

Readers' Advisory @ Your Library **Core Competencies Toolkit**

Introduction

One of the principal functions of OPLA's Readers' Advisory Committee is to raise the standards and strengthen the guidelines for readers' advisory services province-wide through the development of a toolkit elaborating areas of "core competencies." Each area of competency is intended to outline the knowledge and skills needed for public library staff to provide readers' advisory services to adult readers.

What is a core competency?

A core competency is defined as: the skills, know-how, and attributes that enable library staff to effectively deliver knowledgeable and appropriate reading suggestions, in both direct and indirect ways, so readers are encouraged to explore library collections and services. The Committee has established the following four areas of core competencies:

1. Collection Knowledge,
2. Reader Service Skills,
3. Readers' Advisory Conversation and,
4. Reader Development

The work of the Committee on further elaborating each of these competencies is ongoing and evolving. The four sections of the toolkit will be posted on the website as they are completed. The Committee hopes that the competencies toolkit will be valuable to readers' advisors as they: write public service job descriptions; hire and evaluate staff; and plan training opportunities that ensure staff develop (or enhance) the specific skills and behaviours associated with successful service provision.

Collection Knowledge

Definition: Understanding of, and familiarity with, the depth and breadth of materials and resources in the branch and/or system, including material in all formats and media, both fiction and non-fiction.

This involves:

1. Using reading lists, suggestions from the media, schools and community groups, and personal knowledge of current culture;
2. Customizing reading lists using library holdings;
3. Creating read-alike lists or reading maps;
4. Knowing the different formats of reading materials: audio, e-book etc.;
5. Being aware of current titles and trends.

Included in the Collection Knowledge section of the toolkit are suggestions for developing collection knowledge for individuals and groups by means of:

1. [Reading journals](#)
2. [Independent learning](#)
3. [Staying current](#)
4. [Readers' advisory websites, including library websites](#)
5. [Readers' advisory committees](#)
6. [Show and tell /Staff book clubs](#)
7. [Genre studies](#)
8. [Staff wikis for readers' advisory](#)
9. [Library displays](#)
10. [Publishers' days and writers' associations](#)

[Appendix A – Readers' advisory print tools](#)

1 - Reading journals

What is a reading journal?

A reading journal is a record of books you have read. At a minimum, it can be simply a notebook in which you jot down authors and titles. However, a journal becomes more useful if you also write a plot synopsis, notes on appeal factors, interesting quotes and links to similar titles.

Why create a reading journal?

Anyone doing readers' advisory needs to keep some sort of reading journal as a memory prompt. There is nothing more embarrassing than finding yourself at the information desk saying to a customer "I know the perfect book for you. The author's name begins with a B...or was it a P? I'm pretty sure it had the word 'tree' in the title." As well, a journal can serve as a springboard for creating reading maps, displays or booklists.

What format works best for a reading journal?

You might want to make your reading journal records more accessible by keeping them on file cards or in a loose-leaf binder, rather than just in a notebook. Later, books can be sorted alphabetically by author or title.

Of course, as it grows, a paper journal becomes harder to access from multiple points. Instead, you might want to keep your journal on one of the many free websites, such as *Shelfari*, *GoodReads* or *LibraryThing*, that provide social cataloguing for storing and sharing personal booklists. These easy-to-use sites let you create your own mini-library with a cover shot --"I know the book had a cat on the cover!" -- and have space to add a plot summary, review, and various tags or subject headings. By using tags you can easily access a book by means of appeal factors such as "gentle," "evocative," "fast paced." And, because it is stored on the web, your journal is easily available from any computer -- or even with a phone app. As well, the social element of the sites allows you to share your reading lists with friends, join discussion groups, or tie the lists to a Facebook account.

Or you might want to start a reading journal blog, allowing greater space and freedom for musings on what you read. Examples of reading blogs kept by avid amateur readers include:

- [Blog of a bookslut](http://bookslut.com/blog) <http://bookslut.com/blog>
- [Canadian Bookworm](http://cdnbookworm.blogspot.com/) <http://cdnbookworm.blogspot.com/>

Manual or electronic, private or shared, your journal will provide an excellent RA tool. And it is always interesting to look back after 20 years and think "That was such a good book! How could I have forgotten I read it?"

2 - Independent learning

Why offer independent learning opportunities?

Readers' advisory skills often take some time to develop and require the ability to use resources and study fiction books to gain a better understanding. In addition to active learning opportunities such as workshops, library staff can take advantage of independent learning tools to ensure they maximize their time as they develop better advisory skills. Independent learning tools can be developed that cater to specific organizational goals, communities, or staff training requirements. The training is often more effective if the tools are adapted directly to the specific library collection, thus reducing frustration when materials referred to are not included in the library's collection.

Who should participate in independent learning opportunities?

All staff who serve the public and are involved in readers' advisory should be encouraged to work their way through independent learning guides and other training resources. Staff can participate as time allows and utilize the skills they have learned in their interactions with customers.

Where can I find examples of independent learning opportunities?

The Mississauga Library System has developed an Independent Study Unit (ISU) which focuses on developing knowledge of reference resources such as "Genreflecting" or "What Do I Read Next?" Staff involved in readers' advisory need to be aware of print and electronic resources that can be used to find books for customers. By completing this Unit, staff learn to identify which resource can be used to answer each of the hypothetical questions included. The ISU can be completed by staff over time and is divided into different genres. By completing the Unit, staff develop proficiency in using reference resources in a wide variety of genres.

Sample from Mississauga's ISU:

GENERAL FICTION

Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia, 1987, Chambers Fiction File, 1992, Characters in 19th Century Literature, 1993, Historical Figures in Fiction, 1994, Characters in 20th Century Literature, 1990, Fiction Fit, 1991, Good Reading Guide, 1991, Read All Your Life, 1989, Who Else Writes Like? A readers' guide to fiction authors, 1996

I like Tom Clancy, but I have read everything by him. Do you know anybody else who writes like him?

Do you know if Brian Moore is a Canadian writer?

I'd like to read books based on the Bible.

I need some Canadian authors to compare with other authors around a particular theme. What are my choices?

What is the name of the detective whom Margery Allingham wrote about?

For further information or for the complete set of ISUs, contact diana.krawczyk@mississauga.ca

Halifax Public Libraries - have developed a number of genre-focussed tutorials that identify definitions, characteristics, sub-genres and suggested titles. Specifically, these tutorials include information about Thrillers, African Heritage and Maritime Writing. By reading these tutorials, staff can become more familiar with these genres, their appeal factors and popular titles. Staff can complete these tutorials at their own pace, and be exposed to relevant information about popular genres that staff have identified over time.

