Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

Barr, Catherine. Best Books for Children: Preschool through Grade 6. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 430p. $45. ISBN: 9781598847802.

It is good to see a supplement such as this is to the ninth edition of the same title. It is a continuation of what that edition offers. This publication serves as a significant collection development tool for elementary and early elementary readers/pre-readers. While there is subject categorization in this supplement, there is little mentioned about subject organization in a school library. It does cover e-book format and audio book formats, as well as looking at what won what award. The only caution is to realize how quickly this type of book will date. Remember to have relevant, cutting-edge literature for reading always in the library! If this type of list of titles helps do that, also keep watch on what needs to come and go with the students' interests. Recommended.

Burgin, Robert. Going Places: A Reader's Guide to Travel Narrative (Real Stories). Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 572p. $60. ISBN: 9781598849721.

Another valuable, but quick to date, title from the series, *Real Stories* (See Food Lit, also). Certainly a librarian's helper, this publication suggests titles in various genres about travel. With the political and emotional investments that rapidly change in traveling, the librarian is best served by suggesting a title or titles along with a political website that will allow the reader to investigate, not only the history of the area, but its present circumstances. Always fun to explore resources that travel can make more meaningful, this compendium offers a chance to know more about an area than by taking a trip to that area alone. Excellent publication with very helpful indices for browsing, as well as recommendations. Recommended.

Dobbs, Aaron W., Ryan L. Sittler, and Douglas Cook, Editors. Using LibGuides to Enhance Library Services: A LITA Guide. ALA, 2013. 307p. $65. Trade pb. ISBN: 9781555708801.

LibGuides is not free, but many teacher librarians love it because they can assemble in one place many resources attached to a unit of instruction or interest that are commonly requested by patrons. It is a cross between a bibliography and a guide to literature. I have had some teacher librarians experiment with using the LibGuide as a structure for a collaborative unit of instruction with both teachers and students, using it to add to what the teacher librarian may have designed. This collection of guiding articles is intended to get you using and improving the guides that you have begun to create. In this way, it is like a checklist for the person who is beginning, but also you can check your knowledge with others in the field to see if you can glean any new ideas and tips. It is not targeted at the school teacher librarian, per se, but at a larger audience of librarians of all types. If you are a novice or an experienced novice, this guide is worth the price. It will help with many design features and also give ideas for content and maintenance across time. Recommended.

Kurzweil, Ray. How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed. Viking, 2012. 336p. $27.95. ISBN: 9780670025299.

Get ready for a hefty, but authoritative read-in with this one. Ray Kurzweil is a major scientist and futurist. He invented text-to-speech for those who are blind and have low vision among many other inventions, so his name is revered by many. There are a plethora of books out there about brain-based learning that we have reviewed over the past several years, but we have been skeptical about the expertise behind them. In this volume, if you can wade a bit through the complexities, you get the latest on what we really know about brain functioning up until the date of publication. I found as I listened to the audio book of this title, that the novice on brain science can skim over the most technical ideas to glean the essentials and come out understanding major ideas. Kurzweil is the kind of scientist who brilliantly applies what we currently know about science, but has no hesitation about discarding old ideas as new discoveries are made. He teaches the reader how our marvelous brain works and how we can use its strengths in partnership with technology to build deep understanding. For teacher librarians, such understanding helps us help children and teens deal with the ubiquitous information glut and the newest technologies to help us all cope. This book is the kind where you read a chapter and think a while; then, read the next chapter . . . And, don't get lost in the complex explanations, but ferret out the major ideas and their implications for our own practice. While this is not an easy book, it will tickle your brain with major new ideas and understanding. An incredible think!

Lindsay, Julie, and Vicki A. Davis. Flattening Classrooms, Engaging Minds: Move to Global Collaboration One Step at a Time. Pearson, 2013. 340p. $33.99 Trade pb. ISBN: 9780132610353.

