

# Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

## THE ATLAS OF NEW LIBRARIANSHIP

R. David Lankes

MIT Press, 2011, 408 p., \$55.00. ISBN: 978-0-26201-509-7.

A number of voices are calling for the re-conceptualization of the discipline of library and information sciences and this proposal to the field is significant, indeed. Lankes looks past the traditional storage and retrieval function of various traditional types of libraries to look at the how and why of the field. To do this, he first develops a major new mission statement for librarians rather than for libraries. Here is the mission and it should be read several times over just to appreciate the nature of the proposal: "The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities." Such a proposal is not that different than the proposed "learning commons" created by this reviewer. It is "knowledge creation" that is so fascinating. The library may be a repository of information and artifacts, but it is the role of the librarian to facilitate from that store and wealth of information and technology the creation of knowledge. Lankes does this re-conceptualization in the form of a giant mind map printed in the front of this oversized volume and also as a giant poster in a sleeve at the back of the book. From the central concept of mission, Lankes develops four major ideas that then break down into many many categories and subcategories: Importance of a World View, Importance of Theory and Deep Concepts, Conversation Theory, and, Creativity. It takes a bit of doing to first grasp the main ideas of the overall concept map as pictured on multiple two dimensional space and then be able to pursue the various branches and sub-branches through the book. Such navigation we found much easier on the web version that you can access for free at: <http://www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress/>. Lankes and his graduate students and others from the profession were invited to write essays, something like a Wikipedia collection of concepts and theories. The result is not only a MAJOR reconceptualization but a masterpiece of thinking and rethinking as a challenge to a profession sorely needing to reinvent itself. In a discussion of the Atlas with the author, Professor Lankes has agreed to write a feature article for *Teacher Librarian* to appear in our February 2012 issue. Please watch for it. In the meantime, spend an hour or two exploring, watching videos, and linking to various resources. It will challenge old beliefs and propose new ones around which every professional in the field can begin a conversation and start to take action. This is a must study. —DVL

## THE NEW LEARNING COMMONS WHERE LEARNERS WIN! REINVENTING SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND COMPUTER LABS, 2ND EDITION

David V. Loertscher, Carol Koechlin and Sandi Zwaan

While the 2d edition contains much information from the first edition, it expands upon it significantly, and it extends the concepts, particularly in the virtual area. While the teacher librarian in the initial comics can be seen as somewhat scary physically, the message certainly isn't. Rather, it is as a helpful, collaborative plan that helps the teacher librarian facilitate the continuing journey of learning. The ideas in this book are important - they are visionary and go way beyond the idea of the classic school library program. Loertscher and company try to move the school library from being an isolated entity to a much more collaborative and exciting learning place. The book provides many helpful resources on the

full range of pertinent topics, from concept and theory to concrete examples of how a learning commons begins to work. Ever the beta situation (and acknowledged as such), the learning commons approach is an excellent way to help teachers teach and to help learners learn. You cannot implement a full learning commons quickly or all at once but this book will get you started on the right path. Useful index and glossary. (Learning Commons Press, 2011. 248 p. \$28.00. 978-1-933170-67-0.) Not to be missed! Highly recommended. 978-1-933170-67-0 —EBM

## SERVING TEEN PARENTS: FROM LITERACY TO LIFE SKILLS

Ellin Klor and Sarah Lapin

Read the name of this title twice. Yes, it is all about the teens in our high schools who are parents. They may be invisible, but are a special population that require a different kind of attention from

us. If we think of the adults in the community giving services to these very young families, who can we as teacher librarians work with to reach out to these "kids." This book is worth reading, not because it is directed specifically to teacher librarians in schools, because it isn't, but because it reminds us who we should connect with in the community to see that we are helping rather than ignoring, serving rather than hoping someone else is. The topics range from helping the teens themselves to their children. So, who do you know in your school who are teen parents? Get ideas here. (Libraries Unlimited, 2011, 200 p. \$45.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-693-5) Highly recommended —DVL

### **INTEGRATING AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE IN THE LIBRARY AND CLASSROOM**

**Dorothy Littlejohn Guthrie**

Here is a book more valuable for its bibliographies than for its intended purpose. Guthrie selects numerous titles surrounding 20 different topics that may connect to curricular topics in your school and then provides a central book with worksheets and a few activities but also links to many similar titles and extensive bibliographies that lead off into books, multimedia, and web resources. We are not fond of the types of activities recommended for the books because of the more low-level nature of mostly fact gathering, but there are worksheets suggesting projects around many of the titles. We would recommend Book2Cloud editions where one or several themes from a particular book or recommended companion titles causes students to explore, curate, create, and link collaboratively as adult coaches and learners. Use the great resources to build better African American collections but also to challenge not only the reading of the books, but the thinking surrounding them when connected to learning experiences in the classroom. This book could be used to actually isolate the teacher librarian further than normal because you could easily build a curriculum around reading. Not a good use of the plethora of resources expertly collected here. (Libraries Unlimited,

