

# Resources for the Teacher-Librarian

David V. Loertscher

## THE POWER OF VISUALIZATION

*Since I have been doing the professional reviews section of Teacher Librarian, I have come across a number of titles that explore the power of visualization as a teaching tool, a collaboration tool, and a problem solving tool among other uses. In recent years, I have been impressed by the concept of using both the logical and the visual parts of the brain simultaneously to develop knowledge and deep understanding. Whenever I encounter a student cramming for a test, I always suggest the power of a T Chart where you put a written fact you need to know on the left column and a rough picture of that idea on the right column. The two are much easier to recall when the association is made. Looking back over my reviews, I selected two to repeat in this column and then I turn to three other titles in the same genre that have recently been published.*

### VISUAL TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMING INFORMATION INTO KNOWLEDGE, 2ND ED.

David Hyerle

A number of visualization and mind mapping books have been reviewed in these pages over the past three years with a very positive rating because there are so many potential benefits to thinking through visualization. The older generation, accustomed to the old outlining may be rather puzzled by the squiggles and messy drawings that supposedly represent thinking, yet the appeal to a different part of the brain—the combination of the logical and the creative extends learning in new directions. For teacher-librarians who are not using such tools as Gliffy or Inspiration, this book is a good introduction to both the why and how of concept mapping. For those who have used the computer assists or just plain paper and pencil concept maps, this book is also a must read because it takes the simple visualization idea and pushes its possibilities from simple to high-level synthesis of complex concepts. The idea that those of us who are old outliners cannot do this visual stuff robs us of a significant tool is preposterous. Reading and studying the many examples and techniques in this book will provide a whole new world of possibilities. (Corwin Press, 2009. 167 pp. \$33.95. 978-1-4129-2426-9.)  
Bottom line: A must study.

## THE BACK OF THE NAPKIN: SOLVING PROBLEMS AND SELLING IDEAS WITH PICTURES

Dan Roam

I like graphic organizers—that invention to represent ideas in picture form. Most teacher-librarians know and use Inspiration or Kidspiration and teach young people how to organize their thoughts and ideas from what they read. But if you do not know about those packages or cannot afford them, then Roam's system is interesting. Essentially, Roam shows how they created a system of pictures that represented ideas—a picture shorthand of sorts. For example, a rectangle represents a *what* problem to solve. Two arrows pointing the same way with a question mark means a *when* problem. So, his scribbles help him attack who, how, when, where, and how problems. And, the more he uses them, the more complex they become as he thinks through the symbols. So, what does this have to do with teacher-librarians? I think the discovery here, is that we give a gift to learners who embrace graphic organizers. It is a gift of thinking, analysis, synthesis, and seeing the big picture. While a computer program may be quite helpful to a novice learner, we can encourage learners to go beyond what a computer is doing for them to invent systems that stimulate their own thinking. It is the push a piano teacher gives the student at the point where it is time to take flight: "You don't need me as your teacher any more." You are a performer (an information literate performer). Perhaps that is why this book appeals to me—it represents a challenge every teacher-librarian faces. How many of our students become independent learners because of us? (Portfolio/Penguin Group, 2008. 278 pp. \$28.95. 978-1-59184-306-1.)

Bottom line: Read a bit in this book. It may stimulate your own thinking about problem-solving through graphic organizers. I am talking about personal and professional problems as well as what we can do for our students.

## UNFOLDING THE NAPKIN: THE HANDS-ON METHOD FOR SOLVING COMPLEX PROBLEMS WITH SIMPLE PICTURES

Dan Roam

Roam continues his napkin idea in this book of problem solving using pictures. Here is his premise: "1) There is no more powerful way to discover a new way than to draw a simple picture. 2) There is no faster way to develop and test an idea than to draw a simple picture. 3) There is no more effective way to share an idea with other people than to draw a simple picture." And, to these statements, I add, and, you do not need to be an artist to do it! Roam has a four-step technique of solving complex problems: looking, seeing, imagining, and showing. What does he mean? 'Look' means to examine the nature of the problem and be able to draw a picture illustrating the problem. 'Seeing' means that we need to break up the overwhelming big problems into smaller pieces and are able to draw a picture about those component parts. 'Imagine' means to see the possibilities by drawing pictures about possible solutions and

approaches. 'Share' means to use pictures to share our inspiration with others for group analysis and decision-making. Notice the similarity between this model and information literacy models. Finally, here is a note about the structure of this book. The author writes as if we are in a four-day seminar. This means you can "attend" the seminar just by reading and following the book along or you can pay to attend a very expensive seminar with the author. In the final analysis, this is a worthwhile book that when understood can automatically become a part of your own problem solving skill set and prove to be an invaluable asset to teacher-librarians. (Penguin Group, 2009. 280 pp. \$20.00. 978-1-59184-319-1.) **Bottom line:** Highly recommended.

