

THE Teaching Librarian

The Magazine of the Ontario School Library Association
ISSN 1188679X

Student anxiety

Promote well-being in the library learning commons

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Tips on
Weeding Your
Collection

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Advocating for school libraries

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Back to school jitters

How to C.O.P.E. with these strategies for library staff

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anxiety @ your library

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THE Teaching Librarian

Volume 26, Issue 1 September 2018 ISSN 1188679X

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anxiety @ your library

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TingL Mission

The Teaching Librarian

The Teaching Librarian (TingL) is the official magazine of the Ontario School Library Association (OSLA). It is published three times a year to support OSLA members in providing significant and effective library programs and services. *The Teaching Librarian* promotes library programs and curriculum development that furthers exemplary educational objectives. The magazine fosters effective collaboration within the school library community and provides a forum to share experience and expertise.

TingL References

The Teaching Librarian is a general magazine for OSLA members and not a scholarly journal. If your article does require citation of sources, please provide them within the text of your article or column with as much or as little bibliographic information as necessary for identification (e.g. book title, year). If you feel that the works you are citing require full identification, please provide a bibliography at the end of your piece, formatted according to the latest Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition) or APA Style.

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TingL Guidelines

V. 26, Issue 2	"Myths and Reality @ your library" Deadline: September 30, 2018
V. 26, Issue 3	"Travel @ your library" Deadline: January 30, 2019
V. 27, Issue 1	"Quiet @ your library" Deadline: May 27, 2019

Articles of 150-250 words, 500 words, or 800-1,300 words are welcome. Articles, when approved, should be accompanied by high quality images and/or graphics whenever possible. Text must be sent electronically, preferably in a Microsoft Word (or compatible) file. Images or graphics must be digital (minimum size and quality are 4" x 6" and 300 dpi, in .jpeg, .tiff, or .ai format). With photos that contain a recognized individual, please secure the individual's permission in writing for the use of the photo. Photos taken at public events or crowd shots taken in a public place do not require permission from the subjects. All submissions are subject to editing for consistency, length, content, and style. Journalistic style is preferred. *The Teaching Librarian* adheres to Canadian Press Style. Articles must include the working title, name of author, and email address in the body of the text. OSLA reserves the right to use pictures in other OSLA publications unless permission is limited or denied at the time of publishing.

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The Editor's Notebook



Caroline Freibauer

There is nothing more anxiety-inducing than trying to cram your feet into someone else's shoes. Consider the ugly stepsisters attempting to jam their clodhopper feet into a glass slipper meant for Cinderella. With their mother looming over them, the stepsisters felt a lot of pressure to snag that prince.

I am feeling some of that stress as I attempt to fill Diana Maliszewski's well-worn editor-in-chief loafers with my bunion-beleaguered boats. Diana's shoes have been carefully broken in after editing *The Teaching Librarian* for 12 years. You could almost say those shoes fit her like a glove. But it is an honour – albeit a terrifying one – to try to stretch the leather a little to make it work.

Serendipitously, the theme for this edition – selected more than a year ago before I had considered taking over the magazine – is Anxiety. To that end, we have several articles aimed at helping new teacher-librarians C.O.P.E., showing veteran librarians how to reduce stress whether they are planning library programming, or weeding books and assisting anxious students by sharing with them quality books.

But as we were putting together the magazine, another separate, and yet connected, theme emerged on its own. Advocacy – the need to promote the value of a school library – has never become more important than now. Membership of the Ontario School Library Association is dwindling as fewer school boards are staffing library spaces with teacher-librarians or any qualified library professional. Even though research studies prove the importance of a quality school library program, school boards continue to divert money earmarked for school libraries to other programs. We feature several articles on advocacy in this issue. I hope they will inspire you to come up with ways to promote your own school libraries. If we don't speak up, then it will be easy for administrators to see school libraries as irrelevant.

Meanwhile, I will keep tromping around in these editor-in-chief shoes until they become a little more comfortable. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any ideas or advice on how to continue to make *The Teaching Librarian* a useful resource for professionals in schools across the province. ■

***The Teaching Librarian* is looking for contributors!**

Interested in writing for *The Teaching Librarian*? Here are themes and submission deadlines for upcoming issues:

"Myths and Reality @ your library"
Deadline: September 30, 2018

"Travel @ your library"
Deadline: January 30, 2019

"Quiet @ your library"
Deadline: May 27, 2019

We are looking for articles of 150-250 words, 500 words, or 800-1,300 words with high-resolution images or illustrations. Please see page 5 for more detailed information on submitting articles.

Please note that *The Teaching Librarian* adheres to Canadian Press Style.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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President's Report



Kelly Maggiras

Our Library Learning Commons (LLC) brings together all members of the school community, providing a place to inquire, problem solve and explore together. While the LLC is a fun and supportive learning environment, it can also be a safe haven, a place of solace, or a break in our daily school lives. The LLC fulfills a special role in the school – an innovative learning environment that supports and fosters a love for reading, learning and well-being. Whether we are using our spaces for making, inquiry or supporting our school's needs, it brings me comfort and pride knowing that we are able to support the social and emotional needs of our students through the unique space we call the Library Learning Commons.

The LLC functions as a multi-faceted learning environment. It is a place that can support well-being, as well as coping, strategies to support both individuals and the entire school community. In our spaces we focus on continuity and learning about developing socio-emotional needs of students through strategies such as growth mindset as well as Zones of Regulation. By helping our students with diverse needs, we are able to support the learning and well-being for all. Reducing anxiety for students is also about the relationships that we develop with our school community, staff, and parents. We are able to support students and teachers through developing home-school connections as well as creating opportunities for outreach.

Identity

The LLC supports students and allows them to explore their identities as well as their backgrounds. Students come together to explore culturally-relevant resources that represent their social identities, cultures and backgrounds where they can inquire, problem solve and build empathy and compassion towards others. In the intermediate and senior grades, the Library Learning Commons often acts as a safe haven, a place to go that is supervised and yet public. As students mature and begin forming their own identities, they often choose to “hang out” with friends – or alone – in a place where they can be themselves before or after school, at lunchtime and on spares. Creating a welcoming environment is pivotal to the informal support for student mental health and well-being. In terms of identity, every school library should function as both a mirror

and a window for all members of the school community. Students should be able to recognize themselves in the space and in the resources available, and also have the opportunity to see the perspectives of others. This ability to connect is one of the elements that makes a vibrant LLC a true living-learning space. Diverse supports include developing social skills with others and collaboration, as well as providing opportunities for mindfulness, reflection and relaxation.

Makerspace

The Makerspace is a unique learning environment that engages and supports student learning and interests. We are able to boost our brains, engage and meet the different needs of students. Students visit our space to participate in meaningful and authentic learning tasks to support play, project based learning, assessment and student interests. When our hands engage in tasks such as building, knitting and STEAM activities, our minds can let go. We can daydream, reflect and think about what truly engages and interests us. Through makerspaces, students learn about themselves and develop different perspectives and interests. As teacher-librarians, we work with teachers and students to foster creativity, innovation and support socio-emotional well-being. Anxiety is reduced and better understood.

Collaboration and Curriculum Support

As teacher-librarians, we are uniquely situated as professional learning supports and coaches for those new to teaching or simply new to our schools. As the school year begins, we seize the opportunity to reach out to colleagues – some of whom have been in our school for years and some who are brand new to us – to support professional practice, co-teach, co-learn and develop new lessons and units, lessening the potential stress and anxiety of our co-workers. We provide relevant and useful resources and strategies for implementing new and existing curricula. Through modelling healthy team-teaching experiences, we can positively influence school climate.

Parent Community

As curriculum refreshes and evolves, we need to think about how the LLC supports our families through these changes to

ease anxiety. We can develop our relationships through open communication, working together, providing opportunities for workshops and learning through curriculum nights. Having parent volunteers and providing them with the opportunity to share their voices is an integral part of building community and reducing anxiety. We support our newcomer families by creating and developing relationships with outreach programs and agencies to relieve anxiety and answer questions about our community and Canada. Supporting and learning together will help us to build relationships through meaningful learning.

Collectively in our schools and throughout our school community, we come together in the Library Learning Commons to share a love for literacy, and to explore and navigate through information and experiences that will support and develop life-long learners. We create a space to learn, make mistakes, and grow. Most importantly, we provide leadership to develop a healthy learning environment and a feeling of safety, community and belonging for all. ■

Building future leaders by building readers

Reading for fun is linked to increased school achievement, social and civic engagement, pursuit of higher education, employment, health, and life satisfaction.

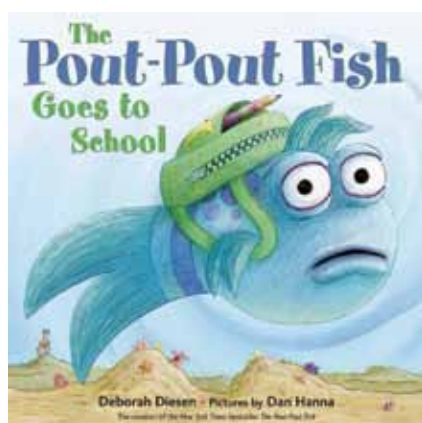
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Book Buzz



I hope that everyone enjoyed the break and made progress with their summer reading lists! Anxiety is quite a timely theme, as the fall is a natural time of angst for students. The start of the school year represents the unknown, a different grade, and for some, potentially a new school.

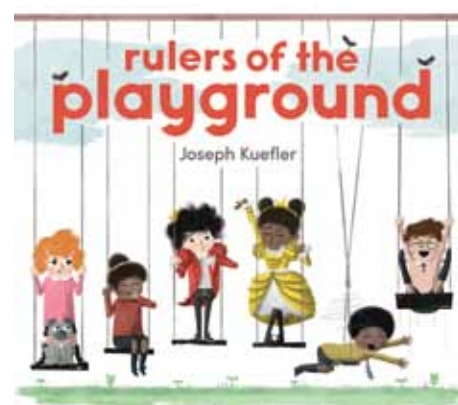
Fortunately, there are many resources for students about mental health awareness that promote and nurture wellness. Several books focus on topics that may be the cause of worry, such as friendship and bullying. There also is important reading material that covers extreme situations such as abuse or terrorism with personal journeys of healing and recovery. All of these books can have a profound impact on youth and provide a non-threatening avenue for honest dialogue and communication between students and the adults who care about them.

Here are eight books to consider for your school library this year:

The Pout-Pout Fish Goes to School

**Written by Deborah Diesen,
Illustrated by Dan Hanna
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
Hardcover: ISBN 9780374308520
(published 2014)
Board Book: ISBN 9780374308520
(published 2018)
For ages: 0 – 4**

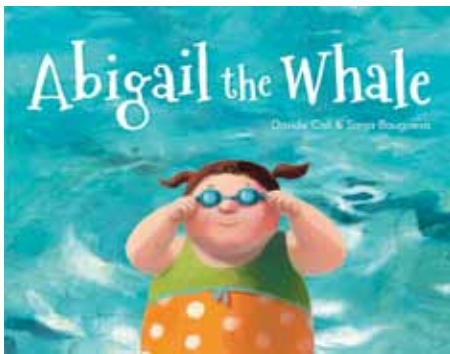
The recent re-release of this “fintastic” story as a board book makes it a great time to revisit it. I am a huge fan of this bestselling series – and this title in particular with its catchy phrasing and wonderful message. In this tale, Mr. Fish navigates his insecurities about school with the help of his very special teacher, Miss Hewitt. This picture book is perfect for back-to-school season whether little learners are starting school for the very first time or need a motivational boost.



