

TL's best professional books for 2008 and this month's reviews

Remember additional reviews can be found online at the following wiki: <http://professionalreviews.pbwiki.com>, offering you even greater access to the professional literature that can help you in your role. You can also add your comments to the wiki about professional titles that you have read, providing a different perspective from that of the reviewer about the various books that appear on the site.

BEST PROFESSIONAL BOOKS 2008

COACHING: APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES

Jim Knight, Ed.

(Corwin Press, 2008. 222 pp. \$33.95. 978-1-4129-6925-3.)

Bottom line: A broad perspective of coaching and coaches in the school who have the same collaborative mission as the teacher-librarian.

GIRLS IN SCIENCE: A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Liesl Chatman, Katherine Nielsen, Erin J. Strauss, and Kimberly D. Tanner

(NSA, 2008. 290 pp. \$24.94. 978-1-933531-04-5.)

Bottom line: A great read as teachers demonstrate how to create, teach, and reflect on what great teaching looks like. Teacher-librarians can discover here the types of conversations and introspections essential in collaboration.

SCHOOLING BY DESIGN: MISSION, ACTION, AND ACHIEVEMENT

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe

(ASCD, 2007. 297pp. \$30.95. 978-1-4166-0580-5.)

Bottom line: Covers the elements of excellence in school organization from these must-read authors.

TEACH LIKE YOUR HAIR'S ON FIRE: THE METHODS AND MADNESS INSIDE ROOM 56

Rafe Esquith

(Penguin, 2007. 256 pp. \$14.00. 978-0-14-311286-0.)

Bottom line: Snuck in from 2007, this very popular book by a very successful teacher actually discusses methods for teaching the best literature and using libraries. A great story with major suggestions for excellence in teaching and reaching urban and multicultural learners.

ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING: A LEADERSHIP GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS, 2ND ED.

Jean Donham

(Neil-Schuman, 2008. 351 pp. \$65.00. 978-1-55570-647-0.)

Bottom line: In this revision, Donham integrates the 2007 AASL Learning Standards into the creation and push towards excellence from the library/learning commons.

THE DIFFERENTIATED SCHOOL: MAKING REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Carol Ann Tomlinson, Kay Brimjoin, and Lane Narvaez

(ASCD, 2008. 240 pp. \$29.95. 978-1-4166-0678-9.)

Bottom line: Most have read Tomlinson's work on differentiation within the classroom. This volume extends those ideas into the school organization as a whole.

A GUIDE TO CO-TEACHING WITH PARAEducATORS: PRACTICAL TIPS FOR K-12 EDUCATORS

Ann I. Nevin, Richard A. Villa, and Jacqueline S. Thousand

(Corwin Press, 2008. 132 pp. \$28.95. 978-1-4129-5764-9.)

Bottom line: Methods of including support personnel under the direction of professionals in high quality programs. Useful even though addressed from the special education perspective.



BETTY
WINSLOW

> JUNIOR FICTION

GIRLS WHO DON'T GIVE UP

Abraham Lincoln: Letters from a slave girl (Dear Mr. President series), Andrea Davis Pinkney, Winslow Press, 2001. \$8.95. 978-1-890817-60-2. Grades 5-9. This fictional collection of letters exchanged between President Lincoln and a young slave also includes historical information, photographs, a timeline, and an index.

A curse dark as gold, Elizabeth C. Bunce, Arthur A. Levine, 2008. \$17.99. 978-0-439-89576-7. Grades 6-8. In this re-imagining of the Pumperstiltskin tale, Charlotte Miller makes a deal with Jack Spinner to keep the family's woolen mill out of the hands of her grasping uncle, but it may cost her more than she's willing to pay.

Romeo's Ex: Rosaline's Story, Lisa Fiedler, Henry Holt, 2006. \$16.95. 978-0-8050-7500-7. Grades 7-8. A generations-long feud explodes and young people on both sides are unwillingly caught between family hate and first love. Includes some bawdy Elizabethan dialogue and introduces characters from *Twelfth Night* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The season, Sarah MacLean, Orchard Books, 2009. \$16.99. 978-0-545-04886-6. Grades 7-8. Lady Alexandra and her friends, bored by Regency society's emphasis on "coming out" and marriage for young ladies, are adamant about remaining single unless they meet men who can accept their unconventional ways. But life is full of surprises....

Song of the sparrow, Lisa Ann Sandell, Scholastic Press, 2007. \$16.99. 978-0-43991-848-0. Grades 6-8. Sixteen-year-old Elaine of Ascolat tells (in verse) the story of her life as the daughter of one of King Arthur's soldiers, her doomed love of Lancelot, her mixed feelings about Gwynivere, and her attempt to protect her loved ones.

BUILDING INFO SMARTS

Carol Koechlin and Sandi Zwaan (Pembroke/Stenhouse, 2008. 32 pp. \$11.00. 978-1-55138-226-5.)

