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RSM542

Literature Review

**Topic Description**

Rapidly changing 21st century technology and the introduction of the Common Core curriculum is allowing librarians to be vital school leaders like never before. It is important that librarians embrace this new role and see themselves as a human resource and team partner. How does collaboration between librarians and teachers and the transformation of a traditional library into a learning commons increase student achievement? In my current school, the Common Core training began this year. Math, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science teachers are looking for ways to meet the standards through inquiry-based learning. Projects like this scare teachers at times because they feel they take too much time, and the teacher needs to turn over a certain amount of control for the learning. A librarian is perfectly placed to collaborate with teachers and train teachers on how to efficiently facilitate 21st century learning aligned to the Common Core. During my interview with Peter Whitmore, it became obvious that he hopes Common Core can be a vehicle for a more collaborative and inquiry-based library.

**Bibliographic Data**

1. Hiebert, E. H. (2012). The Common Core State Standards and text complexity. *Teacher Librarian*, *39*(5), 13-19. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Main Idea: The Common Core places an emphasis on text complexity levels. This article examines how librarians can help teachers, students and parents navigate readability levels, especially when nonfiction selections may be rated higher for certain academic vocabulary. There is a limiting danger when texts are selected merely on readability formulas such as Lexile levels.

Findings: The value and purpose of the librarian in remaining aware of current published selections and alignment to curriculum is highlighted. Hiebert concludes, “It is our nation's librarians who have the knowledge about the available text and media resources. American students and their teachers depend on librarians to uncover and navigate the world of information available in texts and media.”

2. Morris, R. J. (2012). Find where you fit in the Common Core, or the time I forgot about librarians and reading. *Teacher Librarian*, *39*(5), 8-12. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Main Idea: This article discusses that in a push to emphasize all that a librarian does in addition to helping students develop a love of reading and an increased ability in reading comprehension, sometimes we forget to emphasize the value librarians serve in student achievement due to reading ability levels.

Findings: Morris reminds us that “by sharing excitement about the reading part of research and of course by designing instruction that supports it, librarians can motivate students to interact more purposefully and deeply with information.” Librarians are already built in experts trained at how to help students and teachers with construction of knowledge through multiple texts. Morris emphasizes that “with the ‘thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts’ piece of the Common Core vision of a literate person in the 21st century, school librarians have a clear and timely opportunity to lead the implementation of the Common Core, specifically with reading but also with writing, critical thinking, problem solving, and other areas of the CCSS that might not spell out ‘school librarian’--but speak clearly to the competencies of school library professionals.”

3. Hill, R. (2012). All aboard!. *School Library Journal*, *58*(4), 26-30. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Main Idea: Librarians were not asked to “sit at the table” when the Common Core was developed, but are the best-equipped experts to help teachers help students meet the standards. The AASL taking on the development of the Common Core Crosswalk has helped librarians see exactly how they can best become leaders and teammates in the Common Core adaptation.

Findings: Librarians must begin weeding and then finding new informational texts and databases that are engaging and aligned to their teacher’s curriculum. Hill goes on to say, “Still, it's one thing for librarians to introduce students and staff to quality nonfiction texts (a task well within their comfort zones) but another to bridge the gap between inquiry and reading comprehension--an underlying objective of Common Core.” The article concludes with the powerful statement, “the new standards need school librarians just as much as we need them.”

4. White, B. (2011). Toward a learning commons: My journey; your journey. *Teacher Librarian*, *38*(3), 27-30.

Main Idea: This article examines the benefits of transforming the traditional library into a “learning commons.” Not just exposing kids to technology like Web2.0 tools, but helping students use technology to learn, understand, and construct knowledge. White suggests that librarians use extra-curricular time for coaching kids on how to learn.

Findings: Moving to a learning commons style is a cultural shift, a library will go “from being a grocery store where you go to shop for the supplies to create a project to one of a well-equipped and stocked kitchen that allows you to prepare and cook any kind of dish.” White emphasizes that librarians need to be seen as curriculum leaders rather than someone you go to for supplies. And the biggest finding is that transforming into a learning commons is a journey, not a destination.

5. Loertscher, D. V. (2012). At the center of teaching and learning, or isolated again, it's time to decide. *Teacher Librarian*, *39*(5), 57-58. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Main Idea: this article examines the dangers of separating content learning from information literacy. Loertscher “posit[s] that the separation and isolation of content and learning how to learn not only has isolated teacher librarians but made them invisible in school culture. We posit that this has resulted in the notion that because of Google and the Internet, classroom teachers can easily take over the role of teaching information literacy--thus, saving the school a professional salary. That attitude seems to be rampant in any school district facing financial exigency.” Loertscer proposes that we need a major study on how well students achieve learning content when taught within the framework of learning “how to learn.”

Findings: This article links to a strategy for teaching information literacy and content concurrently in an engaging way, that does not take a great deal of instructional time away from the content teacher called Knowledge Building Centers and strategies on how to “flip” Bloom’s taxonomy so that student’s operate at the highest order of thinking first to create knowledge and then work down Bloom’s to understanding.

6. Wright, S. (2012). Flipping Bloom’s taxonomy. *Less Teacher, More Student, Passion Based Learning, The How of 21st Century Teaching, Voices.* Retrieved from http://plpnetwork.com/2012/05/15/flipping-blooms-taxonomy/.