These tutorials can be accessed at the following links:

Thrillers - https://www.library.ns.ca/files/thrillers_1.pdf

African Heritage - https://www.library.ns.ca/files/maritime_1.pdf

Maritime Writing - https://www.library.ns.ca/files/maritime_1.pdf

Halifax Public Libraries have also developed a script for a workshop on general readers' advisory. This workshop exposes new staff to the concept of readers' advisory and is conducted on a regular basis. Other library systems could use this script to develop an active workshop or staff could use it for independent training.

The script for the workshop can be found at https://www.library.ns.ca/files/maritime_1.pdf

Exercises which accompany the workshop can be found at https://www.library.ns.ca/files/RAexercises2_1.pdf

The PowerPoint presentation which accompanies the workshop can be found at https://www.library.ns.ca/files/Readers_Advisory_Training2007_0.ppt

The general link for all of Halifax resources is <http://www.library.ns.ca/content/tutorials-and-training-resources>. Teen resources are also available.

The Toronto Public Library - has developed an internal workshop that assists staff in developing the foundations of good readers' advisory. Participants develop an awareness of: Readers' Advisory Service: a Background, Goals of a Readers' Advisor, Why People Read, The Appeal of Books, The Readers' Advisory Transaction, Building a Background in Fiction & Non-Fiction, and Electronic and Print Resources. For more information and access to the information, please contact Catherine Au Yeung
cauyeung@torontopubliclibrary.ca

Libraries that have access to *NoveList*, delivered by Ebsco Publishing, also have an independent learning opportunity at their fingertips. Staff can access a wide variety of tutorials in *NoveList* that can be completed independently and offer important insight into readers' advisory. The tutorials include information about the database itself and about readers' advisory. Users can access these tutorials through the *NoveList* Learning Centre web page.

3 - Staying current

Why is it important for a readers' advisor to stay on top of publishing?

In today's fast-paced work environment, it is often a challenge just to keep up, never mind be current or ahead; a struggling readers' advisor may occasionally feel that readers are better informed than they are. If you have ever had the experience of a reader asking for the newest release by his/her favourite author, immediately thinking "I didn't know he/she had a new book," then discovering you don't have the title listed in your catalogue because the book isn't due out for nine months, you are not alone. This has happened to all of us. Readers can and do follow the work of their favourite authors with a zeal that we can't match. So what can you do?

What can our library do to stay current?

In addition to the numerous print and online resources staff can consult to stay current, small, medium and large libraries can create routing lists for professional literature resources available in the library's collection. In most libraries, common practice is to route the current issues (which normally have Reference status); some libraries can purchase multiple copies of professional literature journals that may also have appeal for customers: e.g. *Bookmarks* magazine, or journals that are considered "core" professional literature titles for all staff.

How should I organise routing lists?

Routing lists and the slips on each journal should be:

- Maintained by one person; ideally, this person would already deal with journal acquisitions and would intercept new journals as they arrive.
- Up- to-date, reflecting staff changes (e.g. new staff, retirements, moves).
- Clear: slips, especially, should include first and last names of staff, branch locations, and mail codes, if applicable. Consider including a "Route later" option for those unable to read a particular journal the first time around.

How will routing journals be promoted to staff?

Branch managers also need to be involved, and should be responsible for notifying all new employees which journals can be routed to them, and sending this information to the person in charge of maintaining the lists. It is good to incorporate this procedure into a new staff training checklist. If training is done in a teaching setting, arrange for sample issues of the routing journals to be available for new staff to browse, or explain some important features of each. This will help ensure that staff request journals they are interested in, and those that are relevant to their work. A final note, of the utmost importance: routing journals only works if each individual on the routing slip takes personal responsibility for staying up-to-date with his/her reading. Ensure all staff

understand this and are aware of options—such as not checking off their names if they don't have time to read it, but want to get the journal back later.

What titles should I consider routing?

Here are some possible journal titles to consider for provision of an internal routing slip. Key titles of general interest are starred (*).

1. *American libraries*
2. *AudioFile*
3. *Booklist*
4. *Bookmarks* *
5. *Books in Canada*
6. *Library journal* *
7. *Public libraries*
8. *Publisher's weekly* *
9. *Quill & Quire* *

There is also an argument to be made for routing the following:

1. Popular magazines such as *O Magazine*, *Chatelaine*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and *People*: our customers get their book recommendations from these periodicals (which all have book pages or sections), and we also should be aware of the titles mentioned there.
2. Local newspapers: these often have book sections or pages.

Routing journals is so 1.0. Are there any other options out there?

OPML (Outline Processor Markup Language) files or RSS feeds could be the routing list of the future. An OPML file is an XML format document (.xml after the file name) that can be used to create lists of RSS feeds. OPML files can be shared, meaning that specific subject lists (e.g. "Blog feeds for readers' advisory" or "Journal RSS feeds for readers' advisory") can be shared with others. Academic librarians are already creating subject-specific OPML files for their customers; readers' advisory librarians (or your library's readers' advisory committee) could be creating readers' advisory professional literature OPML files to share with staff. These would work as a shared professional literature tool—a routing list of the future, in the sense that the file is shared, but without the need to "route" its contents. Individuals would upload this file into their own personal feed reader (e.g. Google Reader) and have new journal articles, book reviews, or blog posts related to readers' advisory automatically dropped into their reader in real time.

What tools are the key tools for a readers' advisor to be aware of?

1. **Electronic newsletters:** Many of the professional journals used daily for collection development now have online versions. While some of these are only available via subscription, many do offer newsletters filled with current content

that is ideal for keeping up with the latest releases and events in the publishing world. Two you might consider checking out are *Publishers Weekly* (<http://www.publishersweekly.com/>) and *Kirkus Reviews* (www.kirkusreviews.com). Both of these reviewing journals offer a variety of focused newsletters (e.g. *PW Daily*, *PW Religion BookLine*, *Children's Bookshelf*, *PW Comics Week*, *Kirkus Reviews eNewsletter*, *Kirkus Discoveries*, and *Kirkus Reports*).

2. **Online “magazines:”** *January Magazine*

(<http://www.januarymagazine.com>) offers two newsletters, one with general content and another focused on crime fiction. Both provide information on authors and their work, focusing on books written in English, with reviews of the latest releases from Canada, the U.S. and beyond. The Book Report Network (<http://www.bookreporter.com>), a group of websites that promote reading for all ages, offers book reviews, feature articles, author profiles and interviews, excerpts of new releases, and more, with content updated weekly. The most recent edition of their newsletter can be read either online (<http://www.bookreporter.com/newsletters/newsletter.asp>) or via your inbox. In addition to a general newsletter, there are also subject specific alerts on Authors, Reading Group Guides, Teen reads and Kids reads.