Bottom line: A quick and very useful guide to doing research. Have learners create their own tip sheets when they use this one.

LIBRARIANS AS LEARNING SPECIALISTS: MEETING THE LEARNING IMPERATIVE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Allison by Zmuda and Violet H. Harada (Libraries Unlimited, 2008. 148 pp. \$40.00. 978-1-59158-679-1.)

Bottom line: Simply the best professional book of the year for teacher-librarians who must push into the center of teaching and learning in their schools.

WEB LITERACY FOR EDUCATORS

Alan November (Corwin Press, 2008. 109 pp. \$25.95. 978-1-4129-5842-4.)

Bottom line: It's all about the quality of information in this day and age. November provides many ways to ascertain high quality. Compare his techniques with yours and teach them to classroom teachers and learners.

TRANSFORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

W. James Popham (ASCD, 2008. 150 pp. \$22.95. 978-1-4166-0667-3.)

Bottom line: An expert in assessment, Popham demonstrates how to use formative assessment (the kind that happens continually rather than just at the end) to ascertain progress. A great match in learning to assess the many AASL Learning Standards dimensions.

DESIGNING AND ASSESSING EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES: APPLYING THE NEW TAXONOMY

Robert J. Marzano and John S. Kendall (Corwin Press, 2008. 192 pp. \$31.95. 978-1-4129-4035-1.)

Bottom line: An essential read for teacher-librarians who need to be at the forefront

and in the conversation about objectives and assessments. Great for professional learning communities.

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA MANAGER, 4TH EDITION

Blanche Woolls (libraries Unlimited, 2008. 296 pp. \$45.00. 978-1-59158-643-2.)

Bottom line: The fourth edition of this popular textbook for creating and sustaining a school library media program.

BETTER LEARNING THROUGH STRUCTURED TEACHING: A FRAMEWORK FOR THE GRADUAL RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Doug Fisher (ASCD, 2008. 146 pp. \$23.95. 978-1-4166-0635-2.)

Bottom line: Use this book with the AASL Learning Standards to create a gradual release of control over the research process. It is a good model to use as we prepare learners for college.

COLLABORATING FOR PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN GRADES 9-12

Violet H. Harada, Carolyn H. Kirio, and Sandra H. Yamamoto (Linworth, 2008. 200 pp. \$44.95. 978-1-58683-291-9.)

Bottom line: This trio demonstrates what great learning experiences look like in the high school library/learning commons.

POWERFUL LEARNING: WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Linda Darling-Hammond, Brigid Barron, P. David Pearson, Alan H. Schoenfeld, Elizabeth K., Stage, Timothy D. Zimmerman, Gina N. Cervetti, and Jennifer L. Tilson (Jossey-Bass, 2008. 288 pp. \$27.95. 978-0-470-27667-9.)

Bottom line: Check this book out for study by the professional learning community in the discussion of integrating technology into highly effective teaching and learning. A jewel by a prominent educator.

THE NEW LEARNING COMMONS: WHERE LEARNERS WIN! REINVENTING SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND COMPUTER LABS

David V. Leortscher, Carol Koechlin, and Sandi Zwaan
(Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2008. 150 pp. \$28.00. 978-1-933170-40-4.)
Bottom line: An exercise in 180-degree thinking as the school library is transformed into a physical and virtual learning commons. A challenge to the entire profession.

LEADERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE: INSIGHTS OF NATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS

Jo Ann Carr
(American Library Association, 2008. 120 pp. \$43.00. 978-0-8389-0961-4.)
Bottom line: A review of winners of the NSLMPY award given by AASL each year for excellence. How do you measure up?

HOT, FLAT, AND CROWDED: WHY WE NEED A GREEN REVOLUTION AND HOW IT CAN RENEW AMERICA

Thomas L. Friedman
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008. 448 pp. \$27.95. 978-0-374-16685-4.)
Bottom line: Continuing the conversation of *The World is Flat*, keep up with Friedman's ideas and how they influence education in this time of transition.

IBRAIN: SURVIVING THE TECHNOLOGICAL ALTERATION OF THE MODERN MIND

Gary W. Small and Gigi Vorgan
(Collins Living, 2008. 256 pp. \$24.95. 978-0-06-134033-8.)
Bottom line: How do adults work with the new tech generation whose minds are quite different than ours?

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS: SECOND EDITION

NETS Projects
(ISTE, 2008. 32 pp. \$12.95. 978-1-56484-243-5.)
Bottom line: Be sure to keep up with the

various standards ISTE is issuing as well as those revised by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills—Route 21.

WE ARE SMARTER THAN ME: HOW TO UNLEASH THE POWER OF CROWDS IN YOUR BUSINESS

Barry Libert and Jon Spector
Wharton School Publishing, 2008. 176 pp. \$21.99. 978-0-13-224479-4.)
Bottom line: Everything is going collaborative. Examples and insight to spur conversations.