Remember the old days of pen pals among children around the world? You are old!, at least in tech time. In the flat world and networked environment, educational experiences can be without boundaries across classrooms and groups of learners around the world. These two authors are co-sponsors of the Flat Classroom Project and have created a super guide to their work with a theoretical *and* practical guide to success. This is simply the best book on this topic and a must-read. The authors take us through a bit of theory first and then provide seven important steps for getting started. They are experts at this and have created a six-month extension of the book that is free. So, the guide is *really a whole world of professional development guides, helps, examples, and tools* far beyond the printed page. If you have the slightest interest in building learning experiences collaboratively among teachers or across the world, then get this book instantly. A best book of the year!

Michel, Jason Paul. Web Service APIs and Libraries. ALA, 2013. 125p. $55. Trade pb. ISBN: 9780838911822.

Do you have a computer programming class in your high school? If so, computer teachers may be teaching teens how to create apps for iPhones and Android devices that they can sell. Another form of programming is an API that is something like an app, but it resides on your library's website and collects data or items of interest that can be integrated automatically into your site, such as photos, tweets, videos, and many other items. It is something like building an automatic library carefully selected from out there in the cloud. As part of your virtual learning commons, your programming class could take on a project that would build part of the library resources for everyone to use. Ask your computer teacher if the class or some tech-savvy students could have a conversation around this book to see if something could happen. This kind of interaction could set some students on a path to a great career, while doing the learning commons a great service at the same time. This is an idea book with instructions that will get the conversation and the programming going.

Rothsein, Dan, and Luz Santana. Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions. Harvard Educational, 2011. 176p. $26.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781612500997.

We all know the basic questions: who, what, where, why and how, but if children and teens are going to be any good at inquiry and self-directed learning, they need a better introduction to question building than this simple guide. Somehow we missed this title from 2011 and should not have. Part of the learning commons program is the building of great learning experiences and experimental projects that may succeed or fail. An essential element is to turn students from responders into questioners. How is this done? Teachers who love lecturing may already be good at asking fact questions as they present, and they often use their technique to grab and maintain attention. The questions in this book are designed to stimulate thinking, inquiry, imagination, mystery, investigation, wonder, and self-directed learning. The questions stimulate quite a different response from learners that is very pleasing to a teacher librarian bent on stimulating great learning experiences in the learning commons. We recommend this book highly. There are other books that help in building questions, such as Carol Koechlin's Q Tasks published in 2007 by Pembroke. This is a great book to dig into, learn, and then study with teachers as you begin any collaboration. Highly recommended.

Stoeger, Melissa. Food Lit: A Reader's Guide to Epicurean Nonfiction (Real Stories). Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 350p. $ 60. ISBN: 9781598847062.

This reader's advisory compendium is a part of the *Real Stories* series (see Going Places, also) that offers assistance to a librarian when faced with food topics. It is an interesting set of nonfiction works that are arranged by both genre and interest. It is diverse and contains opposing viewpoints. Timely, but food, like the environment, is ever changing. One of the best ways to consider this information is to stay abreast of food blogs, as well as topics of current interest, and view what is mentioned in this publication as history of a food, as well as considerations about food. The information this publication contains is of great interest to students and their parents and others involved in environmental and food issues. Recommended.

Treffinger, Donald J., Patricia F. Schoonover, and Edwin C. Selby. Educating for Creativity & Innovation: A Comprehensive Guide for Research-Based Practice. Prufrock, 2013. 300p. $45 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781593639525.

With the emphasis in many schools of bringing everyone up to a minimum, it is refreshing to find a book that challenges everyone to push far beyond minimal expertise toward creativity. The authors have created a fairly elaborate system of building a program stressing creativity. They develop in everyone, including students, a certain vocabulary and a set of practices that need to be in place and a certain environment in which to practice the tools they recommend, and assess the outcome. This book is long on theory, but short on real life examples and projects. Thus, without extensive professional development of their ideas, it is difficult to grasp what the system would look like in a real school with real students. It would be helpful if the authors had provided a wide variety of videos of students and teachers in action that the reader could access to get a better idea of the system in practice. There are some major ideas to consider here, that need either visits to schools who have implemented the system, or a con-

ference where both the theory and great examples might be presented. Thus, we recommend this title with some reservation, although ideas that would enable creativity and innovation would be very, very welcome.