2011, 294 p. \$40.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-751-2) Used well, this resource is recommended. Used for isolated activities, look elsewhere. —DVL

### **EL DÍA DE LOS NIÑOS/EL DÍA DE LOS LIBROS : BUILDING A CULTURE OF LITERACY IN YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH DÍA**

**Jeanette Larson**

Have you celebrated día you your library or community yet? ALSC (Association of Library Service and REFORMA (The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking) have teamed up to celebrate culture, literacy and families for the fifteenth year. We all need excuses to improve literacy across cultures as a part of school reading initiatives, so take advantage of the ideas in this book to continue your festival or create a new one to infuse the idea of literacy into every culture in your school. Lots of ideas and program suggestions are given across school and public libraries. So, figure out the curricular connections, perhaps those tired county reports, and turn countries, traditions, and literacy into a giant party of reading, reading, and more reading. This book is a great way to begin a wonderful community tradition. (ALA Editions, 2011, 123 p. \$45.00, ISBN: 978-0-83893-599-6.) Worth the price. —DVL

### **GUIDED RESEARCH IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: MYSTERY IN THE MEDIA CENTER, 2ND ED**

**LaDawna Harrington**

Like the first edition, the research process, narrower than the concept of inquiry, is livened up by trying to create detective researchers. It is a clever idea, but its problem lies in its isolation from the classroom curriculum. Young detectives choose a topic and follow step by step lessons across four class periods to earn their certificate as a Lieutenant Inspector at Information Headquarters. So, teachers, take a break for a week, send your middle schoolers to the li-



## JUNIOR FICTION

### IT'S AN ADVENTURE!

**Akimbo and the Baboons.** Alexander McCall Smith. Il. LeUyen Pham. Bloomsbury, 2008. \$9.99. 978-1-59990-215-9. Grades 3-4. Akimbo and his cousin, Kosi, hang out with a well-known scientist who's researching the local baboons, but they get more than they bargained for, as they discover the ins and outs of baboon life.

**Chengli and the Silk Road Caravan.** Hildi Kang. Tanglewood, 2011. \$14.95. 978-1-93371-854-5. Grades 4-6. To find out his father's fate, Chengli, a thirteen-year-old orphan in 630 AD China, joins a caravan taking a princess to her wedding. Will he and the princess survive the desert's dangers?

**A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story.** Linda Sue Park. Clarion Books, 2010. \$16.00. 978-0-547-25127-1. Grades 4-6. Nya's and Salva's stories, in alternate timelines, tell of their ordeals carrying water [Nya] and trekking the Sudan as a Lost Boy [Salva], then Salva's eventual American adoption and return to the Sudan to drill wells, including one in Nya's village.

**Mogo: The Third Warthog.** Donna Jo Napoli. Lita Judge. Hyperion, 2008. \$15.99. 978-1-423-10816-0. Grades 3-6. When Mogo and his brothers get pushed out of their mother's burrow on the African savannah to make room for a new litter, they need to find new homes. Boars are loners, but Mogo wants family nearby.

**Vietnam, Book 1: I Pledge Allegiance.** Chris Lynch. Scholastic Press, 2011. \$16.99. 978-0-545-27029-8. Grades 7-8. Four Boston boys, friends since childhood, enlist when one of them is drafted: Rudi, Marines; Morris, Navy; Beck; Air Force; and Ivan, Army. Morris tells their gritty stories of friendship, fear, change, graphic violence, and homesickness.



### FRESH FANTASY SETTINGS

**Akata Witch.** Nnedi Okorafor. Viking, 2011. \$17.99. 978-0-670-01196-4. Grades 6-10. In Nigeria, American-born Sunny, 12, comes into her magical powers and secretly pursues the study of magic with new friends. The four teens prove to be vital to saving the country from a serial killer.

**Chime.** Franny Billingsley. Dial, 2011. \$17.99. 978-0-8037-3552-1. Grades 7 up. "I've confessed to everything and I'd like to be hanged. Now, if you please," opens this original fantasy set in the early 1900s in a small English town. Briony, 17, believes she's a witch who's hurt those she loves, but events and a romance unfold to show her the truth.