3. **Publisher Information:** Most publishers have news alerts to promote the work of their authors; the following are just a few:

- a. Random House of Canada's *Book Buzz* (<http://www.randomhouse.ca>),
- b. McClelland & Stewart's *The Goods* (<http://www.mcclelland.com>),
- c. Harper Collins Canada offers a number of alerts (<http://www.harpercollins.ca>) on topics such as Reading Groups, Business & Technology, Canadian Focus, Cooking, History, and Science Fiction & Fantasy.
- d. Raincoast Books <http://www.raincoast.com/newsletters/>

4. **Genre information:** Writers' associations, including Crime Writers of Canada (<http://crimewriterscanada.com>) and International Thriller Writers (<http://www.thrillerwriters.org>), understand the importance of promotion and have launched electronic newsletters. These newsletters provide updates on members, author interviews and profiles, reviews, awards, and more.

5. **Blogs:** In recent years, blogs have grown at an astounding rate. The following are just a few of the more “proactive” ones that are great sources of industry news to help even the busiest RA keep informed about the latest news and trends:

- a. <http://www.readersadvisoronline.com/blog/>: the blog for readers' advisors and bibliophiles who work with readers. You'll find essential news, tips, fun stuff, and a community for exploring RA issues. The blog is presented by the Readers' Advisor Online
- b. <http://deweydivas.blogspot.com/> This is the blog of a group of Canadian publishers' representatives based in Ontario, who book talk their favourite reads

of the upcoming season to librarians and school teachers. In 2009 they received the Ontario Public Library Association's Leadership in Adult Readers' Advisory Award.

c. <http://www.earlyword.com/> The stated goal of this site is to give libraries the earliest information possible on the books their customers will be looking for, so they can stay ahead of demand. By giving readers what they want, when they want it, libraries can increase their circulation and their support.

6. How can I find Canadian content?

a. <http://www.bookninja.com/> - *"Bookninja is the premier Canadian literary site, and one of the top literary sites in the world. It is frequented by thousands of people from all around the globe and has become a nexus for literary news and opinion. Our unique look, content, and acerbic presentation have garnered notice from mainstream media and literary personalities alike."*

b. <http://www.cbc.ca/arts/books/> The book page of the CBC website is a great source of information on the Canadian literary scene.

c. *Quill and Quire*, Canada's magazine of book news and reviews, is a must read either in print or online: <http://www.quillandquire.com/> Most of the content is available at no charge; the blog requires a subscription, but the articles and reviews are available to all.

4 - Readers' advisory websites, including library sites

Book Browse (<http://www.bookbrowse.com>)

This site has book reviews, author interviews and biographies, as well as excerpts from current books. Much of the content is available only by subscription, but it is relatively cheap. Extra information includes previews, recommendations, and book guides.

Book Page (<http://www.bookpage.com>)

This site has both interviews with authors and reviews of popular fiction and non-fiction books. The Archives of past information is a useful feature. Lists by author, genre, and audience are available.

Book Reporter (<http://www.bookreporter.com>)

This site has book reviews, author profiles and interviews, contests, and a free weekly newsletter for subscribers. It has information about awards, books and movies.

BookSpot (<http://www.bookspot.com>)

This all-purpose book site has What to Read and Genre and Author Spotlight sections as well as topical lists. Also included are links to awards.

Indie Bound (<http://www.booksense.com/bspicks/index.jsp>)

This site lists the top picks (for adults, children and teens) of independent booksellers. Membership permits access to additional information.

January magazine (<http://www.januarymagazine.com>)

This site has book reviews, author interviews, and a daily blog. Lists by genre are available.

Library Booklists (<http://www.librarybooklists.org>)

This site has a huge collection of reading lists from other libraries. Lists include Nautical fiction, If You Like..., Gentle Reads and the Arts in Fiction. As the site says, it includes original booklists, annotated lists of other booklists, and a calendar of author birthdates.

Globe and Mail Books (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/books/>)

Canada's national newspaper has weekly reviews, articles, bestseller lists, and annual lists that can be searched.

Guardian Books (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books>)

This site has Britain's best books reviews, and includes coverage of the Hay Festival, as well as author and genre information. Searchable.

New York Times Reviews (<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/books/index.html>)

This site has weekly reviews from the Sunday *New York Times* book page. Back issues can be searched. Free registration is required.

[Overbooked](http://www.overbooked.org/ra/index.html) (<http://www.overbooked.org/ra/index.html>)

This site has links to many Readers' Advisory websites.

[Readers' Advice](http://www.readersadvice.com) (<http://www.readersadvice.com>)

This site has lists of authors with read-alike lists. Series and genre lists are also included. There are also RA tips and links to other resources.

[Webrary](http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html) (<http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html>)

From Morton Grove Public Library, this site has eclectic and very specialized lists (e.g. Fiction with Recipes, Natural Disaster Fiction). It classifies booklists by genre, character, setting, subject, author, and audience.

[Who Writes Like?](http://www.erl.vic.gov.au/main/who.htm) (<http://www.erl.vic.gov.au/main/who.htm>)

This Australian Library site provides extensive lists of read-alikes for popular authors.

Genre-specific lists

[Bloodstained Bookshelf](http://www.mirlacca.com/Bookshelf.htm) (<http://www.mirlacca.com/Bookshelf.htm>)

This site has monthly lists of news and forthcoming mysteries. It also has a blog.

[Stop, You're Killing Me](http://www.stopyourkillingme.com) (<http://www.stopyourkillingme.com>)

This site has new releases (also classified as hardcover, paperback, large print, and audio), awards, reviews, and lists according to setting, job of character, historical setting, diversity, and genre. Also included are read-alikes. Indexes by author and character are also prominent.

[The Mystery Reader](http://www.themysteryreader.com) (<http://www.themysteryreader.com>)

This site has rated reviews, news, features and author interviews. Lists by genre are also available.

[Historical Fiction Network](http://www.histfiction.net/books.php) (<http://www.histfiction.net/books.php>)

This site has historical fiction titles listed by time period and popularity. Also included are lists of historical films.

[Horror Writers Association](http://www.horror.org) (<http://www.horror.org>)

This site has lists of new releases, awards, excerpts, and news. Additional information is available to members.

[Locus Magazine](http://www.locusmag.com) (<http://www.locusmag.com>)

This site has Science Fiction and Fantasy reviews, bestseller lists, awards, and news. Additional information is available to subscribers.

[Science Fiction and Fantasy World](http://www.sffworld.com) (<http://www.sffworld.com>)

This site has book reviews, author interviews, articles, art, and news. There are sections for movies, comics, and games as well.

[SF Site](http://www.sfsite.com/home.htm) (<http://www.sfsite.com/home.htm>)

This site has lists of science fiction and fantasy books as well as reviews and excerpts. It includes links to awards.

[Uchronia](http://uchronia.net/) (<http://uchronia.net/>)

The Alternative History list: this site includes more than 2000 books with alternative history narratives. It includes lists by author, series, time setting, and foreign language. There are also lists of anthologies and reference sources.