Wadham, Rachel, and Jonathan Ostenson. **Integrating Young Adult Literature through the Common Core Standards.** Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 260p. $ 45. Trade pb. ISBN: 9781610691185.

There is grave concern that the Common Core standards are another run at politicizing education in a way that will make learning significantly dependent on testing. This book makes a valiant effort to involve standards' issues *and* young adult literature. It works to integrate reading into the standards in meaningful ways for young adults. Analysis of young adult literature is discussed in depth, from its connections to standards' work to understanding various qualitative aspects of the literature. It offers examples of how to tie this literature to standards' work. While this publication is about *how* to face the integration of standards and literature and then what to do with the issue, it isn't a compendium of titles to use for this work (although there are some good examples). Easily the templates and examples can be seen as just that—examples—which can be used with literature that is deemed useful for your students. Recommended.

Wiggins, Grant, and Jay McTighe. **The Understanding by Design Guide to Advanced Concepts in Creating and Reviewing Units.** ASCD, 2012. 136p. $26.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781416614098.

I have used the Understanding by Design framework for many years in my own teaching and have expected my students to achieve As or better success, as excellence is a foundational expectation. At the same time, flexibility, creativity, and innovative thinking have been important. As a coach rather than a prescriber of exactness, I have asked students to soar beyond the prescriptive to the inventive. For students who want to know exactly what and how much to do to, this is confusing. They ask: How many articles should I read? How many words should I use to summarize the article? When is the precise moment I should accomplish this task? This kind of student robot is just as frustrating to me. Such behavior is engrained in a generation of prescriptive teaching and learning to achieve success on the all-important tests. It does take some time for students to learn self-direction and to come into command of their own learning. What I think the message of this advanced guide to Understanding by Design is prescriptive teaching; i.e., once you set the bar using whatever standards you are working with, the outcome is set in concrete. The student will achieve only what a teacher expects. I see this role for the teacher as even more dictatorial than I had interpreted it to be in the initial models. I prefer the interpretation to be guide on the side, rather than scientist on the stage. The entire world of critical thinking, creative thinking, and collaborative intelligence cries out for a larger role for engagement, fascination, discovery, experimentation, exploration, invention, questioning, and inventing than I see happening in this new interpretation. I would like to ask the authors to respond to such a dichotomy, or if they see such a divide.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Brookhart, Wusan M. **How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading.** ASCD, 2013. $27.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781416615071.

Again, check your shelves. What is the current interest in rubrics among your teachers and how current are your resources? This title has a variety of good ideas. Consider: Are rubrics leveling students or liberating them to do better? Are they contributing to personal expertise? What is the current school climate on this issue?

Dillon, James. **No Place for Bullying: Leadership for Schools That Care for Ev-** ery Student. Corwin Press, 2012. 268p. $39.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781452216690.

Yet another title on bullying. Check your shelves to see how current your materials are. You may need a number of volumes on the topic. Staff and parents could scan your collection and Internet resources to come up with a series of ideas that might work in your school.

Fries-Gaither, Jessica, and Terry Shiverdecker. **Inquiring Scientists, Inquiring Readers: Using Nonfiction to Promote Science Literacy, Grades 3-5 - PB325X.** NSTA, 2013. 304p. $37.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781936959105.

NSTA publishes a plethora of ready-to-use inquiry units for all grade levels. We are interested in the clever ideas and the push to have children and teens reach out to information and technology to discover answers or figure them out for themselves. A perfect way for teacher librarians to "horn-in" on the science curriculum with their coaching skills.

Reid, Rob. **Silly Books to Read Aloud.** ALA, 2012. 145p. $18.95 Trade pb. ISBN: 9781937589103.

A fun, fun bibliography that you can hand to a teacher, parent volunteer, a library assistant, teachers, older children (to read to younger ones), school visitors, and yourself to charm the funny bone of a group of listeners.

