reading is our business

READING IS OUR BUSINESS: HOW LIBRARIES CAN FOSTER **READING** COMPREHENSION

Sharon Grimes

A better title for this book would be something like How Teacher-Librarians Can Become Reading Teachers. Grimes, a teacher of the year in Baltimore County, MD, writes a clear explanation of how to teach reading comprehension through literature in the elementary school grades. She goes beyond the direct instruction of the classroom, where phonemic awareness and decoding are the primary emphasis, to helping children think about and find meaning and understanding in what they are reading. She does this as children come for library time to her elementary school library. Grimes argues that "Krashenizing" a school is not enough; that is, the emphasis on the access to and the enjoyment of reading does not cut it, particularly in schools where many students come from language-impoverished homes. And when the reading teachers of the school are not teaching good

comprehension strategies, the teacher-librarian can step up to the plate and teach this skill. Grimes knows how, and she teaches readers how in clearly written chapters laced with her own experience. Grimes also understands her impact on learners, and she has been recognized by her peers as an exemplary teacher of reading.

Two popular philosophies of the teacher-librarian's role come to mind as this book unfolds. The first is Doug Johnson's theory (www.doug-johnson .com) that teacher-librarians can, during library periods (fixed schedules), carry out an effective curriculum in the school library that correlates with the overall school curriculum. The second role asks teacher-librarians to integrate their own agenda as they collaborate on joint learning experiences with teachers. This is an issue that is not going to go away in the field, and it is one that is not being addressed in a serious way, but it is crucial to the holding of school library positions. I wonder what would happen if Grimes demonstrated her technique as a part of the insect unit that she collaboratively teaches with a classroom teacher? If we combined her strategies into a school where the focus of learning experiences was based on Wiggins and McTighe's Understanding by Design (exp. 2nd ed., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005), what would be the impact on teaching and learning? Library schools do not teach students to be teachers of reading in their children's material or young adult materials classes. Grimes asks them to reconsider so that teacher-librarians become reading teachers. This book brings a major issue to the forefront that requires all of us to reexamine our role and to do focused research that leads to a united front or perhaps to the adoption of the banquet philosophy of school library programs (where there are many choices of entrée). (American Library Association, 2006. 184 pp. \$35.00 0-8389-0912-4.)

Bottom line: Read and talk about this book.

READING MATTERS: WHAT THE RESEARCH REVEALS ABOUT READING, LIBRARIES, AND COMMUNITY

Catherine Sheldrick Ross, Lynne McKechnie, and Paulette M. Rothbauer In the Krashen tradition of supporting the value of free voluntary reading, these three authors review the research for children, teens, and adults. The

authors conducted their own research, in addition to reviewing selected, important studies. I found their descriptions of the reading research to be quite informative as they trace the voluminous research and reports across the field and across time. They have a different reporting style than in Stephen Krashen's The Power of Reading: Insights From the Research (2nd ed., Libraries Unlimited, 2004) that may appeal to a different reader. Place this book alongside Krashen's on your shelf, and consult it when you are preparing presentations about the value of teacherlibrarians and their impact on literacy. (Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 288 pp. \$32.00. 1-59158-066-8.)

Bottom line: Essential.

INTEGRATING DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION AND UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN: CONNECTING CONTENT AND KIDS

Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe Promise me that before you finish reading this review, you will order this book or find it in your professional library-and read it! It is difficult but not impossible for teacherlibrarians to find a comfortable role in the current skill-drill-kill mentality and to teach to the test curriculum. So few teachers seem to have time for library research, because their time is devoted to direct instruction, but I anticipate that this trend in education will pass and that a new emphasis will take its place. The Wiggins and McTighe model of understanding by design (UBD) (Understanding by Design. exp. 2nd ed., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005) may be that replacement. And the wonderful thing is that teacher-librarians can and do find this model an extremely comfortable fit.