Rulers of the Playground

**Written and Illustrated by
Joseph Kuefler
HarperCollins, 2017
ISBN 9780062424327
For ages: 4 – 8**

Just in time for September, students will get a dose of playground politics with this picture book. Amongst his peers, Jonah declares himself king of the playground. All the children continue to play, with the exception of Lennox, who also wants the power to rule as queen. It's a cute and timely tale that explores themes of friendship, kindness, and ultimately peace in the kingdom of play.



Abigail the Whale

Written by Davide Cali,
Illustrated by Sonja Bougaeva
Owlkids Books Inc., 2016
ISBN 9781771471985
For ages: 5 – 8

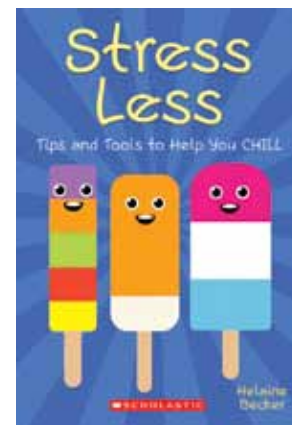
This picture book is excellent to read with elementary students to support the significance of anti-bullying. Abigail dislikes swimming lessons despite being a good swimmer because she is teased by her peers. She is taunted with the phrase, “Abigail is a whale!” Fortunately, her teacher has a profound impact on the situation by teaching Abigail how to alter her thinking. It’s a feel-good story that will leave children cheering for Abigail and any student who has overcome adversity.



The Pink Umbrella

Written by Amélie Callot,
Illustrated by Geneviève Godbout
Tundra, 2018
ISBN 9781101919231
For ages: 6 – 9

This vibrant pink-coloured book with charming illustrations gives young readers an early introduction to emotions and feelings. The main character, Adele, runs the Polka-Dot Apron café and is loved by all her customers for the warmth she shows them. However, when it rains, Adele’s normally cheery façade fades and dampens her spirit. Luckily for her, she has a friend who leaves her mysterious pink surprises to help her overcome her sadness. This picture book celebrates simple acts of kindness and the power of friendship.



Stress Less: Tips and Tools to Help You Chill

Written by Helaine Becker
Scholastic Canada Inc., 2018
ISBN 9781443148702
For ages: 8 – 13

This paperback is meant to help students navigate everyday stressful situations. It acts as a guidebook filled with strategies and techniques in easy language for students to follow. Taking deep breaths, making a don’t do list and decluttering are just a few of the tips covered. This title is the companion to Becker’s *Don’t Stress: How to Handle Life’s Little Problems*. For educators looking for French resources, the original handbook is also available in French, *Pas de Stress! Comment Gérer les Petits Soucis de la Vie*.

continued on page 12

...continued from page 11



TBH, This is SO Awkward

Written by Lisa Greenwald

HarperCollins, 2018

ISBN 9780062689900

For ages: 8 – 12

The drama of middle school and pre-teen text messaging is captured in this very unique chapter book told entirely in texts, e-mails, and notes. Cecily, Prianka, and Gabby are a tight group of friends in the sixth grade who have been BFFs since birth. A new girl to school, Victoria, tries to befriend them and has her feelings hurt after a group text message goes wrong. The author promotes a message to be inclusive to others and the importance of communicating beyond cell phones. A warning to teacher-librarians who skim through the pages: you may need the glossary in the back to decode acronyms like TBH (to be honest).



Speak: The Graphic Novel

Written by Laurie Halse Anderson,

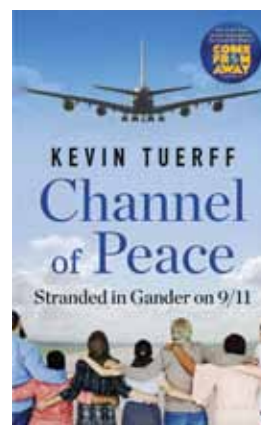
Illustrated by Emily Carroll

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018

ISBN 9780374300289

For ages: 12 – 18

If you attended the past OLA Super Conference, you may have had the chance to meet the illustrator Emily Carroll. Her artwork transformed the original *Speak* written in the late '90s into a graphic novel, bringing this adaptation to a new generation of readers. *Speak* is a powerful story that follows protagonist Melinda on her personal journey to heal and find her voice. While the transition to high-school is challenging enough, she is ostracized by her peers after calling the cops to an end-of-year party. She suffers in silence to share the truth. While the material is heavy, it's also riveting and will capture the attention of readers. Note: mature content including depression and sexual assault are covered.



Channel of Peace: Stranded in Gander on 9/11

Written by Kevin Tuerff

House of Anansi Press Inc., 2018

ISBN 9781487005139

For ages: 13 and up

Although this memoir was published as an adult book, high school students can benefit by exploring themes of kindness, empathy, and problem solving. It's a story that will instill pride in Canadian students when they read how this community came together to welcome others in a period of great crisis. This title is the true story behind the hit musical *Come From Away*. I met Kevin Tuerff at the Reading for the Love of It Conference while he was signing copies at the Mirvish booth. Kevin drew from his experience in Gander, Newfoundland where he was one of 7,000 stranded passengers sheltered when planes were diverted there during 9/11. He also started a "pay it forward" 9/11 initiative and shares tips on how others can follow his example. Note: mature themes. ■



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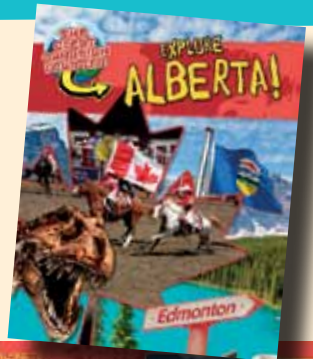
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Meet the Author

Susin Nielsen

Susin Nielsen is an award-winning, Vancouver-based, author – best known for her fantastic characters and sense of humour. Her most recent novel, *Optimists Die First*, was nominated for a 2018 Forest of Reading White Pine Award.



TingL: Did starting off your writing career as a screenwriter help with your transition to writing young adult fiction?

SN: Yes, definitely. It helped me with pacing, with building to good chapter endings, with good dialogue. It also helped with structure, and being able to “cut away the flab.”

Knowing that you are working to meet a deadline right now, are there any relaxation techniques or tips you have for managing stress?

I try to meditate for ten minutes each morning, but I’m terrible at sticking to it. I do yoga – sometimes just a 20 minute podcast, sometimes a whole class. I also have a road bike and I find nothing alleviates stress better than a good strenuous ride. And I try to remind myself that “Rome wasn’t built in a day ...” Not that I’m building Rome or anything like that. :-)

More and more, young adults are struggling with social anxieties of many kinds — which makes your novel *Optimists Die First* a particularly timely novel. What struck you as you were doing your research for this novel?

Just how prevalent anxiety is in our society these days. In our current world, with instant access to all sorts of information —the good, the bad, the ugly—and the perils of social media, it seems inevitable that there will be mental health consequences.

All of your novels deal with weighty issues – bullying, social anxiety, the aftermath of school violence. What motivates you to tackle these concerns?

I’m not really sure. It’s of utmost importance to me that I tell a good story with a great, compelling protagonist first and

Angela Thompson

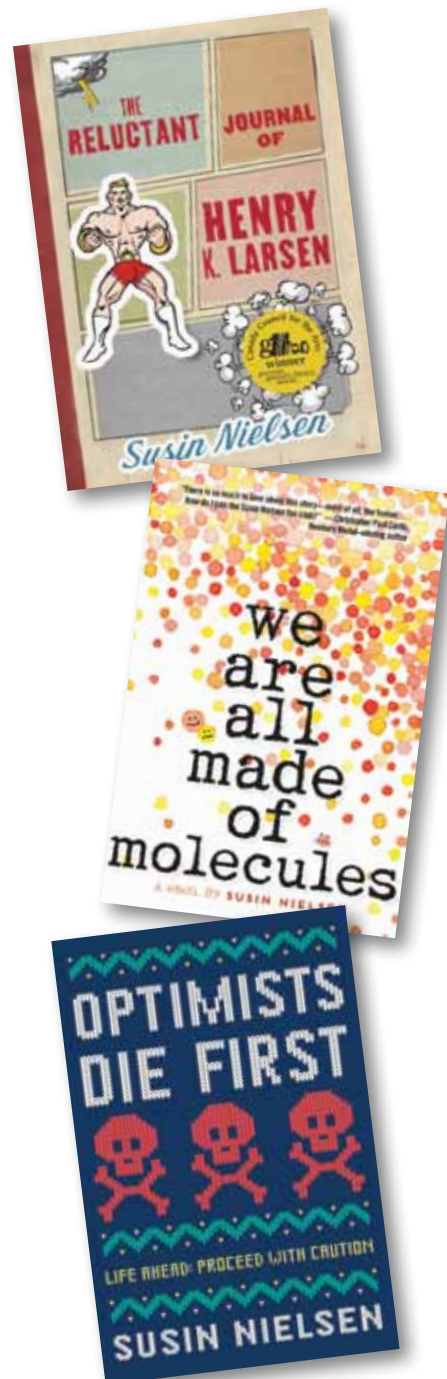
foremost. I'm not trying to be issue driven, per se. But with *The Reluctant Journal of Henry K. Larsen*, for example, I was reading a book by Wally Lamb, *The Hour I First Believed*. He'd put a character in the real life tragedy of Columbine High School. And there was a line in the book that mentioned that one of the shooters had a brother. I'd never ever thought about what it would be like to be the surviving sibling of one of the perpetrators of an act of violence like that ... and that's where Henry was born. So, I tracked Henry through the aftermath of a tragedy – it is always character first. I also have a lot of fractured families in my stories, and I think that comes from my own family background – divorced parents, raised by my single parent mom, half siblings, step siblings, step-parents, etc

How do you decide what stories need to be told and/or what your next project will be?

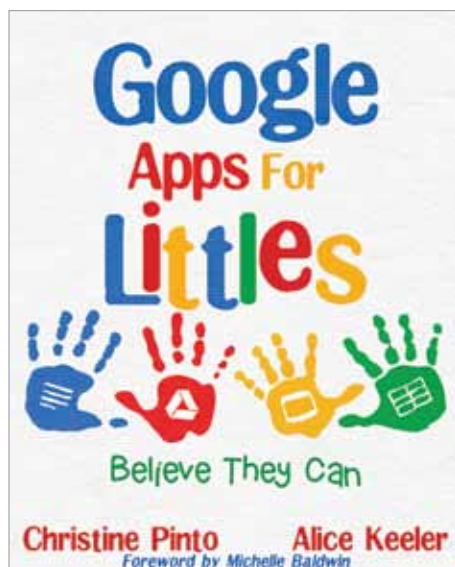
I honestly just hope and pray that another idea comes to me! My most recent one was just a line that popped into my head between wake and sleep.