BEST PROFESSIONAL BOOKS OF THE YEAR

Abilock, Debbie, Kristin Fontichiaro, and Violet H. Harada. Editors. **Growing Schools: Librarians as Professional Developers.** Libraries Unlimited, 2012. 390 p. $45.00. ISBN: 9781610690416

When Loertscher and Koechlin introduced the concept of the Learning Commons in 2008, we introduced the idea of an Experimental Learning Center both in physi-

cal and virtual spaces that would be the center of school improvement. It would be a collaborative with the administrators, specialists, classroom teachers, and students working on projects aimed at improvement and even disruption. Abilock, Fontichero, and Harada have teamed in this book to enlarge on the role that teacher librarians can have in this effort. They have looked for teacher librarians who are taking the lead in professional development in their schools and provide the reader with a banquet of examples that are beyond just the idea stage. This is an essential read; it provides fresh examples of what can and should happen when a teacher librarian moves to the center of teaching and learning. Chapters have been written by building and district teacher librarians and library educators. Thus, there is a broad perspective as the authors use the metaphor of the garden of learning to demonstrate their point that we do have an important role to play. What we don't see in this collection is a collaborative role by other players in the schools such as administrators, technology directors, reading coaches, persons either at the school or district in charge of professional development, the various commercial and governmental players tuned into school change. Thus, there is a "siloing" effect when looking at the role here. We are not the only players here; we need to draw on the perspectives of other players; and, in the Experimental Learning Center, this is exactly what needs to take place. If the teacher librarian can facilitate a physical space where adults and students can take risks, experiment, succeed, fail, test, and get better and better, the school takes on the characteristics of a professional learning community. This is not only true in a physical space that might be created as a part of the library/learning commons, but it is even more important to create a virtual Experimental Learning Center as a part of the Virtual Learning Commons (see the Loertscher/Koechlin article of this issue). However, that said, this is one of the most important books to appear in the literature this year. It begs the professionals of teacher

librarianship to realize the power they have under their fingertips. Instead of just using the bully pulpit, it provides real people doing real projects that make a difference. Read it; think about it; and, then reach out to others in the school to form a strong team bent on school improvement. Essential. *DVL*

Barnes, Mark. Role Reversal: Achieving Uncommonly Excellent Results in the Student-Centered Classroom. ASCD, 2013. $24.95. ISBN: 9781416615064.

Mark is totally into the idea of self-directed learning and has his ROLE model, meaning Results Oriented Learning Environment. In this ROLE, teachers are guides on the side; students are using many technologies; they are blogging regularly; they have year-long projects alongside other investigations; Mark gives comments, not grades; and, he does not worry about "the test." The best news is that he values the regular input of his teacher librarian! The book will lead you to his website: Learnitin5.com where lots of videos get kids started in various investigations and discussions. This is required reading by every teacher librarian, because as you recognize a teacher like Mark in your building who is doing something different, pounce on that person to help out and partner in the experimentation! Time after time one encounters these teachers who build great names for themselves in the web world and many lack any contact with a teacher librarian, or, if they do, they never acknowledge it. You will hear more from Mark in the pages of *Teacher Librarian*, but for now, read this one and consider the possibilities. *DVL*

Bell, Suzanne S. Librarian's Guide to Online Searching. Libraries Unlimited, 2012. 286 p. $50.00. ISBN: 9781610690355.

Really? Another text for online searching by librarians? Yes, and this one is a great one. It gives librarians a leg up on not only evaluating sources and databases, but the intricacies of the search for the "right" information find—something

librarians can always improve upon. Graphics, screenshots, and practical exercises and questions guide your work. References are quite good and divided up often to fit the chapter content. Bottom line: Excellent presentation of a hard to encompass subject and good ways to approach it. Highly recommended. *EM*

Crockett, Lee, Ian Jukes and Andrew Churches. Literacy Is Not Enough: 21ST-Century Fluencies for the Digital Age. Corwin Press, 2011. 213 p. $34.95. ISBN: 9781412987806 .