### **GAMESTORMING: A PLAY-BOOK FOR INNOVATORS, RUBLEBREAKERS, AND CHANGEMAKERS**

**Dave Gray, Summi Brown, and James Macanufor**

Carrying the idea of an information literacy model familiar to teacher-librarians, here is a work from the gamer's mind on solving problems in business. In this version, the authors present their 7 Ps steps: Purpose, product, people, process, pitfalls, prep, practice concerns. The first four ideas are the main circular factors and the final three are concerns outside that circle. This approach is a wise one because the "boss" invites the known skills of the gamer over into a business model, relying on what is already known to inform the problem at hand. So how does this model inform a teacher-librarian working with various teachers on the solution to learning problems? Simply stated, it is the need for adults to look into the various worlds that kids are living in today and draw the skills of those worlds over into the academic world. It is not enough to just label a kid as a gamer and give up trying to reach that kind of kid; it is about knowing what kinds of skills and interests a game has and then incorporating those strengths into an engaging academic solution. That is the reason for recommending

this book because it gives some insight into gamers' minds. Of course, another way is to get a group of gamers together and have them analyze what goes on in the gaming world and how they can use those skills in pursuit of a problem at hand. (O'Reilly, 2010. 266 pp. \$29.99. 978-0-596-80417-6.) **Bottom line:** Giving up on kids with many non-academic interests is no solution.

### **RAPID PROBLEM-SOLVING WITH POST-IT NOTES**

**David Straker**

While this title is a decade old, it uses the ubiquitous sticky notes as a problem solving technique; a combination of visual and text. The book is worth reexamination because it provides some excellent techniques for arranging random ideas into shapes of ideas that help in the solution of the problem at hand. Six techniques are featured: post-up, swap sort, top-down tree, bottom-up tree, information map, and action map. While we cannot show you these configurations here, we can promise that the ideas illustrated are invaluable when various technologies are not available. And, the ideas can be incorporated into technology. For example, one can arrange Wallwisher brainstorming using Straker's ideas, and, it starts you thinking about how to arrange ideas in tools such as Google Forms/spreadsheets. (Da Capo Press, 1997. 156 pp. \$18.00. 978-1-55561-142-2.) **Bottom line:** Recommended.

*We recommend that these and other visualization books find a place on your shelves because when faced with a planning session or problem-solving session with students or adults, a review of these ideas can quickly spark ideas that will save everyone time and build what we term collaborative intelligence. Clearly, highly paid consultants are profiting from the lack of problem solving skills they find in the workplace. No wonder business leaders keep calling out to K-12 education to include these techniques so that kids are prepared for careers and college. Teacher-librarians should have a bushel basket of these kinds of ideas at their fingertips to use to their advantage.*

## **Now, This Month's Other Reviews**

### **THE MANY FACES OF SCHOOL LIBRARY LEADERSHIP**

**Sharon Coatney, Ed.**

Coatney asked luminaries of school librarianship to write essays describing the qualities of leaders, their strategies, their opportunities, and urging the entire community to push toward the center of teaching and learning. The topics and authors will help you decide on the purchase of this book: "Leading from the Middle: Building Influence for Change" by Ken Haycock; "Librarians and Learning Leaders: Cultivating Culture of Inquiry" by Vi Harada; "The School Librarian as an Advocacy Leader" by Deb Levitov; "Intellectual Freedom: Leadership to Preserve Minor's Rights in School Library Media Programs" by Helen R. Adams; "Literacy Leadership and the School Library" by Douglas Achterman; "The Teacher Librarian as Curriculum Leader" by Jody K. Howard; "Pride and Prejudice and Technology Leadership" by Kristin Fontichiaro; "Staff Development—Teacher Librarians as Learning Leaders" by Janice Gilmore-See; "Leadership and Your Professional School Library Association" by Blanche Woolls; and "Shifting Our Vision for Our Future: Leadership as a Foundational Element for Teacher Librarians" by David Loertscher. A reading of the topics demonstrates the coverage of the major elements of the learning commons program in a school and district at a time when leadership is needed more than ever. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 147p. \$40.00. 978-1-59158-893-1.)