UBD is an instructional development model that asks teachers to begin with the design of clear statements of what students are to learn (state standards), followed by the design of an assessment (how the teacher will know when the learner has achieved the standard), followed by the design of a learning activity that pushes each student to the height of his or her potential. In this book, Tomlinson and McTighe marry the principles of UBD with

the ideas of differentiated instruction (DI)that is, serving each individual learner regardless of ethnic background, reading ability, learning style, physical or mental disability, or personal situation. When teacher-librarians discover this marriage, they suddenly believe that the foundation of success for UBD and DI lies in a rich information-and-technology environment, coupled with the collaborative addition of a learning leader (the teacher-librarian). One is tempted to shout as the text is read: "Yes! TLs can help! TLs are natural partners! TLs have the tools, the rich information banks, the strategies, and the talent to make UBD and DI work!"

There are three important elements involved in the reading of this book. The first element is that the reader must thoroughly understand the models proposed, in the language in which they are presented. In other words, the teacher-librarian must be able to speak the words of UBD and DI to communicate with these disciples. The second element is to understand how one's own methods of boosting reading, information literacy, quality information, and technology tools can make these models work. The third element is that one should model the use of UBD and DI when instructing students in the information literacy process so that, in the end, we are marrying our model with theirs.

This is an important book to feature in professional learning communities at the school building level. In fact, if the principal has not already started a study group, then the teacher-librarian should. In any case, the teacher-librarian should not only be involved but should also be in a leadership role with the teachers, with the technical director, and with other education specialists in the school. Even if UBD and DI are not the next wave in education, teacherlibrarians who take a leadership role in this exploration will be prepared to take a leadership role in any new model that is widely adopted. There is no more important role for the library profession than that of the image that teacher-librarians create as learning leaders. (Association Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006. 197 pp. \$25.95. 1-4166-0284-2.) Bottom line: An essential purchase, a required read, a must-do action item.

Q TASKS: HOW TO EMPOWER STUDENTS TO ASK QUESTIONS AND CARE ABOUT ANSWERS

Carol Koechlin and Sandi Zwaan These authors have written several practical guides for teachers on various aspects of teaching information literacy skills (Info-Tasks for Successful Learning, Pembroke, 2001; Create Your Own Information Literate School, Libraries Unlimited, 2005; and Ban Those Bird Units, Hi Willow Research and Publishing, 2005). Q Tasks focuses on questions and the questioning process, which the authors consider to be the key catalyst to inquiry. The book's aim is to help teachers build a culture of inquiry into their classrooms and to nurture an inquiring spirit in their students. Building on Jamie McKenzie's assertion (Learning to Question, to Wonder, to Learn, FNO Press, 2005) that, to be information literate, students need to be effective questioners and Neil Postman's belief (Teaching as a Subversive Activity, Delacorte, 1969) that learning how to ask relevant questions is part of learning how to learn, Q Tasks consists of practical strategies that teachers can use to help students become effective questioners and to encourage them to develop their own questions

In six chapters-"Encouraging Curiosity," "Understanding Questions," "Learning to Ouestion." "Questioning to "Questioning to Progress," and "Moving Forward"-Koechlin and Zwaan provide more than 80 classroom task activities, using a skill-building approach that can be used sequentially. The standard format for each activity includes a lesson overview and teacher tips, student worksheet templates, reproducible Q tips pages, curriculum contexts, and techniques of evaluation. The activities include tasks, such as evaluating the reliability of information, analyzing personal issues, setting realistic goals, and testing new ideas. A number of student organizer templates help students build their own strategies for using information. Particularly useful are elementary schooland high school-level question-builder frameworks, time management skill organizers and homework helpers, thesis maps, and frameworks for high school students for building questions using Bloom's taxonomy. Although the activities are

described in detail, the tasks are meant to be flexible and are adaptable to many curriculum contexts. The authors also provide a useful list of print and web resources on questioning. (U.S.: Stenhouse, 2006. 144 pp. \$20.00. 1-55138-197-4. Canada: Pembroke Publishing, 2006. \$24.95. 144 pp. 1-55138-197-4.) Review by Esther Rosenfeld.

Bottom line: This is a useful, practical, easy-to-use resource for teaching information literacy skills. Highly recommended for teacher-librarians and classroom teachers.

THE WHOLE LIBRARY HAND-**BOOK 4: CURRENT DATA,** PROFESSIONAL ADVICE, AND **CURIOSA ABOUT LIBRARIES** AND LIBRARY SERVICES

George M. Eberhart, ed.