What details are you able to share about the current projects you are working on?

I can't talk about what I'm currently working on, but my new book comes out in September and it's called *No Fixed Address*. It's about a boy, 12-year-old Felix, who is living in a van with his mom – and has to keep this fact a secret from everyone. ■



Professional Resources



Google Apps for Littles: Believe They Can

by Christine Pinto & Alice Keeler
Dave Burgess Consulting, February 2018
ISBN 0978-1-946444-44-8

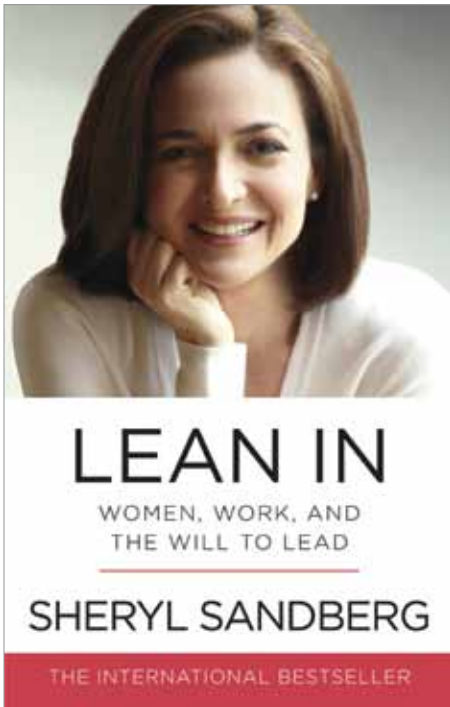
This resource is filled with tips, templates, screenshots, philosophies and ideas to help all levels of Google Educators integrate creativity, expression and discovery into their technological usage.

Christine Pinto and Alice Keeler want to spread the word that our youngest learners are capable of more than just playing games to learn. They are capable of creating too! Use of technology doesn't negate the importance of other creative hands-on activities that are a must in our primary classrooms, but technology also allows students a variety of ways to collaborate, share, provide proof of understanding, practice skills and demonstrate their critical thought in creative ways.

There are many ways to use this book. You could learn the basics of structuring your classroom to create ease of use for you and your students, explore the basics of Google Classroom, create collaboration opportunities, delve into math integration, support English Language Learners and experiment with methods to provide digital feedback for all students, even those who can't read yet.

This book is a generous resource filled with big ideas to expand your thinking and little tips that make life easier. It goes beyond supportive due to the sheer volume of templates and the clarity of the descriptions and screenshots. You could find something new to push your students and expand your professional growth with every return read.

Want more from these two gifted educators? Go to their websites atalicekeeler.com and christinepinto.com to continue to grow and learn.



Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead

by Sheryl Sandberg
 Alfred A. Knopf, 2013
 ISBN 978-0-385-34994-9

This book explores women's achievement in the workforce and what holds women back from reaching for jobs at the top.

Girls and women are well-represented in education and often have high achievement in our classrooms. Popular media states that women are taking over job markets that have been traditionally held by men. In opposition to this, Sandberg claims women “have ceased making real progress at the top of any industry” (p.5-6). Why is that? Is there an understanding that teachers and educational leaders can glean from Sheryl Sandberg’s experiences, observations and research to support the girls we teach and help them embrace their power?

Sheryl Sandberg’s stories illustrate differences of self-concept that exist between men and women and how they affect overall achievement. She argues that compliance is rewarded in education, but risk-taking is valued in career building. She highlights that when boys call out answers they are usually listened to, but when girls do they are scolded “for breaking the rules” (p. 20). How many bold girls are described as bossy or abrasive? Do you think of these terms used in the context of the boys in your class? Many of these responses are unconscious and built through stereotypical images created in the media. An awareness piece is needed to help teachers understand these cycles and reinforce the enabling of girls’ voices in our classrooms.

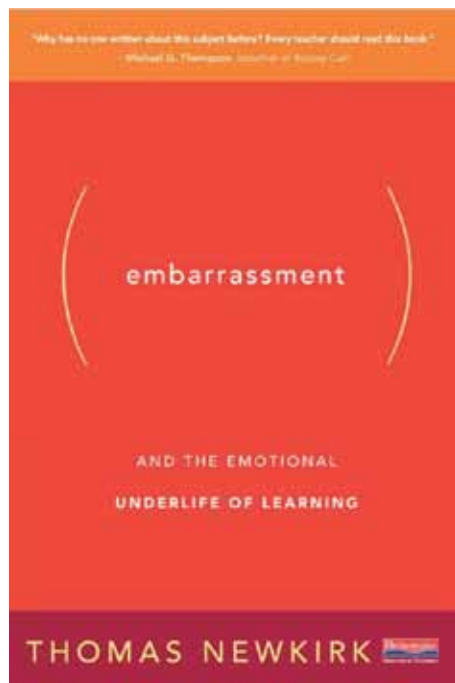
A lack of self-concept also creates barriers to achievement. We need to teach our girls to say thank you when recognized for their accomplishments versus explaining their success away as luck or a misconception of their worthiness. Sheryl Sandberg explains how this results in a phenomenon that most women experience as “impostor syndrome” which limits women because they will only take on jobs when they perceive they have all the skills required versus taking a risk. It can make women take back seats during important meetings and limits women’s ability to advance in the workplace. What can we do to help girls overcome the distorted perceptions of ability that live in their brains?

She believes in teaching “faking it until you make it” and the power that comes from this trick. As well, she explains how the reflective process is a powerful tool that allows our students, female and male, to acknowledge their perception of an upcoming situation and the realities that surround it.

Other insights relate to more adult situations, but Sandberg’s stories can highlight the unconscious biases that minimize successes for our female students. Reading is always a personal journey and insights gained depend on individual experiences. What can you learn from Sandberg? How can her experiences support your students and how might they support your personal growth in the educational field?

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Embarrassment and the Emotional Underlife of Learning

**by Thomas Newkirk
Heinemann, 2017
ISBN 978032508877-8**

This is a much-needed examination of how embarrassment, shame and self-perception affects learning at all levels.

A repeated goal in education is to create safe learning spaces where students can feel comfortable enough to take risks necessary for growth. Unfortunately, we can't always battle the voices in our students' heads that are scientifically proven to cling to negative experiences over the positive. Thomas Newkirk's acknowledgement "that embarrassment is not only a true enemy of learning but of so many other actions we could take to better ourselves" (p.29) reinforces this fact. Reading his book to discover how we can "rearrange some things in our own head so that we can be more generous towards ourselves" (p. 30) is an important life lesson. Imagine what we could achieve if we believed we had the power to change our, often negative, self-perception.

Stories of the effects of embarrassment and how to overcome them are strewn throughout this book, but the power of the read comes from the teaching methods provided to help us, as teachers, overcome the limiting effects of embarrassment and shame. Thomas Newkirk has dedicated chapters to examine specific strategies to support students in math, reading and writing. He gives specific accountable talk structures to help students clarify their thinking, take in other ideas and provide the time and space to think and reflect

giving our students the confidence to participate fully in the learning process.

Another powerful chapter is dedicated to sport. Athletics bring great successes, but also public failure. How do coaches and athletes use sports psychology to overcome those moments and move on? How can those methods support us in the classroom?

This book also connects us to many popular theories and theorists floating through education. You'll see reference to Carol Dweck's grit, perseverance and growth-mindset as well as Jo Boaler's ideas of how mistakes grow your brain. Although not directly mentioned, there also are many references to the gift of failure which you can explore in Jessica Lahey's book of the same title.

If you are looking to support your students' growth at the core level and want to build skills to help students become their own "internal cheerleader" and balance out their limiting "internal critic," (p.96) look no further than Thomas Newkirk's well-researched book filled with engaging stories from many voices to illustrate his point. ■



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Connected Library

Got Paper Anxiety? There's A Form for That!

Anxiety. With me, it can surface anywhere, at any time; whether that be driving under a bridge, stepping into an elevator or even the thought of getting on a plane. The library is my safe place. That is, until I look into my office and see the stacks and stacks of paper looming over me. Just thinking about trying to sort it all can send my heart into palpitations, but there is a solution. Google Forms can help to easily organize both information and assessments. Imagine never having to deal with paper piles again.

Google Forms for Assessment

Recording observational assessment for students in your library is easy with Google Forms. A generic or curriculum specific form can be set up that allows you to record information and send it to individual documents for each student using an add on called Doc Appender. It can be especially useful when teachers send small groups of students to the LLC to work on inquiry projects. Observations can easily be recorded and shared with both teachers and students immediately.

How to set up an observation form with Doc Appender:

1. Create a folder in your Google Drive for the observations (by class or group).
2. Within the folder, create a document for each student with the student's name as the doc name.
3. Create a new Google Form.
4. Set the first question to name and use a dropdown or checkboxes for the answer format.
5. Create the desired questions/look-fors on the form.
6. Add Doc Appender to your toolbar from the menu "add-ons".
7. Launch Doc Appender and follow the steps to append the form.

Google Forms for Forest of Reading® Responses

Google Forms make Forest of Reading responses easy to find and organize. It means no more printouts or lost student booklets. Create a form with the questions: student name, book title, review and rating and then create a QR code that links to the form for easy student access. All of the student answers can be viewed in a spreadsheet or can be doc appended to individual student documents. For your younger Blue Spruce readers, use photos of the book covers and multiple choice emojis in addition to simple text. (Another great option for Forest of Reading responses is Flipgrid where students can submit their responses via video.)

Google Forms for Book Suggestions

Teacher-Librarians are always looking for book suggestions from both colleagues and students. With forms, you can collect the suggestions and organize the list in a spreadsheet that makes ordering easy. A link to the form can be emailed to teachers and students, and placed on a library website, displayed as a QR code or bit.ly linked on the wall of the library.

Google Forms for Library Bookings

When teachers ask to co-plan, co-teach and collaborate with the teacher-librarian, a form can be useful to collect information about potential activities, projects and learning opportunities. Google Forms work well for class and small group bookings. Information collected can include, class/student names, curriculum or activity, required resources, learning goals and considerations for assessment. Once the information is reviewed by the teacher-librarian, a time can be booked for the class to work in the LLC. For those TLs who are comfortable using formulas for Google Sheets, a form can be set up for booking specific time slots in the library using an add-on called form Ranger.



Google Forms for Student Reflection

Reflecting is an important part of the learning process. Forms can be created to lead students through a reflection of their learning throughout the inquiry process, at the finish of a design thinking project, or after exploring activities in the makerspace. The information collected using the form can help the student, teacher-librarian and teacher with assessment, feedback and next steps for learning. If these reflection forms are doc appended to individual student documents, a snapshot of the student's learning process over time can be captured and shared.

Tips for Using Google Forms

- In the settings, leave the “collect email addresses” unchecked (unless you need to verify the responses). This saves your users from having to complete the login process which can be frustrating, especially for younger students.
- When using Doc Appender, select the checkbox option for name if you plan on offering feedback to a group of students, instead of individual comments.
- Create a link on your phone or tablet to quickly access your observation forms. Do this by opening the form on your device, clicking the share icon and then “add to home screen”.
- Create a confirmation message that will appear once your user has submitted the form. For book suggestions, “Thank you for your input. Your request will now be considered for purchase.” For teacher booking requests, “The teacher-librarian will get back to you with a confirmation of your class booking.”
- Remember to set the name question to “Required.” Otherwise you can end up with lots of data and no idea which student it came from!
- When sharing forms with other educators, always remember to make a copy or else your data will be mixed with theirs.

