



Good Ideas!

*Compelling Ideas for
Administrators, Teachers, the PTA,
and the School Board*

CSLA is proud to present "Good Ideas" for creating information literate students.

Strong School Libraries Increase Academic Success

BY EDWARD C. GONZÁLEZ, PRINCIPAL

If there were one room in my school where I had to be trapped for a day, without question it would be the library. As principal, promoting literacy has become a top priority. The school library has given me an opportunity to realize this vision on a large scale.



For eight years I worked with a credentialed librarian, Sharon Owen, at Martin Luther Middle School (MLK) in Madera Unified School District in central California. Sharon was critical to our success at MLK. I made it a priority to send her to conferences so she could keep our staff abreast of new strategies and resources. Additional classified support staff was hired to free up her time to take a central role in curriculum management.

The classic saying "Penny-wise and pound-foolish" applies to the philosophy of cutting library resources and staff in a financially strapped district. A well-supported library is *essential* to a school for many reasons. It creates a distinct learning center for all students and provides a concentration of literary material with a scope far beyond that of any individual classroom. It allows for the organization of curriculum and resources, facilitating the utilization, upkeep, and management of these resources by students and staff. Finally, it provides an environment that encourages exploration and discovery, contemplation and reflection, recreation and research. Such activity creates opportunity for personal and professional growth, which defines education in the truest sense of the word.

A library is a living, dynamic organism. New books, computers, and resources should be purchased regularly to replace old or outdated material. Furniture, equipment, and shelving should be arranged to maximize library usage without upsetting the delicate aesthetics that promote a learning environment. Celebrations of students and their work should accompany prominent displays of historical and contemporary figures and their works. Cultural awareness programs should be a cornerstone of the curriculum on a regular basis throughout the year. Exposure of the great diversity of the human experience and the natural world is available in a library to young and old explorers alike. A healthy, dynamic library will do more for the *academic success* of a school and a community than any stand-alone curricular program that money can buy.

Editor's Note: Edward González was *School Library Journal's* Administrator of the Year for 2003. He was chosen from more than 300 school administrators nominated nationwide.

EDWARD C. GONZÁLEZ is the Principal of John Adams Elementary School

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Learning through
Books, Media and Technology

Profile of a Humanitarian

ARAGON HIGH SCHOOL

Claudia Argyres, library media teacher (LMT) at Aragon High School in San Mateo, has worked for five years with seven freshmen English teachers fine-tuning the “Profile of a Humanitarian” research project. Argyres meets with her colleagues several times to coordinate, plan, determine additional resources needed (then purchase them with funds from the California Public School Library Act), teach, and evaluate the research project. The project culminates in a report that has biographical narrative (in the introductory “hook”), as well as research and analysis. “Before this project was adopted, there was no consis-



Claudia Argyres helps a student select a “humanitarian.”

tent place or time where students were taught basic research skills,” according to Argyres.

The project itself is this: Students select a “humanitarian,” a person who has made a significant difference in the lives of others, from a culturally diverse list of forty suggested names. Through their research, students discover the injustice that the humanitarian fought, actions taken against the injustice, and evaluate the person’s success. Students are also asked to select a defining moment in the humanitarian’s life to develop as an introduction to the paper. The process of doing research is emphasized at each step with focus questions, note taking, key-word prompts, and thinking about research (meta-cognition).

The results? Here are the first two sentences of the introduction to one student’s essay on the Dalai Lama: “Chinese Security personnel and disguised police officers swarmed the area, just waiting for a riot. Scores of monks began yelling for the release of Yulu Daw Tsering in the middle of a religious ceremony.” Definitely not your cut-and-dried, ho-hum research paper introduction!



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STANDARD 4.2: *The Library Media Teacher collaborates with other teachers to plan, design, teach, and access grade-appropriate lessons, units, and projects that integrate information literacy into instruction to increase student learning.*

— Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries
(CSLA, 2004)

"Closed Research"

An Answer for Teachers Short on Time for Term Papers

HUENEME HIGH SCHOOL

"Closed research" requires students to use only specific information resources that are reliable and appropriate to a particular assignment. This approach minimizes student search time and plagiarism while it maximizes reading and analysis. It is especially valuable for teachers who are short on time for term papers. Closed research also helps teachers introduce the research process to inexperienced students, as well as those with special needs. **Teddi Morris**, library media teacher at Hueneme High School in Oxnard, worked with a team of several teachers and a university professor to design two closed research projects.



Teddi Morris analyzes Vietnam War Web sites with students.

Ilene Miele, a UCSB writing professor, suggested the closed research approach, which some professors use at the university. Two teachers, **Randy Sanford** and **Amy Roth**, plus two student teachers, **Lindsay Burkhart** and **Nicole Newcomb**, came to Morris to help them design and teach a closed research project on the Vietnam War for their college prep U.S. history classes.