**Bottom line:** Highly recommended both for the novice and the seasoned professional.

### **A TO ZOO: SUBJECT ACCESS TO CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS (CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE REFERENCE), 8TH ED.**

**Carolyn W. Lima and Rebecca L. Thomas**

This great friend of children's librarians and classroom teachers has been thor-

oroughly revised for this new edition. It is the most comprehensive index to the topical contents of picture books for children and is an essential tool for selecting current title by topic from a sea of picture books. School and public libraries need the new tools as an extended index to part of their current collection and a great source for selection. We wish that this work could be a free library collection that would have both a retrospective library and a current collection library that one could search and even help add to—something that could be kept up to date by the authors and a group of trusted contributors. It is time for this and many other valuable tools to hit the digital wave that is making the entire printed reference collection obsolete. Until that day comes, a copy of this on your reference shelf needs to earn its place by being publicized to users of the picture book collection. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 1165 p. \$85.00. 978-1-59884-406-1.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

### **TECHNOLOGY AND THE SCHOOL LIBRARY: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR MEDIA SPECIALISTS AND OTHER EDUCATORS, 3RD ED.**

**Odin L. Jurkowski**

One of the problems of updating a book on technology that was published a number of years ago is that the entire mindset of the book is from the original perspective. Yes, you can add updates to each of the chapters, but the original perspective comes through. In 2010, there has been enough major change that the author needed to have thrown out the entire old manuscript and started from a 2010 perspective. We are now in the age of handheld computers, cloud computing, Web 2.0 tools, iPads, eBooks, and Google Apps for Education just to name a few cited in this book. Where is the teacher-librarian as tech learning leader? Where is wireless 802.11n? Where is the new presence of Apple? Taking the advice of this author puts one squarely in the early 1990s with a peppering of newer technologies sprinkled around. Better to investigate the many technology titles

published by ISTE and popular technology works done by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning and attending the ISTE annual conference. (Scarecrow Press, 2010. 190 pp. \$45.00. 978-0-8108-7448-0.)

Bottom line: Pass this one by.

### **CHALLENGING UNITS FOR GIFTED LEARNERS: TEACHING THE WAY GIFTED STUDENTS THINK: LANGUAGE ARTS**

**Kenneth J. Smith**

Anytime we see a title like *Challenging Units*, our interest is peaked. Smith, who has a Ph.D. in cognitive psychology shares with us four units that he considers very successful with gifted learners. The units are as much a picture of a very directive teaching style as they are about the content of the units themselves. In a writing unit, a study of Freud, a writer like Robert Frost unit, and a point of view writing unit, we are given step-by-step instructions of what to do, say, and assign. Smith is working the student's mind as if working his own. We see in his units a picture of a self-contained, hopefully, master teacher at the head of the class who is challenging students with tougher thinking at each step of the way. While we respect such master teachers, teacher-librarians will find no space with these learners or teachers as they do only a small amount of research [Smith prescribes that the librarian will only help locate stuff]. This is direct teaching with assignments that command thinking. We prefer, from the point of view of teacher-librarians, more constructivist problems, questions, and investigations that get the gifted into the world of information, technology, and multimedia where engagement will drive the higher order thinking Smith expects. While a number of students in Smith's class are likely to perform well under threat of high expectations, we see boredom as the elephant in the room for an inexperienced teacher trying to duplicate Smith's technique without his demanding presence. In the era of information-rich and technology-rich environments, we think that even higher expectations can be achieved in a world that appeals to teens. It would be a great action research experi-

ment to pit the students of a great constructivist teacher and teacher-librarian against the isolation and demanding environment of Smith's students. Ah, the intrigue of that challenge sends chills up the spine. Just think of students taking one unit with Smith and then a constructivist unit with the constructivist pair and vice versa; then having the students write a reflective paper comparing and contrasting the two experiences from a variety of perspectives. Anyone up for such a challenge? (Prufrock Press, 2010. 184 pp. \$19.95. 978-1-59363-421-6.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

### **LITERATURE LINKS TO AMERICAN HISTORY, K-6: RESOURCES TO ENHANCE AND ENTICE (CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE REFERENCE); AND, LITERATURE LINKS TO AMERICAN HISTORY, 7-12: RESOURCES TO ENHANCE AND ENTICE (CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE REFERENCE)**

**Lynda G. Adamson**

If we take the new Common Core Standards from the National Governor's Conference at their word, then, the nation's children should be exposed across their school years to more and more complex texts. It makes one think: How does that happen? Through textbooks? Through prescribed titles? But, what about the challenges of diversity and the need for differentiation? How can a teacher in front of a class with 25 very different students expose every single child to the kinds of materials that are going to prepare them for college and careers? Through access to a classroom collection? You have got to be kidding! In these two hefty volumes, Adamson takes us into the world of historical fiction and non-fiction; biographies, graphic novels, as well as DVDs and CDs period by period through United States history. Suddenly, one realizes that the potential to provide every child and teen with a plethora of excellent resources is within our grasp. The potential is there with suf-



## ADULT BOOKS FOR TEENS

### SHORT STORY ANTHOLOGIES

**Orson Scott Card's Intergalactic medicine show.** Edmund R. Schubert & Orson Scott Card, eds. Tor, 2008. \$15.95. 978-0-765-320001. Grades 9-12. Selected from Card's online magazine, these stories encompass both fantasy and science fiction genres; four stories take place in Ender's world. Top notch writing and intriguing plot lines make this a notable collection. The story's illustrations are another plus.