**The Inquisitor's Apprentice.** Chris Moriarty. Harcourt Children's Books, 2011. \$16.99. 978-0-547-58135-4. Grades 6-9. Sacha, 13, lives in a Manhattan tenement at the turn of the last century, where magic permeates everyday life. His magical abilities earn him an apprenticeship with the police department's inquisitor. Sacha experiences adventure and danger but also deals with anti-Semitism in New York's bustling immigrant world.

**Kat, Incorrigible.** Stephanie Burgis. Atheneum, 2011. \$16.99. 978-1-4169-9447-3. Grades 6-9. In a world like Jane Austen's but steeped in magic, adventurous Kat, 12, attends an elegant house party and tries to save her older sister from an ill-advised marriage. Kat's humorous narration combines with an exciting plot for an entertaining read.

**Welcome to Bordertown: New Stories and Poems of the Borderlands.** Holly Black and Ellen Kushner, editors. Random House, 2011. \$19.99. 978-0-375-96705-4. Grades 8 up. This excellent, hefty array of short stories are tales set in Bordertown, a grungy, lively, surprising town on the border of the human and faerie worlds, where creatures from both worlds mingle, love, fight, make art, and escape their pasts.

brary and I will teach them everything they need to know about research. Oh, if our jobs were that simple! Is there a professional teacher librarian out there who really believes that such a scheme is raising achievement? Such a simplistic view of the profession is dangerous in these times of financial exigency. The challenge to both authors and publishers is to turn everyone's attention to information and technology integration that boosts classroom and school improvement initiatives. Collaborative thematic and research skills pushed side by side by teacher and teacher librarian in progressively more difficult inquiry projects across a school year must be the focus of sustainable inquiry that really makes a difference. (Linworth, 2011. 119 p. \$35.00 ISBN: 978-1-59884-860-1.) Skip this approach. Middle schoolers deserve more. -DVL

### PERSONAL LEARNING NETWORKS: USING THE POWER OF CONNECTIONS TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION

**Will Richardson**

A personal learning network is a method of linking kids and adults to major sources of information on the Internet. It is like choosing your closest friends that you want to listen to because they keep you up to date, you trust what they have to say, and it is your method of keeping current on what is going on. Richardson has created a very very important book here that every teacher librarian should read and implement both in their own lives and in the lives of their students. Will provides a number of tools that help all of us link to our favorites and even provides directions for getting started with each tool he recommends. More importantly, he describes and promotes the idea of the classroom (and we can say Learning Commons) where PLNs are as natural as plugging in and turning on. We see a bit larger picture than Will describes here: The creation of a portal by learners into the world of information and technology under their control, the development of the personal learning network by every learner, and finally, the creation of a personal portfolio with both private works

and the creation of a public face. Richardson is trying to raise our consciousness as a profession that we have a responsibility beyond the teaching of the research process if we are to help kids, teachers, and ourselves build a personal learning environment that will carry on beyond formal schooling. Our recommendation is for every teacher librarian to purchase this book, read it carefully, implement the skills in your own life not already mastered, and then begin to exhibit what you know to others. It is the new information literacy - an extension of what we have been doing for decades, and an essential life skill for the foreseeable future. Couple this book with chapter seven in Loertscher and Koechlin's *The New Learning Commons Where Learners Win*, 2nd ed., and you will see how Richardson and others see personal learning networks as a key skill in the juggernaut world of the Internet. (Solution Tree Press, 2011. 150 p. \$24.95. ISBN: 978-1-93554-327-5.) Recommended -DVL

### A NEW CULTURE OF LEARNING: CULTIVATING THE IMAGINATION FOR A WORLD OF CONSTANT CHANGE

**Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown**

If you have not read a book lately on educational theory and practice, this one is required reading. Thomas and Brown examine the word of direct teaching vs. the world of discovery and questions. It is all about traditional education that sets out to teach a body of unchanging knowledge vs. the idea of coaching and knowing, making, and playing. It is the difference between behaviorist and constructivist teaching and learning. This huge divide, totally opposite philosophies clashed in No Child Left Behind with behaviorist ideas winning. The concentration on just developing personal expertise under Common Core standards is probably here to stay. But education does not always have to be about regurgitation, and that is where teacher librarians come into the picture. It is not only about what we help teachers and students master, we are all about creativity, critical thinking, messing around, geeking out, hanging



around, and building collective knowledge through play, experimentation, thinking, and doing. While Thomas and Brown argue for a complete reversal of educational strategies and methods, this reviewer does not believe we always have to choose between one method or another; that variety of strategies is the spice of learning. Sometimes, we have to buckle down and learn what we have to learn because that becomes the background knowledge necessary to create and build. We have to understand the laws of aerodynamics before we can design new flying objects. Sometimes we build on traditional knowledge; at other times, we purposefully depart from tradition to explore the great unknown through curiosity. This book will make you think and perhaps shape your ideas as we push kids and teens into this new and exciting world of information and technology. (CreateSpace, 2011. 137 p. \$12.95. ISBN: 978-1-45645-888-1.) A must read. —DVL