DISRUPTING CLASS: HOW DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION WILL CHANGE THE WAY THE WORLD LEARNS

Clayton M. Christensen, Michael B. Horn, and Curtis W. Johnson
(McGraw-Hill, 2008. 238 pp. \$32.95. 978-0-07-159206-2.)
Bottom line: A proposed makeover of how technology can be used to transform education. Sure to be talked about widely.

REDEFINING LITERACY 2.0, 2ND ED.

David F. Warlick
(Linworth, 2008. 183 pp. \$34.95. 978-1-58683-333-1.)
Bottom line: Put this on your reading list.

THIS MONTH'S PROFESSIONAL READING REVIEWS

REDEFINING LITERACY 2.0, 2ND ED.

David F. Warlick
Warlick acknowledges in his introduction that since his first edition, published in 2004, much has changed and developed in the world of information technology. So, while many of the same messages of the original still grace these pages, new examples, ideas, and trends are noted. This is an extremely important book for every teacher-librarian to read and think about. What are the expanding ideas about literacy beyond skilled reading and writing? And, how are new technologies foundational in the demands of the flat world that requires new skills to compete successfully on a global stage? What actions can teacher-

librarians, teacher technologists, and other school leaders take to insure that kids are growing up in a changed literacy environment? Even if you have read the previous edition, put this on your professional learning community's list. (Linworth, 2008. 183 pp. \$34.95. 978-1-58683-3336.)
Bottom line: Not previously reviewed, we name this as one of the best professional books of 2008.

WHAT SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS DO: 101 RESEARCH-BASED CLASSROOM STRATEGIES FOR NEW AND VETERAN TEACHERS, 2ND ED.

Neal A. Glasgow and Cathy D. Hicks
The authors of this collection of research pieces obviously combed the literature for juicy morsels of research that they transform into useful strategies for classroom teachers. They provide a finding from one or several research studies, locate classroom applications for those findings, and warn of precautions and possible pitfalls with those applications. After reading many of these 101 entries, particularly in the areas of technology and reading, the reader discovers disconnected findings, often from a single study that is being generalized far beyond what can actually be inferred from the single study in a few schools or a group of learners. And, there is never mention of the expertise of a teacher technologist or teacher-librarian to assist the classroom teacher in helping learners select high quality information from the Internet, cope with plagiarism, teach media literacy, or find interesting books to read. The school library is mentioned in one place we found, where the authors comment that previously almost all information that kids and teens used came from their textbooks or the school library but now they have access to the Internet. The implication is that none of the previous sources are of much consequence. The more one reads, in the book, the more the 101 ideas form separate unique quilt blocks that leave the reader confused about any patterns across research such as Marzano does in his books that draw research findings together.

(Corwin Press, 2009. 254 pp. \$36.95. 978-1-4129-6619-1.)
Bottom line: We do not recommend the book as adding significantly to any kind of synthesis that would be useful in

KATHLEEN
ODEAN

> YA FICTION

MAGICAL ADVENTURES

Graceling Kristin Cashore. Harcourt, 2008. \$17.00. 978-0-15-206396-2. Grades 7-10. Katsa, a graceling, has a special talent for fighting, which she does at her king's will. When she meets a graceling prince, who's almost her match in sparring, Katsa realizes that she should take control of her own power. Her dangerous journey with the prince to rescue his cousin transforms Katsa's beliefs and her life. Perfect for Tamora Pierce fans.

The graveyard book Neil Gaiman, Harper, 2008. \$17.99. 978-0-06-053092-1. Grades 5-9. "It takes a graveyard to raise a child," the author slyly asserts in this entertaining story of a boy raised in a cemetery after his family is murdered. His training by magical creatures serves him well when he has to evade the murderers, but what will he do when he comes of age and the larger world beckons? This heartwarming tale is full of ghosts, danger, and love.

Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit Nahoko Uehashi. Trans. Cathy Hirano. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2008. \$17.99. 978-0-545-00542-5. Grades 5-8. This action-packed fantasy, deftly translated from Japanese, pits a female bodyguard, who is rescuing a prince, against supernatural forces and a team of the emperor's fighters. The first in a ten-tale series, it portrays the bodyguard and the prince learning and growing during a year of magic and adventure.

Pemba's song: A ghost story Marilyn Nelson and Tonya Hegamin. Scholastic, 2008. \$16.99. 978-0-545-02076-3. Grades 7-9. Pemba, 14, resists moving with her single mother to a small town in Connecticut from Brooklyn. After ghostly encounters with a slave girl who once lived in their house, Pemba becomes fascinated with local history and is determined to help the ghost move on. Pemba narrates her story in conversational prose, interspersed with lyrical poems that tell the ghost's story.

advancing the discussions of professional learning communities.

THE HIPSTER LIBRARIAN'S
GUIDE TO TEEN CRAFT
PROJECTS

Tina Coleman and Peggie Llanes
Do not show this to a teacher, but perhaps to an after school student looking for something cute and fun. We get instructions to make melted crayon bookmarks, pressed flower notecards, blank books, layered fabric collages, coasters and trivets, and rubber band bracelets to name a few. Could we suggest crafts that have an educational purpose? Don't look for anything of value here. And published by ALA? (ALA, 2009. 90 pp. \$40.00. 978-0-8389-0971-3.)