Think of all the extra time you'll have without worrying about sorting through those giant stacks of paper! Oh wait, there's still a million books to catalogue, resources to order, Lego sets to sort, lunch time clubs to organize... 📖

DRAWN TO THE FORM

Diana Maliszewski

Marketing Your Comic Collection: How Do The Professionals Do It?

There is an abundance of riches in terms of the quantity and quality of comics and graphic novels published and available. How do we select the best resources that will appeal to our students? How might we spotlight some series or titles that may fall under the radar or not get noticed? How do others get material in the hands of readers?

In the spring of 2018, I had the opportunity to attend a dinner meeting sponsored by Penguin Random House with members of DC Entertainment to discuss the company's recent DC Books for Young Readers line. The representatives described the launch of DC Zoom and DC Ink. Those invited to the delightful dinner held at the Art Gallery of Ontario included what Blake Kobashigawa, Manager of Mass Book Sales and Trade Marketing, described as "key librarians and educators in Toronto". There were comic bloggers and vendors, as well as public and school library representation.

The DC guests gave a brief, informal talk about the product line, provided short samples of a couple of the titles, and then opened the discussion up for questions. Blake and his colleagues answered queries about age ranges, representation, author selection, release cadence, and the rationale for starting the imprints. We also received a few

promotional items as physical souvenirs and reminders of our time together. Someone asked about the DC presence at conferences and events like Comic Con and they explained that those huge displays weren't always the most effective way of sharing and promoting material. Even though the displays attracted a lot of attention, it did not always translate into improved sales. The marketers explained that identifying key stakeholders that held influence and approaching them was much more effective and cost efficient.

What does this mean for a simple school or public library, without an expert team of marketers available for promotion? Targeting individuals who hold influence in your space. "Wine and dine" them and offer them an opportunity to peruse the new titles. School library professionals can still create book displays that highlight new titles but consider harnessing "people power" for promotion. Word of mouth is a potent tool for spreading the news about a title that may not already have an audience waiting for its release. Post reviews on Goodreads or Amazon. As Pernille Ripp (@pernilleripp) wrote on Twitter on June 7: "Take some time this summer to leave reviews on Amazon and Goodreads for the books you love, both fiction and PD books. It makes a huge difference to the writers." ■

TVO Offers Relief for Math Anxiety

Leah Kearney

Math often generates complex emotions for both learners and educators. Some love it, others ... not so much. The emotional responses to math are so intense that researchers have begun studying this phenomenon now known as Math Anxiety and have come to several interesting conclusions.

“Math anxiety refers to the feelings of fear, tension, and apprehension that many people experience when engaging with mathematics. Across 65 countries and economies that participated in the 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), on average, 33% of 15-year-old students reported feeling helpless when solving math problems.”

Resource: thelearningexchange.ca/math-anxiety

Not only does Math Anxiety cause stress for students, it also impacts their achievement meaning that they perform considerably lower during math assessments. However, TVO has developed several digital learning products to alleviate this acute anxiety.

Here are some of the free resources TVO offers to help students from kindergarten to high school:



TVO mPower is a fun and innovative online game-based resource that builds problem-solving, critical thinking and math skills for students in Grades K-6. It immerses children in a virtual world of math in which they learn key concepts through fun and engaging game experiences. mPower weaves together ideas in Ontario's math, science and social studies curriculum and places them in real-life contexts so children can apply what they know.



TVO Mathify provides math support for students in Grade 7-10. They can access live, interactive online math help by certified Ontario teachers. Students can log in from Sunday to Thursday, between 5:30 and 9:30 p.m. for individualized math tutoring. There are discussion rooms for each grade where students can join and see what questions other students are asking and ask their own question for personalized help. Students also will find 24/7 discussion rooms, video lessons and commonly asked questions to help build their understanding and consolidate new learning.

TVO is proud to be engaged in supporting the development of healthy attitudes toward mathematics and decreasing anxiety around learning. ■



Advocacy at Toronto Catholic District School Board

Advocacy is a critical component of a teacher-librarian's job. We are taught that in our AQ courses and read about it in professional literature. And yet, this is one area that few of us fully embrace. After all, we are Canadians; being aggressive is not in our DNA. And yet, if we do not advocate for school libraries, the future may not treat us kindly.

My principal once asked me after seven years of working hard and doing all the right things in our school library: "Who even knows what you are doing?" I want to believe that she meant well and tried to encourage me to be even more visible. And it worked. From that day on, I have organized, collaborated, spoken out during staff and department heads' meetings and spent my lunch periods in the staff room. I have joined union committees. I tweet every single "success" at my library, and make sure to add my principal, school board and a few other passionate teacher-librarians I trust to spread the word. I advocate.

Recently, I had a chance to speak at our school board budget meeting. After several years of cuts and sacrifices due to an exorbitant deficit – elementary school teacher-librarians went on a chopping block – the board invited all stakeholders to provide suggestions for supplementing the underfunded areas. This sounded like a personal invitation to all teacher-librarians to speak up. And I accepted the invitation. Here is a summary of my address:

Staffing Concerns

The ministry funding formula is based on a ratio of one teacher-librarian for every 909 secondary students. A recent

survey conducted among TCDSB secondary teacher-librarians shows that in reality, the TCDSB secondary per pupil ratio is one teacher-librarian – eight sections – for every 1,492 students, which is on average about 60% over the ministry formula.

Operational Budget Issues

Another critical issue, apart from understaffing, is a lack of funds for school library operations. Our budgets, or lack thereof, depend on personal relationships with the school administration. There is no set amount allocated to a school library for the many expenses we need to cover. Some of us need to go to the principal to ask for money to purchase any items, no matter how big or small the amount. To compare, the TDSB library allocation is \$26 per pupil for secondary. This allocation covers books, supplies, furniture and equipment and services for the library.

Technology Challenges

Today, information is mostly accessed online. To facilitate this trend, school libraries provide workshops on proper use of online searches, which includes evaluating websites, critical thinking skills needed for fake news detection, academic honesty and academic databases. TCDSB has provided us with tools such as the Insignia Library System and the Gale database suite. These tools allow staff and students easy access to technology and reliable research. However, teenagers are "programmed" by social media to expect instant gratification. The more steps they have to take, the less likely they are to take advantage of those sources.

E-books are accessible virtually online through the Insignia Library System. The more cost efficient and equitable way to purchase e-books for school libraries would be pooling the funds to form a consortium through the board.

Recommendations:

That the Board provide transparency and accountability in their application of the funding formula for school libraries.

That all LLC programs be allocated funding per pupil in the secondary level that is commensurate with the current amounts assigned by the TDSB.

That e-book purchases are done through a board-wide secondary school consortium.

That secondary teacher-librarians be consulted by the board in regards to academic database and e-book purchases. ■

Resources

"Budget Allocations for Teacher-Librarians, Ministry of Education, 2017-2018." edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1718/2017_18_guide_grant_student_needs_en.pdf.

"School Budget Allocations." Toronto District School Board, tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Business-Services/Budgets-and-Financial-Statements/School-Budget-Allocations.

"School Libraries 2017." People for Education, peopleforeducation.ca/research/school-libraries-2017.

An Advocacy Story

As I sit down and write this article for *The Teaching Librarian*, the theme of anxiety certainly fits. Not in the ways that I suspect you would think. Am I nervous and anxious to write an article when I've never done so before? Would the words I need to write actually come? Would the tick of the clock make me anxious as the deadline approaches? The answer to these questions is maybe a little. However, what is really getting my heart beating is making you, the reader, understand the power each of you has to advocate for school libraries and the integral role of the teacher-librarian. I truly believe that our future is dependent upon this. This is where my anxiety lies. I have this awesome opportunity and I hope that I can convey why advocacy is so important and why you need to join us in this fight.

I have just begun my second three-year term as a councillor on the Ontario School Library Association Council where I represent the Southwest Region. Being on council has been transformative for me in so many ways and has given me a perspective far beyond my school library and the libraries within my board of Greater Essex in Windsor. I have small town roots at heart, which have helped with this perspective. I am extremely proud to have grown up in Timmins. I'm also keenly aware that there are virtually no teacher-librarians in Northern Ontario. We, as an OSLA Council, are even struggling to find a council representative from the North.

Through my work on council, it has quickly become apparent to all of us sitting around the table, that school libraries and the role of the teacher-librarian has been declining at an alarming rate over the years. To be honest, membership with this association has dropped and this is attributable to this province-wide decline.

I know that I don't have to preach to the choir as to why school libraries and teacher-librarians are necessary for the students that we teach. We know the value of a well-stocked and relevant school library and how a teacher-librarian is the ultimate facilitator for knowledge building, critical thinking, and a genuine love of reading. We help students work with information and guide them as they gather, analyze and synthesize it. Our work is of critical importance as we equip students with 21st Century competencies.

During the summer of 2015, our then OSLA President Jeanne Conte and fellow OSLA Councillor, Melissa Jensen, attended

the Annual General Meeting of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. They brought forth a motion to create a provincial Library Standing Committee, which was passed by the membership. This committee's terms of reference are as follows:

- To advise the Executive on the current issues facing teacher-librarians in elementary schools.
- To identify for the Executive the variety of roles and working conditions of elementary teacher-librarians from board to board.
- To advise the Executive on promoting the vision of the school library learning commons and the crucial role of teacher-librarians in elementary schools.
- To advise the Executive and recommend strategies that will strengthen the role of elementary teacher-librarians as specialist teachers of literacy, information literacy, and the integration of information-communication technologies (ICTs) into the curriculum.
- To advise the Executive and recommend programs and resources which will support teacher-librarians.

In the fall of 2015, applications were accepted for this newly-formed Library Standing Committee. I was ecstatic to be selected and subsequently chosen to Chair this committee with four other passionate teacher-librarians. Our work led us to the creation of two resolutions that would head to the ETFO 2016 AGM which dealt with proportional teacher-librarian staffing based on 1:763 elementary students and providing dedicated school library budgets based on per-pupil funding. We knew that there was a lack of consistency and accountability among school boards and between work sites.

Unfortunately, time ran short that summer and these two resolutions did not make it to the floor. Meanwhile, we were jolted into a sense of urgency after reviewing results of our library committee's survey of ETFO Local Presidents. We found the following:

- Very few locals are staffed by an ETFO teacher-librarian. Many are staffed by a central or onsite technician, parent volunteers, or not at all.
- A theme in the data was that there was a distinct difference in staffing between urban and rural settings, with rural settings tending to have little or no teacher-librarian allocation, or even library staffing at all.

continued on page 26

- Very few ETFO locals have collective agreement language that would define or protect the position of teacher-librarian.
- In general, libraries are not receiving the allocation of resource funding that is set aside for physical and virtual library collections. In many locals, the school community is expected to fundraise to put resources in the library.
- It is completely at the discretion of the board and the principal to allocate school funds to library resources. Local leaders indicated limited information is shared by boards about classroom resources funding allocated to a school, part of which is supposed to go to the library. As one local leader indicated that this process is “shrouded in mystery and unclear.”
- Of the locals that had teacher-librarians, many were providing preparation coverage for a significant proportion of their library time instead of delivering a quality library learning commons program.