Somehow we missed this 2011 title, but it is and essential think piece for teacher librarians. The author trio present five major ways that a young person needs to develop fluency if they are to succeed in the global world: information fluency, solution fluency, creativity fluency, collaboration fluency, and media fluency. They not only defend their five point model but offer excellent advice on how to implement each of these with young people. The scientific method is employed by use of a fluency scaffold; each fluency has its own staircase to develop that ability. For example, in information fluency, their five steps are: Ask, Acquire, Analyze, Apply, and Assess. For solution fluency, the six steps are: Define, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Debrief. For collaboration fluency, their five steps are: Establish, Envision, Engineer, Execute, and Examine. The authors bring all of them together as a method of creating digital citizens that they define as personal responsibility, global citizenship, digital citizenship, altruistic service, and environmental stewardship. We appreciate the wider conceptual model these authors envision in an attempt to prepare young people for the challenges of the 21st century. It will challenge you as a teacher librarian to rethink what you consider as information literacy and how you implement and integrate your ideas into collaborative learning experiences alongside the classroom teachers. It is time to take a broader look at the IL models we developed back in the 1980s and this book is

an important contribution to that analysis. This is a must read for every Teacher Librarian bent on moving to the center of teaching and learning. *DVL*

Evans, G. Edward & Saponaro, Margaret Z. **Collection Management Basics** 6th ed. Library and Information Science Text Series. Libraries Unlimited, 2012. 128 pp. $45.00. ISBN 9781598848649

Now in its 6th edition, there isn't a better tome to orient oneself to collection development and management. This edition is nicely updated but maintains the concept of the collection being the heart of a library. How to manage what is there is what this publication covers well. Whether used as a ready reference or as a text to come to a good understanding of how to manage and develop appropriate collections in a library, this book is well worth using. *EM*

Froschauer, Linda, Editor. **A Year of Inquiry: A Collection for Elementary Educators.** NSTA, 2012. 211 p. $25.95. ISBN: 9781936959341.

The Common Core Standards may center their attention on Language Arts and Mathematics, but they urge that science be included. You can expect to see a larger inclusion and development around science as the CCS continues to develop and be implemented. This is the case because of the movement toward STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) that is enjoying a new emphasis in many schools across North America. That said, teacher librarians in elementary schools should watch for and encourage more interest in science as they see these signals start to take hold in their school. Now to the book at hand: Every elementary teacher librarian should purchase this book; read it; and, share it with teachers. It is amazing. Amazing because it advocates that inquiry and science knowledge be integrated to help children to start thinking like scientists. It is exactly what we as teacher librarians would hope that teachers of all disciplines would do; that is, integrate the teaching of content knowledge and 21st Century skills/information literacy. When the readers understand what is happening here, they will see it is like raising the curtain on the true integration of the library/learning commons into the lives and practices of the classroom teacher. The book is laid out in chapters, each with a theme or stage of the inquiry process. Following a short introduction, the editor has collected articles from the NSTA journal that give practical examples of that theme. The themes are: What do Scientists Do?, Process Skills, Science Notebooks, Investigable Questions, Data Collection and Representation, Selecting an Inquiry Experience, Switching from Cookbook Labs to Full Inquiry, Sharing Research Results, and, Assessing Inquiry. What a natural idea to marry such an idea from science with the inquiry skills teacher librarians wish to teach! Fabulous! What an opportunity! Get this book and start the conversation! *DVL*

Hysell, Shannon Graff. **Recommended Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries and Media Centers: 2012 Edition, Volume 32.** Libraries Unlimited, 2012. 321 pp. $75.00. ISBN: 9781610691802.

As with the other volumes of this series, this one is well presented and provides excellent guidance to librarians, if for nothing else than to understand the enormous cost of many of these books. However, it also is a map to use when considering what to collect, what to subscribe to, and what not to subscribe. Highly recommended. *EM*

Kurzweil, Ray. **How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed.** Viking, 2012. 336p. $27.95. ISBN:9780670025299.