**Fast ships, black sails.** Ann & Jeff VanderMeer, eds. Night Shade Books, 2008. \$14.95. 978-1-597-800945. Grades 11-12. Whether they are fierce or foolish, male or female, pirates from the past, present, and future abound in these stories. Justin Howe's "Skillet and Saber" is a unique look at ship cooks; "The Nymph's Child" by Carrie Vaughn reveals a woman in disguise. Older teens should enjoy these unique tales.

**Fragile things: Short fictions and wonders.** Neil Gaiman. Harper, 2010. \$7.99. 978-0-060-515232. Grades 11-12. Ghosts, Sherlock Holmes, strange Tarot cards, fairy tale characters, sock monkeys, and more, can be found in these stories and poems by a master storyteller. The settings range from Narnia to a modern-day teenage party in this often chilling collection for mature readers.

**Unusual suspects: Stories of mystery & fantasy.** Dana Stabenow, ed. Ace Books, 2008. \$14.00. 978-0-441-016372. Grades 9-12. Murder mysteries meet the supernatural in these unique stories that nicely combine genres. "Spellbound" by Donna Andrews takes place in the College of Magical Studies; Sharon Shinn's "The House of Seven Spirits" employs ghosts to solve a murder. These singular stories are entertaining reads.

cient funding to provide the foundation of excellence. The challenge, of course, is how to integrate this bountiful harvest into the everyday exploration of a vibrant and fascinating historical adventure. What is missing from these volumes is the vast number of websites and database materials that could add another major dimension to the study of our history and culture. That world would take equally thick volumes to list and annotate. For those in school and public libraries, these volumes are an invaluable collection development tool. Professionals at the district level can make great use of this resource to look across collections that could be shared across schools. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. \$65.00 each. Volume K-6: 978-1-59158-468-1. Volume 7-12: 978-1-59158-469-8). Bottom line: One wishes that this could be a digital collection that could be kept current over time. However, used soon, it is a fine reference work.

### INDEPENDENT SCHOOL LIBRARIES: PERSPECTIVES ON EXCELLENCE (LIBRARIES UNLIMITED PROFESSIONAL GUIDES IN SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP)

#### Dorcas Hand, Ed.

Noting a major gap in the literature of independent school libraries, Dorcas Hand has reached out to notable independent school teacher-librarians from across the country to assemble an eclectic set of articles targeting this unique audience. Topics range from collaboration to technology; from advocacy to administrative management concerns and are well written and edited. This is a collection to be read and reread by independent school teacher librarians and shared with the governing councils of these schools. And, as stated in the subtitle, the central theme is excellence. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 369 pp. \$45.00. 978-1-59158-803-0.)

Bottom line: Congratulations to Hand for a fine collection and a must read for these schools and for anyone interested in becoming a teacher librarian in an independent school.

### THE THIRD TEACHER: 79 WAYS YOU CAN USE DESIGN TO TRANSFORM TEACHING & LEARNING

#### OWP/P CANNON DESIGN, VS FURNITURE

#### Bruce Mau Design

Authored by a group of architects and other designers, this book is a perfect companion to Loertscher, Koechlin, and Zwaan's *The New School Learning Commons* because it has a vision of physical space in which constructivist learning can flourish. Each of the 79 ideas take a whole page in the book with supplementary explanations, ideas, illustrations, photos, and case studies to give some substance to the idea. The ideas begin with philosophy of education and migrate toward spaces that accomplish those ideas. And, the book has a companion web site where the reader can make comments on the various ideas (TL Editors added lots of ideas from the learning commons perspective hoping to catch the attention of an architect or two). While many cannot build a new facility, this book provides enough ideas to prove that it is possible to accomplish the vision of a physical learning commons by reading and applying its ideas. For example, bookshelves and banks of computers can be moved from the center of the room to create a flexible space. And with the question, "If it doesn't move, does it belong?" as a guiding principle, getting a group of folks together for a new look at a learning space would provide a list of ideas on which to base serious plans. (Abrams, 2010. 255 pp. \$29.95. 978-0-8109-8998-6.) Bottom line: This is one of the best design books we have seen and if you are planning any renovations at all, this book is a must.