I employed the help of our Greater Essex Local ETFO VP Mario Spagnuolo – now an ETFO Provincial Executive Member – to provide us with some advice and direction. Mario took the two resolutions to ETFO Representative Council – ETFO Local Presidents and VPs – where they passed. Our Library Standing Committee didn’t leave anything to chance. We tweaked the original two resolutions and put them forward at the 2017 AGM. Mario and I spoke to an audience of approximately 800 delegates in support of these resolutions where they unanimously passed.

Mario was such a supporter of the ETFO Library Standing Committee’s work that he suggested we develop a local Greater Essex Library Ad Hoc Committee. The purpose of this committee was to support ETFO local teacher-librarians in their school library learning commons and to provide professional learning opportunities and resources. We tapped some equally passionate teacher-librarians to serve on this committee and committed to meeting a few times a year, as well as providing a professional learning event that we’ve affectionately entitled “Librarypalooza”. On May 31, 2018, we had our third annual event.

At the time of this writing, our ETFO Provincial Executive is sending another resolution to the floor for the ETFO AGM 2018. This new resolution would amend their ETFO Policy Statement by adding:

“That the provincial government provide dedicated, enveloped funding for educational material and resources, technological or otherwise, in elementary school library learning commons”.

The rationale for this addition is that “to lobby for dedicated resource funding is a logical extension of ETFO’s commitment to teacher-librarians and the programs they deliver. Teacher-Librarians need a high-quality library collection to do their jobs effectively and that the collection needs to be upgraded

constantly to maintain the interest of students. There also is a need to continually evaluate the technology that is available in library learning so this aspect of resource procurement cannot be ignored”.

ETFO’s commitment to teacher-librarians and school library programming was acknowledged and celebrated by the Ontario School Library Association with their Award for Special Achievement in February 2018. After presenting my Chair’s report to the ETFO Executive after our Committee’s first year, ETFO President Sam Hammond commented that he never would have made it as a teacher past his first year of teaching if it were not for the school’s teacher-librarian.

On the weekend of the Royal Wedding of Harry and Meghan, I was reminded of a story about Meghan Markle. As a little girl growing up in Los Angeles, Meghan was outraged by a television commercial by Ivory dishwashing soap whose tag line was “women all over America are fighting greasy pots and pans”. After Meghan participated in a letter-writing campaign, the soap company changed their motto from “women” all over America to “people” all over America. Never discount your power of speaking up.

So, what can you do to help advocate for our common cause? Consider tweeting about the great work that you are doing in your library or harness the power of other social media sites. Offer to present to your parents’ club or council about what the school library and your program offers their children. Get on the docket to speak with your board’s trustees about the importance of libraries and programming. Inquire with your local federation about the possibility of starting a Library Ad Hoc Committee to support other teacher-librarians in your local. Make sure your school library is a stop on any school “open house” event, such as a kindergarten open house or a Grade 9 night. Have a 30-60 second elevator speech at the ready as you never know who you will run into in the community that could help advocate and support school libraries. Invite your school administrator to accompany you to OLA Super Conference – their attendance is free on the day that they attend. The possibilities to help advocate are endless.

As this new school year begins, pick one thing that you can do to toot your own horn and advocate. It’s time to hold boards and schools accountable for the funding that they receive from the Ministry of Education for teacher-librarian staffing and library resources. After all, why should a kid going to school in Timmins have a very different library experience than one attending school in Windsor? It’s about consistency and equity regardless of your board and where you live. ■

Anita Brooks Kirkland

Making the Case for the Library Learning Commons

Every child in Canada deserves an excellent school library. Canadian School Libraries (CSL) is pleased to introduce resources for professional learning, with a particular focus on helping you make the case for the library learning commons to stakeholders and decision-makers.

**Excellent School Libraries:
What Students Should Expect**
canadianschoollibraries.ca/excellent-school-libraries

School libraries exist to support student success. This resource defines what students should expect from the school library. Making the case for the library learning commons must include a clearly articulated vision for how students benefit.

Supporting School Administrators
canadianschoollibraries.ca/for-administrators

The learning commons is a whole school approach to learning and needs instructional leadership. Resources on this page help school administrators and district leaders imagine the possibilities as they leverage the potential of the learning commons model. What is an excellent school library? Why should your school or district transform the library? Where can you see the approach in action in Canadian schools? Who is leading the way? What does the research say? This page answers these critical questions and connects to supporting resources.

NOTE: Be sure to download the PDF versions of both of these webpages for printing and sharing!



**Make the Case with Research:
The CSL Research Archive**
researcharchive.canadianschoollibraries.ca

What does the research say? You are sure to be asked as you make the case. The CSL project Treasure Mountain Canada (TMC) is a research symposium and think tank focused on the school library learning commons. The CSL Research Archive makes papers from all TMC symposiums accessible and searchable. Never before has made-in-Canada scholarly and practitioner research been so easy to access! The Research Archive also provides a comprehensive guide to a large body of Canadian and international research studies.

Make the Case with Professional Literature: *The CSL Journal*
journal.canadianschoollibraries.ca

With three online editions per year, the *CSL Journal* is Canada's only national journal dedicated to school library learning commons practice. Articles represent ideas from across the country, providing inspiration for teaching, learning, and program growth.

Leading Learning: Supporting You
lsop.canadianschoollibraries.ca

Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada provides a catalyst for igniting the design of future-oriented learning. The document positions the school library learning commons as critical to innovative pedagogical approaches for the new century. The new Supporting You section of the Leading Learning website provides practical tools for using *Leading Learning* as a guide for measurement and growth, professional learning, action research and implementation. The vision framed in OSLA's *Together for Learning* can be realized by using *Leading Learning* in these ways.

Canadian School Libraries connects school library practitioners and educators across Canada in the collaborative pursuit of delivering exemplary practices reflective of current professional school library learning commons standards. The CSL website provides one point of access for all of the resources highlighted in this article. Connect with us and help make the case for the library learning commons in Canada! ■



Anna Szumilas

Fan Arts Expo

Bringing a comic arts event to life takes time. For me, it took several years of gathering information and ideas, convincing myself that I could do it, and—finally—planning and executing the project.

I got inspired to create a comic-con at my school while attending a Toronto Comic Arts Festival Educator's Day at Toronto Reference Library. I attend this event every year, and each time I get new ideas, new graphic novels and a renewed energy to make things happen at my school.

This spring, all stars finally aligned, and the plan became a reality. There were many “stars” – aka like-minded people involved in the process.

First, I contacted our principal, who approved the week-long event, and provided money for guest speakers and encouragement along the way.

Next, I met with the Arts Department, specifically one Visual Arts teacher who doubles as the school Anime Club facilitator. In a week after our meeting in February, the following plans were set in motion:

- Organization of comic-con costume contest and getting prizes for winners
- Event promotion campaign: social media, wall posters and PA announcements
- Logo design for posters and t-shirts
- Guest artist (former student volunteer)
- Organizing and supplying baked goods for a themed café during common lunch

My prep work included:

- contacting and inviting Star Wars Stormtroopers
- organizing a graphic novel author visit
- partnering with Toronto Public Library for a 3D printer workshop in our library
- getting free comic books from a neighbourhood comic book store

Our first ever Fan Arts Expo was a week-long event when the library became a hub of all things comic-con. During a series



of cosplay workshops, participating art classes transformed the space into a makerspace. Our Grade 12 cosplay workshop facilitator, Mary Maliszewski, began the workshop by sharing her life-long experience with cosplay. Her presentation, richly illustrated by photos taken during cosplay conventions, helped students realize that it does not have to be a very elaborate or difficult task. The activity of making simple headbands using pipe cleaners and yarn finger-knitted and



wound around the band, proved to be an equal measure of fun and challenge. As usual, YouTube did not disappoint with instructional videos.

A school library-led comic-con would not be complete without an author visit. A local graphic novel author spoke to invited classes about her craft and her inspirations. She also led the participants in a story-making activity which was quite a daring undertaking with about 50 students involved in the process. The result was a spectacular story with blood, vampires and a lot of romance.

3D Printer workshops for invited science classes were facilitated by Toronto Public Library Digital Innovation Hub Technician Gobi Sooriyakumar and our Toronto Public Library Outreach Librarian Yoojin Kwon. Students had a chance to learn how to design and print a 3D object starting from an existing design or could create their own. They also were able to get a 3D printer certification.

The big event took place on Friday, the last day of the Expo. Initially, we were planning to use the LLC space that day, however, due to logistical issues we agreed to move the festivities to the auditorium, which is not only a much larger space, but also is more accessible to the whole school.

The main reason for the larger venue was the number of activities involved and the timing of the event. The Expo finale took place during a special common lunch for more than 1,400 students. The auditorium had enough space to accommodate doodling tables, button machines, crafts stations with jigsaw puzzles, knitting and finger knitting, board and digital game tables including Chess, Monopoly, a Makey Makey station and an Arduino hub. Special mention goes to a café with baked goods prepared and catered by our anime club and the “gamer’s den” – arguably the most popular part of the show.

Right at the entrance to the auditorium we set up the graphic novel booth with free comic books, bookmarks and poster giveaways. The majority of them were donated by our neighbourhood comic book stores. The rest were purchased for next to nothing with the library petty cash.

The Canadian 501 Stormtroopers’ Legion made an appearance as well. They blended nicely with many students and staff wearing anime, superhero and sci-fi costumes. The first ever school cosplay contest showcased creative and spectacular costumes. The awards — gift certificates from a gaming store, an arts store, and Tim Hortons — were funded by the school.

A gaming tournament held Friday after school was the cherry on top of the week long festivities. It was organized and hosted by the school Gaming Club.

As usually happens with events like ours, we have started planning the next year’s Expo already. Here is what we have decided to change:

- We will add a four-day-boot camp for cosplay making after school for those interested
- All tables in the auditorium, including café tables, will be doodling tables covered with white paper and supplied with coloured pencils
- Collect donations for a charity of choice
- Photo booth – or green screen photo studio – run by the photography class
- An Escape Room

I need to emphasize that it takes a buy-in of many groups and individuals for this event to run smoothly. It took the collaboration of the whole school and involvement of many students and teachers to make our Fan Arts Expo a success.

For More Information

Star Wars Stormtroopers – Canadian Legion (501st.ca/garrison)

Toronto Public Library Digital Innovation Hubs (torontopubliclibrary.ca/using-the-library/computer-services/innovation-spaces)

Free Comic Day – first Saturday in May at participating stores (check online) ■



Natasha Rankin

Forest of Reading Fun at 16th Avenue School in Richmond Hill District School Board

I have been involved in the Forest of Reading® for three years and spearheaded it for two years at my current school. I'm going to outline how I ran the program this year as I found it to be the most successful.

I ran five of the programs which cost about \$4,000 to buy the books. I did the Blue Spruce™ program with all classes from kindergarten to Grade 2. I did the Silver Birch® Express Collection with the Grade 4 and 5 students during their library times for the shorter read alouds (some took two weeks) and gave the chapter books to teachers to use as their class readers. I introduced the Silver Birch Non-Fiction with Grade 5 and 6 students, introducing the topics, discussing the books and sharing key concepts. Students were given free time to read in the library, either on their own or guided by their teacher.