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Remember the old days of pen pals among children around the world? You are old!, at least in tech time. In the flat world and networked environment, educational experiences can be without boundaries across classrooms and groups of learners around the world. These two authors are co-sponsors of the Flat Classroom Project and have created a super guide to their work with a theoretical *and* practical guide to success. This is simply the best book on this topic and a must-read. The authors take us through a bit of theory first and

then provide seven important steps for getting started. They are experts at this and have created a six-month extension of the book that is free. So, the guide is really a whole world of professional development guides, helps, examples, and tools far beyond the printed page. If you have the slightest interest in building learning experiences collaboratively among teachers or across the world, then get this book instantly. A best book of the year! *DVL*

Loertscher, David, Carol Koechlin, and Esther Rosenfeld. The Virtual Learning Commons: Building A Participatory School Learning Community. Learning Commons Press – Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2012. 133 pp. $32. ISBN: 9781933170701.

Teaching and learning in the 21st century require new approaches, goals, and practice for teacher librarians, classroom teachers, administrator, and students. Among the many ideas to emerge with significant support is the concept of the Learning Commons. In their previous book , *The New Learning Commons Where Learners Win 2d edition, 2011*, Loertscher, Koechlin, and Rosenfeld presented the basic concepts and spoke primarily about the Learning Commons as a physical place combining the library and computer lab into a newly designed collaborative learning space. As its title suggests, this new book extends the concept to the virtual world and all its potential. The first part of the book presents the foundational ideas of a large participatory Virtual Learning Commons and how and what it can contribute to teaching and learning. The second part of the book directs the reader to download a Google sites-based template to enable you to start creating your own VLC. The last part of the book addresses several of the issues which might arise when you embark on this route.   The authors state: "We hope that the reader will be as excited by the possibilities as we are. Education across the world is changing, and we hope that the Virtual Learning Commons will be the vehicle to help both young people and adults learning to work in a global community. It is time to focus on building young people who are in charge of their own learning; a habit that will serve them their entire lives." The books is well cited, indexed, and provides a very valuable further reading part. Practical and poignant. Highly recommended. *EM*

Perez, Katherine. The Co-Teaching Book of Lists. Jossey-Bass, 2012. 270p. $29.95. ISBN: 9781118017449.

I could not believe my eyes at a recent convention when I came across this book and spoke to the author. Co-teaching? Is anybody except teacher librarians still talking about this topic. Oh yes, the author responded. My calendar of workshops and conferences is packed! After reviewing hundreds of books in education, I can hardly remember the last time I read about collaborative teaching as a part of school culture from any of the major educational writers. Well, here is a practical guide with list after list after list of tips and steps to take during the co-planning, co-assessing, and co-teaching of learning experiences. Admittedly, Dr. Perez has a bias toward special education teachers because that is her field, but she does include other specialists, just not technology folks or teacher librarians. Well, we don't seem to be able to have everything, but there is so much wiggle room in the lists that it is a simple matter to include our agenda in an information rich and technology rich environment. Teacher librarians need to be experts at collaboration whether or not they can reach every faculty member. This is a book for your bedside table– read a list every single night before going to sleep. The ones we can work on, we adopt as our strategy of the week and perhaps we showcase one strategy alongside a classroom teacher at each faculty meeting. Get this book! Use this book! It can only push you toward that center of teaching and learning whether in the physical learning commons or the virtual learning commons. *DVL*

Perrauto, Anna & Aversa, Elizabeth. Information Resources in the Humanities and Arts, 6th edition. (Library and Information Science Text Series). Libraries Unlimited, 2012. 461 pp. $80.00. ISBN: 9781598848328.

This book continues to be worthy of trust and time. While geared mainly to newer professionals, it is a good reminder of how humanities and art are so important to scholarship. Taking almost 10 years to be updated, it doesn't disappoint. There are interesting digital resources as well as standard print resources in this text, and it can be used as a ready reference tool for many different types of libraries. If used with elementary or middle school students, caution needs to be taken with developmental appropriateness. *EM*

Wagner, Tony. Creating Innovators: The Making of Young People Who Will Change the World. Scribner, 2012. 288 p. $27. ISBN: 9781451611496.

Tony Wagner is an outspoken critic of cookie cutter education and lays out in this book a plan for your people to stretch their imaginations and spread their wings in the solution of local and world problems and challenges. Interesting reading that will tweak your brain. *DVL*