### TEACHING DIGITAL NATIVES: PARTNERING FOR REAL LEARNING

#### Marc Prensky

Prensky is a motivational speaker about technology and while not having much experience in an actual classroom has assembled a variety of ideas for using technology

collaboratively among students. He begins the book with some sound observations about students who are very comfortable in digital space: "They do not want to be lectured to. They want to be respected, to be trusted and to have their opinions valued and count. They want to create using the tools of their time. The want to work with their peers on group work and projects (and prevent slackers from getting a free ride.). They want to make decisions and share control. "While these statements do not apply to all kids that are using computers, they are astute enough about a segment of kids and teens that one perks up looking for suggestions. In his first chapter, he challenges the teacher to be constructivist rather than a behaviorist by putting up a problem and having a serious conversation with students about how to work in a more collaborative environment (sound advice). In chapter two, he continues this discussion but adds a variety of ways to group students so that collaboration becomes a natural. Then he steps it up a notch by suggesting that the teacher ask students how to improve projects they are working on. He recommends building good questions that lead to real projects. Then you introduce the conversation about how technology can assist us all in answering the major questions we have posed. He then recommends almost a hundred tools that can be used in a collaborative learning environment and then suggests that experience with the tools and a careful assessment of impact will provide the teacher with the critical skills to teach constructively. All in all, we find that this progressive device, chapter by chapter to be a great way to make progress in one of the greatest challenges that behaviorist teachers face as they try to transform their teaching and connect to students crying out for change and respect. (Corwin Press, 2010. 203 pp. \$33.95. 978-1-4129-7541-4.)

**Bottom line:** Highly recommended as both a personal guide and a book to be collaboratively studied and used as the foundation of action research.

## **TEACHING TECH-SAVVY KIDS: BRINGING DIGITAL MEDIA INTO THE CLASSROOM, GRADES 5-12**

**Jessica K. Parker (and others)**

The most common way to approach various tech tools is tool by tool by tool. Here is another of these guides structured "by tool." Here we are introduced to social media tools such as Facebook, YouTube, and Wikipedia. Co-writers to Parker introduce virtual worlds such as Second Life, and the culture of the remixed media that is so popular with many techie kids. For each of the media, we are introduced and then various suggestions for how to use a tool are given. While this kind of book is a common approach to technology, we prefer books that start with learning problems and then suggest tools that address those problems directly. Otherwise, we just get a feeling of tool overload. Having said that, look at your shelves for this kind of approach. (Corwin, 2010. 191 pp. \$33.95. 978-1-4129-7150-8.)

**Bottom line:** If you need ideas connected to tools, this source is as good as any.

## **THE DIGITAL DIET: TODAY'S DIGITAL TOOLS IN SMALL BYTES**

**Andrew Churches, Lee Crockett,  
and Ian Jukes**

The 21st Century Fluency Project is a group of international entrepreneurs trying to make a difference in education with technology. They have a web site, <http://21stcenturyfluency.com>, and a series of publications that promote their ideas. In the *Digital Diet*, they introduce a number of tools that can be used effectively in teaching and learning. They include chapters on the digital citizen, searching, social bookmarking, VoIP, Twitter, Blogger, social networking, VoiceThread, media sharing, and email. In each chapter, the authors introduce the tool, provide ideas for use differing from other publications of this type, and they provide rubrics to assess the use by students of the tool. There are a number of books and other publications

that are arranged tool by tool like this one. If you see tools you need more ideas on, then this is a good publication to add to your collection. It is certain the mere use of a tool does not mean students will learn any more than they would by using conventional non-digital strategies. Thus, the inclusion of rubrics is a valuable additional idea. If you check out the web site of the 21st Century Fluency Project, you will find a very interesting model of digital citizenship. Five components comprise digital citizenship in the model: media literacy, information literacy, solution literacy, creative fluency, and collaboration fluency. It compares very well with the other models of 21st century learning and technology out there. If you do not buy the book, at least check out the web site. (21st Century Fluency Project/Corwin Press, 2010. 172 pp. \$29.95. 978-1-4499-7550-0.)

