

MASSACHUSETTS POWER!



**A Parents' Guide to
School Libraries**

**Connie Champlin
Katherine Lowe
David V. Loertscher**



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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:

Reading Literacy

- An Avid and Capable Reader

Technology Literacy

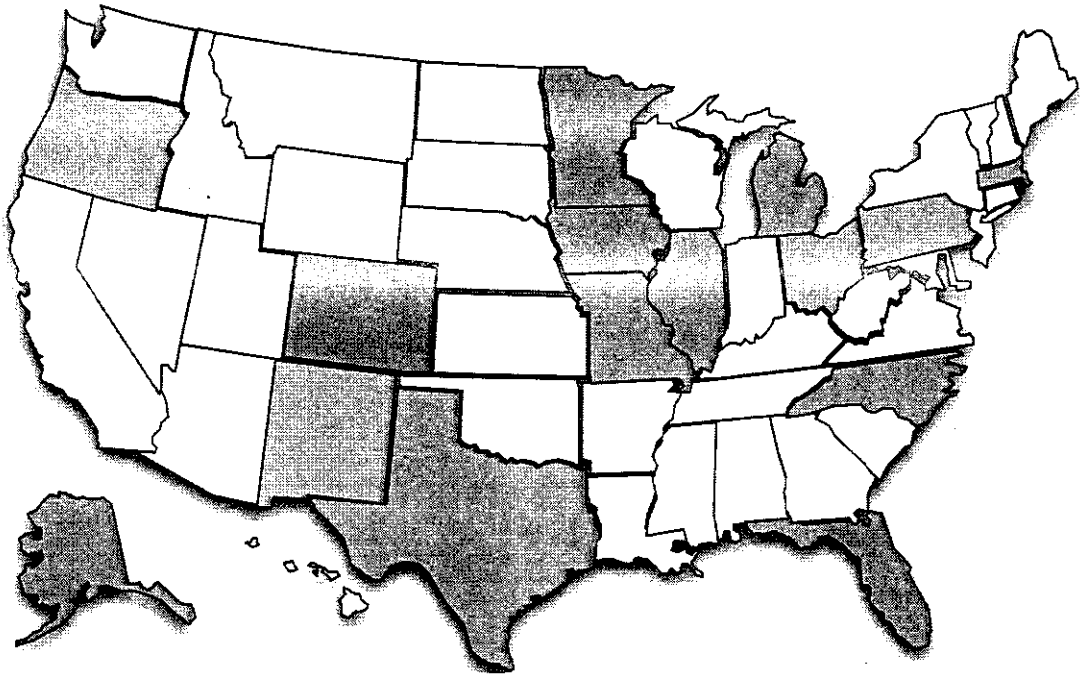
- A Skilled User of Technology Tools
- An Efficient Learner

Information Literacy

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

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, 2000
Florida, 2003
Illinois, 2005
Indiana, 2006
Iowa, 2002
Massachusetts, 2002
Michigan, 2003
Minnesota, 2003
Missouri, 2003
New Mexico, 2002
North Carolina, 2003
Ohio, 2004
Oregon, 2001
Pennsylvania, 2000
Rhode Island, 2004
Texas, 2001

¹ For a complete list of these studies, consult <http://www.davidvl.org> under "Research & School Libraries" or *School Libraries Work!* Updated ed. Scholastic, 2006.
www.scholastic.com/librarians/printables/downloads/slw_2006.pdf.

What Every Parent Should Know About School Libraries and Achievement

What do you as a parent know about the role of school library programs in your child's education? What should you know? In a study "*School Libraries and MCAS Scores*" conducted by Simmons College the following items were noted:

■ Key Findings

- Schools with library programs have higher MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) scores.
- Students score higher on MCAS tests when there is a higher per pupil book count.
- Schools with increased library use have higher MCAS scores.
- At the elementary and high school levels, students who are served by a full-time school librarian have higher MCAS scores than those in schools without a full-time librarian.
- At the elementary level, students score higher on the MCAS tests when the library is aligned with the state curriculum frameworks.¹

■ Policy Implications

- Staff elementary school libraries with a full time professional librarian who is an integral part of the school's planning and teaching team
- Equip school libraries with a quality collection of books and other educational media professionally selected to support and enrich the curriculum²

In their recent study of schools in Alaska, Pennsylvania and Colorado, Lance and Loertscher found that scores were 10 to 20 percent higher in schools where libraries have strong library specialists who collaborate with teachers, teach information literacy, promote reading, and see to it that collections are current and ample.³

¹ From *School Libraries and MCAS Scores*. Simmons College, 2000. At <http://web.simmons.edu/%7ebaughman/mcas-school-libraries/>

² From *Fact Sheet: Massachusetts School Library Media Centers*. Prepared by the Massachusetts School Library Association, 2006. At www.mslma.org/legislation/legislationfactsheet01.html

³ Lance, Keith and David V. Loertscher. *Powering Achievement: School Library Media Programs Make a Difference*. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City: Hi Willow, 2002.

Research Linking Reading to Academic Achievement

Research completed by Ann E. Cunningham and Keith E. Stanovich¹, Stephen Krashen,² and Jeff McQuillan³ plus the latest NAEP research⁴ from the U.S. federal government link the amount young people read with their scores on academic achievement. The message is clear:

For Everyone: Amount Counts! One hundred years of research supports the notion that free voluntary reading (the kind of reading you want to do, not have to do) is the best predictor of seven essential achievement basics:

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

For ESL Learners: Amount Counts!

Research also demonstrates that the fastest way to get anyone—child, teenager, or adult—to learn English is to have them read a lot in English!

Reading vs. Television: Consider this: 1) Children's books have 50 percent more rare words in them than adult prime-time television, and 2) Popular magazines have roughly three times as many opportunities for new word learning as prime-time television.

NAEP Results 2000.¹

Fourth graders in the United States do better academically when they:

- Read more pages in school
- Read more pages as homework
- Have more books, magazines, newspapers, and encyclopedias in their homes
- Report that they read for fun every day
- Discuss what they read.

The Massachusetts English and Language Arts curriculum recognizes the importance of the school library program. *"Reading and writing open up worlds beyond one's immediate experience. Reading transcends physical boundaries, giving students access to the knowledge and wisdom of people from other times and places. Readers view life through someone else's eyes."*⁵

*"The school library/media center and the classroom library are essential resources in developing a strong and varied literature curriculum. Library teachers can work with classroom teachers in selecting instructional materials to support literature study through a variety of approaches. School librarians play a key role in finding books to match students' interests, and in suggesting further resources in public libraries."*⁵

¹ "What Reading Does for the Mind" by Ann E. Cunningham and Keith E. Stanovich. *American Educator*, Spring/Summer, 1998, p. 1-8.

² *The Power of Reading* by Stephen Krashen, 2nd ed. Libraries Unlimited, 2004.

³ *The Literacy Crisis* by Jeff McQuillan (Heinemann, 1998).

⁴ "The Nation's Reading Report Card: Fourth-Grade Reading 2000 by the National Center for Education Statistics," The Center, 2000. online at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001499>

⁵ Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework. At www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

How Does Massachusetts Compare to the Nation in School Libraries?

In March 2004, the Federal Government released the report: *The Status of School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999-2000* available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004313>. While the data are old (federal wheels grind slowly), it is the most recent national statistics we have. How did Massachusetts compare to the nation that year? The following table summarizes some of the most important findings:¹

Characteristic	Source	Massachusetts	Nation
Public schools that claim to have a library	p. 4	94%	91.6%
Private schools in the U.S. that claim to have a library	p. 6	Not Reported	62.8%
Public schools that have a certificated librarian	p. 8	61.5%	75.2%
Number of schools with a full time librarian at the school	p. 18	52.4%	60.5%
School libraries with paid library aides	p. 22	65%	71.6%
Average library expenditures (books and multimedia)	p. 28	\$7182	\$8729
Average number of books in the library	p. 28	9212	10,232
Average library circulation of materials per week	P. 46	360	605

Conclusions:

- Almost half of Massachusetts's schools do not have a full-time librarian. This means that many schools share a librarian with another school or several schools. Why is that a problem? David Loertscher conducted dissertation research in Indiana in 1973 in the school libraries and found that the most frustrated professionals were those that serve more than one school. These librarians are unable to develop a full reading or information literacy program in any of their schools. Which is better when there is no money to hire only a half-time librarian for each school or a full-time librarian for only some of the schools? In spite of the equity arguments, it would seem better to hire a full-time person who could really make a difference in one school but leave the other one vacant. At least half the children/teachers would flourish rather than everyone suffering. Equitable policies are not the best action.
- In Massachusetts spending on materials is below the national average.
- In Massachusetts collections of books are below the national average.
- In Massachusetts circulation is far below the national average, not high enough to give a major boost to literacy.

Good advice for every parent and grandparent:

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



School Library Program Standards for 21st Century Learning*

These "School Library Program Standards for 21st Century Learning" developed by the Massachusetts School Library Association define the main features of an excellent program. Are these evident when you visit your child's school library?

Teaching & Learning

Staffing

The school has a minimum of one full-time Massachusetts licensed library teacher supported by one full-time qualified library support staff person for approximately every five hundred (500) students with additional staffing for extended hours.

Information Problem Solving Process

A collaboratively selected information problem solving process is taught and used district-wide.

Information Literacy Outcomes

A PreK-12 information literacy curriculum with defined outcomes is taught within discipline Frameworks in inquiry-based lessons.

Inquiry-based Curriculum

Sufficient collaboratively developed and taught inquiry-based curriculum lessons at each grade level to ensure that all students have opportunities to learn and practice the skills needed to meet district PreK-12 information literacy outcomes.

A Reading Community

Reading is integrated into all subject areas and departments.

Program Administration

Staffing: Each school library should have a minimum of one full-time licensed library teacher supported by one full-time qualified library support staff for approximately every 500 students.

Scheduling: Teachers use library effectively as an extension of their classrooms. The schedule encourages flexible, equitable, frequent use. Instruction is linked to major units of study.

Assessment: Library media services, staff, budget, collections, facility, and equipment are assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure their continuing support of the school's goals and expectations for student learning.

The Principal is committed to providing the instructional framework and collaborative teaching climate is essential for an effective library media program.

The District Library Media Administrator develops and implements effective, strategic short and long range plans and systematic assessment for district library media services.

School Library Program Standards for 21st Century Learning* (cont.)

The Superintendent actively supports the implementation of effective school library programs based on empirical research and national and state standards.

The School Board provides leadership in library media policy making and budgeting.

Resources

The Library Collection is based on teaching and learning styles, developmental and multicultural needs, state and national education standards, and principles of intellectual freedom.

Print collection: At least 20 titles per student, with 70% of the entire collection published within the last 10 years.

Periodical subscriptions in a combination of print & electronic formats.

Technology: Videos, audio books, computer software and other non-print media sufficient to support diverse learning styles, abilities and teaching methodologies. Workstations access at least 1 on-line full-text periodical database, 1 online encyclopedia, the library catalog and the Internet.

There are enough workstations for the ratio of students in a class to computers to be at least:

- 2:1 for largest class at elementary

- 1:1 for largest class at the secondary level.

Budget: At least 0.5% of the district's most recent annual per pupil expenditure is allocated to meet collection needs with additional funding for technology hardware and other capital expenses.

Facilities

According to Massachusetts School Construction Program Standards:

Space

- Elementary Schools: From 1800-3000 square feet. Small group and seminar areas up to 500 square feet each and computer labs/workstations with 30 square feet per work station.
- Secondary schools: Up to 15% of enrollment x 40 square feet. Computer labs/workstations with 30 square feet per workstation.

Seating Capacity

Elementary Schools: Determined by a combination of the size of the student body and the number of staff persons available for supervision.

Secondary Schools: Twelve percent (12%) of the total student body.

Accessibility: To conform to the American with Disabilities Act, the facility must be accessible to the handicapped.

* Complete Massachusetts School Library Media Program Standards for 21st Century Learning (2003) can be accessed online at: <http://www.maschoolibraries.org>

Why a Professional School Librarian?

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

Here are a few things professional school librarians do:

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

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

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 seventeen major studies since 2000 in over 9200 schools with professional school librarians, scores were 10 to 20% higher than in schools without these professionals.

School Library Staffing: Good News, Bad News

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

Every school library needs:

At least one full-time professional librarian.

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

At least one full-time paraprofessional/clerical person.

Why: These people keep the warehouse running in its myriad and time-consuming functions of circulation, retrieval, shelving, 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 this technology doesn't work, it's a zero.

Rationale

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

How is your school library staffed?

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



Position Statement on School Libraries in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Massachusetts School Library Media Association endorses the following recommendations of the American Library Association and the American Association of School Libraries on the value and staffing of school library media programs.

In today's information age, an individual's success, even existence, depends largely on the ability to access, evaluate and utilize information. Library media specialists are leaders in carrying out the school's instructional program through their separate but overlapping roles of information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant.

To guarantee every young person an equal and effective educational opportunity, officials must provide each school with library media facilities and resources to meet curriculum needs. District administrators must also ensure that each school's staff includes highly qualified library media teachers and support personnel to carry out the mission of the instructional program.

School library media specialists have a broad undergraduate education with a liberal arts background and hold a masters degree or equivalent from a program that combines academic and professional preparation in library and information science, education, management, media, communications theory, and technology. The academic program of study includes directed field experience in a library media program, coordinated by a faculty member, in cooperation with an experienced library media specialist. Library media specialists meet state certification requirements for both the library media specialist and professional educator classifications. While there may be many practicing library media specialists who have only an undergraduate degree and whose job performance is outstanding, the masters degree is considered the entry-level degree for the profession.

Although staffing patterns are developed to meet local needs, certain basic staffing requirements can be identified. Staffing patterns must reflect the following principles:

All students, teachers, and administrators in each school building at all grade levels must have access to a library media program provided by one or more certified library media specialists working full-time in the school's library media center.

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 "AASL Position Statement on Preparation of School Library Media Specialists." American Library Association. 2005. 15 June 2005. [http://www.ala.org/aasl/positions/ps\\_prep\\_school.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/positions/ps_prep_school.html)



## Massachusetts School Libraries and the Curriculum

In 2002, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills<sup>1</sup> was formed through the efforts of the United States Department of Education and numerous business partners. Their mission is to bring 21st Century Skills to every child in America by serving as a catalyst for change in teaching, learning, and assessment and as an advocate among education policy makers through a unique partnership among education, business, and government leaders. They report that as much as students need to learn academic content, they also need to know how to keep learning — and make effective and innovative use of what they know — throughout their lives. Learning and thinking skills are comprised of:

- Critical-thinking and problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Creativity and innovation skills
- Collaboration skills
- Contextual learning skills
- Information and media literacy skills

School libraries are the laboratories where students find the resources, both print and electronic, and receive the instruction on how to effectively evaluate and synthesize the information they find. In an increasingly diverse and global economy our schools need to produce literate students who know how to access, evaluate and use information.

A good school library program, staffed by a certified school library teacher, supports all areas of the school's curriculum. In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, curriculum is documented by the State Frameworks, which were developed to standardize what all students should know and learn. The English Language Art Frameworks clearly articulate a research component under Standard 24. The following information reflects the most current research standard under the Composition Strand, published in June 2001. All standards may be found on the Massachusetts Department of Education website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>.

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<sup>1</sup> Partnership For 21st Century Skills. <http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/>

## General Standard 24: Research

*Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.*

| GRADE LEVEL | LEARNING STANDARDS—As the amount and complexity of knowledge increases, students need to understand the features of the many resources available to them and know how to conduct an efficient and successful search for accurate information.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PreK–4      | <p><b>GRADES PREK–2</b><br/>24.1: Generate questions and gather information from several sources in a classroom, school or public library.</p> <p><b>Grades 3–4</b><br/>24.2: Identify and apply steps in conducting and reporting research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the need for information and formulate open-ended research questions.</li> <li>• Initiate a plan for searching for information.</li> <li>• Locate resources.</li> <li>• Evaluate the relevance of the information.</li> <li>• Interpret, use, and communicate the information.</li> <li>• Evaluate the research project as a whole.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 5–8         | <p><b>Grades 5–6</b><br/>24.3: Apply steps for obtaining information from a variety of sources, organizing information, documenting sources, and presenting research in individual and group projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use an expanded range of print and non-print sources (<i>atlases, data bases, electronic, or online resources</i>);</li> <li>• follow established criteria for evaluating information;</li> <li>• locate specific information within resources by using indexes, tables of contents, electronic search key words;</li> <li>• organize and present research using the grades 5–6 Learning Standards in the Composition Strand as a guide for writing; and</li> <li>• provide appropriate documentation in a consistent format.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grades 7–8</b><br/>24.4: Apply steps for obtaining information from a variety of sources, organizing information, documenting sources, and presenting research in individual projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• differentiate between primary and secondary source materials;</li> <li>• differentiate between paraphrasing and using direct quotes in a report;</li> <li>• organize and present research using the grade 7–8 Learning Standards in the Composition Strand as a guide for writing;</li> <li>• document information and quotations and use a consistent format for footnotes or endnotes and</li> <li>• use standard bibliographic format to document sources.</li> </ul> |
| 9–10        | 24.5: Formulate open-ended research questions and apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a variety of sources, organizing information, documenting sources in a consistent and standard format, and presenting research.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 11–12       | 24.6: Formulate original, open-ended questions to explore a topic of interest, design and carry out research, and evaluate the quality of the research paper in terms of the adequacy of its questions, materials, approach, and documentation of sources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