The teachers wanted their students to write a five-page

paper linking the Vietnam War to nine specific themes that addressed U.S. history content standard 11 on American foreign policy since World War II. The history teachers and Morris collaboratively decided to restrict the students to a limited number of books, one on-line subscription database, and no more than ten Internet sites. Morris then assembled the resources, taught the students how to use them, and instructed them how to write bibliographic citations.

▼
"Teddi's outstanding work with our students and staff reflects not only in an increasing level of quality research by students at Hueneme High School, but also in our school-wide improvement on the Academic Performance Index and Adequate Yearly Progress success indicators."
— **Tom McCoy, Principal**

Morris went on to adapt the closed research approach for Sanford's and Roth's two U.S. history ELL classes. They researched an historical figure utilizing Gale's online Biography Resource Center, and wrote a five-paragraph essay.

Roth related that collaborating with Morris on a closed research project made doing a term paper smoother for her students. "The students were not overwhelmed or uncertain with their data research, and I was confident in the material they were analyzing."

▼
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Student Reviewers Published on the Web

LOS ANGELES ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL

David Villancio-Wolter, library media teacher at Los Angeles Academy Middle School, designed a ready-to-use lesson with all resources available to teachers via the school Web site to help develop the literacy skills of his 3,000 students, half of which are English language learners.



David Villancio-Wolter and students edit Web page content.

The lesson assists students in asking and responding to the essential question, “What are the qualities of a good book?”

The process is simple:

1. Students identify qualities of a good book.
2. Students seek evidence of these qualities in books they have read using a graphic organizer.
3. Students identify the elements of a book review.
4. Students apply what they have learned to write, peer review, and publish reviews for good books on the school’s LocalReads website.

All English teachers in all grades are potential collaborators for this easy-to-implement lesson. English teachers **David Marshall**, **Jacqueline Mercado**, **Meghan Schooler**, and **Sergio Sanchez** met with Villancio-Wolter to modify the activities to meet the unique needs of their students. In the library, he and the teachers worked together to facilitate the lesson, and they split the task of evaluating the book reviews using an assessment rubric. They were careful to align their lesson to the *State Content Standards for English-Language Arts* as well as information literacy standards.



“David has made the library what it is today. It has everything you would need.”

– Maria Borges, Principal

Villancio-Wolter commented, “The fact that their reviews would be published led them to care more deeply about their final drafts. I was struck by the increased level of attention to detail.” Other students were led to read books based on recommendations on the Web site. Looking at their independent reading has helped create more thoughtful and critical students.



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STANDARD 3: The Library Media Teacher collaborates with other teachers to advance reading comprehension and foster a love of reading.

– Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries (CSLA, 2004)

Contagious Diseases: *Travel Alert!*

ALEXANDER HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL

As a result of globalization, we live in an increasingly mobile, worldwide society. No area of the world is isolated anymore. However, along with the ease and convenience of global travel and commerce comes a heightened risk from contagious diseases that travel along with the goods and people. At Hamilton High School in Los Angeles, library media



Teaching is contagious with Rosemarie Bernier.

teacher **Rosemarie Bernier** collaborated with health teacher **Edward Berger** to create a unique lesson, the creation of a Travel Alert flyer, with which to teach students the dangers of contagious diseases worldwide.

After collaborating with Berger, Bernier created a WebQuest on-line lesson that incorporated the content standards, all of the teacher's instructions, and

an example of a Travel Alert flyer. Links to the Center for Disease Control Web site and quality Web sites for information on diseases that their teacher wanted them to learn to use and print resources are also on Bernier's site. As well, students access on the site the rubric for how the final product will be graded.

Bernier teaches the lesson in the library using a projector, a computer, and the Internet. She teaches students how to access the WebQuest from the library media center Web site. Preselected Web sites are incorporated into the WebQuest. Next, she teaches the students how to use the on-line card catalog to find print resources in the library. She shows students how to find and copy pictures for their projects. Bernier encourages students having trouble with the assignment to e-mail her to receive help.

"The results are very gratifying," reports Bernier. "By evaluating the student work myself, I find the strengths and weaknesses in the lesson." Each year several finished products are highlighted in the library to motivate students to produce better work.



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STANDARD 5: The Library Media Teacher collaborates with other teachers and the community to integrate the best uses of information and communication technologies into the curriculum and instruction.

— Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries
(CSLA, 2004)

Beware of Greeks Bearing Products

EMERSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HARPER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

This is the third time LMT **Jamie Boston** has been selected for *Good Ideas!* Through successful collaboration with ninth-grade English teacher **Debbie DePaula**, Boston brought information literacy and Greek mythology together in the media



Jamie Boston,
Triple Crown Winner

center. Both teachers looked at the standards to see what areas were not well covered in the curriculum. Greek mythology and business letter writing were the results. This led DePaula and Boston to design an assignment where students would research a mythological character, create a product that could be associated with the character, and promote its sale to a company by writing the company a business letter.