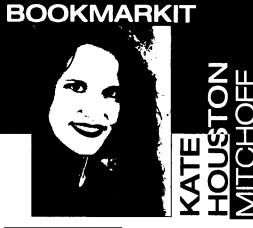
The Whole Library Handbook has been fun and informative reading since the publication of its first edition. This edition is no different. It is packed with data, brief professional writing, bibliographies, trivia, issues, and everything else that the editor found to tweak our interest, professionalism, and funny bone. This fourth edition contains the best of the old, as well as much new material, and it is targeted at librarianship as a whole.

And for those interested in the school library arena, Blanche Woolls and I edited a companion volume to Eberhart's book, also published by American Library Association (2004), entitled Whole School Library Handbook. A number of library professors use The Whole Library Handbook in a beginning course to introduce students to the field. It is a fine compilation for that purpose, but for the experienced librarian, it continues to serve as an almanac function as well as a professional information treasure. (American Library Association, 2006. 585 pp. \$42.00. 0-8389-0915-9.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

BEST BOOKS FOR CHILDREN: PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 6, 8TH ED.

Catherine Barr and John T. Gillespie For many years, Gillespie has created and published a huge database of reviews of both children's titles and young adult titles



> WEB SITES

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Middle School and High School Sites

Benjamin Franklin www.pbs.org/benfranklin/

PBS presents this great introduction to the life and accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin for middle school and high school students. The site includes an interactive timeline of his life in context with other worldly events, an A-to-Z list of his interests and achievements, and great lesson plans to spark interest in the man. The site also looks at the man through various lenses: his role as active citizen, his wit and wisdom, his role as scientist, and his worldly participation in economics and politics.

The Amazing Adventures of Benjamin Franklin www.time.com/time/2003/franklin/ bffranklin.html

Time magazine's online report about Benjamin Franklin explores his great virtues, his aversion to tyranny, his great tolerance, and his humor. Who was the man Benjamin Franklin? What really happened during the historic kite-flying experiment? What was life like in old Philadelphia? This site explores Franklin's world beyond that for which he is traditionally known.

Benjamin Franklin at 300 www.npr.org/templates/story/story .php?storyId=5156263

One of the best educational uses of the Internet is its ability to offer multimedia resources to the public. Here is a great opportunity for students to listen to National Public Radio's *Talk of the Nation* show as experts discuss the life of Benjamin Franklin.

in the various periodicals. Now in the eighth edition of this children's volume, the emphasis is the same: to provide a classified list of books and some multimedia, reviewed in important selection sources. Historically, this book has been the only game in town-an exhaustive collection of reviewed materials. Now, the various automation vendors provide lookup of titles by topic and include full-text reviews in the various review media. So is the list useful? For the building-level selector who keeps up each year and has access to the online databases of reviews, probably not. However, for the person who is creating data collections and trying to build topical strengths in more depth than just a few titles per topic, this collection can serve as a guide alongside a computerized selection database.

The print version has advantages and disadvantages. Advantages are that the print version can be checked offline; it can serve as a crude tool to see what is in print in a topical area; and it can provide the user with a quick guide to thousands of reviews. Disadvantages are that it is not current; because of in-print instability, it does not reflect what is actually available for purchase; and it is updated only occasionally. As online tools continue to improve, the need for this type of list decreases, but it might still be useful at the district level and for those who are building new collections. (Libraries Unlimited, 2006, 1,800 pp. \$80.00. 1-59158-085-4.)

Bottom line: Recommended for this limited audience.

ADMINISTERING THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER: 4TH ED., REVISED AND EXPANDED Betty J. Morris

This textbook for the course in library school has had its audience over the years. As a whole, the text provides an overview of the organizational structure of a modern school library, with emphasis on new technologies and the integration of resources, technology, and staff to create a vibrant learning laboratory. This is where the book shines: Here are lists, resources, guidance, and a vision of a center of many possibilities. Morris also provides an updated web site to help supplement and update the many web resources cited.

