



It is the middle of November so it must be time for the latest edition of TLM. This month we start with a look at the brilliant Bright Ideas blog – hosted over in sunny Australia and run by the School Library Association of Victoria it is updated regularly and has masses of excellent articles, links and ideas that can be applied anywhere! Following on there is an interesting and insightful article on digital lending for teens, courtesy of BBC Audiobooks.

It seems that comic books are now good for enhancing reading skills – I just wish I could show that information to some teachers I had back in the day!

Fourth this month is information on the increasingly popular **Library Myth Busters** activity – it is very much a work in progress, but is sufficiently developed to be used in Libraries everywhere.

After busting Library Myths there follows the mission statement for the excellent American project **Guys Read**, and considering the difficulties many of us go through in getting many young males to read it is well worth having a read through!

This month the **Eight Questions With...** interview is with Mary Naylus author of the newly published and very readable YA novel *The Dresskeeper*.

Bright Ideas

Bright Ideas is a blog that began as the brainchild of Mary Manning in August last year and it was launched in early October 2008. The School Library Association of Victoria is showing great collegiality and collaboration by making the blog freely available to anyone who is interested in it.

Since late September 2008, when I began taking statistics, it has had 80,000 hits, and some of the more interesting regions that have used Bright ideas include:

- Tanzania,
- Saudi Arabia

- Guatemala
- Bahamas
- Bulgaria
- Grenada
- Zimbabwe
- Vietnam
- Azerbaijan
- Dominican Republic

Bright ideas has several purposes:

- The first is to share what other SLAV members have achieved and are using in their schools.
- The second aim is to identify Web 2.0 tools that could be useful for schools and to write about these resources and how they could possibly be used in the school library and classroom. Teen Librarian is one of these resources.
- The third is to pass on news of conferences, items of interest from the media and other opportunities.
- The fourth is to collate useful links.
- The fifth is to share pictures of our libraries and displays so that we can gain insight and ideas from others.
- The sixth aim is to present new ideas such as how video-gaming can be used for learning and detailing projects like the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Collaborative Learning and Research Project which in term 2, is focussing on trialling videogames as learning tools.
- The seventh is to present personal learning blogs from some of SLAV's members.

As the blog is evolutionary, these aims will change and grow over time.

<http://slav.globalteacher.org.au/>

Digital lending for teens

You may not be surprised to read that media usage amongst children is at an all-time high - internet, TV, mobile phones and MP3 players. A 2008 study by OFCOM showed that 90% of 12-15 year olds use a mobile phone, and 69% use it every day.

75% of children from the same age group have access to and use the internet and the same percentage use an MP3 player with 38% using it on a daily basis. Children aged 8-11 have an average of 4 media devices in their bedrooms and children aged 12-15 have an average of 6. And this study is over a year old so the figures have presumably increased further.

So would it be fair to say that this usage equals familiarity with the medium and thus an opportunity for us to seize? Whilst many young people may think it's seriously uncool to be seen walking out of a library with a stack of books, they may think twice about attaching this label to someone walking out of a library with an iPod crammed full of audio material. And whilst we're not advocating children *disguising* the act of listening to audiobooks on an MP3 player, it surely works in our favour!

So you may think it's easier said than done to assume that all teenagers are going to be flocking to download digital audiobooks, just because they're *familiar* with the technology required to do this. But there's such a huge range of fantastic quality digital audio material available that it won't take long for the iPod generation to be persuaded to give it a go. Unabridged readings by bestselling authors (Eoin Colfer, Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson etc) and read by well-known actors are all obviously available but there's so much more that will grab their interest: comedy from TV and radio favourites such as Little Britain, and full-cast radio dramas such as Terry Deary's *Horrible Histories* series and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. And not forgetting *Doctor Who*, *Torchwood* and the *Sarah Jane Adventures* - readings of classic novels, radio dramatisations, soundtracks, and audio original stories.

The last few years has seen the emergence of one or two key players in the marketplace providing digital lending platforms to libraries

- these companies work with publishers to provide libraries with audiobooks to fill these platforms. For example, BBC Audiobooks currently has more than 3000 titles available for digital lending.

Libraries that have taken this service for their library users seem to be buying the majority of their content with an adult audience in mind. But we must not let them forget about the younger generation, those that are naturally more familiar with the technology, have more free time to fiddle around with it and are inevitably more likely to embrace the service when you launch it.

For more information on digital lending you can get in touch with BBC Audiobooks' Sales and Marketing Manager Nick Forster who would be happy to discuss this with you. Alternatively, email emily.milroy@bbc.com for a brochure.

Comic books are good for children's learning

Researchers believe they can benefit from tales about the caped crusader, Superman and even Dennis the Menace in the same way they can from reading other types of literature, despite teachers and parents often being snooty about comics, experts say.