### **COPYRIGHT CATECHISM II: PRACTICAL ANSWERS TO EVERYDAY SCHOOL DILEMMAS**

**Carol Simpson**

Anything copyright by Carol Simpson deserves a good look and this publication is no exception. Having answered school library copyright questions for many years, she uses this publication to take the teacher librarian into 2011 legalities about copyright. Well indexed and with an effective table of contents, this publication is meant to augment her 5th edition of Copyright for Schools and covers much of what she said in her column from 2005 to 2011 about copyright questions. A ready reference full of great information. (Linworth, 2011. 162 p. \$40.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-848-9.) Highly recommended. —EBM

### **TALES FROM THE 7000 ISLES: FILIPINO FOLK STORIES.**

**Dianne De las Casas and Zarah Gagtiga (2011)**

A most interesting collection of Filipino culture, this book, divided by genre, is for

many upper elementary to middle school students. There is variety within each genre, it is well indexed, and provides many interesting notes about Filipino culture. Photos, recipes and craft directions enhance the tales. Part of the Libraries Unlimited World Folklore Series. (ABC-CLIO, 2011. 175 p. \$40.00 ISBN: 978-1-59884-698-0.) Recommended. —EBM

### **BOOK CLUBBING!: SUCCESSFUL BOOK CLUBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Carol Littlejohn**

We are attracted to this book because of all the new possibilities for using technologies to create a reading culture in the school. Alas, the only use of technology we could find in the book was the use and creation of book trailers. So, if you are looking for face to face activities, this book has a number of ideas. But, we are looking for a book of a different sort that can make use of technology in a way to really create a reading culture beyond what a single librarian can do. It would be the difference between an isolated program and a giant collaborative involving everyone: students, teachers, parents, adult specialists, administrators, etc. Who will write this one? Who will help us all get out of our traditional love of reading space and push us into the real center of reading. I'm waiting. (Linworth, 2011, 128 p. \$35.00. ISBN: 978-1-58683-414-2.) —DVL

### **GOING MOBILE : DEVELOPING APPS FOR YOUR LIBRARY USING BASIC HTML PROGRAMMING**

**Scott LaCounte**

Do you have your own Geek squad? iStaff? Tech Club? Do kids bring their mobile devices to school? If so, and even if you don't think you need it, you think, we'd suggest getting this book and then create a study group with kids and adults. Get an app created for your virtual learning commons or your library website. If you are not on their phone or iPad, you know who is.... Oh, and by the way, if you are creating knowledge

## IT'S A MYSTERY

**The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie.** Alan Bradley. Bantam, 2010.

\$15.00. 978-0-385-34349-7. Grades 9-12. Flavia de Luce, a chemistry prodigy at the age of eleven, uses keen intelligence to solve a murder at her family's English estate. Absurd situations and Flavia's humor combine for a highly entertaining read.

**Bone by Bone.** Carol O'Connell. Berkley Books, 2009. \$9.99. 978-0-425-23105-0. Grades 11-12. Twenty years ago, when he was seventeen, Oren Hobbs's fifteen-year-old brother Josh disappeared into the woods. When human bones start appearing on the homestead's porch, Oren, a former Army CID investigator, attempts to solve past and present crimes.

**The Distant Hours.** Kate Morton. Atria Books, 2010. \$26.00. 978-1-439-15278-2. Grades 9-12. When Edie Burchill discovers her mother's stay at Milderhurst Castle during WWII, she uncovers the owners' family secrets as well. Fans of gothic mysteries will find the requisite gloomy atmosphere, haunted house, and women in peril, with a few twists thrown in.

**Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter.** Tom Franklin. William Morrow, 2010. \$24.99. 978-0-060-59466-4. Grades 11-12. Twenty years after teen-aged Cindy Walker's unresolved disappearance during a date with Larry Ott, the truth emerges after a present day murder. More than a mystery, this novel explores racial tensions and the bonds of enduring friendships.