What the text does not do, however, is to demonstrate how these major resources are actually transformed into a teaching and learning resource. It is clear from the text that such a role is envisioned, but other sources are needed to translate the place into an action center. Thus, for the beginner in this field, this resource is a good one for building the infrastructure upon which a vital program is built. It remains one of a number of choices that school library professors use as a central text or as a supplementary recommendation. For the practicing teacher-librarian of a few years, the book provides a good review of organizational elements as a valuable self-check of vision. (Libraries Unlimited, 2004. 704 pp. \$70.00. 0-313-32261-9.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

STUDENT GUIDE TO RESEARCH IN THE DIGITAL AGE: HOW TO LOCATE AND EVALUATE INFORMATION SOURCES

Leslie F. Stebbins

Although Stebbins's principal audience is the first-year college student, this manual is worthy of consideration for the secondary school student. She covers part of the first phase of the research process—after the principal question has been formed and on to finding and evaluating the information. Such is an essential and critical first phase if students are to learn how to survive in an information-overloaded world. Each chapter guides the learner in a particular genre, including books and e-books, scholarly and popular articles, primary sources, biographical research, legal research, government documents, and citing sources.

For the teacher-librarian, this book provides clear examples of how to prepare a just-in-time lesson on finding and evaluating information when learners are faced with a particular genre. Consideration should also be given to purchasing several copies if the teacher-librarian believes that students will profit from having a full guide.

l applaud the author for solid ideas on not just finding information but also on the critical piece of evaluating the information. What is missing is the rest of the research process, as learners begin to consume the information, analyze it, and then synthesize it toward the creation of a product. It would be wonderful to find a guide that focuses on these high-level thinking activities because they are often presumed but not automatic. (Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 220 pp. \$45.00. 1-59158-099-4.)

Bottom line: This book is worth serious consideration for those teaching advanced searching and evaluation skills at the secondary level.

WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SCHOOLS, STANDARDS, AND HIGH STAKES TESTS

Donna Walker Tileston

Tileston is a good soldier of the current party line in education; that is, she is an apologist for the Department of Education's major arguments for the reasons for standards, alignment, and testing. In clearly written chapters, she presents this position to parents to help them understand the current educational practice and know how to respond positively to it. So, depending on your own philosophy about current practice, this book will either be a gem or a major piece of propaganda. One of the best features is the glossary of educational jargon, with easy-to-understand definitions.

There really are not enough of these primers to education that reflect either side of the major issues. I also noticed that school libraries are not mentioned in this book and that the vocabulary instruction is particularly distasteful to a Krashen advocate. All in all, however, parents need access to this book along with a companion piece with different ideas. For teacher-librarians, it is a solid summary of the state of "official" thinking, and as such, it gives readers a full understanding of a position and the language that we all must speak in defense of an idea. (Corwin Press, 2006. 88 pp. \$12.95. 1-4129-1470-1.)

Bottom line: Read and enjoy-read and fume. This book will stir your dendrites.

READING RAPS: A BOOK CLUB GUIDE FOR LIBRARIANS, KIDS, AND FAMILIES

Rita Soltan

There are may methods available for promoting reading, but in these days, when

collaboration and information literacy take up such large chunks of a teacher-librarian's time, how can the emphasis on literacy be maintained? Soltan's book provides one idea and a great resource: the promotion of book discussions held by family and friends that do not require the teacher-librarian to be the center of attention. Teacher-librarians can be the power behind the throne in this instance. The author provides a range of reading selections, and then, in a chapter for each title, she provides a plot summary. a character summary, a list of other books on similar topics, a list of resources for author study, and a nice list of discussion auestions.

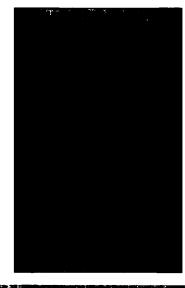
This book falls into four categories: family reads, mother-daughter reads, father-son reads, and reader raps (childrenonly discussion groups). The teacher-librarian can (a) get the group started by leading the first time or two, (b) provide the group with Soltan's guidance, and (c) fade into the background—a fine literacy leadership technique. The books covered range from children's books through teens' books, so there is something to interest all readers. (Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 372 pp. \$35.00. 1-59158-234-2.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

A TO ZOO: SUBJECT ACCESS TO CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS, 7TH ED.