The program provided online virtual author talks which each class participated in at least once, many more often.

The Silver Birch collection and Red Maple™ collection were done as book clubs. This year we had our highest turn out yet, 34 students in our Silver Birch and 81 in our Red Maple. I had two other teachers meet with the Silver Birch group once a week doing book talks. They helped lead discussions, provide question prompts and read responses. I did the same with the Red Maple group, but had to split them up over two days.

One book in the collection was *Secret Path* – a graphic novel by Gord Downie and Jeff Lemire – which I decided to share as a read aloud and group discussion. The book recounts

the story of Chanie Wenjack, a 12-year-old boy who died 50 years ago trying to escape a residential school. It turned into quite a time commitment, but was completely worth it. I used resources provided by the Ontario Library Association and created some of my own activities to extend the learning.

The program was a huge success. The students loved the books. They couldn't get enough of them – couldn't wait to sign them out and take them home to share with their families. Many of my reluctant readers in Grade 7 and 8 were so proud of the number of books they were able to read over the course of the club. I was reading them along with them and the number of students who would stop me in the halls to talk about books was unbelievable! Outside of the book clubs, the in-class collections also were a huge success. Teachers would continually show me pieces of writing and reading responses related to the books that we would share together in the library. They really made an impact on the students.

The culmination for the students who are in the Silver Birch and Red Maple Clubs is to attend the Festival of Trees at Harbourfront Centre in downtown Toronto where the winner of the award in each category is crowned. It is labelled the rock concert for reading and that is so true! The students get to meet the authors they have been reading, participate in workshops, get autographs and attend the ceremony.

Even better, students can apply to participate in the ceremony. This year two of my students were chosen to introduce the authors – one was chosen to be a sign holder and the other

Tips for a Successful Forest of Reading Program

Try to order at least five copies of each title. Fundraising helps pay for the books.

Host a “book tasting” in the library to entice students and whet their appetite for the books.

Encourage other teachers in the school to sign up for novels. Let students know who is reading the books so that they can go to the teachers to talk about the books.

Participate in Forest Friday virtual author talks. Invite students to bring their lunch and chat with the authors.

Use Twitter to share thoughts and ideas about the books.

Use Google Classroom to facilitate student sign-up, to create a collaborative space to talk about the books and to post activities.

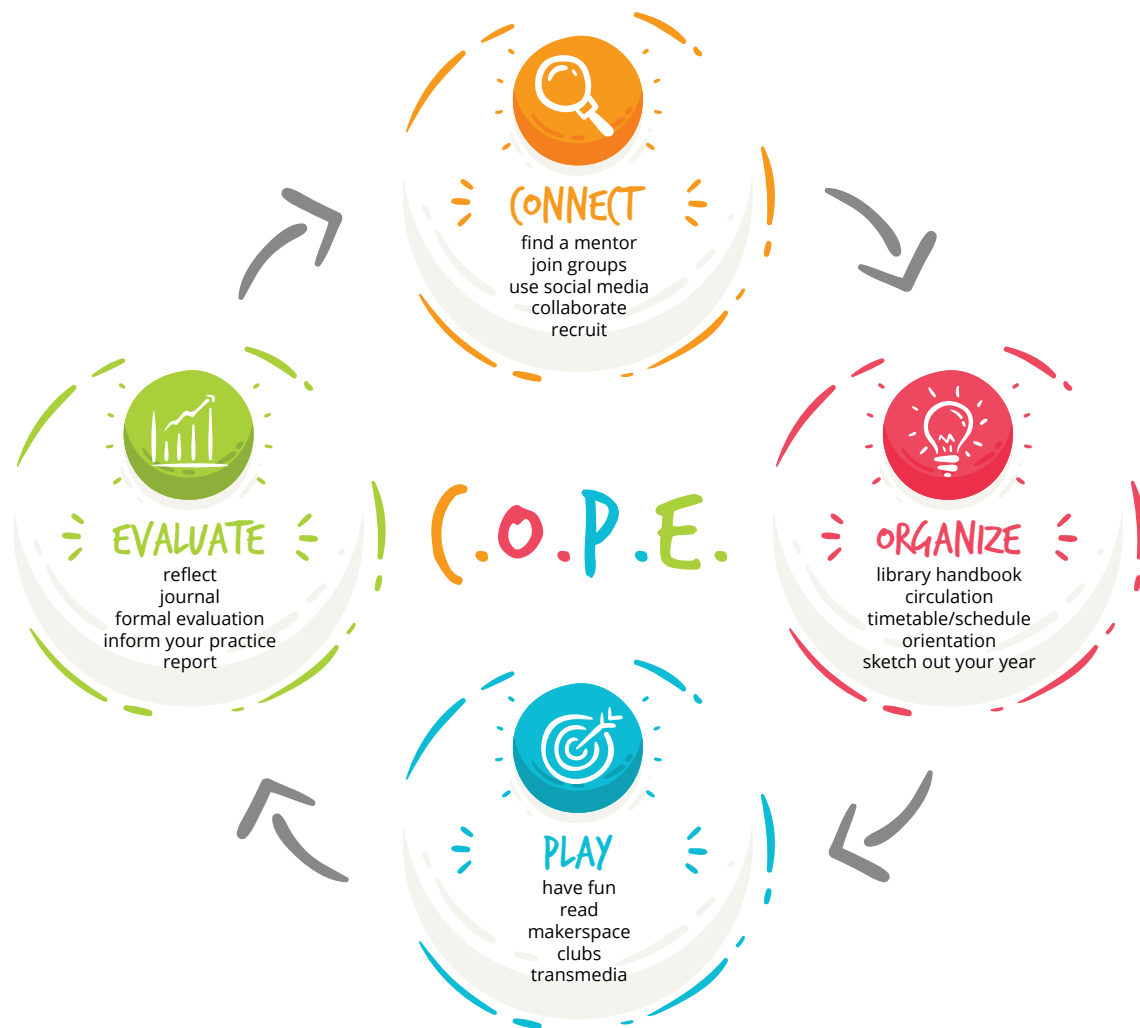
Make Forest of Reading visible around the school. Set up bulletin boards showcasing the Forest of Reading books. Post graphs to highlight everyone’s progress as they read the books.



got to read the top three finalists. It is a very time-consuming process filling in individual applications for each student which includes writing a paragraph as to why I think they would be a good choice. About 40 of my students applied.

There also is an art contest associated with the festival and the winning artist gets their art on the actual awards given to the authors. I explain the art contest to the kids each year, collect all their art, photocopy it, send away the originals to the contest and then do a school wide contest winner in each of the categories. This year one of my students won the whole contest! It was truly amazing to see how proud she was.

Although it can be very time consuming and all encompassing, I cannot recommend this program enough. It gets kids excited, motivated, and involved. Most importantly, it gets students reading and coming back for more! They are all already talking about who might be nominated next year! ■



Brenda Roberts

Library Jitters? Learn to C.O.P.E.

We've all felt it! That nagging anxiety in the pit of your stomach that increases as you get closer to Labour Day. Whether you're new to the library learning commons or just getting ready for your September start up, these tips will help you get organized and hopefully alleviate some of the worries we all experience as we head into a new school year.

Identify Yourself

Before you learn to C.O.P.E., reflect on who you are as an educator. What is your philosophy of education? What experiences as a library client are going to shape your view of your role as teacher-librarian? What features and experiences do you want to ensure are part of your Library Learning Commons? Zmuda and Harada (2008) state that teacher-librarians "must serve as program administrators, information specialists and teachers who are willing to collaborate and lead," (p. 35). I struggled with defining what type of leader I was and where I could lead by advocating for the library.

Crippen's (2005) description of servant-leadership appealed to me, e.g. genuine care and concern for all members of the community, and nurturing the individual. The servant leadership goal of "the greater good of society" (Crippen, 2005, p. 21) merged with Lindahl's (2008) description of shared leadership helped me define my goals.

Sometime during your first term, consider writing a personal and a library mission statement. Zmuda and Harada (2008) remind us that "a mission centered mindset requires a constant analysis of whether daily practices are having the desired effect on student achievement" (p. 8). A quick Google search will provide you with many varied examples. Here are my most recent statements.

Library Learning Commons Mission Statement

The mission of my Library Learning Commons is to:

- provide an inviting, engaging and stimulating environment
- offer rich and diverse resources, media and technology
- provide the best possible services

- be the information hub of the school
- enrich and support our school's educational objectives as outlined in the school's mission, vision and values statements

Teacher-Librarian Mission Statement

As teacher-librarian it is my mission to:

- serve, support and provide differentiated collaboration and instruction to our clientele
- provide purposeful, personalized and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities
- guide the whole student in their quest to be literate, inquisitive and to explore their affinities and to be self-reliant and ethical seekers of information
- support school success by modelling adapting with change, solving problems and sharing knowledge and skills
- ensure that students have the self-esteem and abilities to become active and fulfilled citizens, as they join in a world-wide network of life-long learners

With your mission always in the back of your mind, you are ready to C.O.P.E.

Connect

Find a mentor in your area who can fill you in on standard procedures for your district and who can coach and advise you on library programming, technology initiatives, budget proposals, and so on. Sign up for any professional development your school board offers directed at the learning commons, technology, literacy and makerspaces. Join your local and provincial association, the Ontario School Library Association.

Use social media to connect with groups like Canadian School Libraries ([facebook.com/search/top/?q=canadian%20school%20libraries](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=canadian%20school%20libraries)) and School Library Journal ([facebook.com/SchoolLibraryJournal](https://www.facebook.com/SchoolLibraryJournal)), as well as with individual library gurus like Diana Rendina (renovatedlearning.com), Joyce Valenza ([@joycevalenza](https://twitter.com/joycevalenza)) and Silvia Tolisano (langwitches.org/blog).

Get to know your staff. Look for ways to collaborate and connect with them. Watch for staff members who will help to promote your programs and encourage them to get others on board. During the first week of school, spend as much time as you can outdoors at entry and dismissal time to recruit parent volunteers. Set aside time in the first two weeks to train both parent and student volunteers.

Organize

Spend some time in August getting organized. Before planning anything, check to see if your school board has a library handbook, maybe a binder but more likely available online. Take time to read it as it will provide detailed information about your role, your circulation system, cataloguing standards, copyright, what to do if a book is challenged and so on.

While it may seem humdrum, circulation is still basic

to libraries. You want to establish a routine during your orientation classes that becomes seamless. This frees you up to co-teach throughout the year instead of being stuck solving circulation issues. For younger students make up a song or chant to remind them of the steps they have to go through when checking out their books. For older students a poster or chart near the circulation computers can free up a lot of your time in the first few weeks. How many books will students take out at a time? Where can students return their books? Is there a drop box? Do they check in their own material? In my experience in a kindergarten to Grade 5 setting, students from kindergarten to Grade 3 used a drop box, while students in Grades 4 and 5 learned to check in their own books and sort them into collection bins. Are you providing library bags, personalized browser cards or book marks that remind students of their library account number and basic circulation rules?