**Bottom line:** Recommended.

## **ZING!: SEVEN CREATIVITY PRACTICES FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**

**Pat Mora**

What do we need to understand about creativity, the creative student, and the student who needs to learn how to preserve the creative part of themselves that they have naturally? Mora, a popular speaker, offers a number of suggestions to teachers on how to include creative work in school. She has seven suggestions and when one compares them to an information literacy research model, they are very similar: value each student's creative talents, create quiet spaces for students, motivate students to gather their materials, assist students to begin their projects, support students in their revision, create sharing opportunities for students, and motivate students to persevere. For both teacher and teacher-librarian during collaborative instructional design, how do they invent opportunities to be creative? When we listen to Sir Ken Robinson talk about the necessity to include creativity as part of learning, what strategies come to mind? If the topic has not come up in planning, then *Zing* might be one place

to get ideas. The book is small, the chapters a bit too dense, but ideas are there worth considering. Kids and teens bring from their non-school environments techniques of knowledge building and if the adults understand those environments, they can learn to appeal to and include strategies that combine what needs to happen academically with the skills students already know about. When was the last time you thought about creativity in the learning process? If it has been a while, this book should re-awaken an interest you have probably had at some point. In the era of the content creator who can go viral almost at any moment, we can do much to encourage such authors' efforts. (Corwin, 2010. 140 pp. \$23.95. 978-1-4129-7839-2.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

### **SMARTER CLICKING: SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY POLICIES THAT WORK!**

#### **Christopher Wells**

As most teacher-librarians know, there are tech directors who build very restrictive kingdoms and tech directors who see the principal use of technology as teaching and learning. Wells seems to be in the former camp while proclaiming interest in the latter. This book is full of things to fear about technology and what to do about those fears in creating policies that will be ENFORCED. Yes, everyone is going to be involved, but in the end, the rules will be straightforward and will protect everyone against attacks by students and teachers. Computing in the media center must be watched, Wells says in the last chapter because you know what will go on and you have to get control of technologies that the students will bring to school. There is no mention of cloud computing. No mention of Web 2.0 and while tighter and looser filtering policies are reviewed we are convinced Wells loves the tight controls. We are waiting for a book by someone who really has teaching and learning at the center of school policies on technology. The policies encouraged in this book do not respect the idea that we

need to approach technology by encouraging personal responsibility and trust in the adults who work with kids. Every tech director has to understand that NO means IGNORE THE RULE AND GET AROUND IT to many kids, teens, and even adults. Teacher-librarians who bump up against impossible filtering and tech bureaucracy understand full well the difference between policies that discourage rather than encourage. (Corwin Press, 2010. 134 pp. \$26.95. 978-1-4129-6699-3.)

Bottom line: This book argues a policy that is unrealistic and impossible to enforce. Ignore this book.

### **BOUND-FOR-CAREER GUIDE-BOOK: A STUDENT GUIDE TO CAREER EXPLORATION, DECISION-MAKING, AND THE JOB SEARCH**

#### **Frank Burnett**

With the introduction of the Common Core Standards across the United States, one would normally get very excited about a reference book about getting ready for a career since that is at the center of Obama's Race to the Top program. Not so in this slim volume. Burnett seems to be writing a career guide from the 1980's perspective. That time no longer exists. So many young people are going to college to prepare for non-existent jobs—the kind where we select a profession and prepare for a slot that is going to open up for an entire career. Perhaps some of the old ideas still apply, but we are given list after list of top jobs that are out there waiting for us with no evidence that Burnett has done any substantial research to back up those lists, particularly in view of global competition. Where is the entrepreneur in this book? Where is the critical thinker, the creative thinker, or the problem solver? Where is the idea of being prepared for collaborative teams where we meld our individual expertise with that of others? Not in this book. And, it is not really written for students to use with its dense and uninteresting text. Perhaps there are a few straightforward ideas that some young people

and can use in this traditional view, but teacher-librarians should be able to locate much better information sources than this one. (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010. 170 pp. \$27.95. 978-1-60709-759-4.)

Bottom line: Pass this one by.

### **HABITS OF MIND ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: PRACTICAL AND CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS**

#### **Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick, Eds.**

Somehow we missed this collection of essays last year, but when personal characteristics such as habits of mind or dispositions are discussed, teacher-librarians need to perk up their ears. In the first part of this book, Costa and others list and discuss briefly what the recognized habits of mind are. Here is their list: persisting; listening with understanding and empathy; questioning and posing problems; thinking and communicating with clarity and precision; creating, imagining, and innovating; taking responsible risks; thinking interdependently; managing impulsivity; thinking flexibly; striving for accuracy; applying past knowledge to new situations; gathering data through all senses; responding with wonderment and awe; finding humor; and, remaining open to continued learning. So, for a quick guide to habits of mind, this is an easy reference, and the use of all the habits as a cool essay is a great one to use with adults and kids to help them understand the various concepts. So, just for the brief explanations, this book is worth a quick inspection. Then have teachers discuss how they have used the habits to work into their teaching of various content areas. Costa recommends as do we, the book should be approached and shared in just bits and pieces. If you are trying to teach or discuss the habits of mind and need a few examples; this is your book. (ASCD, 2009. 237 pp. \$26.85. 978-1-4166-0763-2.)