<http://bit.ly/2egddy>

Library Myth-busters

This is an idea I have been working on that can be run with a Reading Group and also for breaking the ice for new users in the Library:

This event can be run by following the Myth Busters format of having small teams investigating various Library Myths and then presenting their findings to the entire Reading Group. If permission can be obtained for filming, a short DVD could be made of the proceedings. This could tie into a larger media and film-making programme that can be run over half-term or summer holidays. It is fun and educational – teenagers learn how the library works and what the staff do all day as well as debunking misconceptions they may have on what goes on in libraries.

Here are a list of library myths that can either be debunked or confirmed:

- Librarians have lots of time to read on the job
- All librarians are fast readers
- Public libraries are only busy during the school year
- Public libraries are only busy during summer holidays
- Libraries are used only by those who cannot afford to buy their own books.
- Librarians have no stress
- Librarians have read every book in the library.
- Librarians know the answer to everything
- Everyone who works in the library is a librarian
- Libraries are just about getting books
- Libraries aren't necessary because everything's available on the internet
- Libraries have plenty of funding because they get so many donated books and charge so much in fines
- The librarian can be held responsible for everything that kids check out because they work for government and must protect the kids from bad things
- Librarians wear their hair in buns, have wire-rimmed glasses, and say shhhhh! all the time
- Librarians only issue books
- Everything in the library is free
- You have to know Dewey to use the library
- Libraries are serious and quiet all the time
- Library cards are hard to get
- Libraries are for English readers only
- School Libraries aren't needed because kids can get everything that they want at the public library or online.

The list is by no means complete and if anyone would like to submit extra library myths you can do it here: <http://bit.ly/TiLTc>

Guys Read

Their mission is to motivate boys to read by connecting them with materials they will want to read, in ways they like to read.

1. Make some noise for boys.

We have literacy programs for adults and families. GUYS READ is our chance to call attention to boys' literacy.

2. Expand our definition of reading.

Include boy-friendly non-fiction, humour, comics, graphic novels, action-adventure, magazines, websites, audio-books, and newspapers in school reading. Let boys know that all these materials count as reading.

3. Give boys choice.

Motivate guys to want to read by letting them choose texts they will enjoy. Find out what they want. Let them choose from a new, wider range of reading.

4. Encourage male role models.

Men have to step up as role models of literacy. What we do is more important than all we might say.

5. Be realistic. Start small.

Boys aren't believing that "Reading is wonderful." Reading is often difficult and boring for them. Let's start with "Here is one book/magazine/text you might like."

6. Spread the GUYS READ word.

Encourage people to use the information and downloads on this site to set up their own chapters of GUYS READ, and get people thinking about boys and reading.

<http://www.guysread.com>

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Special thanks go to Mary Naylus for answering the Eight Questions With... interview

All submissions of articles, reviews & ideas are welcome and can be sent to teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

Subscribing to Teen Librarian Monthly is free just send an e-mail to: teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

Eight Questions With... Mary Naylus

Q1 What influenced your decision to write for Teenagers?

Well, I have two daughters, one of whom is a teenager, and when the idea for a time-travelling dress came to mind, I decided to make the lead protagonist a teenager, and address what seems to be a void in the YA market for historical fiction.

Q2 How do you get into the heads of your characters?

I suppose I can (just) remember what it was like being Picky's age (13, thinking everyone is against you, telling it like it is), so I combine those memories with the observations of my daughter and her friends and usually tone it down and make it less colloquial.

Q3 Do you know instinctively what will appeal to Teens or is it more a hit or miss process?

As I said, having children around in the right age group helps, as I can run things past them, but I must confess that the comedy is sometimes hit and miss. What's funny for adults is not necessarily funny for kids, and vice versa.

Q4 What is the most satisfying part of the writing process for you?

Seeing the story develop from a little bud of an idea, and the excitement of adding little bits and pieces that tie the story together (for example, the part in *The Dresskeeper* with Christopher Wren).

Q5 Do you ever read the works of other Teen/YA authors? If yes what can you recommend?

I have read many but I would probably go with my daughters' recommendations of *Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne, and *Girl Missing* by Sophie McKenzie.

Q6 Are any of your novels based on personal experiences?

Interestingly my protagonists tend to be quite different from me, more daring, different family life, different background. I suppose I like thinking outside the box, because it makes the writing more animated.

Q7 Are you working on anything new at the moment (or do you have anything planned?)

Yes, *The Plaguemaker*, about 15-year-old Blessie, who through ghostly intervention and research discovers her father is about to make a disastrous and potentially dangerous business decision – building on top of a plague pit. It's based on stories of workmen building The Tube network, who were overcome by disease from buried plague victims when they exposed centuries' old bodies.

Q8 Do you ever do Library visits to Teen Reading Groups? If yes, what is the best way to get into contact with you or your agent about it?

Yes, sure. My editor at Prospera is happy to take enquiries – editor@prospera.co.uk