Carolyn W. Lima and John A. Lima Students and teachers ask for picture books on the strangest topics, and a search of the catalogs is a fruitless one. You think that you have read something that they want, but it is often a needle in a haystack or a random search at best. A to Zoo: Subject Access to Children's Picture Books (7th ed.) has been a godsend throughout its many editions because it is a detailed subject analysis of picture books. If you cannot find a picture book in this volume, it probably has not been written. Suitable for large picture book collections-larger than any mind can keep categorized-or at the district level where a special search can be done on occasion, this reliable friend continues to earn its keep on the shelf. (Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 1,728 pp. \$80.00. 1-59158-232-6.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.



Teams in Library Technical Services

Edited by Rosann Bazirjian and Rebecca Mugridge

- Presents research and case studies demonstrating how the use of library technical services teams has been and ahould be applied to libraries
- Describes the various types of teams and how to manage them
- Explores recurring themes on the relationships between professional and support staff and the changing roles of librarians.
- Helps managers and teams address issues such as performance evaluation rewards and recognition, hiring, worldoad and worldlow, and process improvements

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TEACHING WRITING TO VISUAL, AUDITORY, AND KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

Donovan R. Walling

The ideas in this book are worth considering because so many school library research assignments end up as written work. We know that students have varying learning styles, and Walling carries this a step further by saying that the end product will be better if the writing task matches the learning style. There is logic here, but this idea really needs to be tested in your school-in collaboration with a classroom teacher-to determine if it really works for your students. Walling provides plenty of ideas and examples to skim through to have a long discussion about its potential in collaborative projects. (Corwin Press, 2006. 136 pp. \$27.95. 1-4129-2520-7.)

Bottom line: Recommended for the interesting ideas in varying the writing results in the research.

SIZZLING SUMMER READING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG ADULTS, 2ND ED.

Katharine L. Kan, for the Young Adult Library Services Association

For teacher-librarians who collaborate with public libraries on summer teen reading programs, here is a collection of ideas from public libraries from all over the United States that involve teens in fun and motivating ways. (American Library Association, 2006. 112 pp. \$30.00. 0-8389-3563-X.)

Bottom line: An excellent idea source.

COPYRIGHT LAW FOR LIBRARIANS AND EDUCATORS: **CREATIVE STRATEGIES** AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS. 2ND ED.

Kenneth D. Crews

THE COMPLETE COPYRIGHT LIABILITY HANDBOOK FOR LIBRARIANS AND EDUCATORS Tomas A. Lipinski

There are many titles on copyright for librarians, and I have reviewed several in past columns. In these two works, the authors assist teacher-librarians in the creation of policies that balance fair use with copyright infringement. The first book, by Crews, is an overview of many issues in the field, and it can be used rather quickly because it provides-at the beginning of each article-a list of summary points. In contrast, the second book, by Lipinski, is a much denser read because it explores the various sections of copyright law in detail. Because copyright interpretations affect children and teens every day in the music and Internet world, such interpretations present a constant challenge and the need to update our policies frequently. So look at your copyright reference shelf. How old are your reference works? Certainly, Carol Simpson's Copyright for School: A Practical Guide (4th ed., Linworth, 2005) should be represented, and the Crews volume makes a separate and needed comparison. The Lipinski volume is for the more advanced reader. What happens in the music world and the movie world (e.g., The Da Vinci Code) often affects us in the library, so it does no harm to try to stay current. (American Library Association, 2006. 176 pp. \$45.00. 0-8389-0906-X. Neal-Schuman, 2006. 400 pp. \$125.00. 1-55570-532-4.)

Bottom line: Both are recommended.

HOW THE BRAIN LEARNS. 3RD FD.

HOW THE BRAIN LEARNS, 3RD ED., FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

David A. Sousa

How the Brain Learns (3rd ed.) is a popular textbook and professional development guide that extensively reviews what we know about brain functioning and learning. Many sample teaching techniques that illustrate the use of the brain functions explored in the text have been added to the third edition. Preservice and experienced teachers and teacher-librarians can test their knowledge about how the human brain learns as well as their own teaching ideas against the examples given by the author. Although the notion that we truly understand learning and brain function is naïve, it is important to understand what is known in a growing field and to use what we can of the information as we teach. This is an essential read for teacher-librarians, particularly for those whose professional education is more than a decade old. Not only can this book be used in professional development, but it can also be used to check one's teaching methods against the ideas. The facilitator's guide provides sample workshops or professional development sessions. It is, however, only partially helpful because it concentrates on the building of content knowledge about the brain rather than the translation of ideas into action plans. (Corwin Press, 2006. 328 pp. \$39.95. 1-4129-3661-6. 2006. 56 pp. \$16.95. 1-4129-3738-8.)