Bottom line: Recommended as a quick reference or good discussion stimulator in a professional development session.

## SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN GIFTED EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING OUR MOST ABLE STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Jaime A. Castellano and Andrea Dawn Frazier, Eds.

Not long ago, it was reported that the kids most neglected in the No Child Left Behind era were the gifted. When we turn our attention to one problem such as bringing every child up to a minimum level, we seem to neglect something else. Everyone may talk about the "gaps" we must concentrate on, but in doing so, do we open up another gap that was once a strength because we no longer focus on it? Like the discussion about teens trying to multitask by listening to their iPods during school, can we focus as normal adults on everything? This collection of essays tries to bring back onto our radar screens those of the brightest who may be so bored with having to listen while the same concept is taught over and over until "everybody" gets it, that they just "veg out." And, the result is, we lose out as a nation. During our race with the Russians in space, monies were targeted at our nation's best and brightest. Now, monies target the lowest performers and it is hard to find extra money to pay attention to the best and brightest. What to do? Not paying attention is not an option. That is why this book should be purchased, torn up, and given chapter by chapter to a group for an analysis and synthesis of the major points across all the authors represented. It would spur ideas and remind us all that we have to appeal to all the children and teens in our classrooms and learning commons. (Prufrock Press, 2010. 463 pp. \$79.95. 978-1-59363-417-9.)

**Bottom line:** An authoritative and recommended read.

## THE UNITED STATES OF STORYTELLING: FOLKTALES AND TRUE STORIES FROM THE EASTERN STATES

Dan Keding

Do we have to study the states again? Must I choose a state and do one more plagia-

rized/copy job for you, teacher? Do we ever get beyond the basic facts of statehood—beyond the state flowers and birds? Keding gives states east of the Mississippi (in the first volume) and west of the Mississippi (in the second volume) a gift by researching and retelling stories connected to the unique culture of each state—whether that story is an imported story by immigrants, by native populations, or a story representing that state. The stories are readable, tellable, and a breath of fresh air for state studies and for just plain storytelling. Since digital storytelling is all the rage right now, include material from this excellent collection into those initiatives with kids and teens. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 254 pp. \$50.00. 978-1-59158-728-6.)

**Bottom line:** Highly recommended.

## GUIDE TO REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS, 6TH ED.

Barbara Ripp Safford, Compiler

The printed reference collection in any library is the most expensive piece of the print collection and also the most restricted for use. In the economic downturn and the digital revolution, one must ask some basic questions. What happened to the printed magazine collection in school libraries over the past 20 years? Does anyone even have a retrospective periodical collection any more in the face of online subscription databases? Sure, school libraries still stock periodicals, but what kinds and for what function? In the same way, the print reference collection seems to be diminishing in function, purpose, and form. If students in your school are accessing 99% of their information during research in online sources, then what is the function of the print reference collection? How current is the information in a print reference book? How often does a particular volume get used? Where does it get used? When does it get used? What is the cost per use as compared with cost per use of online information? To get the print reference collection used, do we have to force kids and teens to use it? If yes why? This guide is a printed reference of recommended list. How current is it even

when published in 2010? Will its use pay its way? Why isn't it an online tool that is constantly being updated? How many teacher-librarians actually consult printed bibliographies any more as they select materials for their collections? As you can see, this reviewer believes we are in a period of transition and there seems to be much logical sense in the notion that the printed reference collection is dead. If the teacher-librarian still values the print reference collection and can demonstrate the value of its uses, then this source has some value. I suspect most folks use the automated selection tools that are part of the automated acquisition module of the OPAC. Looking at the reference shelves of many school library media centers that I have visited recently, those expensive outdated reference sources that give more misinformation that reliable data should be heading for the recycling bin; so many have never been used. Don't tell taxpayers that, however. (Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 236 pp. \$60.00. 978-1-59158-277-9.)

**Bottom line:** This selection tool is credible and as a sixth edition, will exist or die depending on its sales.

## NEAL-SCHUMAN GUIDE TO RECOMMENDED CHILDREN'S BOOKS, SECOND EDITION

Kathryn I. Matthew and Joy L. Lowe

If there is any money to purchase materials for the Common Core Standards emphasis on the reading of information books, then this list is coming out at the right time. The two able authors have selected carefully among a wide range of print and multimedia materials beginning cleverly with math and science and then covering the rest of the non-fiction areas. So, as a printed bibliography, it is credible. Having said that, how many teacher-librarians select their materials using printed bibliographies any more? Since Destiny, the automated system is ubiquitous, we suspect that most selection takes place on Title Wave where one can compare reviews and with a click of a button manage the acquisition system very efficiently. (Neal-Schuman, 2010. 356 pp. \$65.00. 978-1-55570-688-3.)