Bottom line: Ignore this collection of time wasters.

TEEN SPACES: THE STEP-BY-
STEP LIBRARY MAKEOVER

Kimberly Bolan

You are trying to transform a tired library into a learning commons or public library teen space that is going to draw them in. You are looking and looking for ideas. This volume is probably worth consulting to get creative juices flowing but not necessarily for following its suggestions. We envision a learning commons facility that is extremely flexible and can be rearranged regularly to accommodate all types of activities. Picture after picture shows bookshelves creating nooks and crannies where teens will lounge, but too often quite permanent solutions that will be dated as soon as the remodeling has taken place. There are a number of hints toward flexibility and multiple-use, so that is why we recommend it as a starter. Read this and then get radical—go techno alongside the studious, the playful, the program activities.... We could go on and on. (ALA, 2009. 225 pp. \$40.00. 978-0-8389-0969-0.)

Bottom line: There is room for a real 21st century approach to the facilities if we are going to attract a broad range of teens.

WHOSE TALE IS TRUE?
READERS THEATRE TO INTRO-
DUCE AND RESEARCH 49
AMAZING AMERICAN WOMEN

Nancy Polette

Here is a unique idea to use in substitution

for booktalks. If the teacher's assignment is to select a person to do research about, Polette has written 49 very short readers theatre scripts that utilize four readers. Only one of the readers is telling the truth about the person and by listening, the class should be able to tell which one it is who is the real person. Polette then offers worksheets that I would not recommend using with the class because they are the usual fact gathering and time wasting exercises, but the idea here is unique enough that it would likely pique the interest of listeners who might select the person who is being discovered. For example, students who are going to do the scripts could go to the library and choose a few books for each person to be introduced. They would then have these available for checkout by the listeners or even themselves. Such an activity would also be good to encourage reading about women of a certain era being studied. Once students caught on to the idea, they could write scripts of their own for almost any kind of unit, combining writing with assessment. (Teacher Ideas Press, 2009, 167 pp. \$25.00. 978-1-59158-762-0.)

Bottom line: Interesting.

GOOD CHOICE! SUPPORTING
INDEPENDENT READING AND
RESPONSE, K-6

Tony Stead

There is nothing wrong with this book that collaboration with a teacher-librarian could not improve on. Independent reading—a novel idea in today's skill, kill, and drill reading curriculum. Stead has a plethora of ideas for the classroom teacher on how to manage a classroom library, how to get kids reading independently, and how to get them to respond to what they are reading. We encounter tubs of books all labeled with various genre signs and these tubs of books are to provide everything the young folks want to read. It is magical how so few books can cover the wide range of reading interests and levels for an entire school year. Then the magic word appears in the chapter on where to get materials. It is buried to be sure. It is only mentioned in one place. The source mentioned is: the LIBRARY. Stead does not mention if this refers to the central school library or the public library, but there it is. I am waiting for the consultant such as



JOHN PETERS

Stead who teams up with a teacher-librarian to write a really good book on independent reading. Is there anyone out there who could do the world a favor? Is there a publisher out there who would publish such a work? Is there an acquisition editor for a major publishing company out there who would recognize the winning team and winning strategy of rotating classroom collections and major classroom/library initiatives? I'm still waiting. In the meantime, pass this book by. (Stenhouse, 2009. 237 pp. \$22.50. 978-1-57110-732-9.)

Bottom line: Not recommended.

USING WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN THE K-12 CLASSROOM

Beverly E. Crane

Crane is an example of a writer in educational technology who focuses on enhancing teaching and learning through technology rather than standing back to admire the glitz or worships the software or network potential. A good example is her first main chapter on blogging in the language arts. She introduces the tool then demonstrates the process of using blogs in an I-Search project. She teaches not only podcasting, but how to use it in a history class studying immigrants and emigration. We learn how to create wikis to stimulate both individual and collaborative writing activities across the curriculum with a full chapter devoted to digital story-telling. She devotes a chapter to using various Google tools and another chapter on working with ELL students. We recommend this book for its usefulness. Each chapter can be used in a professional development session where teachers are introduced to a technology, but more important develop ways to use that technology in their classrooms to boost learning. For the intermediate user of web 2.0 tools, the value here is a range of ideas that may not have occurred to us before. (Neil-Schuman, 2009. 188 pp. \$59.95. 978-1-55570-653-1.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

TOYS TO TOOLS: CONNECTING STUDENT CELL PHONES TO EDUCATION

Liz Kolb

You have got to be kidding! Using students' cell phones as tools for learning IN

school? There must be an oxymoron here somewhere. Or, some common sense. After the dust settles with the long list of don'ts, can'ts, and won't works recognized in the first couple of chapters, the ideas begin. There are chapters about using cell phones for podcasting, as cameras and camcorders, for doing classroom projects, for research and organization tools, as management tools, for use in preschool and early grades, and looking into the future. This is a dangerous book. It will infect you with very unpopular ideas that you will want to try. Do not consult it unless you are creative, seeking ideas, forward thinking, realistic, or just a bit crazy. Hands off! (ISTE, 2008. 225 pp. \$34.95. ISBN: 978-1-56484-247-3.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

WE ARE QUIET, WE ARE LOUD (BEST YOUNG WRITERS AND ARTISTS IN AMERICA)

David Levithan, Ed.