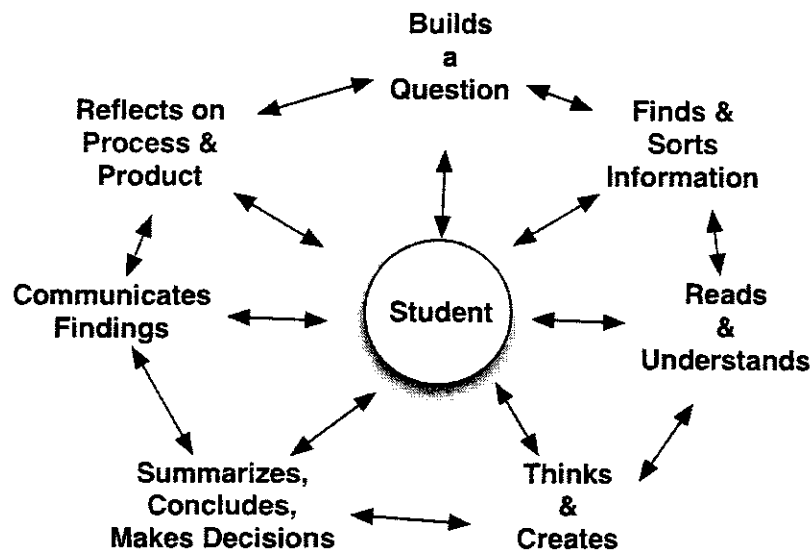
## Information Literacy: A Life Skill

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



## Helping Your Child/Teen with Information

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

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

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

The number-one complaint of teachers and librarians today is that students cut and clip information from the Internet, books, and other resources and then pass it in as if it were their own work. There are services available on the Internet where for a fee, the student can download a research paper to print out and hand in. The impact on learning is devastating. There is none.

Replace **CUT** and **CLIP** with:  
**Cut, Clip, THINK!**

Let's get a few things straight:

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

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

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

## Judging an Internet Site: A Critical Skill

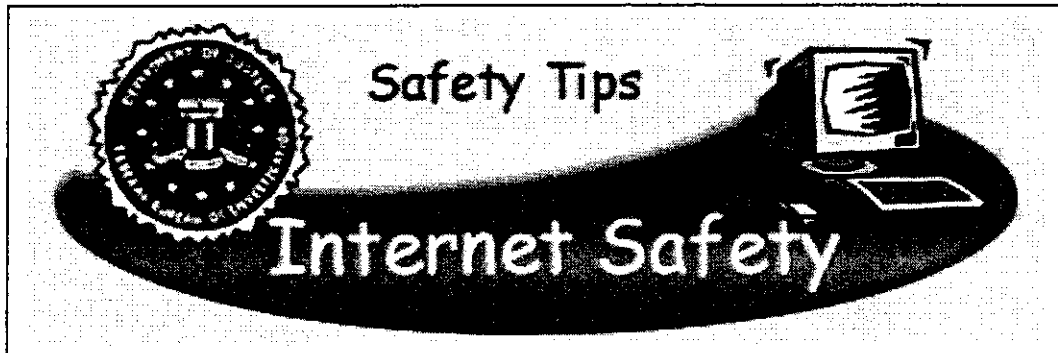
Use this guide to help decide whether or not the web pages are reliable sources for research. Need help? Ask your school librarian.

URL: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           |                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Author:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                           | Based on the information you found, rate this source:            |
| <b>Who is the author?</b><br>(Can't find a name? Look at the top and bottom of the page. Click through other pages on the site looking for an author).                                                                                     |                                                           |                                                                  |
| <b>What makes the author an expert</b> on this topic? What do you learn about the author's <b>occupation</b> , years of <b>experience</b> , <b>education</b> , or other facts that make him an expert?                                     |                                                           |                                                                  |
| List any <b>connection the author has to a university, research laboratory, governmental agency, or other reputable organization</b> related to the topic.                                                                                 |                                                           | Credible                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Not Credible                                                     |
| <b>Purpose:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Based on what you found out about the purpose, rate this source: |
| What is the <b>purpose of the website?</b> To sell something? To provide <b>information?</b> To <b>convince</b> you of something? What does the <b>domain name</b> (.com, .gov, .org, .edu, .info) tell you about the purpose of the site? |                                                           |                                                                  |
| If only <b>one side of the argument</b> is presented, what side is left out?                                                                                                                                                               |                                                           |                                                                  |
| What is <b>another resource</b> or type of resource that might provide the <b>other side</b> of the story?                                                                                                                                 |                                                           |                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Biased                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Not Biased                                                       |
| <b>Accuracy:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                           | This information is                                              |
| Note any <b>obvious errors</b> on the page, including <b>spelling</b> or <b>grammar</b> errors. What does this suggest about care in producing the page?                                                                                   |                                                           |                                                                  |
| How does the <b>information factually compare to information from other sources</b> you've already read?                                                                                                                                   |                                                           |                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Accurate                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Not Accurate                                                     |
| <b>Content and Currency:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                           | This information is                                              |
| If statistics are provided, <b>how old is the data?</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                           |                                                                  |
| How <b>recent is the other information</b> on the page? Does this make the information more or less valuable?                                                                                                                              |                                                           |                                                                  |
| <b>When</b> was the page <b>written?</b> <b>When</b> was it last <b>revised?</b>                                                                                                                                                           |                                                           |                                                                  |
| Does the author provide a <b>bibliography, Works Cited page</b> or <b>footnotes</b> that tell us where he got the information?                                                                                                             |                                                           |                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Current                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Cited                                                            |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Not Current                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                           | Not Cited                                                        |
| <b>Summary:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | The best reasons for using or rejecting this website are: |                                                                  |

## Internet Safety for Kids

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



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

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

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

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

## A Critical Thinker

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

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

### CRITICAL THINKING CONTINUUM

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

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

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

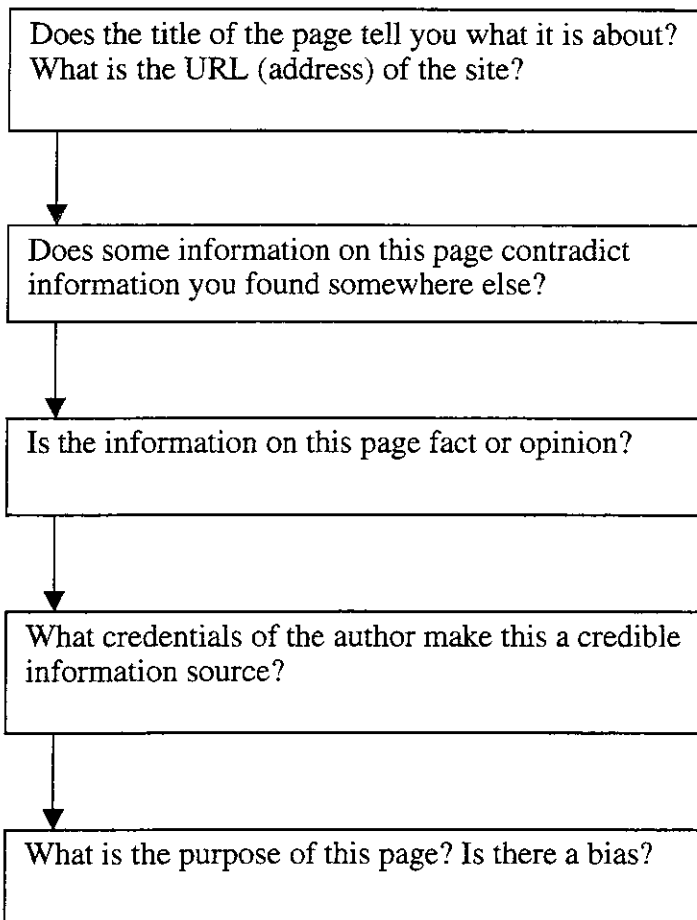
As a first step, learners should do a quick scan of the site to determine the general purpose of the site. Is it meant to:

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



## A Critical Thinker (cont.)

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



### Resources for Web Evaluation

1. Critical Evaluation Surveys and Resources  
<http://www.discoveryschool.com/schrockguide/eval.html>
2. "Cyber Guides," by Linda Joseph.  
<http://www.cyberbee.com/guides.html>
3. Evaluation Checklist <http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalcrit.html>
4. Quick: The Quality Information Checklist"  
<http://www.quick.org.uk/menu.htm>

## Homework Help: How the Library Can Help

### Homework: A Concern for the Whole Family

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

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

**How to Help: Monitor assignments**

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

**How to Help: Provide guidance**

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

From: "Helping Your Child with Homework." U.S. Dept. of Education, Accessed September 15, 2006 at: <http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/homework/index.html>

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

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

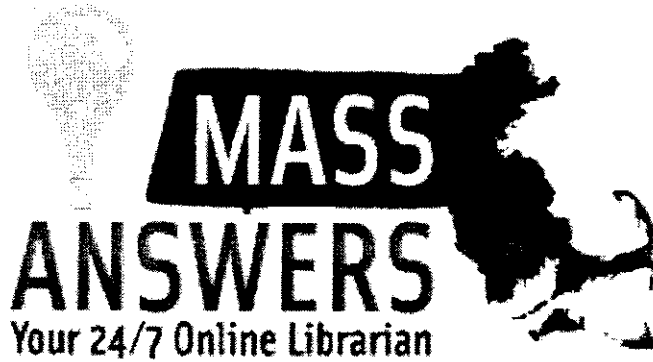
**Resources:**

- ❖ Know the open hours of school and public libraries since homework time often surpasses those hours.
- ❖ Know what's available on the digital school library (school site) and on the MA subscription databases
- ❖ Expect lists of the best websites to be available on your school and public library websites. Several well-chosen websites will save countless hours of searching.
- ❖ Know if there is a "virtual reference service" available—a librarian online to help at any time of day or night.
- ❖ Know that MA databases (an online database resource collection) are available to any MA citizen at no charge and obtain, if necessary, any password needed to get access.