[The Romance Reader](http://www.theromancereader.com) (<http://www.theromancereader.com>)

This site has reviews, top reads and author interviews. There are also lists of sub-genres.

[Western Writers of America](http://www.westernwriters.org) (<http://www.westernwriters.org>)

This site has bestseller lists and awards as well as interviews.

[Overbooked Inspirational Fiction](http://www.overbooked.org/genres/inspirational/index.html)

(<http://www.overbooked.org/genres/inspirational/index.html>)

This site has links to Christian authors' websites and upcoming releases

Book club resources

[Book Chat Central](http://pub104.ezboard.com/bbookchatcentral) (<http://pub104.ezboard.com/bbookchatcentral>)

This site offers live chat and discussion boards about general fiction, mysteries, science fiction and thrillers.

[Book Club Resources](http://www.book-clubs-resource.com) (<http://www.book-clubs-resource.com>)

This site offers a guide for starting and running a book club or reading group, with links to online book clubs and reading resources.

[Canadian Book Clubs](http://www.bookclubs.ca) (<http://www.bookclubs.ca>)

This site offers book discussions and reviews of literary titles.

[Reading Group Guides](http://www.readinggroupguides.com) (<http://www.readinggroupguides.com>)

This is an online community for book clubs; it has lists of titles and guides.

[Reading Group Choices](http://www.readinggroupchoices.com) (<http://www.readinggroupchoices.com>)

This site has reading suggestions for both fiction and non-fiction titles, guides for discussion, and a subject listing of titles.

[Thinking Out Loud](http://www.webrary.org/rs/tol.html) (<http://www.webrary.org/rs/tol.html>)

Morton Grove Public Library's book club website lists the titles chosen for discussion with links to reading guides, reviews and some author interviews.

Blogs

[Readers' Advisor Online Blog](http://www.readersadvisoronline.com) (<http://www.readersadvisoronline.com>)

This site has comments about new books and about happenings in the library or book publishing world. It is designed to be useful to both book lovers and library reference staff.

[In the Bookroom](http://www.libraryjournal.com/blog/770000077.html) (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/blog/770000077.html>)

This book-related blog is compiled by the staff of *Library Journal*.

[Citizen Reader](http://www.citizenreader.com) (<http://www.citizenreader.com>)

The author of *The Real Story: A Guide to Nonfiction Reading Interests* talks mainly about non-fiction titles.

[Dewey Divas and the Dudes](http://deweydivas.blogspot.com) (<http://deweydivas.blogspot.com>)

The Dewey Divas and Dudes are book publishers' representatives who comment on books and movies.

[Pop Goes Fiction](http://popgoesfiction.blogspot.com) (<http://popgoesfiction.blogspot.com>)

A former librarian reviews fiction titles and divides her lists into genre categories.

5 - Readers' advisory committees

Why create a readers' advisory committee?

Having a group of staff who focus on readers' advisory keeps this aspect of library service a vital part of your staff's responsibilities. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that readers' advisory is naturally one of the things that staff do when serving the public, and therefore this service does not need any special attention. The RA committee can ensure that readers' advisory skills are developed and maintained by overseeing the inclusion of training and encouraging current awareness as a part of staff development. The committee might also, along with other groups in your library, coordinate programs and community outreach related to promoting reading.

Who should be on the readers' advisory committee?

It is always great to be able to build on people's passions, so having people involved on the readers' advisory committee who are committed to this aspect of library service is important. The size and composition of your committee will depend on your organization, but consider the following when determining membership:

- **What are the goals of this committee?** For example, if the committee is going to oversee programming and the library has staff that do that on a larger scale, then there should be either a representative or liaison from that group to the committee.
- **Who does readers' advisory in our library?** If your staff model involves staff at different levels doing some aspect of readers' advisory—whether creating displays of material or active interaction with the public—make sure representatives from these levels are included on the RA committee.

What does the readers' advisory committee do?

- Plan – it creates a yearly plan of readers' advisory activities for staff and for activities relating to public service that are consistent with the library's mission and strategic plan.
- Coordinates service delivery – it develops key readers' advisory initiatives, communicates these to all levels of the organization, and oversees their roll out and evaluation.
- Programming
- Tool development
- Staff training and development
- Monitoring and quality control
- Communications and marketing
- Coordination and liaison with other library committees or groups

Toolkit for developing a readers' advisory committee

Terms of reference – Define the committee and what it will do:

READERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

NAME OF COMMITTEE:	<u>READERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE</u>
PURPOSE:	<i>What is the purpose of your committee and its major areas of focus?</i>
MANDATE:	Within its stated purpose, the committee will be responsible for:
<u>Planning:</u>	<i>What type of planning will the committee do? E.g. create an annual work plan of activities, make recommendations about how readers' advisory services will be developed or enhanced. What will the committee take into consideration when planning? E.g. Mission statement, strategic plan, resources, etc.</i>
<u>Service delivery:</u>	<i>How will the committee make sure that the readers' advisory services are delivered? What direct activities might the committee take on? E.g. the creation of reading maps, etc.</i>
<u>Programming & user education:</u>	<i>If the committee is going to be responsible for coordinating or leading the development, implementation and/or evaluation of programs for the public, related to readers' advisory: include a statement here.</i>
<u>Staff training & development:</u>	<i>Outline the committees' responsibilities in terms of staff training and development. E.g. will it be responsible for creating training workshops, seeking out external training opportunities such as Education Institute sessions, RA in a Day, conferences, etc.</i>
<u>Monitoring & quality control:</u>	<i>The committee will be responsible for monitoring its work plan, ensuring that tasks are completed, as well as evaluating its activity, and other readers' advisory activity, in the library system. It might also provide mentorship and leadership for activities at individual library branches.</i>
<u>Communications & marketing:</u>	<i>How will the committee communicate about its activities, both internally and externally? E.g. current awareness for staff, readers' advisory initiatives in the library, etc. If working in a medium to large-sized system, you may want to have key contacts for readers' advisory activities in each branch. These individuals would not be on the Readers' Advisory Committee but would be champions of this work in their locations. Will the committee identify strategies and initiatives to communicate with the public?</i>

STRUCTURE:	
<u>Composition:</u>	<i>Who will the members of the committee be? You may choose to identify their roles, rather than assign specific names, for the purposes of the terms of reference.</i>
<u>Meetings:</u>	<i>How often will the committee meet?</i>
<u>Minutes:</u>	<i>Who will be responsible for taking minutes? To whom will the minutes of committee meetings be distributed?</i>
<u>Accountability & reporting:</u>	<i>Depending on the size of your organization, you might want to include a statement about whom this committee reports to. Whose approval is required for RA activities?</i>
<u>Representation on other committees/groups :</u>	<i>In what other library committees or groups would a member of the readers' advisory committee also participate?</i>

6 - Show and tell/Staff book clubs

Why have show and tell?

Staff who are dedicated to serving fiction readers usually find some way of sharing information about books they have read, heard about, or are popular with customers. “Show and tell” allows staff to see and hear about a variety of good reads without having to read or review the books themselves.

Why have a staff book club?

Book clubs have become a popular means for sharing information and insight about books. Most people are familiar and comfortable with the format, and it allows staff to speak at greater length about books they have read and the customers to whom they might recommend them.

Who should participate?

All staff should be encouraged to read and share information about books they have read. In a fiction department, it is critical that all staff who serve the public, and may be involved in readers’ advisory, be encouraged to participate.

How does show and tell work?

Staff bring books, articles, or trends to share with their co-workers on a random or assigned basis. Discussion of books can be brief, identifying the title, author and appeal factors for readers. Reviews or other media articles can be discussed to make staff aware of books or authors who are in the media. Often, demand for books is driven by television, film or the Internet. Therefore, discussion of these can reveal significant information about readers’ preferences. In addition, significant events or social developments can impact readers and writers. For example, “Chick Lit” grew out of the publishing of books such as “Sex in the City” and “Bridget Jones’ Diary,” as well as a growing social trend of independent, single women. All of the above provide context for literature and readers’ enjoyment of books.

How does a staff book club work?

This is a more formalized process of sharing information about specific titles. If available, staff could read the same book and discuss the appeal factors of the book. This might be a useful exercise if the manager or senior staff want to train staff how to read fiction so they can better determine how to advise readers. Alternatively, staff can read more widely and share information about individual titles that each one of them reads. The books could be selected randomly or from a specific genre or writing style, e.g. fantasy fiction or epistolary novels. It is helpful for one staff member to be assigned to speak about the genre, and

include its description, history, general appeal factors and popular authors. This way, staff can become more familiar with a genre in which they may not be widely read. Staff can choose books in that genre, read them, and discuss them at the book club. Time must be devoted to this practice; a schedule is helpful to ensure staff are prepared to present the novel they have read.

What aspects of the book should staff focus on in the book club?

Staff can focus too much on the plot when describing their novel, so it is helpful to develop a few questions that encourage people to think more deeply about the book, the appeal factors, and why other readers' might be interested. Staff should avoid "spoilers" that reveal key plot details which would make reading the particular title less enjoyable for others.

Sample starters/statements:

I chose this book because. . .

This book is about . . . (10 words or less ONLY)

My favourite part of the book was. . .

The most interesting character was. . .

I almost stopped reading this book because. . .

The best sentence in the book is. . .

I would recommend this book to. . .

7 - Genre studies

What is a genre study?

A genre study is an examination of a fiction or non-fiction genre, which could include history, historical fiction, romance, Chick Lit, etc. It is a formal process in which members read and create read-alike lists and present these to the group.

Why would one want to do a genre study?

A genre study is a useful method of engaging staff in learning what is out there in the multitude of genres. This exercise will also help them learn about their collections and different authors, and broaden their reading horizons.

How does one run a genre study?

- Pick a genre or sub-genre, alternating between lesser known and popular genres--for example: horror; Chick Lit or romance; fantasy; mysteries; science fiction; historical; literary.
- Each member picks two books from the genre and informs everyone in the group what their choices are so there is no duplication.
- While reading/perusing the books, note appeal factors, styles, etc.

What are some sources that members of the group can use to learn about appeal factors and other things mentioned above?

Book Lust, More Book Lust, Now Read This and Now Read This II by Nancy Pearl

Genreflecting Series by various authors and covering various subjects

Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction by Joyce Saricks

Members create read-alike lists of 8-12 titles for their two chosen titles using library resources and databases. All items on the list must be in the collection. These lists can be submitted in electronic format, with book jackets and links to the catalogue record. This will allow for easy creation of online lists for a website.

Where can you find information about read-alikes?

There are many websites and book sources out there to help with this. Also there are databases such as *Books and Authors* and *Novelist* that help link readers with the books they would enjoy.

Are there online resources as well?

Some suggested websites:

[Library Booklists](http://www.librarybooklists.org) (<http://www.librarybooklists.org>)

This site has a huge collection of reading lists from other libraries. Lists include Nautical fiction, If You Like..., Gentle Reads, and the Arts in Fiction. As the site says, it includes original booklists, annotated lists of other booklists, and a calendar of author birthdates.

[Readers' Advice](http://www.readersadvice.com) (<http://www.readersadvice.com>)

This site has lists of authors with read-alike lists. Series and genre lists are also included. There are also RA tips and links to other resources.

[Webrary](http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html) (<http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html>)

From Morton Grove Public Library, this site has eclectic and very specialized lists—e.g. Fiction with Recipes, Natural Disaster Fiction. It has booklists by genre, character, setting, subject, author, and audience.

[Who Writes Like?](http://www.erl.vic.gov.au/readers/who.htm) (<http://www.erl.vic.gov.au/readers/who.htm>)

This Australian Library site provides extensive lists of read-alikes for popular authors.

For further suggestions: please review the RA websites, including the library sites toolkit.

What does a genre study meeting look like?

1. At the meeting discuss the genre:
 - a. What defines the genre?
 - b. What are recurring themes?
 - c. Who writes in this genre?
 - d. What is the appeal of the genre?
 - e. What are the sub-genres?
2. Each person presents his/her titles:
 - a. Discuss the appeal factors
 - b. Elaborate likes/dislikes and why
 - c. Suggest who might enjoy the books and why
 - d. Based on the appeal factors, themes, and subject matter: suggest the read-alikes

Depending on time factors and schedules, these meetings can take place monthly, bi-monthly, or whenever works best for the organization. With new books out each season and new genres created all the time, this can be an ongoing agenda item of meetings and trainings forever.

8 - Staff wikis for readers' advisory

What can you put on a staff wiki for readers' advisory?

A staff readers' advisory wiki is a good place to put all your library's book lists, research guides, links to RA websites, and staff book suggestions. Staff share their expertise, and have "one-stop-shopping" for RA resources that might otherwise be hard to find, or inaccessible.

Why a wiki?

Wikis are subject searchable, and keywords can be tailored to your library's RA needs. They are easy to design and use. Wiki hosting sites such as PB Works (<http://www.pbworks.com>) offer a free service, with step-by-step instructions and online help.

9 - Library displays

Why have library displays?

Library displays are an integral part of readers' advisory service. Library users are often overwhelmed trying to choose from the huge selection of books filling the shelves. Libraries that feature books in *displays* help direct users to the books they really want. Library displays work on many levels, and serve various purposes. Traditionally, displays have been viewed as a means to draw a customer's attention to new books, special collections, and under-circulated titles. However, it is much less common for displays to be used as a professional training opportunity.

You can make the most of your library and its collection by promoting your readers' advisory service and fiction collection in a variety of ways that are inviting to your customers and educational for your staff. The purpose of your display should be two-fold: to inform (your customers) and to educate (your staff).

Who should create library displays?

Display responsibilities are often assigned by default to staff members who show an interest in or a flair for doing the work. However, creating displays can be a very practical and worthwhile activity for all library staff. It is a great strategy for enabling your staff to learn about the collection. While the activity of putting a display together is quite common, recognition of its potential significance as an education function for library staff is lacking.

How do you get started?

In the beginning, staff who are creating a fiction display tend to feature the same great titles again and again. Add variety by having staff create a thematic display. A thematic display allows library staff to branch out from the usual topics and highlight different aspects of the adult fiction collection. For example, rather than having a display focus simply on romance, try paranormal romance. Instead of a mystery display, try pulling books that focus on knitting mysteries, or mysteries that feature animals. This will encourage your staff to dig a little deeper and spend more time familiarizing themselves with your fiction collection. Deciding on topics and creating thematic displays is not only a great training opportunity, it also allows your staff to see just how popular (or unpopular) various themes in your area are. Staff should also keep in mind that the books they select for display should be worth recommending. Therefore, they may need to do some research on their topic in order to find books that have won awards, made bestsellers lists, or have at least two positive reviews written about them.

What are the results?

Not only are displays a great training tool for your staff, they also provide a quantifiable measure of the success of your adult fiction collection. Libraries should keep track of how many displays are created or changed each month, and also how many books are added to the displays. If you discover that your display topics are generating questions from your customers, you may want to record these questions separately as they may yield useful statistics and contribute to ideas for more displays.

10 - Publishers' days and writers' associations

What are publishers' days?

Publishers' days give public service staff, teachers and teacher librarians an opportunity to view new titles and/or listen to presentations from a variety of publishers. Publishers' sales representatives are invited to display new and recommended titles, seasonal catalogues, order forms and subject lists. Publishers' sales representatives can also be invited to deliver book talks for key titles. A "display only" table is also an option when a sales representative cannot be present.

Who organizes a publishers' day?

A publishers' day can be the responsibility of Collection Development, a training opportunity organized by Human Resources, or a task for the library or school wholesaler. Collection Development or HR staff contact individual publishers or sales representatives and outline their expectations with respect to: hours of display, intellectual level, lists, quantity, and theme. Staff could also contact their library wholesaler and make publishers' day a part of that contract. The wholesaler would then assume responsibility for inviting sales representatives, coordinating snacks and lunch, and arranging prizes. Some library wholesalers hold regular display days and invite staff from their client group to attend.

The Dewey Divas also attend publishers' days. Library staff can approach the library membership and invite Dewey Divas sales representatives to a publishers' day.

Where does a publishers' day take place?

Publishers' days are often a part of a public library's Staff Day or part of a school board's In-service Training. Materials can be displayed in a board room, class room, meeting room or hallway. Materials can be sent in advance or arrive with the sales representatives or wholesaler. Book talk presentations can be held as a session or a lunch-hour activity. A library wholesaler publishers' day is usually held in a hotel ballroom.

How much time does a publishers' day take?

As much time as you have! An unmanned display could be available for staff to view over the space of a few days. If staff can only attend when they are off-desk, then an all-day display would be available for viewing by staff on all shifts. Book talks can easily be scheduled into a morning or an afternoon.

Publishing houses with sales representatives dedicated to schools and libraries:
McLelland & Stewart <http://www.mcclelland.com/>
Random House Canada <http://www.randomhouse.ca/>
Harper Collins Canada <http://www.harpercollins.ca/>
HB Fenn Ltd. <http://www.hbfenn.com/>

Dewey Divas:

For contact information, lists and information on new releases:
<http://deweydivas.blogspot.com/>

Canadian library wholesalers:

Association of Canadian Book Wholesalers <http://www.acbw.ca/>
Educational Library Booksellers of Ontario <http://elbo.ca/members>

Writers' associations

What do writers' associations do?

There are many associations, groups and guilds representing writers in Canada. These groups examine issues such as copyright, digitization, Canadian content, and health care for their membership. Some groups present Awards to recognize new and established Canadian authors.

Canadian Authors' Association <http://www.canauthors.org/>
Professional Writers' Association of Canada <http://www.pwac.ca/>
Writers' Union of Canada <http://www.writersunion.ca/index.asp>
Writers' Guild of Canada <http://www.wgc.ca/>
Writers' Trust of Canada <http://www.writerstrust.com/>

How would I use a writers' association at my library or school?

These groups provide information staff with the latest updates about new and emerging authors, speakers, grants and awards. Any library with a Writer in Residence Program or an in-house publishing initiative would find these associations useful.

Appendix A: Readers' advisory print tools

This list provides a description of current print tools for adult (and some teen) readers' advisory as well as collection recommendations. Bullet points provide excerpts of published reviews. For additional print resources, we highly recommend consulting the following annotated list:

Wyatt, Neal (ed.). "A Selection of Core Resources for Readers' Advisory Service." RUSQ. 3 Oct. 2010 Web. 15 March 2011

<http://www.rusq.org/2010/10/03/a-selection-of-core-resources-for-readers-advisory-service/>

1. Burgin, Robert, ed. ***Nonfiction Readers' Advisory***. Libraries Unlimited, 2004. \$45.74
Discussing topics such as "Defining readers' advisory," "What is the appeal of books," and "Why non-fiction?," *Nonfiction Readers' Advisory* seems less suitable as a readers' advisory tool and more helpful as a tool for staff development. It does suggest a list of selected web sites to assist in performing non-fiction readers' advisory services. An academic "teaching" tool for librarians, this guide is best suited for use in learning about performing readers' advisory service, not for actually directly providing it. For professional development only.
 - *Booklist*: "[An] accessible collection of essays on the challenges of readers' advisory librarians who strive to meet the non-fiction reading needs of patrons....15 information professionals from a variety of library settings...explore some of the intricacies of readers' advisory for non-fiction....With many helpful tips for starting non-fiction advisory services by some of the most notable experts in the field."
 - *Library Journal*: starred review: "...one wishes this reference included more specific title suggestions for readers' advisory use and a concrete plan to help libraries make the mental and physical shift to a non-fiction-inclusive readers' advisory service...Highly recommended."
2. Cords, Sarah Statz. ***The Real Story: A Guide to Nonfiction Reading Interests***. Libraries Unlimited, 2006. \$62.98
After defining non-fiction as a genre and discussing its unique characteristics and appeals, Cords describes more than 500 popular non-fiction titles and organizes them according to genre: true adventure, true crime, travel narratives, investigative writing, environmental writing, science and math, history, biography, memoirs and autobiography, relationships, and making sense of ourselves and each other. Each chapter includes a general definition of the genre, its appeal and organization, as well as lists of subgenres and popular themes. This is followed by sections including "Consider Starting With...", "Read-alikes" (including both fiction and non-fiction titles), "Further Readings" and "References Lists." The focus is on the best titles published within the last decade, with key classics and benchmark titles also cited. Appendices include non-fiction book awards, Internet resources, and overviews of political pundits and spirituality writers.

This is similar to a non-fiction version of *Genreflecting* and is perhaps the only guide of its kind. Each larger non-fiction area is broken into many detailed smaller genres, which helps to focus on the reader's area(s) of interest. The lists of read-alikes and 'Consider Starting With...' suggestions should be very helpful in making recommendations. Because of its uniqueness, recommended for all libraries.

- *Reference and User Services Quarterly*: "Reading *The Real Story* is an enjoyable learning experience. Knowing the appeal of non-fiction genres, subjects, and styles will help reference librarians immensely and will help their readers discover how exciting well-written non-fiction can be."
- *Library Journal*: "Cords's tone is friendly and engaging, offering exactly the kind of help you would hope for from a colleague. Her excellent introduction to non-fiction reader interests will be valued for answering reader queries as well as professional development. Recommended for all public libraries."

3. Herald, Diana Tixier. ***Genreflecting: A Guide to Popular Reading Interests***, 6th ed. Libraries Unlimited, 2006. \$45.00

The purpose of *Genreflecting* is to provide a structured overview of genre fiction. The Introduction discusses topics such as "The Nature of Genre Fiction," "Who Is the Common Reader?", and "Readers' Advisory Service." Each chapter treats a specific genre (Westerns, crime, adventure, romance, science fiction, fantasy, horror, Christian fiction and emerging genres) and is divided into two categories. The first category, "Themes and Types," includes an overview of the genre as well as lists of authors and titles under various subgenre headings. The second part of each chapter, titled "Topics," is a collection of secondary material that provides information on resources for more in-depth information on the specific character of the genre. These include anthologies, bibliographies, history and criticism, encyclopaedias, associations, awards and online resources. More than 5000 titles are classified and a wide range of authors, titles and annotations (selected to illustrate the subgenres) are presented throughout. A range of classic and contemporary titles are offered, with an emphasis on material that is widely available. In general the criteria for inclusion of an author are prolific output and availability. However classic authors who are not prolific but have made a tremendous impact on the genre, or those who are new and show great promise, are included as appropriate. Each chapter ends with a list of recommendations. The accessible style of this easy-to-use volume makes it both a quick reference tool and a resource that a customer could easily browse. Especially helpful for making reading recommendations are the subgenre breakdowns in each chapter, the author's top picks for each genre, and the lists of "bests" and awards. Suggested for all libraries, especially neighbourhood branches that may not have a range of tools. Indexes: author/title, subject and character.

- *Recommended Reference Books*: “All in all, there is no comparable guide to genre fiction.”
 - *Booklist*: “Highly recommended where information on genre fiction is sought.”
4. Husband, Janet G. and Jonathan F. Husband. ***Sequels: An Annotated Guide to Novels in Series***, 4th ed. American Library Association, 2009. Arranged by author, the entries describe each series in a few paragraphs and list titles in reading order, almost always with a brief plot summary. The entries speak to the appeal of each series and provide information for sharing with readers. An online subscription version (<http://esequels.com>) keeps series information up-to-date. Coverage is for novels only, across genres. This title was included in an article on core resources for readers’ advisory in the Fall 2010 issue of *Reference & User Services*
- *Quarterly.Midwest Book Review*: “An effective and easy-to-use librarian’s resource.” *Booklist*: “Libraries that have added databases such as NovelList or The Reader’s Advisor Online—or, for that matter, the electronic version, eSequels—already have sequel information and book descriptions and will have to decide if they also need a print resource.”
5. Huse, Roy and Jeanne Huse. ***Who Else Writes Like...? A Reader's Guide to Fiction Authors***, 6th ed. Library and Information Statistics Unit, 2009. \$41.15
- Who Else Writes Like...?* is a reading promotion tool designed to help fiction readers expand the number of writers they read. It lists 1,970 authors and suggests three to 12 alternatives for each author. The alternative authors listed for each entry are cross-referenced. The links made between authors are based on recommendations from practicing librarians in the UK. The focus is on popular material. The main author entries may include: author dates, nationality, pseudonyms, genre(s), names of main characters, series and/or environments that regularly feature in the author’s work, literary prizes won, and relevant websites. Features include: an index of genres and subgenres, an index to characters and series in fiction, lists of prize-winning authors and titles since 1990, and a list of other recommended fiction guides and websites for further reading. This guide is nicely organized and easy to use. It is great for making quick suggestions to readers who are interested in finding new authors whose work is similar to writers they enjoy. A very simple treatment, recommended as a source for people in a hurry.
- *Australian Library Journal*: “It is one of those books that provide what you need to know in a format that is not daunting or overbearing but simple, concise, and easy to read and use. It is obvious that it was put together by experienced librarians....This is a wonderful guide—very useful and well-priced.”

6. Maatta, Stephanie L. ***A Few Good Books: Using Contemporary Readers' Advisory Strategies to Connect Readers with Books***. Neal-Schuman, 2009. \$69.95 (p.b.)

This book should help build a solid foundation in the theory and practice of readers' advisory, as well as suggest ways that new Library 2.0 technologies—including tags, clouds, e-books, virtual RA, and other digital formats—can enhance programs. It includes a section on RA for readers with disabilities, patrons who are non-native speakers of English, and adult new readers. There are strategies and tools for working directly with readers and for keeping current about books and authors, along with detailed coverage across a variety of book genres including: popular fiction, literary fiction, adventure, suspense, thriller, mystery, science fiction, and more. Each genre is accompanied by a sample book list. Maatta also includes real-life examples of successful RA transactions, sample scripts, and extensive appendices with important print and electronic resources. This is a suggested purchase for all libraries, because of its timeliness, emphasis on Library 2.0 technologies, and related resources not covered by other publications.

- *Library Journal*: "This comprehensive and up-to-date guide is a treasure trove of practical advice and resources....Highly recommended for all library schools and library staff."

7. Moyer, Jessica. ***Integrated Advisory Service: Breaking Through the Book Boundary to Better Serve Library Users***. Libraries Unlimited, 2010. \$58.00

Moyer's book is designed to assist librarians in making connections between all the different media in library collections. It considers the entire library collection through the lens of genres, and gives librarians the big picture so they can apply genres to their entire collection, including magazines and games, graphic novels, manga and other alternative media. It introduces library staff to new and/or poorly understood genres such as popular science, or SF in non-book media. It includes contributions from well-known authors such as Kaite Stover, Jessica Zellers, Heather Booth, and Nicole Suarez. Each of the book's chapters is organized around a genre (such as SF, women's stories and others), with sections on integrated advisory, characters, plots, themes, and making connections across genres. Each chapter also provides a variety of lists that will help both staff and customers find materials based on genre interests. It includes a chapter on street lit/urban lit, and a teen chapter that will help adult readers understand teen titles and assist teen library customers to find what they want. It offers a complete chapter on popular science, a special section on romance for men, and historical non-fiction titles – all of which will be of special interest to male readers. Recommended for professional development, and, because it is geared to customers as well as library staff, for possible purchase for all libraries.

8. Moyer, Jessica E. and Kaite Mediatore Stover. **Readers' Advisory Handbook**. American Library Association, 2010. \$56.59
This compilation presents the full range of “skills, techniques and practices” that now make up readers’ advisory service. It is divided into five parts: “Getting to Know Your Materials,” “Reviewing and Evaluating Materials,” “Marketing, Promoting, and Sharing Materials,” “Programming,” and “Expanding Readers’ Advisory Services.” Chapters authored by a number of familiar names (including Heather Booth and David Wright) complement chapters by editors Moyer and Stover. Several of the chapters contain samples and worksheets. Material covered includes: how to advise customers about all kinds of media, from fiction and non-fiction to audio books, graphic novels and reference materials; how to provide services to senior citizens, teens, and the incarcerated; how to handle author visits and book groups; and how to enhance storytelling, including adult storytelling. Timely advice on adult storytelling and other “new” aspects of reader’s advisory make this a suitable purchase for all libraries, primarily for professional development.
- *Booklist*: “A valuable addition to the growing readers’ advisory shelf.”

9. Rogers, Jane, ed. **Good Fiction Guide**. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press, 2005. \$22.95
Dubbed a snapshot of English literature at the beginning of the twenty-first century, this guide is intended for the general reader, and aims to offer information about, and enthusiasm for, more than 1100 authors and more than 4200 titles. Contributions include 34 short essays introducing different genres. Each essay is written by a different person who has a special interest in that genre and concludes with the writer’s top 12 recommendations. The bulk of the guide is a list of more than 1100 alphabetically arranged, paragraph-length author entries covering more than 4200 books. The aim of each entry is to give a flavour of the writer’s work, including recommendations about which of their books to read and suggestions about similar authors. The guide covers a wide range of fiction for both adults and teens, such as classic and contemporary, literary and popular, and international works translated into English. Selection is based on reader enjoyment, and authors are included only if their books are well-known, strong sellers, in print, recommended by the contributors, or seminal to the development of a genre. This is an excellent source for recommending good things to read. The breezy writing style gives it popular appeal. The “read on” feature is especially useful for recommending similar titles, depending on the aspect that particularly appeals. Recommended for larger libraries to consider as an extra resource. Includes title/author indexes.
- *Library Journal*: “...a livelier, more engaging source than standard companions. Highly recommended for literature collections.”

10. Saricks, Joyce. ***Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction***. 2nd rev. ed. American Library Association, 2009. \$69.36
Part instruction manual for doing readers' advisory and part readers' advisory tool, this book was envisioned as a guide for exploring fiction genres as well as for helping those who are at a loss assisting readers to seek out titles. The guide discusses the specific appeal of 15 different popular fiction genres, outlines the benchmark titles for each, and suggests how to talk to people about the books they love. It includes genres not often found in other readers' advisory tools, such as literary fiction, women's lives and relationships, and six subcategories of suspense. While the guide is not a comprehensive study of any genre, each chapter divides a genre into subgenres, notes particular characteristics and appeal, and identifies authors and titles that typify each. For readers' advisors there are appended, annotated suggestions for print and non-print resources. An additional appendix encourages readers to explore various genres by reading five representative titles each year. The guide also provides practical suggestions about preparing to work with readers, advice on how to conduct a readers' advisory interview, and reference sources for each genre. An academic "teaching" tool for librarians, this guide is best suited for use in learning about performing readers' advisory service, not for actually directly providing it. For professional development only. General index.
- *Library Journal*: "(An) excellent self-study reader's advisory guide...Highly recommended for all public libraries."
11. Smith, Sharron and Maureen O'Connor. ***Canadian Fiction: A Guide to Reading Interests***. Libraries Unlimited, 2005. \$68.70
The goal of *Canadian Fiction* is to give readers a sense of the qualities of Canadian literature, as well as an understanding of the sometimes subtle differences between the literature of Canada and other countries. The guide also attempts to define the nuances of Canadian literature in order to promote its identity and cultivate its readership. "Canadian" is broadly defined and includes authors whose work could be eligible for a Canadian literary award. It covers material published between 1990 and 2004, including more than 500 of the "best" contemporary Canadian fiction titles available today, with some French work in translation but not short fiction, except as possible read-alikes. The chapters cover different genres. Main entries are briefly annotated, describing the works and articulating their themes. Entries include: assigned subject headings, awards, suitability for book groups, and suggested further reading (not just Canadian authors and including some non-fiction). References are listed and appendices include: resources and websites, lists of literary awards and winners, and Canadian publishing information. The focus on Canadian fiction makes this a unique resource for Canadian libraries despite its limited coverage (1990 – 2004). Indexes: author/title and subject. *Library Journal*: "This is a great readers'

advisory tool. Highly recommended for libraries where there's an interest in Canadian fiction.

- *Booklist*: “This is a must for those libraries where Canadian authors or settings are popular. Every Canadian public library will wish to have this at hand for the reader's advisory desk. Highly recommended!”

12. Wyatt, Neal. ***The Readers' Advisory Guide to Nonfiction***. American Libraries Association, 2007. (p.b. 2009) \$56.55

Wyatt focuses on eight popular categories: history, true crime, true adventure, science, memoir, food/cooking, travel, and sports. Within each, she explains the scope, popularity, style, major authors and works, and the subject's position in readers' advisory interviews. This book is a good companion to Cords' *The Real Story*. It has fewer titles, but emphasizes the professional aspect. Wyatt discusses concepts relating to non-fiction readers' advisory and contrasts these with fiction RA. She notes core authors, their most important books, and how to market the collection.

- *Library Journal*: “Wyatt makes excellent use of examples to explain her points, and the appendixes on building non-fiction subject guides, a non-fiction reading plan for librarians, and a sample annotation form leave librarians with plenty of guidance for starting to implement her suggestions. Recommended for public libraries.”
- *Booklist*: “This book, especially strong in its coverage of methods, combines well with *The Real Story: A Guide to Nonfiction Reading Interests*, by Sarah Statz Cords (Libraries Unlimited, 2006), which focuses on annotations of and read-alikes for individual titles. Both are highly recommended to librarians who serve narrative non-fiction readers.”