Do not just read this book. Buy ten copies and get English teachers and teens to read it as a prelude to getting involved. Each year, Scholastic sponsor art and writing awards and this volume is a compilation of the best. How many teens can you get in your school to submit their work? Involve teens in the selection of what will go to national. Here is an idea: Get your tech department to download the open source software package titled Kete from LibLime. It is something like YouTube to upload and archive student work produced in your school. Then send the best to national. It is all a part of 21st century skills and the top of the new Bloom's taxonomy: Creativity. It's a challenge worth pushing. (PUSH/Scholastic, 2008. 356 pp. \$8.99. 978-0-545-03399-2.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS IN SPANISH FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS, 2004-2008

Isabel Schon

Dr. Schon has been publishing annotated books in Spanish for many years in various series. This one is her latest and covers fiction, information books, graphic novels, reference books, easy books with a subject index, and sources for acquisition. Schon does not include a book just because it is in Spanish,

PICTURE BOOKS <

POETRY IN THE CITY: WHAT COULD BE VERSE?

Big city song. Debora Pearson. Ill. Lynn Rowe Reed. Holiday House, 2006. \$16.95. 978-0-8234-1988-3. Grades 1-2. From sunup to midnight, a toe tapping expression of a big city's "big happy racket!" with high energy illustrations to match.

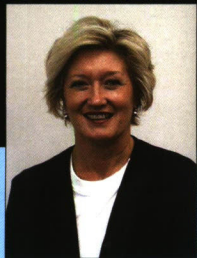
Block city. Robert Louis Stevenson. Ill. Daniel Kirk. Simon & Schuster, 2005. \$14.95 978-0-689-86964-8. Grades K-2. This poetic tribute to the power of imagination, a child in a playground fashions wooden blocks into "a kirk and a mill and a palace beside / And a harbor as well where my vessels may ride."

City beats: A hip-hoppy pigeon poem. S. Kelly Rammell. Ill. Jeanette Canyon. Dawn Publications, 2006. \$16.95. 978-1-58469-076-4. Grades 1-3. Dizzying illustrations paired with short poems to present a pigeon's-eye view of city life, from pounding sound effects to the parade of "different shoes on different feet."

City lullaby. Marilyn Singer. Ill. Carl Cneut. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. \$16.00. 978-0-618-60703-7. Grades PreK-1. More like an "anti-lullaby," this rhymed, baby's eye view of a massively crowded city sidewalk and street presents a glorious cacophony of bangs, crashes, squeals, beeps, bumps, and more.

Mural on Second Avenue, and other city poems. Lilian Moore. Ill. Roma Karas. Candlewick, 2005. \$16.99. 978-0-7636-1987-9. Grades K-3. Paired to intimate city scenes, Moore's simple poems on window shopping, kite flying, how "roofs / design a sky," and other urban observations will have children regarding their own worlds with new eyes.

Tex and Sugar: A big city kitty ditty. Barbara Johansen Newman. Sterling, 2007. \$14.95. 978-1-4027-3887-6. Grades 1-2. Two feline country singers go for the bright lights and the big time in this hilarious rhymed tale of romance and stardom. Vivid illustrations bring the city to vibrant life.



**RACHELLE
LASKY BILZ**

> ADULT BOOKS FOR OLDER TEENS

SURVIVORS

A fraction of the whole. Steve Toltz. Spiegel& Grau, 2008. \$14.95. 978-0-385-52173-4. Alternately told by Jasper Dean and his insane father Martin, this novel is a unique look at coming of age in Australia and how people cope (or not) with wildly changing events. By turns profound and laugh-out-loud hilarious, here is a unique, special story.

Carry me home. Sandra Kring. Delta, 2004. \$13.00. 978-0-385-33813-4. Earl "Earwig" Gunderman, sixteen and brain-damaged by fever, narrates this beautifully-written novel about how World War II affects his family and his town. Amusing and uncannily insightful, Earl is an unforgettable protagonist.

Come back: A mother and daughter's journey through hell and back. Claire & Mia Fontaine. Harper, 2006. \$24.95. 978-0-060-79216-9. Brilliant Mia, fifteen, runs away from home, self-mutilates, and does drugs; her mother Claire literally does everything necessary to save her. Told through Mia's diary and Claire's narration, this riveting nonfiction account is both distressing and inspiring.

