *The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours* by Jane Goodall
- *Animals in Flight* by Jenkins and Page
- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jenne and James D. Houston

Author Web Sites (find others using Google)

- Lois Lowry: www.loislowry.com

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:

- *Ophelia Speaks : Adolescent Girls Write About Their Search for Self* by Sara Shandler
- *Lord of the Rings Trilogy* by J.R.R. Tolkien
- *A Child Called It* & others by Dave Pelzer
- *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
- *Ender's Game* & others by Orson Scott Card
- *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini
- *The Life of Pi* by Yann Martel
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
- *The Notebook* & others by Nicholas Sparks
- Chris Crutcher - any titles
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey
- *Slake's Limbo* by Felice Holman
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and others by Maya Angelou
- *Go Ask Alice* - Anonymous
- *The Pigman* & others by Paul Zindel
- *Buried Onions* & others by Gary Soto
- Walter Dean Myers - any titles
- Wil Hobbes - any titles
- Cynthia Voigt - any titles
- Philip Pullman - any titles
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (still a classic)
- *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
- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- Robert Newton Peck - *A Day No Pigs Would Die* and sequels
- *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* by Margaret Craven
- *John Hersey - Hiroshima* - Lest we forget
- Milton Meltzer - many titles
- *A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich* by Alice Childress
- William Sleator - almost any title

- *Deathwatch* by Robb White
- Walter Dean Myers - many titles

Science Fiction/Fantasy

- J.R.R. Tolkien - any titles
- *His Dark Materials Trilogy* by Philip Pullman
- 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

- *Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess
- *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster* by Jon Krakauer
- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue M. Kidd
- Mary Higgins Clark - any titles
- *Da Vinci Code* & others by Dan Brown
- Stephen King - Any titles
- *Jurassic Park* & others by Michael Crichton
- *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- Agatha Christie - any titles
- Tony Hillerman - any mystery
- Jane Austin - all writings
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - any Sherlock Holmes titles
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell
- Louis L'Amour's westerns still appeal
- John Grisham - any of the legal novels
- Jeffrey Archer - many titles - one of England's best
- *The Chosen* and others by Chaim Potok

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 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 other topics kids love:

- ❖ Animals, animals, animals (including everything from pets to dinosaurs)
- ❖ Insects—the more close-up photos, the better: giant spiders, snakes
- ❖ The morbid—mummies, terrible and sick things that have happened
- ❖ Projects, experiments and cookbooks of things to make (like slime)
- ❖ Sports non-fiction—record books, game rules, equipment, biography
- ❖ Disasters—How I died climbing Mt. Everest, shipwrecks, earthquakes
- ❖ The Human Body (you know they'll go for the sex chapters first)
- ❖ "Eyewitness Books" published by Dorling Kindersley
- ❖ Websites of museums, art galleries, Northwest Indian masks
- ❖ Cars, trucks, motorcycles, rollerblades, snowboards
- ❖ Cartoons like *Calvin and Hobbes* or *Garfield*
- ❖ Cookbooks (experiment with them)
- ❖ Cut-away picture books showing the insides of castles, submarines, or pyramids
- ❖ Coping with death and loss
- ❖ *The Guinness Book of World Records* and derivative titles in their series.
- ❖ Wars and military
- ❖ Airplanes and missiles
- ❖ Space and space exploration
- ❖ Rocks, minerals, and jewels
- ❖ The latest technology toys
- ❖ Diseases
- ❖ Drawing
- ❖ Jokes and riddles

I hear a Great Dane
moved in across
the street



I knew libraries
were good
for something



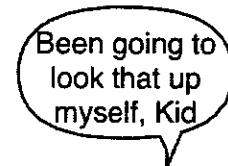
This list will never end. Once your kids get started on a topic, they will exhaust every library and bookstore in town. Now that's a shame!

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 and other nasty matters.
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 divorce or other dysfunctional family problems.
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, bulimia, and anorexia.
19. Ecology issues at home: conservation, healthy foods
20. Books to cheer me up, make me laugh, comfort me, or just to take along to the beach.



**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)	http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsa.htm
3. <i>Booklist</i> . Books for Youth; Adult Books for Young Adults; Media (Audio, Video, CDs)	http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm
4. <i>Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books</i>	http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/
5. Minnesota State Book Awards	http://www.minnesotahumanities.org/Book/pastawards.htm
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. <i>Horn Book</i> Parent's Page	http://www.hbook.com/parents.shtml
10. <i>Children's Literature Choices</i> (annual Top Choices List)	http://www.childrenslit.com/clc.htm
11. <i>Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children</i> (National Science Teachers Association)	http://www.nsta.org/ostbe
12. <i>School Library Journal</i> 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



We're Poor - Can the Library Help? YES!

School and Public Libraries are Free, Free, Free!

What many parents don't realize, particularly if you have just come to this country, is that your family 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 you learn English
2. Tutoring programs to help both parents and children
3. After-school programs for homework, tutoring, and extra learning
4. Computer terminals for use of 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 other languages
8. Magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets
9. Information to help you solve problems
10. Materials to help children with their school work

School and public libraries are the best bargain 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. It might be that people discriminate against you because of the color of your skin or because you are Jewish, speak Arabic, or go to the "wrong" church. They may think you are overweight or underweight, are too tall or too short, or are just plain ugly. 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. Find out 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 deal with the discrimination you face.

Responsibility, Fines, and Bringing Books Back

A perennial problem in every library is lost, missing, and overdue materials. 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 is a miracle.



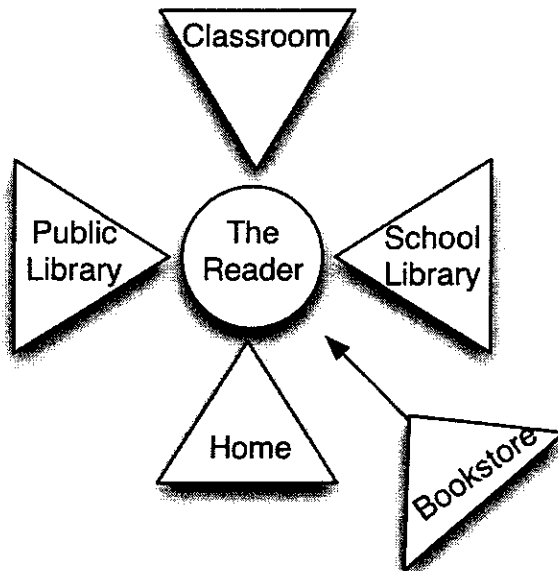
We all try to help children and teens learn responsibility. Yet they must have books to read—and lots of them. How can we do both? If for example, a child doesn't handle materials very well, shall we deny access to books? **NO!** There is no alternative. Literacy must always win. Children and teens must 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 a personal book case.
5. Have an appropriate container—a bag, 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 child loses a book, 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. **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: in the classroom and in the school library. But this is more complex than it first appears. 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 arm's 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 classroom.

Everywhere I look there's another litterbox



Purr



Money, Money, Money: What You Can Do

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

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

Second, ask how much per child 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 topical 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/write a grant.
 - c. Help a child read or understand a web site.
 - d. Organize a reading celebration; head a library fund-raising campaign.
 - e. Serve as a library advocate on a PTA parent council.
 - f. Carry a bill through the state legislature to fund library databases for every child in the state.
 - g. Be an artist-in-residence based in the library.
 - h. Do storytelling or reading aloud to classes as they come to the library.
 - i. Serve as a one-on-one tutor in the library.
 - j. Help students make a library quilt to be auctioned for the library fund.
 - k. Find 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. Safety 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 isn't any 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 the staff are, or how the place operates. They need advocates.

It may seem odd, but many librarians feel helpless as they try to provide first-rate information systems 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.



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

She's on the school board, Kid.



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; it requires vigilance; it 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.

**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>

* *New Jersey Power!* © 2004 Hi Willow Research & Publishing. Available at <http://www.lmcsource.com> *

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 an 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.

¹ Keith Lance speech, White House Conference on School Libraries. At: <http://www.ims.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 must have 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/term-paper 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.

The library was a swarm of cool cats today



Purr



School Library Horror Stories: A Dilemma

We have heard from students many horror stories 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 reports are flawed.
4. There is nothing in the library we want to read.
5. The library is a social center for goofing off.
6. 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 soooooooooooooooooo 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."

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!"

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

Many schools in the United States are filled with students who are learning English. The school and public libraries 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 their 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: books not read; poor research habits; rampant plagiarism; 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.

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 pleasurable 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. —Jorge 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.

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School Libraries

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Information Literacy

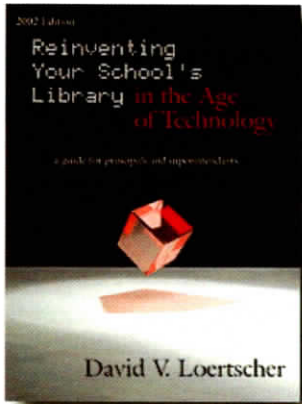
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Reinventing Your School's Library in the Age of Technology: A Guide for Principals and Superintendents

2002 Edition

David V. Loertscher

Hi Willow Research and Publishing

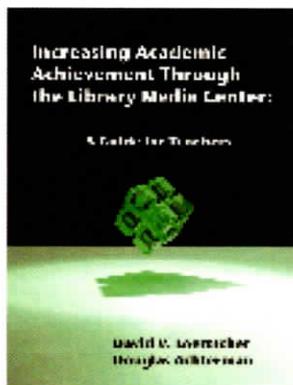
ISBN: 0-931510-79-1; 2002; \$18.00

Newly revised and updated for 2002, this best selling publication still asks the questions: Is a school library needed? Is any library needed? Isn't it all on the Internet? This new guide is designed to answer these questions and more for the school administrator who is wondering what to do with an amazing array of new technologies added

to the school environment.

Many pages contain checklists to stimulate thinking and planning. Two threads run through all sections - budget implications and assessment. Numerous graphic models present a concept succinctly for instant understanding.

An invaluable tool!



Increasing Academic Achievement Through the Library Media Center:

A Guide for Teachers

David V. Loertscher and Douglas Achterman; Hi Willow Research and Publishing ISBN: 0-931510-90-2; 2003; \$18.00

If you liked Reinvent your School's Library, this is the perfect companion piece written directly for the teacher who is seeking to increase "scores" now in its second edition.

Using the effective "one idea per page" format, teachers are presented with ideas how to collaborate effectively, what types of library media center activities are likely to produce results, how to promote reading with the library media specialist as a partner, how to enhance learning through technology, and how to promote and partner in the teaching of information literacy.

The Second edition contains a number of new pages on a variety of topics and older ideas have been revised. The goal has been to continue to communicate very clearly to a classroom teacher the benefits of working with the library media specialist collaboratively.