“Scrapbooking” was an additional activity that was included.

▼
“Jamie is the best librarian I have ever worked with in my career.”
– ***Diane Studley, Principal***

Boston is the LMT at two middle schools in Davis – Emerson and Harper.

▼
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HIGHSMITH INNOVATION AWARD The Art of Persuasion

Five years ago a project began that has blossomed into something that benefits all seventh-grade students at Valley Middle School. Library media teacher **Margaret (Peggy) Hodge** says, “Meeting



Peggy Hodge (standing) collaborates with the Seventh-Grade Team.

the standards was our first objective.” Because of this project, Valley Middle School library media center purchases new books on social issues every year. With funding cuts, they were at risk of losing their on-line database, and the students rallied! More than one

hundred of them wrote persuasive letters and won a district-wide grant to pay for on-line resources the next year! What *power!*

Not only is Hodge a change agent with her teachers, she also implements innovative programs at Valley Middle School. Some of those programs include:

- Big6™ Mentorship
- Books and More – a literary event
- The GATE Book Club
- 7 Habits training for students

These and many more innovative programs make Hodge shine in the profession.

▼
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CSLA PRESIDENT'S AWARD

David Bogardus: Promoting Student and Community Literacy

Working with district administration, **David Bogardus**, library media teacher at Diamond Ranch High School in Pomona, has raised the bar for library services K–12. At the request of Pomona Unified Superintendent Patrick D. Leier, David is building the model of high-impact libraries. A high-impact library has extended hours to serve the community, networks with the public library to share resources, and builds alliances with the district adult education program and vendors to support a District-wide Student Learning Resource Network for the Pomona community.



David Bogardus, high-impact LMT

Among the numerous successful programs championed by LMT Bogardus is leading the training for all district library personnel in the new Web-based programs.

▼
“David has a clear vision of what a school library must become to promote student and community literacy and learning. The leadership he has demonstrated among his colleagues in the district to impart that vision and make it a reality is exceptional.”

– *Cynthia Walkenbach, Director of Secondary Learning and Site Support*

▼
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SAGEBRUSH TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Adrienne St. George: Teaching Technology with Expertise

As a member of a core team of teachers that offers technology training whenever possible, **Adrienne St. George** has made technology second nature to her colleagues. The teachers at Diegueño Middle School e-mail staff, parents, and students. They also post students' grades and assignments on Web pages, take attendance on-line, and demonstrate lessons using PowerPoint.



A middle schooler enjoys a technology moment with St. George.

A primary goal of her district and LMT St. George is to teach students to use technology in a literate manner so that they become organized investigators as well as creative and critical thinkers.

▼
“Inviting, engaging and inspiring – Adrienne St. George welcomes you into the media center and before you know it, she has ‘hooked’ you on technology. Even the most resolute technophobe walks out with a ‘Well, gosh, I’ll try it’ attitude.”

– *Penny Cooper-Francisco, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction*

▼
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Marilyn Pugh, Principal

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Learn the Morse Code

Pro-active library advocate, respected educator, visionary administrator, avid reader – these words all describe **John Morse**, assistant superintendent of instructional services for Paso Robles Joint Unified School District and recipient of the prestigious 2004 CSLA Administrative Leadership Award. He has clearly demonstrated an influential, unique, and sustained commitment to effective school library programs.



In his 14 years at Paso Robles, Morse has been instrumental in working both locally and countywide to provide new technologies and information literacy skills for students, staff, and parents. He also established the library media teachers (LMT) as leaders in these efforts.

Collaborating with LMTs on every detail, Morse has overseen the construction of three elementary school libraries and the remodeling of the high school and one of the middle school libraries. He is currently working on repair efforts for damage sustained to the libraries in the San Simeon earthquake of December 2003.

Morse also recognizes the educational value of well-staffed libraries. During his tenure, an additional full-time LMT position has been added, and library technician hours have been extended to full-time at each site. Now libraries are open the entire school day. Whenever possible, he sends library staff to professional workshops and conferences. LMT Sandy Rowland passionately spoke for the district's LMTs and library technicians when she said,

“We are overwhelmed and grateful to be educationally, emotionally, and financially supported by such a committed, visionary, district-level administrator as Mr. John Morse.”

CSLA joins the library staff in Paso Robles Public Schools in honoring and congratulating Assistant Superintendent John Morse, a strong leader and champion for school libraries and staffing.



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Back issues of *Good Ideas!* are available at www.schoollibrary.com

To nominate a school library and a library media teacher for *Good Ideas!* recognition, contact Susan Pennell, spennell@maderacoe.k12.ca.us, 559-673-6051 x263.