Hurry down sunshine. Michael Greenberg. Other Press, 2008. \$22.00. 978-1-590-51191-6. When she was fifteen, the author's daughter, Sally was "struck mad" and diagnosed as bipolar. After twenty-four harrowing days in a psychiatric hospital, Sally and her father struggle to cope in this arresting, affecting memoir.

My sister, my love: The intimate story of Skyler Rampike. Joyce Carol Oates. HarperCollins, 2008. \$25.95. 978-0-061-54748-5. When Skyler was nine, his six-year-old sister, an ice skating prodigy, was murdered. Now nineteen, Skyler tells his story. This chilling novel of family dysfunction is by turns disturbing and fascinating.

and, in a personal interview with her, reports there is plenty of "junk" out there with terrible translations and cultural boo-boos just trying to catch the market from teacher-librarians who may not know the language or culture in enough depth to make good choices. Schon has the experience and the cultural background to select the best and most authentic in Latino culture. (Scarescrow, 2009. 412 pp. 978-0-8108-6386-6.)
Bottom line: Trust this list.

RELENTLESS PROGRESS: THE RECONFIGURATION OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, FAIRY TALES, AND STORY- TELLING

Jack Zipes

Zipes, a well-known expert on children's literature, is worried that the idea of globalization is turning much of the stories for children into massive consumerism. He is wondering out loud if international publishers, writers, librarians, and others should take back the territory of having literature speak clearly to children about a more traditional world—one that has raised the children of the world for centuries. Thus, his book title is a question rather than a welcoming trend. What are the messages of story you as teacher-librarians encounter each day as you recommend, tell, enact, and discuss modern children's literature? Compare your own thoughts with those of this scholar for a big think and re-assessment. (Routledge, 2009. 189 pp. \$34.95. 978-0-415-99064-6.)
Bottom line: Recommended.

TANGRAM TALES: STORY THEATER USING THE ANCIENT CHINESE PUZZLE

Dianne De las Casas

A tangram is a set of seven paper or plastic shapes that the player uses to build shapes of all kinds. The object is clever construction. Our author has developed a technique of reader's theatre where kids tell stories and illustrate those stories with a tangram as one would on a felt board. Dozens of simple stories are presented here with suggested tangram illustrations. It is a fun and clever technique to engage kids and teen tellers and another way to capture the attention of the listener, but also develop

the reading and storytelling of the participants. Teacher-librarians could demonstrate this technique to a volunteer, a group of students, or a paraprofessional and get the ball rolling in a class or across the school. It dawns on this reviewer that there should be a way to do this on a computer projected on a screen, and one might issue this as a challenge to kids who might actually create an application to do so. This idea is clever enough to demand the book's purchase and integration into the idea of reading, telling, and doing stories for fun. (Teacher Ideas Press, 2009. 110 pp. \$27.00. 978-1-59158-652-4.)
Bottom line: Highly recommended.

ACTIVE READING: ACTIVITIES FOR LIBRARIANS AND TEACHERS

Beth McGuire

McGuire has created worksheets for both fiction and nonfiction books. One presumes that kids would select a book and fill in the worksheet instead of taking an AR quiz on the book, however, our author states no real purpose nor does she justify how this would advance reading other than giving kids something to demonstrate they have read the book. This is the kind of reading requirement sure to kill the joy of reading and create useless busy work for kids. Is there a way to move beyond worksheets in K-12 education? Engagement, higher-level thinking, creativity, compare/contrast, and almost any other 21st century skill can be integrated into wide reading, but there just isn't a clue in this collection of deadly required exercises. (Libraries Unlimited, 2009. 170 pp. \$35.00. 978-1-59158-666-1.)
Bottom line: Pass this by.

PROPOSAL PLANNING & WRITING

Jeremy T. Miner and Lynn E. Miner

In these times of economic downturn, teacher-librarians will have to sharpen their ability to write grants. These two professional grant writers try to help by covering and making suggestions on how to write for both public and private grants. They go through the various procedures from cover letters to the proposal and with a wide variety of tips and tactics. It is always somewhat of a gamble of time expended

SARA
CATHERINE
HOWARD

YA NONFICTION <

WHO'S THAT?

Barry Sanders (*Football Superstars*). Samuel Crompton. Chelsea House, 2008. 978-0-7910-9667-3. \$30.00. Grades 6-12. Winner of the 1988 Heisman Trophy, Barry Sanders went on to play ten years of professional football with the Detroit Lions, depicted here, before retiring at 30. Sanders now spends time with family and charity events. Statistics, chronology, glossary, bibliography, and an index are provided.

Hatshepsut: Egypt's first female pharaoh (*Signature Lives*). Pamela Dell. Compass Point Books, 2009. 978-0-7565-3835-4. \$17.95. Grades 6-10. Until the mid 19th century, this powerful pharaoh was unknown, and still mysteries exist about how she became pharaoh. Included is a detailed timeline, list of resources, glossary, source notes and index.