Next, take a look at your timetable. How much of it is fixed and what is flexible? If you are part-time library and part-time planning time, lobby your administrator to provide the planning time in the library so that you can maximize your time in your space. Your first few weeks will likely be dedicated to orientation classes. Go ahead and develop your schedule and be ready to share it with staff members before the first day. I usually send out an email with open times so that staff can select the orientation times that fit their timetables. Think about how you will conduct orientation. It gets tiresome saying the same thing to 30+ classes so consider making a Voki, video, slideshow...something that is entertaining and delivers key information. Consider getting your students involved by developing a treasure hunt or trivia game that lets them explore the space.

If you are new to the Library Learning Commons, you need to take a look at your environment. You should have designated areas including: a teaching area with enough tables and chairs so at least one class can sit comfortably, a larger screen with computer, projector and speakers, a story time area for those teaching younger students, areas for individuals to work or read quietly, catalog search stations, a circulation desk with at least one computer and barcode scanner, at least one book return near the entry and circulation desk, access to a variety of technology and a makerspace area.

Last, it's a good idea to sketch out your year. While there should be many blank sections on your calendar so that you can plan collaborative inquiries, there are some things that have to happen at certain times of the year. Use the school calendar to take note of special events, performances, open houses and so forth. Add in dates for your book fair, author visits, and Forest of Reading® events. Take note of special religious days, seasons, holidays, as well as days like Earth Day. I like to mark out when I'm changing book displays and what topics need to be pulled, e.g. books on self-esteem and bullying prevention for Bullying Prevention Week. As well as pulling books for displays, I like to email staff at the beginning of the year asking for their long-range plans and if there are

continued on page 34

...continued from page 33

any subject areas or specific titles they would like for that first week. Then I try to have them pulled, signed out and delivered to their rooms or mail slots to welcome them and support the library service model.

Play

The Library Learning Commons is a fantastic place to work. It's a place to play with ideas, to nurture curiosity and to model risk-taking. Remember to have fun and demonstrate to your students what it is to be a life-long learner. Read constantly. There is nothing more rewarding than being able to hold in-depth discussions on many books and to be able to make recommendations with confidence. Makerspaces are very popular right now and can be as basic as a Lego wall or craft corner to complex robotics and coding stations. As well as a makerspace, consider having a spot for puppets and dramatic play, an ongoing jigsaw puzzle, and traditional board games. Consider running clubs. Scholastic is great at publishing books that have companion websites with games and quests. Team up with classroom teachers to run reading clubs (don't forget the Forest of Reading), as well as other clubs that can link to curriculum, e.g. cartooning, poetry, and app development. Take the lead and introduce your colleagues and students to transmedia works. Inanimate Alice (inanimatealice.com) is classic for junior/intermediate students and manages to incorporate story, image, video, music, sound effects, diagrams and games all into one highly engaging tale. A few other transmedia works to explore include: Flight Paths (flightpaths.net), Skeleton Creek (patrickcarman.com/enter/skeleton-creek), Infex (itunes.apple.com/ca/app/infex/id538082903?mt=8) and The Creature Department (thecreaturedepartment.com/creatures.html).

Evaluate

Learn to reflect daily on what is going well, what needs a few tweaks and what has to change or be thrown out. Be honest. Get feedback from staff and students. Consider keeping a journal so that you can track your work, successes and feelings. If you are interested in a more formal evaluation, take a look at Achieving Information Literacy available at accessola2.com/SLIC-Site/slic/ail110217.pdf for Canadian standards, sample checklists, and a policy statement of competencies for teacher-librarians. These tools not only inform your practice but are useful when writing your annual report to submit to administrators.

Figure out what kind of teacher-librarian you want to be and what your Library Learning Commons will offer. Then with a bit of preplanning: connect, organize, play and evaluate, you are on your way to a fantastic year! ■

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WHY REGISTER FOR THE FOREST OF READING?

The Forest of Reading is Canada's largest recreational reading program where readers select the winners! This initiative by the Ontario Library Association (OLA) offers seven reading programs to encourage a love of reading in people of all ages. More than 270,000 readers participate every year individually, or at their school or public library.



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VIRTUAL AUTHOR VISITS: Free for all 2019 registrants: Forest Fridays (English) and Mercre-LIT (French) virtual author visits! From January to June, nominees will host a 40-45 minute visit plus a 15 minute Q&A virtually. You will be able to participate with your readers through Adobe Connect on your computer.

*Mercre-LIT French Virtual Author
Visits are funded by the Ministry
of Francophone Affairs*



Ontario



CELEBRATE: Attend the largest young readers' literary festival in Canada – the Festival of Trees! It is the official Forest celebration where the award winners are announced. You and your readers, along with 15,000 other readers, can take part in author workshops, activities, entertainment, and much more!

(Please Note: You must purchase tickets to attend the Festival).



VOTING: Democracy in Action! Receive official voting privileges and encourage reader engagement by giving your readers the power to choose the winners of the award programs.



COMMUNITY: Unite your readers with fellow readers across Canada and internationally through the Forest of Reading Facebook and Twitter pages and receive exclusive updates from the Forest.



LOVE OF READING: Create a meaningful experience for your readers and create opportunities for reluctant readers to get excited about reading. Support and celebrate Canadian books, publishers, authors, and illustrators.

Registration opens October 1 at accessola.com/forest



The Anxious Weeder

Philip Wasley



The book in your hand is one you remember purchasing. You were so pleased to find something that fit the curriculum and engaged your students. It was money well spent; money that was spent about seven years ago. Upon further examination, you realize the content is a bit dated and the cover depicts students using flip phones. The condition of the book is pretty good though – little to no damage and the cover is still shiny. “Someone could still use this book,” you think to yourself. Do you put it back on the shelf? Is your anxiety level increasing?

Here’s another scenario. Your school board’s central library services team has arrived and their orders have been to support you in your large-scale weeding project. The staff and community have been notified and have even been given solid reasons as to why this work is important. You’re committed, but as the pile of books for deselection grows, so does your heartbeat. Was this a mistake?

Whether you are weeding your collection on your own, or leading a team of qualified staff, the anxiety associated with such a task can be too strong for even the best of librarians. The notion of the printed page being destroyed is not an easy one to accept, no matter what the justification. There is a widely-accepted view that any knowledge is better than no knowledge. This view becomes more accepted in schools that deal with budget restraints and an already shrinking library.

There are many stakeholders in any library who have their own expectations of what your space needs to offer, so the anxiety you feel will come from several places. There is your own school’s administration, other teachers and staff, parents, community members, and of course, the students. There is even the chance the public at large may be affected as it’s not unusual for a disgruntled observer to alert the local media.

Why is Weeding Important?

Like crabgrass, the outdated, damaged, and inappropriate materials can start to strangle your garden of good reads.

You want to avoid the same fate for your library. The most rewarding thing you’ll hear after a large-scale weeding project is an unsolicited comment like “look at all these new books!” Weeding quite literally gets books into the hands of students because weeding allows students to see the books. You’ll observe an almost magnetic reaction between their hands and those now visible resources. Weeding improves visibility, and provides more space and access.

What Needs to Go?

Every school needs current, relevant and appropriate resources. Libraries should want a collection that highlights and celebrates every identity, and sometimes this can mean judging a book by its cover. Books in your collection that reinforce stereotypes or colonial visions are often good candidates for deselection. I’ve worked closely with Ruth Hall, Program Coordinator for Library and Learning Resources at the Toronto District School Board. Here are criteria that she’s summarized for our own team. It’s taken largely from the board’s own collection development guide provided to teacher-librarians:

- Condition (stained, missing pages, torn)
- Currency (copyright date, age)
- Multiple copies
- Relevance to the curriculum and specialty programs (IB, Arts, SHSM, etc.)
- Relevance to your students (age/grade/learning needs/culture/interests)
- Equity (variety of people, beliefs, viewpoints, socio-economic and political, indigenous peoples, sensitive topics/issues)
- Canadian
- Visual appeal and format
- Durability and cost

For teachers new to the role and even with a board’s collection development policy in hand, weeding can be challenging. Where do you go from there? Here are some principles:

1. Weeding should not be an event

Large scale weeding projects tend to get publicized whether we like it or not. Pressure can come from all fronts and even the most successful purges will still bruise a few egos. Some have even resorted to completing large weeds on their own and discarding the books under the cover of night. Instead, view weeding as just something you do in your role as the teacher-librarian. Don't wait for the library to burst at the seams. Devise a method that will allow you to commit to weeding just one shelf for fifteen minutes a day or even a week.

Dr. Gail Dickinson, Associate Dean at Old Dominion University in Virginia who conducts focused research on school library management, suggests this three-step, one shelf per week weeding process:

Step 1 (Time required: 1 minute)

Approach a shelf and slightly pull out books that you think might need to be weeded.

Step 2 (Time required: 4 minutes)

Look at each book that you have selected. Carefully apply your selection criteria against each book.

Step 3 (Time required: 10 minutes)

Take the books to your workstation and remove each book from the library system. Complete any other processing for each book, e.g. discard stamp, label removal, etc. Place books in recycling bin.

Try to plan it so you get through the whole collection within one school year, and just keep going. You will come to know your collection very well and it will just get easier.

2. Hoarding is not collection development

School libraries are not meant to be repositories for every resource, even if they are outstanding. At some point, you need to make choices and create a collection that clearly supports the school's vision and curriculum. Both of these can change over time and when they do, so should your collection. Teachers and students will not be able to find the good stuff if it's buried or wedged between books that should have been weeded ages ago. You'll know you're doing it right when your borrowers are continually visiting your library, checking out different resources each time, and voicing their appreciation for the resources they continue to discover. If you're not seeing or hearing this, then the collection is stale.

3. It's always older than you think

Remember the year 2000? Remember how long we waited for that year to arrive and how much it defined "the future"? For a while we could rely on the fact that any publish date in the 21st century was good enough, but that's not the case anymore. The year 2000 was eighteen years ago. The year 2008 was ten

years ago. For subject areas like technology and careers, that's still too old. Make the mindset shift and think in terms of the actual age of the book, not how long ago the publish date feels to you personally. You're not weeding on publish date alone, but it can often become the deciding factor on whether you keep a book or not.

The End?

Believe it or not, you must always buy more, and that means you should always be weeding. Even the Bible said, "Of making many books, there is no end." To keep anxiety at bay, remember to approach it as an ongoing process and just something you do as a teacher-librarian. Keeping older books is okay when there is purpose and intent (and a lack of budget), but these choices should be few and far between. Remember to consider a book's age in comparison with its content; it's older than you think. As you continue this important feature of library management, both you and your borrowers will be richly rewarded. ■

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To Weed or Not To Weed?

Here are some books that you might have in your collection. Provided their physical condition is acceptable, these are candidates that may cause you some anxiety.



Title: *Native Homes*
Author: Bobbie Kalman
Year: 2001
Publisher: Crabtree
Notes: Prolific author, part of the Native Nations of North America series



Title: *Trials and Triumphs: The Story of African-Canadians*
Author: Lawrence Hill
Year: 1993
Publisher: Umbrella Press
Notes: Notable author, part of Peoples of Canada series



Title: *The New Everyday Science Explained*
Author: Curt Supplee
Year: 2004
Publisher: National Geographic Society
Notes: Contains high quality full colour pictures

Photo by NeONBRAND on Unsplash



Caroline Freibauer

Research Project

College and university librarians have always done informal surveys to determine how well incoming students can navigate a library. And the results are always the same: Students who had the benefit of a library program in high school have the best information literacy skills.

Now, the Ontario Library Association is using this anecdotal data as a starting point for a more formal research project that will help link high school libraries and teacher-librarians to student success at post-secondary institutions.

Sarah Roberts, advocacy and research officer at OLA, is pulling together a team from across the province that will conduct an empirical research study to determine the impact of good high school library programs. The research group includes librarians from colleges and universities, as well as teacher-librarians and school library co-ordinators.

“It’s really great to be able to show evidence,” says Roberts, who will be working with the committee. “And to show the scope of that evidence.”

Mary Cavanagh is a professor at the University of Ottawa School of Information Studies specializing in teaching research methods. She is interested in helping design a questionnaire, solve any ethical problems and analyze the data.

She said the key is to design the survey so that it gives you exactly the information you want. She recommends that the focus be kept small – for instance, does having had a school library make a difference to first year post-secondary students? Then after the initial data is collected, the team can consider whether there is a difference with just the space, or with a library technician or with a teacher-librarian.

“Among practitioners, you study something because you need a report to influence decisionmakers,” says Cavanagh.

“Good planning up front will make it better in the end. I am helping this group design something practical and doable – it strengthens the quality of the results.”

Courtney Lundrigan is the Trinity College Library Instructional and Reader Services Librarian at the University of Toronto. She spends a lot of time teaching information literacy skills and offering research support for individuals and groups.

“Prior to this, I hadn’t considered the role of the school library,” she says.

“How have I gone so long without asking this question? It’s very, very helpful to understand what research skills the students have coming in.”

Lundrigan wants to be part of the research team for two reasons

First, it will support her practice. It will help her start conversations with instructors and faculty members about information literacy, assignment design and expectations.

Second, it will help her assist students who are coming to university from different backgrounds. “There is a disconnect with what students know and what we think they know,” says Lundrigan.

She says this research study will help academic librarians know what they are dealing with.

The research study is still at the early planning stage. In the next few months, Roberts hopes to finalize membership of the committee and determine the scope of the project. Then the group will be able to decide how much money it will need to carry out the plan and determine where it will get that funding.

If interested in participating, contact Sarah Roberts at sroberts@accessola.com or 416-363-3388, ext. 231. ■

Photo by Jess Watters on Unsplash

Heather McTavish

Safe Space, Calm Space

Reducing Anxiety @ Your Library

What is it about the library that causes a generalized sense of fear among many of its patrons? Is it the library space, the sheer overwhelming feeling of not knowing what to do and where to go when one enters its doors, or the magnitude of knowledge contained in its print and online volumes? Endless. And, how does this manifest in our elementary and secondary school libraries? For each student, the anxiety unfolds as a different beast, but strategies to quell library nerves seem to have a common and arguably “common sense” thread—that library staff can do wonders with a smile and a “may I help you?”

This thread runs deep amongst both the elementary and secondary library staff at the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. Teacher-Librarians and library technicians alike suggest that creating a welcoming, safe space is vital. Greeting students as they come into the library and engaging them by stepping out from behind the circulation desk, to interact with students on computers or those browsing the shelves, can help achieve this sense of welcoming. Building a rapport with students through taking a genuine interest in their learning, and creating different zones where students feel they can come to do more than just quietly study is also essential.

While strategies look a little different in elementary school libraries than in secondary, and also differ from school to school, there is much to learn from one another about practiced efforts to help overcome anxiety in our libraries. Below, both elementary and secondary staff weigh in on what works in their libraries to create calm.

Elementary Library Anxiety-Reducing Strategies:

Include the library as a room in the “Welcome to Kindergarten” night for students and parents to introduce them to library programs and the library space.

Set the library up as a relaxing space with jazz music, “Color Me Calm” books and lots of books on display.

Create a variety of comfortable zones with stuffed animals and different types of seating, like couches to mimic a living room.

Read students library-themed children’s books on their first visit to the library, such as *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen, *Library Mouse* by Daniel Kirk, *The Librarian From the Black Lagoon* by Mike Thaler, and *Dewey: There’s a Cat in the Library* by Vicki Myron.

Secondary Library Anxiety-Reducing Strategies:

Acknowledge each student with a little humor when they walk into the library. For example, “Good morning! Are you even awake?”

Play easy listening classical or jazz music and dim the lights to create a relaxed Coffee House vibe.

Establish connections at the circulation desk by asking students about their reading or asking them to let you know how they liked a particular book.

Create engaging and interactive displays where students can participate and have a voice with themes such as: “Why do you love your library?”

Display student artwork in the library which makes it a place that is partly “decorated” by the students.

Run programs that encourage students to come to the library continually, such as the Forest of Reading book club and the Accelerated Reading program, complete with themed contests and activities.

Demystify the library with clear signs about available programs and resources for students who are too shy to ask for help to find what they’re looking for. ■

Photo by Masaaki Komori on Unsplash

Jennifer Brown

Fostering Wellness in the Elementary Library Learning Commons

The conversations around mental health in our schools have grown significantly over the past decade. It is no longer out of place to hear staff, students, and families discussing stress, anxiety, self-care and mental wellness. Efforts are being put in place throughout our province and beyond to ensure that the education system not only acknowledges students' anxieties and stressors, but also creates safe, mentally healthy learning environments in which our students can thrive and freely be themselves. This shift is a reflection of the ongoing challenges our children are facing in coping with the fast-paced, information overloaded, digital age they experience each and every day. As educators, we know that helping our students feel prepared to navigate the world around them, critically consume information and create socially responsible contributions to society are essential to their healthy social-emotional growth and development.

So where does the elementary school library learning commons fit in to this important but daunting task of fostering positive student mental health?

The Importance of Mindfulness and Self-Regulation

The library learning commons can and should be the heart of the school and the hub of innovative educational practice. It should be a space where students know that they can take risks, seek support, and feel safe. So it only seems fitting that we embed mindfulness and mental wellness in the design of our space, the structures we put in place, and the variety of learning materials we offer.

The Ontario Ministry of Education's 2013 document *Supporting Minds* provides educators with concrete strategies and suggestions for supporting students with a variety of mental health needs, but also highlights that many of these strategies can benefit all students, not only those with a diagnosed mental illness. The document states that:

Concern is growing in our society about the number of children and youth who are experiencing mental health problems. At the same time, our education system in Ontario is focused on making schools safe and accepting, and on meeting the needs of all students by providing the

kind of instruction and assessment that is "necessary for some and good for all."¹

Like other school boards across the province, the Peel District School Board Climate for Learning and Working Resource Team supports educators and administrators in creating a mentally healthy classroom for all learners. They describe this learning environment grounded in student wellness as the following:

- Classroom is safe, inclusive, and accepting for students
- Clear and consistent expectations for behaviour in class
- Diversity is recognized and celebrated
- Students feel a strong sense of belonging
- Mental well-being is explicitly linked to performance
- Students feel safe to share and be who they are without stigma
- Students turn to teachers or other adults in the school for help if needed²

Looking at our work through the lens of student wellness allows the library learning commons to be the true heart and hub of the entire school community and offers all stakeholders a space for open exploration, uncovering of curriculum expectations through inquiry and the development of essential critical thinking skills through research and in depth literacy instruction. By both encouraging mindful moments and fostering self-regulation in our learners, we can help reduce student anxieties and empower learners to embrace the risk-taking mindset needed for ongoing growth and success.

Mindfulness can be described as choosing and learning to control your focus of attention. Mindfulness can also help people cope with negative thoughts, feelings, and events.³

Certainly, mindfulness can and should be taught explicitly in our classrooms. Yet, the library learning commons can also offer opportunities for mindful practice. The materials we select, the invitations we create, the flexibility of our space can all support student wellness and encourage mindful moments.

So what might this look like in our library learning commons?

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Libraries are about freedom. Freedom to read, freedom of ideas, freedom of communication. They are about education (which is not a process that finishes the day we leave school or university), about entertainment, about making safe spaces, and about access to information.

— Neil Gaiman



Natural and human-made decor that encourages calm, focus, relaxation and curiosity while creating a welcoming environment.

Flexible and inviting seating that can encourage collaboration or solitude as needed.



Simple but engaging games and puzzles that encourage play, mental focus and problem solving.

Soothing images, materials and objects to allow students to pause and reset when needed.

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Access to a wide variety of hands-on materials and creative outlets that inspire curiosity and wonder.



Book collections and displays that centre around student interests, passions and curiosities.



Ongoing opportunities for student voice, emotions and needs to be expressed and valued.

Mindful practice is one way that our students can develop the self-regulatory skills needed to gain independence. In the library learning commons we can put in place specific and intentional routines and send clear messages to our learners about the importance of these skills.

Fostering self-regulation in our children tells them that we believe in them, we trust them and we value them by:

- Providing structures in our libraries like free-flow book exchange, equitable library/technology access, self-selection of reading materials, open shelving and access to creative materials.
- Encouraging independence in our learners through gradual release while understanding that each child will develop at a different pace.
- Reducing stress triggers where we can by consistently sending the message that we value the children more than the books/materials on our shelves. This means that mistakes will occur like lost or damaged books/materials. These should never prevent a child from feeling comfortable entering the library and sharing their story about what has happened.
- Co-creating an adaptable space where the children can move the furniture, add labels or signage, request additional materials, select alternative styles of seating and create displays or prompts for the school community.

Like any learning environment, the library learning commons has the potential to provide children of all ages with a wide range of experiences to support individual wellness and learning styles. Whether through intentional play or flexible seating or hands on building materials, each child should know that, in addition to phenomenal books, great research databases and cool technology, their school library is a place where they can be themselves, advocate for their needs and pause to reset if needed. ■

1. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/SupportingMinds.pdf>
 2. <https://spark.adobe.com/page/rKhBvUQEVMxc9>
 3. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzyXV7FXfrhid1F5bTBNcGJsLVU/view>

THE Teaching Librarian Event Calendar

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SEPTEMBER

ALL MONTH

Voting for the Forest of Reading® Evergreen Award™ program

OCTOBER

ALL MONTH

Canadian Library Month

1–7

First Nations Public Library Week

1

Registration for Forest of Reading opens (school-aged programs and Golden Oak)

1

Community Led Think Tank

11–12

2018 Ophea Conference

15

2019 Forest of Reading nominated lists announced (excluding Evergreen)

14–20

Ontario Public Library Week

NOVEMBER

22

Ontario Municipal Election Day

31

Super Conference 2019 Call for Poster Sessions closes

1

Deadline for OSLA Award Nominations including Teacher-Librarian of the Year Award, Administrator of the Year Award, and Award for Special Achievement

5–6

Child and Youth Services EXPO

7

Registration for Super Conference 2019 opens

DECEMBER

15

Deadline for OLA Board and OSLA Council Nominations

1

Elections open for OLA Board and OSLA Council

10

Elections close for OLA Board and OSLA Council

Dec. 21—Jan. 2

OLA offices closes for the holidays

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