Bottom line: If a printed source of recommended informational materials is your forte, then this collection is worth your time.

## USING SCIENCE NOTEBOOKS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Michael P. Klentschy**

If one looks at the science guided inquiry demonstrated in this book, there is a striking resemblance between the library/learning commons inquiry model and what middle school students should be doing. If the teacher-librarian makes this comparison, then a natural conversation of collaborative inquiry in both the science classroom and the learning commons ensues. If the students are branching out at all from an actual lab into the world of information for their experimentation or problem solving, then the combination of teacher-librarian and science teacher cannot be beat! It just takes making the connection on both adult's part. This book demonstrates the power of keeping a notebook that is much more than just "what I did today." If the teacher-librarian is a techno whiz, then there are lots of possibilities of combining the paper notebook with Web 2.0 tools to achieve even better information and thinking analysis about data, information, experimentation, critical thinking. We think such an alliance would make the science experience for young people absolutely tops! (NSTA, 2010. 232 pp. \$29.95. 978-1-936137-04-6.)

Bottom line: We recommend this book highly as a discussion starter between the teacher-librarian and the science teacher. Two heads can be much better than one.

## TIPS AND OTHER BRIGHT IDEAS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES, VOL. 4

**Kate Vande Brake**

A compendium of ideas to use in an elementary setting, this book gives suggestions from around the United States about how to do various actions in an elementary library. For the newbie to an elementary school library, the tips and tactics offered

will spur the practitioner to consider what will work in their environment and what will need to be customized in order to have success in their program. Many of the suggestions are defined not only developmentally, but by the type of school library one is involved with. Many of the suggestions need student assessment/results orientation for student learning (why am I doing this?). (Linworth, 2010. 144 pp. \$35.00. 978-1-58683-416-6.)

Bottom line: A management tool for the practitioner that has its place in developing some connection with the classroom and curriculum, but can be extended.—*Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux*

## Here is a Contrast in Reviews:

### THE ADVENTURES OF SUPER3: A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO INFORMATION LITERACY FOR GRADES K-2

**Annette C. Hibbert Nelson and  
Danielle N. DuPuis**

Has the school lost the services of a professional teacher-librarian? Or, as a teacher-librarian are you part time at several elementary schools? If so, these authors have created lessons that can replace the professional teacher-librarian in the teaching of research skills for grades K-2. The advantage of having the classroom teacher teach these lessons alone in the classroom is that they can be adapted easily to the topic at hand and thus will be learned more readily by the students. If taught as isolated library lessons on scheduled periods, they will lose most of their effectiveness. The most difficult advocacy effort is to convince an entire school that baby sitting students whose teacher needs a planning period and teaching them isolated skills is a good use of tax payer dollars. Certainly, the research does not support such a program. The authors of these lessons mention no effort to collaborate with classroom teachers in the teaching of the topics in the classroom. Neither do they link their lessons to the new Common Core Standards that every teacher will be facing. (Linworth, 2010. 185 pp. Pap/CD: 978-1-58683-387-9.)

Bottom line: For these reasons, this book is not recommended for teacher-librarians but recommended for classroom teachers if they can link the lessons to the Common Core Standards.—*David Loertscher*

### THE ADVENTURES OF SUPER3: A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO IN- FORMATION LITERACY FOR GRADES K-2

**Annette C. Hibbert Nelson and  
Danielle N. DuPuis**

Quite well done! This work includes very creative ideas about how to make traditional learning into fun, innovative, creative problem-solving learning. Compiled by two elementary school library practitioners with the blessing of the Big 6 (Super 3) creators, the authors have created engaging and thought-provoking lessons for young students that not only educate, but enthrall learners as well. The DVD, which is included is really the best part as it relates (with animation) learning to various national education standards. While all of the lessons have correlation to most of the AASL *Standards for the 21st Century Learner*, they can easily be shown to incorporate other standards and expectations. This compendium of lessons is a strong statement for information literacy and its place in learning today while it urges educators to design and use assignments that are at a higher thinking level. No allowance is given for the young ages of the students; rather they are encouraged developmentally to "solve" their problems/issues/questions as a lifelong learning situation where the strategies of the Super 3 can be applied across curriculum and learning needs. These lessons emulate the conviction that students learn more when they enjoy learning more.

Bottom line: A great resource that can be used as is or creatively used to strengthen existing lessons.—*Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux*