

Share Your Ideas

Saskatchewan School Library Association

THE MEDIUM – FALL 2011

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Tried, Tested, and True

In the spring and in the fall of 2011, the editors of *The Medium* sent out a Google form and a poster asking the SSLA membership to share their tried, tested, and true ideas they have used to create inviting and engaging learning environments for their students in and outside of the learning resource centre. Teacher-librarians from around Saskatchewan and throughout Canada shared their ideas.

Laurel Reimche from Estevan in Cornerstone School Division shares an idea about school library promotion:

"I use an old laptop hooked up to a television to run a continuous PowerPoint show about the learning resource centre. The TV is situated in the school library's front windows, facing out into the hallway, where students walking down the hallway toward the library can see it. I change the information every month, using it to advertise coming events and new magazines and books, and to tout library services like e-library.

Evonne Garnett from Saskatchewan Rivers School Division reserves a portion of her school library budget to:

"Take our most avid readers and library users to Saskatoon to shop for fiction at McNally Robinsons. We give the school coordinator at McNally's advanced warning that we are coming and fax in advance any paperwork that is needed to smooth out the purchasing process. We print off our inventory and bring it along in a binder. Students are instructed about book selection guidelines (gaps to fill or gluts to avoid in the collection, etc.) and are then cut loose to find the books they want to read in the store. They are given a budget of \$X each and check their selections against the inventory binder before bringing them to one of the chaperones (usually the library technician and an English teacher) for approval. They work through the process of the purchase order and come home with a substantial pile of books to be processed. We do this towards the end of the year so that the books can be fresh on the shelves for the fall. We dine at a restaurant, Jerry's Burger Emporium or Fuddruckers are favourites, and arrive home in good time. This is one activity that is always a huge success!

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Jacqueline Helman, the teacher-librarian at Centennial Collegiate High School in Saskatoon shares a multitude of different ways that she creates a culture of learning in the school library.

Gr. 9 Inquiry/Saskatoon Murder Mystery WDM



Pharoah" Inquiry Simulation Game



Graphic Novel Club



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“Coffee House” in the library



Guitar Coffee House



Celebrate Multiculturalism (Chinese Calligraphy)



Celebrate Multiculturalism



Artifact Search: Gr. 9 History



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Tracy Aulie from South Shore and Sedley in Prairie Valley School Division

explains how students have a personalized browsing experience at her school library:

“This is not my own idea, but we tried it this year and teachers and students seem to love it! Each child receives a paint stir stick. On the end, I tape their patron info barcode (name included). Some classrooms decorated their stir sticks. When classes come into sign out books, they have a shelf marker at their fingertips when they are looking for books and then their bar code is handy when they want to sign out their book.”

Alan Smith and Sharon Bede the teacher-librarians at Kelowna Secondary School,

have made an overt effort to develop an environment that not just is functional as a commons but also to provide spaces for readers. Alan describes their space as follows:

Our 'reading lounge' in the immediate centre of the school library facility is reserved for readers. We place new arrivals (fiction and non-fiction) on shelves bordering the seating area and adjacent to the periodicals. It is an evolving space, but includes leather club chairs, sled chairs, coffee tables, and a love seat. We also have some private seating in the back of our stacks for studying or quiet chess matches. The traditional table seating is for learning tasks and classroom instruction as needed. We have added a barstool computing area around our broadcast television and OPAC, which is a more social collaborative computing space for short term tasks. We have recently added some tables and chairs among the island in one of our computing labs and try to encourage this space for seniors to drop-in as much as possible. We built a student art gallery, display niches, and many green plants to keep the area as welcoming as possible.

Although we have many classes booked in the school library for collaborative and some teacher projects, we equally try to address the numerous students who need a commons for spares and class breaks. The pressure on resources and the space from overcrowded classes, expanded timetabled coursework, distance learning, and technology services has become a challenge for a school library that does not have considerable square footage.

To see pictures, please visit the Kelowna Secondary School's Flickr pages.

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/okflyfisher/sets/72157626629721673/>
- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/okflyfisher/sets/72157625871889468/>