James Monroe (*Presidents and Their Times*). Corinne J. Naden and Rose Blue. Marshall Cavendish, 2009. 978-0-7614-2838-1. \$23.95. Grades 7-9. Responsible for the Monroe Doctrine as the fifth president of the United States, Monroe's presidency, is known as the Era of Good Feelings, and is described with primary-source materials and photographs. Contains a timeline, glossary, further reading, bibliography, and an index.

Painting the wild frontier: The art and adventures of George Catlin. Susanna Reich. Clarion Books, 2008. \$15.75. 978-0-618-71470-4. Grades 6-10. This is an introduction to Catlin's paintings of the American frontier, combines biographical information and art explanation. Included are a timeline, sources notes, bibliography, and index.

Whaam! The art and life of Roy Lichtenstein. Susan Goldman Rubin. Abrams, 2008. 978-0-8109-9492-8. \$12.89. Grades 7-12. While Lichtenstein was formally trained, his real artistic inspiration came from comics and cartoons. Students that like graphic novels and pop art will find this a fascinating read.

vs. success rate. Perhaps your strategy these days for grants where thousands will be applying is to concentrate on the small ones in the local community. One teacher-librarian told me that he was a "bottom feeder" and was successful year after year with the small grants lots of folks did not bother to apply for, so his odds were higher and he was successful at bringing in thousands and thousands of dollars. Get smart. (Greenwood Press, 2008. 201 pp. \$65.00. 978-0-313-35658-2.)

Bottom line: You probably already have proposal guides on your shelf. Do you need another one? These authors have good advice. It is always good to get several points of view and in that spirit, we recommend this one as a current source. Take it and use it.

TEACHING HOW TO LEARN: THE TEACHER'S GUIDE TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Kenneth A. Kiewra

Many, many professional books concentrate on helping the teacher become a better teacher in front of the class as they deliver content, create assignments, manage behavior, and organize their content to meet different learning styles. Kiewra presents his idea that we need to teach the students learning strategies to meet us as teachers half way. The teacher-librarian's contribution to learning is part of teaching students how to learn. We want to co-teach to see that the learning strategies of information literacy are taught in a way that enhances content learning. Thus our interest; here is a book that stresses the balance between how the teacher performs and how the students match the teaching effort through their own learning strategies. No mention of teacher-librarians in this book. Kiewra is just interested in the teacher in an obviously closed classroom environment. However, the AASL Learning Standards provide the view of learning activities when the classroom door opens into the world of information and technology. Like the learning standards Kiewra stresses ideas similar to our dispositions: responsibilities and self-evaluation by the students as they practice inquiry. If the classroom teacher can understand that by opening the door to a new world and to a specialist in the school known as the teacher-

librarian, magic and other wonderful things happen by stressing both content and process learning. Let us assume that your professional learning community is reading this book together and that you are at the table during the discussion. It would seem a simple matter to turn the Kiewra strategy into the idea that two heads are better than one. (Corwin Press, 2009. 184 pp. \$33.95. 978-1-4129-6534-7.)

Bottom line: Try this book on a teacher or two. Get the conversation started toward elevating both content and process teaching and learning. It just might be the way to get your nose under the tent into the classroom.

WRITE GRANTS, GET MONEY, 2ND ED.

Cynthia Anderson and Kathi Knop

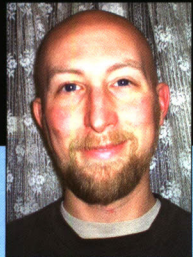
A school administrator, former teacher-librarian, and a current teacher-librarian team here to provide a very practical and targeted guide for obtaining grants for the school library/learning commons. Their approach is much more practical than *Proposal Planning & Writing* by Jeremy T. Miner and Lynn E. Miner, reviewed in this same column. The Miner contribution is more general and actually more sophisticated than Anderson and Knop's. The Miners have long experience and success at grant writing; we are uncertain about the success of the Anderson/Knop team. That said, this latter guide is probably for beginners; the former for the more experienced but unsuccessful grant writer seeking to hone skills. Together both would be even better since the reader begins to understand the central ideas and can contrast conflicting advice. The CD accompanying this book contains sample grant proposals, sample funded grants, and a PowerPoint presentation by Gail Dickenson. (Linworth Books, 2009. 128 pp. plus CD ROM. \$44.95. 978-1-58683-303-9.)

Bottom line: Get all the advice you can and get writing!

A LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO CULTIVATING AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GARDEN

Bonnie Mackey

Gardening with children seems to come and go in the elementary curriculum and with the emphasis totally on test scores these days, perhaps teaching real stuff is a lost art;



JOE SUTLIFF SANDERS

> GRAPHIC NOVELS

GIRL'S ADVENTURING

Rogue angel: Teller of tall tales.

Barbara Randall Kessel and Renae De Liz. IDW Publishing, 2008. \$19.99. 978-160010318-6. Grades 5 and up. Annja, a brilliant archaeologist, has a secret: she is the magical heir of Joan of Arc. But even sharper than the sword that appears when she calls for it is her incisive mind, and she'll need both in this unpredictable adventure to recapture a lost literary gem.

Fairy Tail. Hiro Mashima. Del Rey Manga, 2009. \$12.50. 978-0-345-50330-5. Grades 7 and up. Novice celestial wizard Lucy becomes the centerpiece of a new team of magical mercenaries from the legendary (and raucous) Fairy Tail guild. With the unpredictable fire wizard Natsu and his very strange cat, Lucy takes on jobs that are always more dangerous (and funny) than they first seem. Students will enjoy this delightful new series.

Usagi Yojimbo: Tomoe's story, Volume 22

Stan Sakai. Dark Horse Books, 2008. \$15.95. 978-1-59307-947-5. Grades 3 and up. This volume is a rare jumping-on point for newcomers to one of the most consistently stunning manga series ever. The relationship between Tomoe, the cat samurai, and Usagi, the wandering rabbit warrior, has deepened over the years. Although Tomoe is not the book's central character, her dedication and clarity of vision are its driving force. The final chapter, "Chanoyu," is a reminder of Sakai's mastery of the form, as Usagi and Tomoe say goodbye to each other in a nearly silent tea ceremony; as with the ceremony itself, what the chapter *refuses* to say is the clearest and most moving comment. A masterpiece!

however, in a downturned economy, perhaps it is something worth reviving as a survival strategy. Should the teacher-librarian be in charge of the school garden? Please, not. But, we can promote, help, guide, coach, and celebrate the garden. This is a good popular guide of ideas for manageable gardens and as an extended school/parent connection would be extremely helpful at this difficult time. (Linworth Publishing, 2009. 124 pp. \$39.95. 978-1-58683-328-2.)

Bottom line: We recommend buying and promoting this book to the faculty. It is all a part of health and wellness.

FOLKTALES OF THE AMAZON

Juan Carlos Galeano

If any of the countries of the great Amazon basin are in the curriculum of your school, then this is a fascinating collection of folktales that can be used to build authenticity into the study of the region. Galeano collected these tales personally and combined similar versions into a retelling and then in translation to English. After each tale, the author gives a bit of background of variants. These tales are very different than the Eurocentral ones kids and teens have heard, so it is a fresh new experience to hear them and then retell them on wikis, blogs, podcasts, or using any other creative writing, reading, or theatrical presentation we wish to create. (Libraries Unlimited, 2009. 125 p. \$40.00. 978-1-59158-674-6.)

Bottom line: These are as close to authentic as it gets.

CONTENT AREA READING, WRITING, AND STORYTELLING: A DYNAMIC TOOL FOR IMPROVING READING AND WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM THROUGH ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Brian "Fox" Ellis

Teacher-librarians have tried over the years to make storytelling and creative dramas a part of the agenda to help students love literature and reading, so they have concentrated on imparting the pure joy, laughter, mystery, and attention-grabbing power of oral language. Ellis has a different purpose. He wants to weave the power of story into the language arts curriculum to push elementary school children into creating their own

stories as a way of improving literacy. In the book, he begins storytelling "lessons" with a story to be read aloud/told to the class. Then, he provides detailed instructions of how to engage the class in using that story to model creations of their own. Complete lesson plans with rubrics and links to NCTE standards are provided, thus, the book presents a way to integrate storytelling into the language arts curriculum. In the age of the Internet, there are all kinds of Web 2.0 technologies that kids can use to not only create, but share their stories virtually. Ellis does not seem to embrace technology but those possibilities need to be added to his recommended activities. How does one help children become better storytellers in their own right without killing interest in this powerful medium? The only way to know is try some of his ideas and watch for the results—both in terms of improved literacy and also in fun, exciting, interesting, and powerful kid tellers. (Teacher Ideas Press, 2009. 256 pp. \$35.00. 978-1-59158-701-9.)

Bottom line: Use this one with caution as a collaborative learning experience with classroom teachers.

JUVENILE COURT: A GUIDE FOR YOUNG ADULTS AND THEIR PARENTS

Leora Krygier

I would not normally review a reference book in this column, but this title reminds me of the major role teacher-librarians have in being sensitive and ready to help and advise the teenagers who grace their environment. Working closely with counselors, we often find ourselves going deep into the personal problems of our teens with our only weapons being high quality information combined with caring yet professional distance. And, one never knows when a critical moment will happen, yet we must be ready. Look at your shelves. Are they stocked with not just books, but digital resources you can lay your hands on in an instant? Disasters, fights, discovered pregnancies, gangs, the law, career advice, family dysfunction—the list is so very long and we have no time to "look it up." This title is a sensible guide to scan yourself and put in your repertoire for instant access. You could save a life. Be ready. (Scarecrow, 2009. 181 pp., \$29.95. 978-0-8108-6127-5.)

Bottom line: Recommended.