**The Girl who Would Speak for the Dead.** Paul Elwork. Penguin, 2011. \$24.95. 978-0-399-18717-2. Grades 9-12. Thirteen-year-old twins Michael and Emily Stewart fool neighborhood kids with "spirit knockings," but family secrets and adult involvement cause unforeseen, dire consequences.

building centers and/or Book2Cloud versions of ebooks, did you know that in the management section of a Google Site, there is this box you can check that makes the site available on mobile devices! So even if you don't have an app, you can be in the middle of any learning experience right alongside the teacher. Fabulous collaborative opportunities are right at our fingertips, and it doesn't take a genius or a computer programmer to get it done. Let's go! [ALA, 2012. 52 p. \$45.00. ISBN: 978-0-83891-129-7.] Recommended —*DVL*

### **MANGATOPIA: ESSAYS ON MANGA AND ANIME IN THE MODERN WORLD**

**Timothy Perper and Martha Cornog, editors**

This is a most interesting compilation of information about manga and anime - 2 very popular styles that are sweeping the country. Stating that this country is seeing an epic effect by these styles, the editors reinforce much of what they claim with interesting essays and statistics from a variety of well known experts in anime and manga. This is well indexed, well substantiated, and well approached. The various essays are thought provoking not only to professionals, but also to parents and students. Don't miss this one! (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 275p. \$ 50.00, ISBN: 978-1-59158-098-2.) Highly recommended. —*EBM*

### **TEACHING HISTORICAL FICTION WITH READY-MADE LITERATURE CIRCLES FOR SECONDARY READERS**

**Carianne Bernadowski & Kelly Morgano**

Recently there has been some significant interest in the professional world dealing with secondary students and book clubbing/reading. This book offers some interesting ideas about how to engage secondary readers in historical fiction areas. In Part 1 there are templates that can be used with a variety of books and who make excellent discussion starters. In Part 2 there

is a collection of thoughts about how to "do" a literature circle with certain titles that may be of interest to secondary age students. The selection of the titles and authors is diverse and interesting unto itself. It wouldn't be hard to substitute one that you prefer to do for one of these, however. Covering many areas in history, these templates align with current state and national standards, and are about popular areas that many history lessons teach. More for the novice to this type of teaching than the expert, it draws ideas that lend themselves to interdisciplinary lessons. It would benefit from having more information about technological connections that can be made using these scenarios in history, but that is another book. (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 222 p. \$ 35.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-788-8.) Recommended. —*EBM*

### **CASE STUDY RESEARCH: A PROGRAM EVALUATION GUIDE FOR LIBRARIANS**

**Ravonne A. Green**

This book attempts to bridge the issue of outcome assessment and library methodologies that can be used. Using a case-study approach The book is built around a hypothetical case and comes complete with vignettes and examples. There is text on how to do just about anything regarding case study research; from proposal to identifying design and data collection methods. One of the strong points about this book is its discussion about appropriate political, ethical, and interpersonal relationships. There is information about how to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative and qualitative data as well as how to evaluate and use these findings. Finally, It gives a good explanation about how to report the evidence. There is information about using the appropriate qualitative software to help do some of this. In a world where librarians need information about how to report evidence, this book really helps in certain areas. (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 114 p. \$ 45.00. ISBN: 978-1-59158-860-3.) Recommended. —*EBM*

Each year, a number of major bibliographies are published for use by teacher librarians and public librarians to build their collections in topical areas. The format, annotations, selection criteria and organization of the lists remain constant and provide users with excellent lists. These often end up in automated collection lists attached to OPAC systems. They are, of course outdated at the moment of publication, but are treasured as authoritative sources of the best. In tight budget years, more and more attention must be given to every dollar expended. The choice is always whether to buy an expensive published list or use the money to buy actual titles. These expensive lists are often best purchased and then shared. Here is a checklist of recent titles we have received for your consideration:

Historical fiction for teens : a genre guide. Melissa Rabey (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 324 p. \$45.00. ISBN: 978-1-59158-813-9)

The family in literature for young readers: a resource guide for use with grades 4 to 9. John Thomas Gillespie, ed. (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 470 p. \$60.00. ISBN: 978-1-59158-915-0)

Graphic Novels for Young Readers : A Genre Guide for Ages 4-14. Nathan Herald (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 188 p., \$40.00. ISBN: 978-1-59884-395-8)

Multicultural Literature and Response: Affirming Diverse Voices. Lynn Atkinson Smolen and Ruth A. Oswald (Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 453p. \$45.00 ISBN: 978-1-59884-474-0)