**Advice:**

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

## Homework Help: How the Library Can Help



*A Professional Librarian,  
on Your Computer,  
at Your Convenience.*

**MassAnswers** is an innovative service that lets you ask questions and get answers, in real time, right here on the Internet, from reference staff at some of the best libraries across Massachusetts and the nation. This system combines the immediacy of the telephone and the preciseness of written e-mail with the ability to "look over" the librarian's shoulder and see what he or she sees on screen. Once you submit a question at the right side of this screen, it will be picked up by a Massachusetts Librarian from one of the *MassAnswers* participating libraries. If all are busy, or if it is off-hours for Massachusetts, a librarian from one of our nationwide cooperating libraries will pick up. These include strong libraries such as the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg in North Carolina or libraries throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties, California

### MassAnswers.org

*Invite a Librarian into your computer!*

**MassAnswers** is a cooperative project of Massachusetts Regional Reference Center libraries and other cooperating libraries, who have joined with the nation-wide 24/7 Reference collaborative. *MassAnswers* is initially funded by federal grant funds authorized by the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the **Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners**. *MassAnswers* is coordinated by the Boston Regional Library System, a service of the Boston Public Library.

## Massachusetts Subscription Databases

You and your child can access these and many other subscription databases from home using your public library card number. From school—if your child's school library is staffed by a certified school librarian—your child also has access. Funding is provided through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the six Massachusetts Regional Library Systems. Many of the Regional Library Systems now offer supplementary web-accessible online databases to the residents in their region

| Database                                                                                                                               | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Gale Group (Licensed through June 30, 2007)<br>In-Library and Remote Product Access Codes (in parentheses following database name) |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Biography Resource Center (BioRC)</b>                                                                                               | Use this database for biographies covering literary figures, science, multicultural studies, business, entertainment, politics, sports, government, history, current events and the arts. Includes over one million thumbnail biographies from the <i>Complete Marquis Who's Who</i> , the <i>Who's Who of African Americans</i> , and 250 full-text periodicals. |
| <b>Business and Company ASAP (BCPM)</b>                                                                                                | Same content as General BusinessFile ASAP without access to Investex content in advanced searching mode.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Contemporary Literary Criticism Select (CLC)</b>                                                                                    | An extensive collection of critical essays on contemporary writers. Each entry also contains a biographical/critical introduction, a list of principal works, and sources for further study.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Expanded Academic ASAP (EAIM)</b>                                                                                                   | Use this database to find full-text information on Astronomy, Religion, Law, History, Psychology, Humanities, Current Events, Sociology, Communications and the General Sciences.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>General BusinessFile ASAP (GBFM)</b>                                                                                                | Use this database to research all business and management topics. Includes directory listings for over 150,000 companies as well as investment analysts' reports on major companies and industries.                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>General Reference Center Gold (GRGM)</b>                                                                                            | Use this general interest database to search full-text magazines, reference books, and newspapers for information on current events, popular culture, the arts and sciences, sports, etc.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Health Reference Center Academic (HRCA)</b>                                                                                         | Full-text database that provides health information for nursing & allied health students as well as consumer health research.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Info Trac K-12 Junior Edition (K12J)</b>                                                                                            | Designed for junior high and middle school students. Includes mainly full-text magazines, newspapers and reference books covering current events, the arts, science, popular culture, health, people, government, history, sports and more.                                                                                                                       |

## Massachusetts Subscription Databases (cont.)

|                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Info Trac K-12 Student Edition (STOM)</b>                                             | Designed for high school students. Includes mainly full-text magazines, newspapers and reference books covering current events, the arts, science, popular culture, health, people, government, history, sports and more.                            |
| <b>Info Trac OneFile (ITOF)</b>                                                          | Use this comprehensive periodical resource for any subject. Coverage goes back to 1980- with over 9,200 titles (5,156 full-text).                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Kids InfoBits (ITKE)</b>                                                              | Covering 75 full-text curriculum-related magazines and 7 reference books, <i>InfoBits</i> targets the research needs of K- 5 students. It features a developmentally appropriate and visual graphic interface and a subject-based topic tree search. |
| <b>Professional Collection (SP00)</b>                                                    | A custom selection of over 300 full-text journals for educators, administrators and librarians.                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Gale Virtual Reference Library (GVRL)</b>                                             | A mix of more than 20 full-text reference books covering the arts, biography, business, the environment, history, literature, medicine, multicultural studies, geography, and science.                                                               |
| <b>eBooks (NetLibrary) (Funded by the Boston and Metrowest Regional Library Systems)</b> | View approximately 7,000 eBooks with illustrations (3,500 in the public domain) on popular topics such as travel, computers, consumer health and business on the web.                                                                                |
| <b>Newspapers (NewsBank) (Funded by the Massachusetts Regional Library Systems)</b>      | Full-text Massachusetts newspapers including the <i>Boston Globe</i> (1980-present, and The Springfield Republican (1988-present).                                                                                                                   |



MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF  
Library Commissioners

More information about statewide subscription databases can be found  
at <http://mbic.state.ma.us/grants/licenses/index.php>

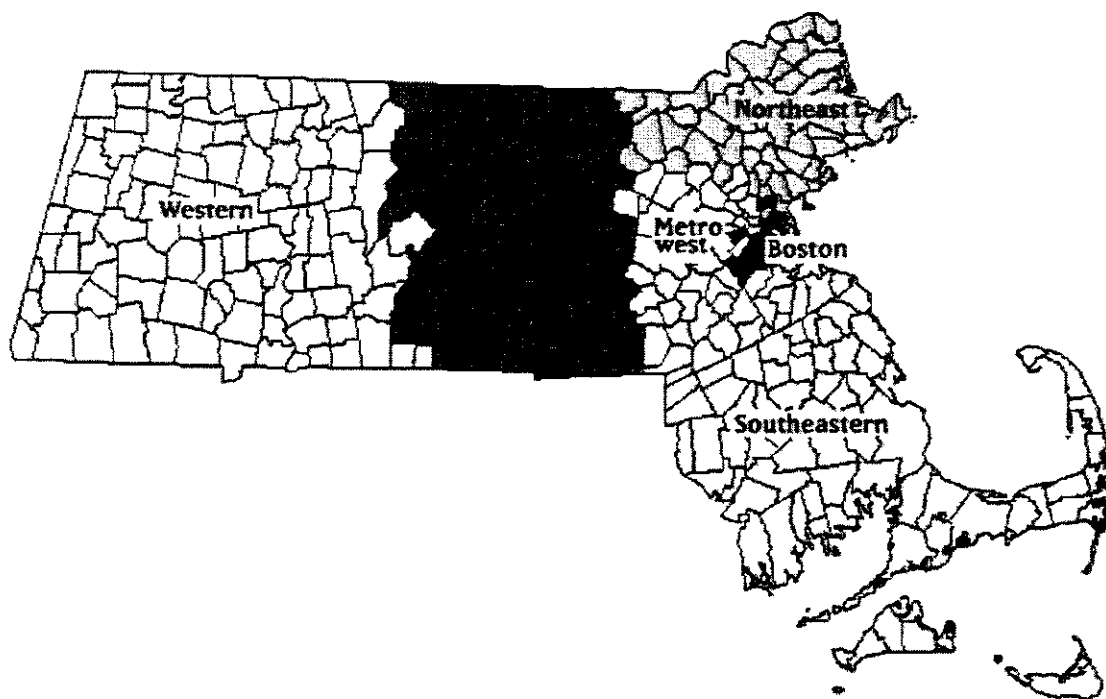


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Library Commissioners

## Regional Library Systems

The six Regional Library Systems provide services and support resource sharing among nearly 1,800 public, academic, school and special libraries in Massachusetts. Regional services include interlibrary loan, reference and referral, delivery of materials between libraries, continuing education, technical assistance, database access, bookmobile services, cooperative purchasing programs, supplemental deposit collections of print and non-print materials, and the Summer Reading Program.

Find out more at <http://mbic.state.ma.us/mbic/regional/index.php>



### Eligibility Requirements for Schools to belong to the Regional Library System

Each public school library must be staffed by a full- or part-time librarian meeting Massachusetts certification requirements as a school library media specialist; each non-public school library member must be staffed by a full- or part-time librarian meeting Massachusetts certification requirements or possessing a Master in Library Science degree.

## Can't You Just Find That on the Internet?

"...71 percent of American middle- and high-school students use the Internet as their No.1 research venue."<sup>1</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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<sup>2</sup> in 2001 states that both teenagers and their parents feel that the Internet is vital to completing school projects. 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 most 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 Massachusetts.

### Why use Massachusetts's subscription databases instead of Google?

The Massachusetts subscription contains a collection of resources that have been selected, organized and endorsed by educators. Information on the Massachusetts databases is:

- ❖ **AUTHORITATIVE**, with quality information from recognized publishers/sources.
- ❖ **SAFE**, with little chance of children getting to inappropriate sites.
- ❖ **FREE** with a MA public library card

<sup>1</sup> Levy, Stephen. "All Eyes on Google." *Newsweek International* 29 Mar 2004: 40.

<sup>2</sup> 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](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/39/report_display.asp)



## The School Library, Reading, and Your Child

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Good Books for Massachusetts Kids and Teens

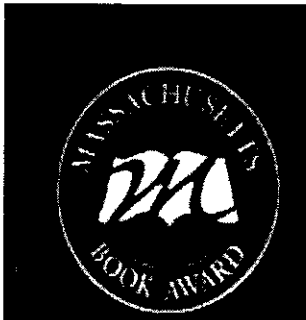
What should we choose at the library? What book should I buy my grandchild? There are so many books and too little time. Where should we start?

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



### Massachusetts Children's Book Award Grades 4-6

2006—*Molly Moon's Incredible Book of Hypnotism* by Georgia Byng  
 2005—*The Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke  
 2004—*Jackie and Me* by Dan Gutman  
[www.salemstate.edu/education/mcba](http://www.salemstate.edu/education/mcba)



### Massachusetts Book Award Adults as well as children's books awards

2006—*Where the Great Hawk Flies* by Liza Ketchum  
 —*The Old African* by Julius Lester  
 —*Beneath the Streets of Boston* by Joe McKendry  
[www.massbook.org/pastwinners.html](http://www.massbook.org/pastwinners.html)



### The Boston Globe—Horn Book Award Fiction and Poetry, Picture Book, and Nonfiction

2006—*The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline  
 —*Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert  
 —*If You Decide to Go to the Moon* by Faith McNulty, illustrated by Steven Kellogg  
<http://www.hbook.com/awards/bghb/>

## Celebrate Reading Massachusetts Style

Celebrating reading is appropriate any time. Massachusetts is fortunate to have a creative group of authors and illustrators producing exciting books for children and young adults including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry for all ages. Consider inviting one to your school. Information can be found at the authors' websites or at the Children's Book Council website [www.cbcbooks.org/contacts](http://www.cbcbooks.org/contacts).

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

Louisa May Alcott  
 Anna Alter  
 Molly Bang  
 Christopher Bing  
 Jeanne Birdsall  
 Nancy Bond  
 Jan Brett  
 Norman Bridwell  
 Margaret Chang  
 Andrew Clements  
 Robert Cormier  
 Jacqueline Davies  
 Marguerite Davol  
 Jana Dillon  
 Jane Dyer  
 Michael Emberley  
 Norm Finkelstein  
 Jack Gantos  
 Nancy Garden  
 Robie Harris  
 Barbara Harrison  
 Mark Peter Hughes  
 Carol Otis Hurst  
 D. B. Johnson  
 X. J. Kennedy  
 Liza Ketchum  
 Stephen Krenski

Julius Lester  
 Betty Levin  
 Grace Lin  
 Lois Lowry  
 Patricia MacLachlan  
 Greg Maguire  
 David McCord  
 Kathryn Lasky  
 Barbara McGrath  
 Richard Michelson  
 Barry Moser  
 Susannah Natti  
 Ilsa Plume  
 Nancy Poydar  
 Peter Reynolds  
 Marcia Sewall  
 Susan Meddaugh  
 Greg Tang  
 Ann Turner  
 Jane Yolen

Additional information about MA authors and illustrators can be found in the *2005-2007 New England Authors & Illustrators of Children's Books Directory*  
[www.newenglandbooks.org/order\\_form.html](http://www.newenglandbooks.org/order_form.html)

## Does Your School Library Support the Reading Program?

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

- A sustained silent reading program in every classroom once a day, K-12.
- A program to read aloud to every student once a day, K-12. This includes storytelling as well as oral reading.
- Motivational programs and challenges to encourage reading are preferable to contests.
- A program to involve parents in the total school reading initiative.
- A program to build a school-wide community of readers.
- Use technology assists to reading as long as those assists actually increase reading time and amount read (educational television, CD-ROM and eBooks).
- Celebrate reading regularly as milestones are reached.
- Create the sense that reading is fun! Cool! Something I enjoy!
- Other:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Reading research tells us that when young people have easy access to exciting reading materials, they read more!**

## Massachusetts Links to Great Reading Resources

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

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

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

**Letters About Literature** is a national reading and writing program that asks students in Grades 4 through 12 to write letters to authors whose work has made a significant difference in their lives. The Library of Congress and Target Stores sponsor it nationally. The Massachusetts Center for the Book, with primary sponsorship from the Calderwood Writing Initiative at the Boston Athenaeum, administers the Massachusetts state program. The Massachusetts Library Association also provides assistance. An annual awards ceremony is held at the State House. At [www.massbook.org](http://www.massbook.org)

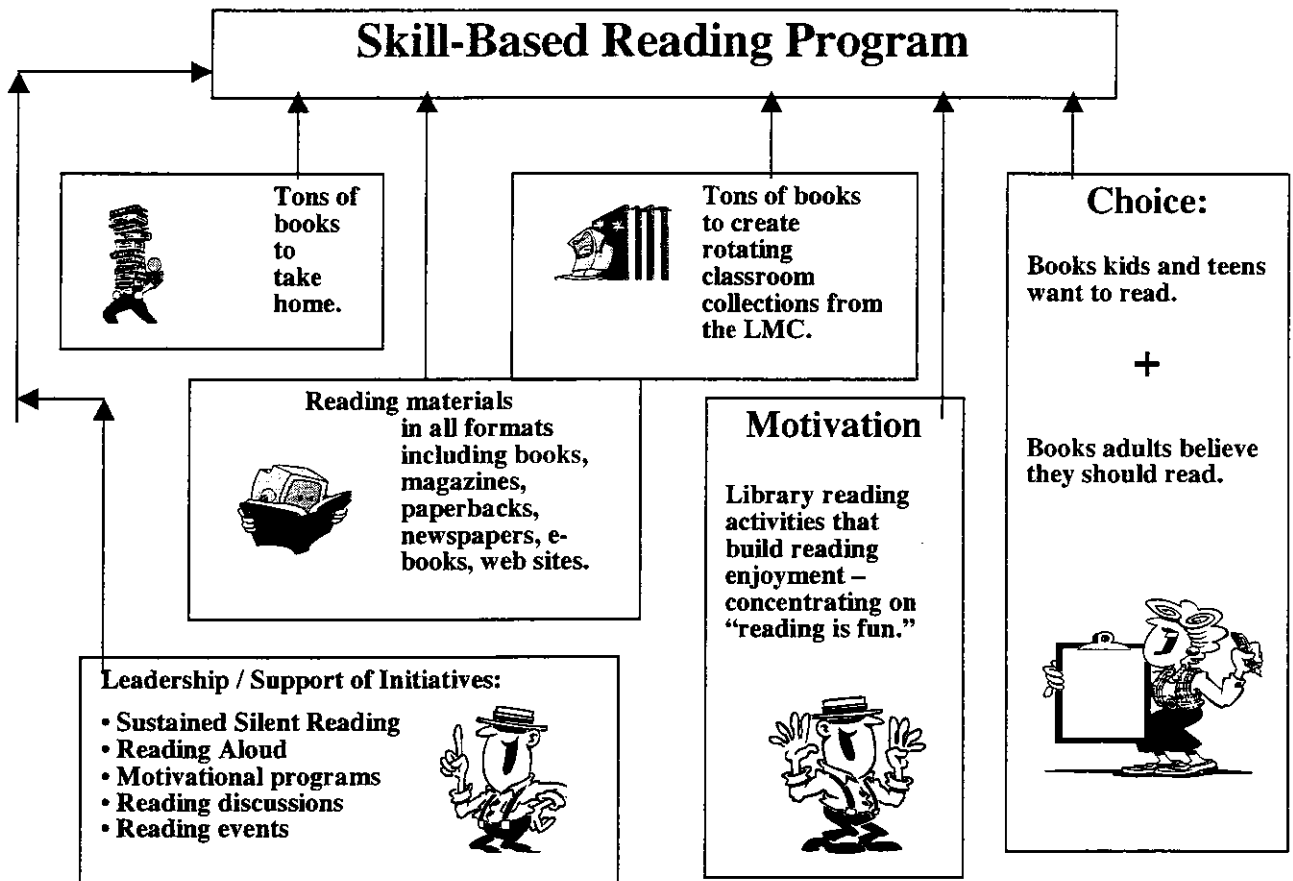
**Reading is Fundamental** helps deliver children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate school-age children to read regularly. At <http://www.rif.org>

**Red Sox Reading Game** is part of the Massachusetts Teachers Associations literacy initiative called Reading Matters. This campaign has been sponsored for six years because educators consider summer reading very important in developing life-long reading habits, in maintaining literacy skills and in promoting reading for pleasure. At [www.readingmatters.org/redsox/index.html](http://www.readingmatters.org/redsox/index.html)

**School Libraries Bookmark Contest** sponsored by the MA School Library Association invites students to celebrate "School Library Month" by designing a bookmark that shows the many activities, lessons and experiences that school librarians share with students. Student winners, announced at the Statehouse each April, receive statewide recognition and book certificates. At [www.mslma.org/schoollibrarymonth/07/bookmark07.html](http://www.mslma.org/schoollibrarymonth/07/bookmark07.html)

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

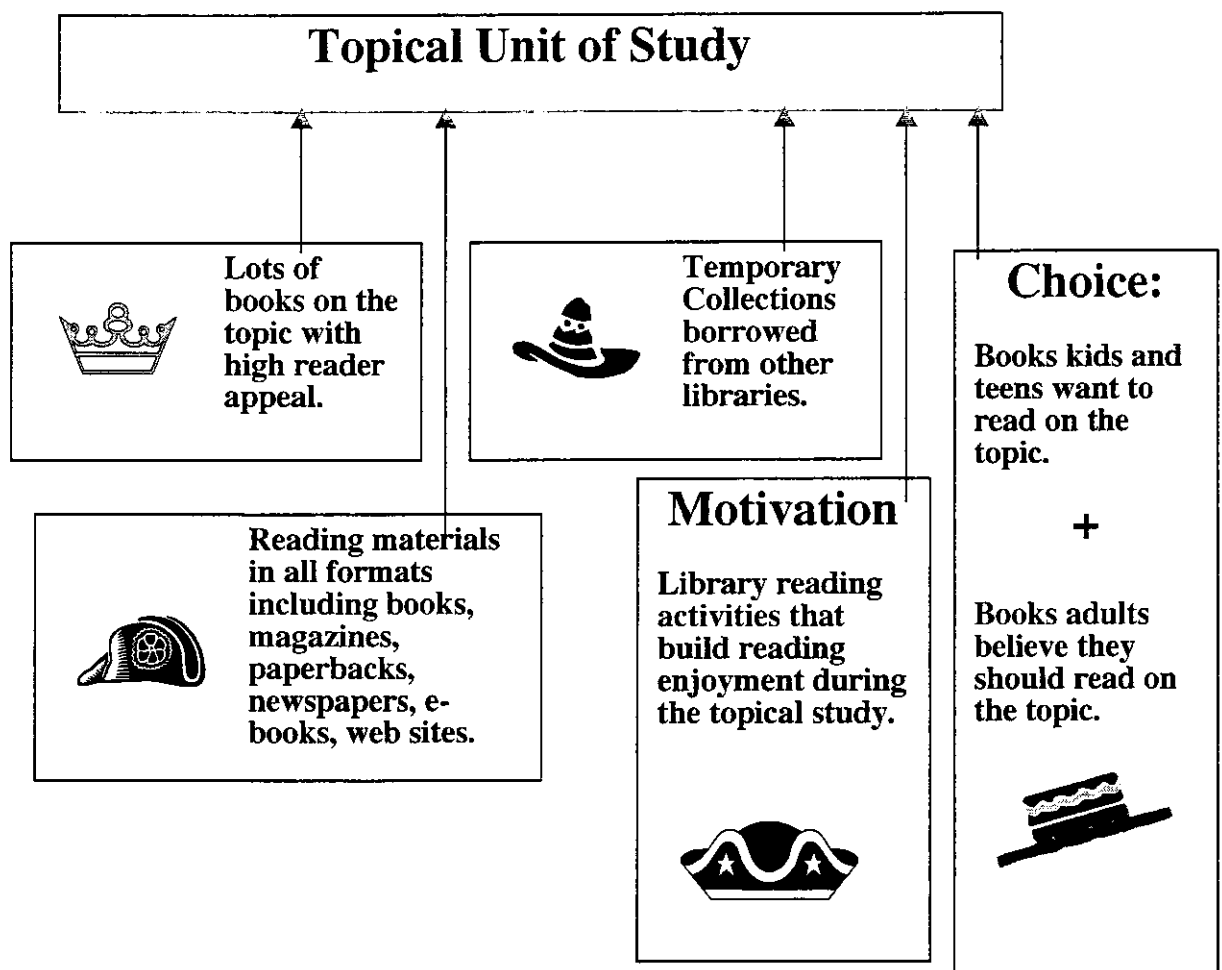
If a school community really believes the research saying that "amount counts," then the school and public library should have an extensive collection of reading materials young people want to read. So many school libraries in the nation have outdated, ragged, and uninteresting reading collections, so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



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

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

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



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



## How to Raise a Reader!

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

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

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

## I'm a Reader—And I Don't Apologize

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

### The Reader's Bill of Rights

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

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

## Reading to Your Child: A Few Tips

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

### For Young Children

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

### Developing Readers

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

### Beginning Readers

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

### Reading Aloud

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

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

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

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

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

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

### What to do:

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

**Reading is its own reward.**

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

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

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

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<sup>1</sup> Fader, Daniel. *The New Hooked on Books*. Putnam, 1977. The classic of the field. Fader worked with kids in prison and got them to read. Check a library. It's now out of print. Also: Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. Libraries Unlimited, 1993. One hundred years of research about reading can't be wrong.

## Books for Adolescents Who Dislike Reading

Prepared for the Boston Arts Academy/Fenway High School Library  
by Katherine Lowe

There are many wonderful books that will appeal to adolescents who dislike reading. Here is a list of some of them:

- *The Art of Optical Illusions* by Al Seckel
- *Big Mouth & Ugly Girl* by Joyce Carol Oates
- *Blind Sighted* by Peter Moore
- *The Brimstone Journals* by Ron Koertge
- *Children of the River* by Linda Crew
- *City of the Beasts* by Isabel Allende
- *City of Embers* by Jeanne Duprau
- *Confessions of a Backup Dancer* by Tucker Shaw
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon
- *Dead Girls Don't Write Letters* by Gail Giles
- *Deathwatch* by Robb White
- *Double Helix* by Nancy Werlin
- *Draw Characters for Japanese Animation* by Christopher Hart
- *Emako Blue* by Brenda Woods
- *Feed* by M.T. Anderson
- *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson
- *Foolish/Unfoolish: Reflections On Love* by Ashanti
- *Forgotten Fire* by Adam Bagdasaria
- *The Girls* by Amy Goldman Koss
- *The Gospel According to Larry* by Janet Tashjian
- *Gossip Girl* by Cecily Von Ziegesar
- *House of Dies Drear* by Virginia Hamilton
- *House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer
- *In the Shadow of No Towers* by Art Spiegelman
- *Journey to the Center of the Earth* by Jules Verne
- *Last Chance Texaco* by Brent Hartinger
- *Life is Funny* by E.R. Frank
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
- *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech
- *Oh, My Goddess! Wrong Number* by Kosuke Fujishima
- *This Book is About Sex* by Tucker Shaw
- *Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden
- *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson
- *What My Mother Doesn't Know* by Sonya Sones

### Favorite Authors

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Douglas Adams   | Chris Crutcher  |
| Sharon Draper   | Chris Lynch     |
| Gary Paulsen    | Louise Rennison |
| William Sleator |                 |

### Books in Series

*Fruits Basket* series by Natsuk Takaya  
*Orca Soundings* books  
*Alex Rider* series by Anthony Horowitz  
*Bluford* series by Paul Langan  
*Anne E. Schraff Sweep* series by Cate Tiernan  
*Tripods* series by John Christopher

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

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

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

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

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

### Common Goals of School and Public Libraries

- Introduce, promote, and encourage children to love and appreciate reading and good literature
- Develop capable critical users of information and technology
- Improve listening skills
- Foster visual literacy
- Assist children in understanding themselves and their world
- Encourage each child to develop to his/her fullest potential
- Develop life long learners

From the joint statement on "School/Public Library Services to Children" at [www.mslna.org/whoweare/cooperationMLA.html](http://www.mslna.org/whoweare/cooperationMLA.html).

## Don't Leave Summer Reading to Chance

*What support and encouragement for summer reading exists at your community school or public library? Ask your school's librarian and teachers what they can do to encourage your child to take advantage of reading during the next scheduled break from school.*

Reading teachers, school librarians, and principals should develop a school-wide plan that increases independent reading during the summer. Reading practice helps ensure higher reading scores. Lack of practice results in summer loss, especially among middle grades students.

Following are a few ways to promote summer reading:

**Plan A: School and Public Library Summer Reading Programs.** Most schools require students to read over the summer. Each school has its own requirements and summer reading list. Be sure to ask your school's library teacher for a copy and check with your public library to see if they have copies of the books assigned for summer reading available. The Massachusetts Regional Library Systems sponsors your regional library system's youth services consultant for more information about the summer reading program at your public library and make sure your child participates.

**Plan B: Public Library.** Work with the local public library to promote summer reading. Help students obtain public library cards. Have public librarians visit the school to talk about summer programs for young adolescents. Plan a field trip to the public library. If this is not possible, plan a meeting after school at the public library and encourage students to attend.

**Plan C: Book Discussion Groups.** Recruit students to participate in a book discussion group led by teachers or the school librarian at a public library. Select the first two book titles and encourage students to read the first book. At the first meeting, discuss the first book, set the date for the next meeting, introduce the next book, and seek recommendations from the participants for the third book.

**Plan D: School List.** Work with teachers and students to decide on a list of five books that everyone should read over the summer. Promote the five books in

### **Don't Leave Summer Reading to Chance<sup>1</sup> (cont.)**

classrooms and the school library. Ask the public library to purchase several copies of the books. Ask the PTA to purchase additional copies of the books to be placed in the public library. Find information about the authors, other books by the authors, and similar books written by other authors and place this information on the school website. At the beginning of school in the fall, have class discussions about the five books.

**Plan E: Individualized Summer Reading.** Prepare a summer reading booklet using copy paper. Make sections for books, magazines, and newspapers. Students write in date, material read, time spent, and comments. Show students an example of what might be written. Inform parents of the program and encourage them to provide the opportunities and encouragement needed to increase summer reading. Students turn in their completed booklets to teachers in the fall. Examples are used in subsequent years, and students who kept good records are invited to share their results prior to the following summer.

**Plan F: Summer Reading for New Students.** Prepare a list of books for summer reading and distribute and promote the list to students and parents at the orientation meeting for new students. Have an older student stress the importance of summer reading. Show a visual of how to access the school website concerning the summer reading program for new students. Invite a public librarian to explain how the public library will have programs and materials for use by students and how students may obtain public library cards.

**Plan G: Reading Matters.** The Massachusetts Teachers Association in conjunction with Staples has established a web site to promote reading and literacy among Massachusetts's children. It has reading tips, activities, and links to a wealth of resources to help promote reading, in addition to providing details about the Red Sox Reading Game contest. Check it out at [www.readingmatters.org](http://www.readingmatters.org).

Don't leave summer reading to chance. Promote the summer reading plan via the school web site/newsletter and by providing the local newspaper with an article about the school and its interest in summer reading.

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Adapted from an article written for *Indiana Power!* by Jack Humphrey, Director of Middle Grades Reading Network, University of Evansville, 2004.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## When Parents and Books Cross Swords: A Few Tips (cont.)

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

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

**Intellectual Freedom** is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. It is a core value of the library profession and a cornerstone of democracy.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/basics/intellectual.htm>

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

**Helpful source: MSLMA Intellectual Freedom  
Pamphlet:**  
<http://www.msma.org/howeare/intellfreedom.html>

## Too Good to Miss: MSLA Favorite Picture Books

There are so many wonderful picture books for the younger set and for "children" of all ages that we could recommend, but we had to make choices. Enjoy these favorites and please read other titles by these authors.

- *And the Dish Ran Away With the Spoon* by Janet Stevens
- *Bad Case of Stripes* by David Shannon
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Eric Carle
- *Bunny Money* by Rosemary Wells
- *Chicken Soup with Rice* by Maurice Sendak
- *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin
- *Don't Let the Pigeon Ride the Bus!* by Mo Willems
- *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* by Eileen Christelow
- *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson
- *Harry the Dirty Dog* series by Gene Zion
- *Have You Seen My Duckling?* by Nancy Tafuri
- *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg* by D. B. Johnson
- *Horton Hatches the Egg* by Dr. Seuss
- *How Much is a Million* by David M. Schwartz
- *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff
- *Letting Swift River Go* by Jane Yolen
- *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes
- *Martha Speaks* by Susan Meddaugh
- *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney
- *My Little Sister Ate One Hare* by Bill Grossman
- *Officer Buckle and Gloria* by Peggy Rathman
- *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie DePaola
- *Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats
- *The Red Eyed Tree Frog* by Joy Cowley
- *Rocks in his Head* by Carol Otis Hurst
- *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni
- *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
- *Squids will be Squids, Fresh Morals, Beastly Fables* by Jon Scieszka
- *Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf
- *The Talking Eggs* by Robert San Souci
- *Thank you, Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Traction Man is Here!* By Mini Grey
- *The Tub People* by Pam Conrad
- *Tuesday* by David Wiesner
- *When Marion Sang* by Pam Munoz Ryan (older)
- *When the Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant
- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
- *Zachary's Ball* by Matt Tavares

## Chapter Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

There are so many wonderful fiction books for grades 3-5 that we could recommend, but we had to make choices. Here are some of our favorites, but we hope you will read other titles by these authors.

- *Anastasia Krupnik* by Lois Lowry
- *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo
- *Ballad of Lucy Whipple* by Karen Cushman
- *Bunnicula* by James Howe
- *Catwings* by Ursula LeGuin
- *Chocolate Fever* by Robert Kimmel Smith
- *City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau
- *Cricket in Times Square* by George Selden
- *Dacey's Song* by Cynthia Voigt
- *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Frindle* by Andrew Clements
- *Fudge-a-Mania* by Judy Blume
- *Half Magic* by Edward Eager
- *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen
- *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes
- *The Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell
- *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* by Jack Gantos
- *Judy Moody* by Megan McDonald
- *The Landry News* by Andrew Clements
- *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech
- *Midnight of Charlie Bone* by Jenny Nimmo
- *Mr. Popper's Penguins* by Richard Atwater
- *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert O'Brien
- *My Father's Dragon* by Ruth Stiles Gannett
- *Poppy* by Avi
- *Ramona the Brave* by Beverly Cleary
- *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse...* by Kate DiCamillo
- *The Watson's Go to Birmingham* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Winnie the Pooh* by A. A. Milne
- *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck

Author Web Sites are linked from  
<http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/%7Edkbrown/authors.html>

## Teen Books Too Good to Miss: Our Favorites

Joan Collins, library media specialist, John Glenn Middle School, Bedford, MA, recommends the following titles that have been popular with secondary students.

### Favorites

- *Danger Zone* by David Klass
- *Joyride* by Amy Ehrlich
- *Killing Mr. Griffin* by Lois Duncan
- *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Montmorency: Thief, Liar, Gentleman?* By Eleanor Updale
- *Rules of the Road* by Joan Bauer
- *Speak* by Laurie Halse Andersen
- *Tangerine* by Edward Bloor

### Grades 6-8

- *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Petersen Haddix
- *Apprenticeship of Lucas Whitaker* by Cynthia DeFelice
- *Midnight for Charlie Bone* by Jenny Nimmo
- *P.S. Longer Letter Later* by Paula Danziger
- *Stormbreaker* by Anthony Horowitz
- *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* by Kimberly Willis Holt

### Science Fiction and Fantasy

- *Airborn* by Kenneth Oppel
- *Eva* by Peter Dickinson
- *Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman
- *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams
- *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer
- *Lord of the Rings* by J. R. Tolkien

### Adult Books for YA's

- *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* by Mark Haddon
- *In My Hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer* by Irene Gut Opdyke
- *Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini
- *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult

## More Best Books Lists for Your Child/Teen

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

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Association of Library Services for Children</b> (American Library Association) does a number of excellent book lists each year and sponsors the famous Caldecott and Newbery Awards, Bura Belpre and Coretta Scott King Awards.</p> | <p><a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds">www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds</a></p>                         |
| <p><b>Young Adult Library Services Association</b> (American Library Association) lists include: Best Books for Young Adults; Quick Picks for the Reluctant Young Reader; Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults</p>                          | <p><a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.htm">www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.htm</a></p>                   |
| <p><i>Booklist</i>. Books for Youth; Adult Books for Young Adults; Media (Audio, Video, CDs)</p>                                                                                                                                           | <p><a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/editorschoice/booklisteditors.htm">www.ala.org/ala/booklist/editorschoice/booklisteditors.htm</a></p>             |
| <p><i>Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p><a href="http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/">alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/</a></p>                                                                 |
| <p><i>Children's, Teacher's and YA Choices</i> (International Reading Association)</p>                                                                                                                                                     | <p><a href="http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices.html">www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices.html</a></p>                                         |
| <p><i>Notable Trade Books</i> (National Council for the Social Studies)</p>                                                                                                                                                                | <p><a href="http://www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/">www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable/</a></p>                                                 |
| <p><i>Outstanding Science trade Books for Children</i> (National Science Teachers Association)</p>                                                                                                                                         | <p><a href="http://www.nsta.org/ostbc">www.nsta.org/ostbc</a></p>                                                                                             |
| <p><i>Horn Book</i> Parent's Page</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><a href="http://www.hbook.com/teachersparents/default.asp">www.hbook.com/teachersparents/default.asp</a></p>                                               |
| <p><i>Children's Literature Choices</i> (annual Top Choices list)</p>                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><a href="http://www.childrenslit.com/clc.htm">www.childrenslit.com/clc.htm</a></p>                                                                         |
| <p><b>The Christopher Awards Books for Young People</b> to books "which affirm the highest values of the human spirit."</p>                                                                                                                | <p><a href="http://www.christophers.org/awardsmm.html">www.christophers.org/awardsmm.html</a></p>                                                             |
| <p><b>Américas Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature</b> (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, U of WI)</p>                                                                                                     | <p><a href="http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CLACS/outreach/americas.html">www.uwm.edu/Dept/CLACS/outreach/americas.html</a></p>                                       |
| <p><b>Best Children's Science Picture Book</b> (Giverny Award)</p>                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><a href="http://www.15degreelab.com/award06.html">www.15degreelab.com/award06.html</a></p>                                                                 |
| <p><b>Children's Literature Web Guide</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p><a href="http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown">www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown</a></p>                                                                         |
| <p><b>New York Public Library: 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know</b></p>                                                                                                                                                              | <p><a href="http://kids.nypl.org/reading/recommended2.cfm?ListID=61">http://kids.nypl.org/reading/recommended2.cfm?ListID=61</a></p>                          |
| <p><b>Chicago Public Library Best of the Best: Books for Great Kids and Teens</b></p>                                                                                                                                                      | <p><a href="http://www.chipublib.org/008subject/003cya/bestofbest/best04_intro.html">www.chipublib.org/008subject/003cya/bestofbest/best04_intro.html</a></p> |

## School Libraries Matter!

Currently, the Massachusetts Department of Education does not provide any specific funding, leadership or statewide standards for school libraries because they are not included in Chapter 70, the Education Reform Law. Therefore, Massachusetts schools are not required to provide library programs for students. This has led to the progressive decay of library programs across the state and is compromising the success of Education Reform in the Commonwealth.

The inclusion of school libraries in Chapter 70 would ensure that Massachusetts schools provide the information, literacy, and technology centers students need to maximize their achievements under Education Reform.

Well-designed studies from 16 states, including a study conducted at Simmons College in Boston, show a positive relationship between good school libraries and student achievement, including positive impacts on:<sup>1</sup> **reading scores; literacy; technology skills; academic achievement as measured by standardized testing, including MCAS.**

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluates library/media services and staffing as part of its accreditation process for secondary schools.<sup>2</sup>

Chapter 15 of the Massachusetts General Laws supports the establishment of school library media centers, including the acquisition of materials and professional staffing.

Department of Education specifications for new school construction include school library media centers in all new buildings.<sup>3</sup>

Only schools with credentialed library teachers are eligible to participate in regional library systems and receive government grants, databases, and other support worth thousands of dollars per district.<sup>4</sup>

### ***What can you do?***

**Contact your legislators and urge them to pass legislation that includes school libraries in the Education Reform Law, Chapter 70.**

**With adequate facilities and the presence of a professional library teacher a school library/media center evolves from a stagnant book warehouse to a dynamic learning center!**

**A strong library program is a cost-effective way to boost student achievement.**

<sup>1</sup> For specific study results consult the Massachusetts School Library Association website <http://www.maschoollibraries.org>

<sup>2</sup> New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Public Secondary Schools, Standards for Accreditation for Year 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Massachusetts Education Laws and Regulations 603 CMR 38.00: School Construction

<sup>4</sup> Consult the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for specific requirements

## **FACT SHEET:**

### **Massachusetts School Library Media Centers**

#### **THE PROBLEM:**

Massachusetts education policy makers are not supporting the power of school library media centers to help students achieve. There is great inequity in access to quality literature and information and library professionals in schools throughout the state.

Of the fifty U.S. states, Massachusetts ranks:

- **38th** in providing its public school students with state-certified library media specialists,
- **41st** in teachers who agree that school library materials are adequate to support educational objectives,
- **49th** in providing its public schools with school libraries and
- **50th** in mean circulation per pupil per school of all library materials.

The 1999 Simmons Study of MA School Library Media Centers found that:

- **37%** of Massachusetts elementary schools did not have full-time library professionals on staff,
- **8%** of public schools did not have a library media center,
- An average of \$12.00 per child is spent for school library books—less than half the average cost of one hardcover children's book.
- The MA Department of Education has no administrator designated to provide leadership and set standards for school library media programs statewide.
- Neither MA education reform legislation nor the MA Department of Education provides specific funding, leadership or plans for improving public school library media services.
- The progressive decay of library media programs in many MA school districts has compromised the success of education reform.

#### **THE SOLUTION:**

Provide the school library resources necessary to help children maximize their academic achievement. Evidence from the Simmons Study indicates "equal educational opportunity comes more within reach for all children in the presence of a school library program that supports, extends and enriches the educational process". Educational research has firmly established that higher student academic achievement is associated with

- State, local and national leadership in support of school library media programs,
- An elementary school library media center whose collection is aligned with the MA Curriculum Frameworks. This is especially true in schools that have a high percentage (15% or more) of free school lunches.
- A school library media center which is equipped with a quality collection of books and other educational media professionally selected to support and enrich the school's curriculum,



- A school library media program which is adequately staffed, according to national guidelines, and has library professional(s) who are an integral part of the school's planning and teaching team,
- MA schools whose libraries have more open hours for student access, automated collections, information literacy programs, book counts which meet or exceed state standards, and increased student use.

## WHAT LEGISLATORS CAN DO:

Support the power of school libraries to help all students succeed! Massachusetts's legislators have proven their commitment to providing children with a quality, equitable education through education reform. Integral to the success of education reform is the provision of information-rich school environments. School libraries are the information and literacy centers of their learning communities. Legislative leadership in support of school libraries will help education reform succeed and Massachusetts's public school students achieve.

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## Classroom Collections

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

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

### Advantages of Print Classroom Collections

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

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

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

### Solution: ROTATING Classroom Collections

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

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

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

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

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

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

Consider this:

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

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

*In Massachusetts from 1999 to 2005, expenditures for school library materials decreased from \$16.90 to \$14.46 per student<sup>1</sup>, while the average price of a book increased from \$16.66 in 1999 to \$20.52 in 2005.<sup>2</sup> In terms of buying-power, this means that at current funding levels, a school librarian cannot even afford to add one new book per student to the library collection each year, and difficult choices must be made between providing students access to books or online resources and equipment.*

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

Here are a few things you could do:

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

<sup>1</sup> School Library Data. MA Bd of Library Commissioners. Accessed online: <http://mblic.state.ma.us/advisory/statistics/school/index.php> 9/17/06

<sup>2</sup> St. Lifer, Even. 2005 Book Prices. School Library Journal. Accessed online: <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA83277.html> and <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA507329.html> 9/17/2006.

## Volunteering at the School Library

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

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

### 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 including old encyclopedias, National Geographic magazines, and your old college textbooks.
3. Persons with an ax to grind, something to sell, or a political agenda.
4. Volunteers who accept the responsibility to run a library when there isn't a certified school librarian.

## How Parent Groups Can Help the School Library

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

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

Resource: Learn more about ways to support your child's school library at [www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/toolkits/whatparentsshould.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/toolkits/whatparentsshould.htm)

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

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

### What the library offers for free:

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

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

### What you can do:

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

Check out this site for information and links to support families of language minority students: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/>.

## Great Quotes

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

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

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

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

*"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*, 1966.

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

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

*"When I walk into a school and see a good library, it usually means that there's a good principal."* ~Jean Fritz, noted children's author

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

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

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

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

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

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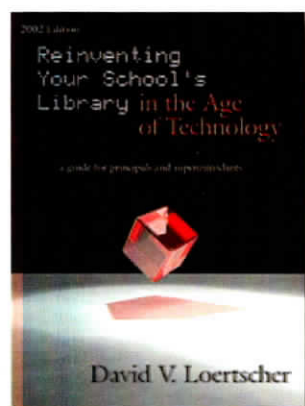
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## **Reinventing Your School's Library in the Age of Technology: A Guide for Principals and Superintendents**

2002 Edition

David V. Loertscher

Hi Willow Research and Publishing

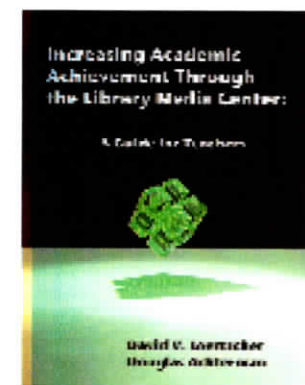
ISBN: 0-931510-79-1

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**

A Guide for Teachers

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

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.