Bottom line: An essential read and guide to a developing and important topic.

SELECTING AND MANAGING **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES: A** HOW-TO-DO-IT MANUAL FOR LIBRARIANS, REVISED

Vicki L. Gregory, with assistance by Ardis Hanson

Think back to your collection development class in library school. Did it cover the building of electronic resources? Since that class, how much reading or professional development experiences covering this topic have you had? Most teacherlibrarians have inherited state-funded databases or other large packages from the district, and suddenly we must jump in and do digital.

In the last decade, the digital collection has included access to the Internet, and that access has dwarfed our print collections. Gregory and Hanson help us to take a serious look at what we are doing in the digital world-the real world for many of our patrons-and to ask some hard questions to sensibly deal with this growing collection. Their chapters cover collection development policies, selection criteria, budgeting and acquisition, organization and access, evaluation and assessment, rights management, preservation, and, finally, thinking to the future. This book is a good selection for a professional learning community of teacher-librarians and as a supplement to a collection development textbook that does not quite cover the digital world in sufficient detail. (Neal-Schuman, 2006. 139 pp. \$65.00. 1-5557-548-0.)

Bottom line: Highly recommended.

THE BIG BOOK OF LIBRARY **GRANT MONEY 2006:** PROFILES OF PRIVATE AND CORPORATE FOUNDATIONS AND DIRECT CORPORATE **GIVERS RECEPTIVE TO** LIBRARY GRANT PROPOSALS Prepared by the Taft Group for the American Library Association

The fight for funds to keep collections and technology current continues to plague the nation's school libraries, requiring every teach-librarian to look for support outside of school, district, and state dollars. This volume is an expensive resource, and I do not recommend its purchase unless the teacher-librarianperhaps at the district level-decides that grant seeking is a serious activity. There are a number of online sources for grant seeking. This printed catalog narrows the search a bit and describes hundreds of possible sources. (American Library Association, 2006. 1,667 pp. \$275.00. 0-8389-3558-3.)

Bottom line: Recommended for the committed grant seeker.

GRANTS FOR LIBRARIES: A HOW-TO-DO-IT MANUAL AND **CD-ROM FOR LIBRARIANS**

Stephanie Rawlins Gerding and Pamela H. MacKellar

Knowing the availability of a possible grant is just the first step in getting it. Gerding and MacKellar are experienced grant-writing professionals, and they have conducted grantwriting seminars in many venues. Part I of this book explains the stages that one goes through in writing and submitting a winning grant proposal. Part II provides many examples of successful grant projects. Finally, part III and the CD-ROM provide many forms, guides, and examples to follow in the construction of an actual grant. This book is an appropriate purchase not just for the individual teacherlibrarian who needs a short course in grant writing but also for a district director who intends to provide professional development on this topic. The authors cover all types of libraries, but there is sufficient information for the school library to make the book worth its purchase price, if the buyer seriously wants to learn the ropes of obtaining grants. This book can also be used as a text in a library school seminar or in a continuing education workshop. It is certainly a text worth considering. (Neal-Schuman, 2006. 251 pp., plus CD-ROM. \$99.95. 1-55570-555-9.)

Bottom line: Recommended.

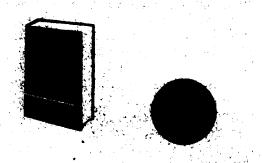
BULLY FREE BULLETIN BOARDS, POSTERS, AND BAN-NERS: CREATIVE DISPLAYS FOR A SAFE AND CARING SCHOOL, GRADES K-8

Allan L. Beane and Linda Beane

This book provides bully-free ideas and patterns that are designed to be given to an assistant or a group of students to create bulletin boards for any available space in the library or school. These ideas can be part of a program that sends the message that bullying will not be tolerated. (Free Spirit Publishing, 2006. 144 pp. \$24.95. 1-57542-186-0.)

Bottom line: Worth a look.

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