Main Idea: This is a blog; however, it has been peer-reviewed in the sense that David Loertscher refers to Shelley Wright’s theory in the article above. Wright proposes that we flip Bloom’s Taxonomy by having students play, create, and question in order to lead them into evaluation, analysis, application, understanding, and remembering.

Findings: Wright gives three scenarios of student’s going through this flipped process, “We *started* with creativity and *ended* with the knowledge my students have curated. They’ve been engaged with the entire process from start to finish, and my students have make some significant decisions about the essential knowledge they need.” I think this is an intriguing theory, and I’d like to find a way to research how it would work with my students.

7. Kirkland, A. B. (2012). Inquiry untethered. *By the Brooks: Advocate for School Libraries.* Retrieved from http://www.bythebrooks.ca/inquiry-untethered/.

Main Idea: Again, this is a blog and is in no sense a peer-reviewed article. However, it is an idea based off the strategies mentioned by David Loertscher in his multiple articles on learning commons. I include it here because it may be the strategy I would like to assess in my research to see if it increases student achievement. The idea is that Knowledge Building Centers are structures around which a student creates knowledge through research: exploring, investigating, processing, and creating.

Findings: Using a Knowledge Building Center template made it easy for the authors to replicate for different projects without too much project set-up time. A benefit noticed was that, “Revisiting our guiding question helps to put learning in context, identify and discuss the process and results of learning – metacognition – and transfer that self-knowledge to new learning situations.”

8. Koechlin, C., Zwaan, S., & Loertscher, D. V. (2008). The time is now: transform your school library into a learning commons. *Teacher Librarian*, *36*(1), 8-14. Retrieved from Academic Search Premier.

Main Idea: This article defines the learning commons as “the showcase for high-quality teaching and learning-a place to develop and demonstrate exemplary educational practices. It will serve as the professional development center For the entire school-a place to learn, experiment with, assess, and then widely adopt improved instructional programs. It is the keystone of literacy and technological programs of the school and the place where classroom teachers can collaboratively design, build, implement, and assess knowledge-building learning activities.” Written before the existence of the Common Core, it is useful to read of how this theory evolved and will align with the Common Core. Knowledge building, collaboration, and technology are the keystones of the learning commons.

Findings: The idea is to make the library the hub of the school, rather than a quiet add-on that can be dismissed (or no longer funded). It encourages teacher collaboration by building “a place where they do not feel they are alone in the challenge of elevating every learner toward excellence; a place to be part of a teaching and learning team that merges classroom teachers and specialists in a mutual quest…Reinvent your school library and computer labs; listen to your clients; build learning partnership teams; infuse the best teaching science.”

9. Lance, K., & Hofschire, L. (2012). *Change in School Librarian Staffing Linked with Change in CSAP Reading Performance, 2005 to 2011*. Denver, CO: Colorado State Library, Library Research Service. Retrieved from <http://www.lrs.org/documents/closer_look/CO4_2012_Closer_Look_Report.pdf>*.*

Main Idea: Cited in more than one of the articles above, this study examined any impact on test scores in Colorado schools with librarians, without librarians, and those that had started with librarians in 2005, but had lost them by 2011.

Findings: At schools with librarians, 45 percent of students increased test scores, at schools without librarians only 29 percent of students increased test scores. Even with “poverty utilized as a control variable” scores increased. This data definitely shows there exists a positive impact of librarians on student achievement; action research projects can help show why there is such an impact on student achievement.

**Graphic Organizer**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **Title** | **Year** | **Leadership**  **Roles of**  **Librarians** | **Common**  **Core** | **Librarian**  **Collaboration** | **Librarian**  **Supplying Resources** | **Librarian as Technology Teacher** |
| Hiebert, Elfrieda H. | The Common Core State Standards and Text Complexity | 2012 | x | x |  | x |  |
| Morris, Rebecca J. | Find Where You Fit in the Common Core, or The Time I Forgot About Librarians and Reading. | 2012 | x | x | x | x |  |
| Hill, Rebecca | All Aboard! | 2012 | x | x | x |  |  |
| White,  Bruce | Toward a Learning Commons: My Journey; Your Journey | 2011 | x | x | x | x | x |
| Loertscher, David V. | At the Center of Teaching and Learning, or Isolated Again, It's Time to Decide | 2012 | x |  | x |  | x |
| Wright, Shelley | Flipping Bloom’s Taxonomy | 2012 |  |  | x | x | x |
| Kirkland, Anita Brooks | Inquiry Untethered | 2012 | x | x | x | x | x |
| Koechlin, Carol; Zwaan, Sandi and Loertscher, David V. | The Time is Now: Transform Your School Library Into a Learning Commons | 2008 | x |  | x |  | x |
| Lance, Keith and Hofschire, Linda | Change in School Librarian Staffing Linked with Change in CSAP Reading Performance, 2005 to 2011. | 2012 | x |  | x |  |  |

After completing the readings, it has become clear that while the Common Core aligns quite well with the expertise trained librarians already have, what librarians are trained to do is not well-publicized. Therefore, we must promote the natural resource of librarians as leaders, facilitators, collaborators, and instructors on the standards and project-based learning. I’d like my research to center on the teacher’s knowledge of the expertise of a school librarian around the Common Core and to show an increase in student achievement through a collaborative project – in particular using the Knowledge Building Center model.