

Managing Volunteers

Most of my limited time in the library is spent managing my two amazing volunteers. It takes a lot of time, but cuts down on my work in the long run. I learned quickly that volunteers need to feel like part of a team. Demonstrate tasks for your volunteers. Working side by side goes a long way to making them feel important. Mutual respect and a co-operative climate foster a good working relationship, with flexibility as key in maintaining a positive atmosphere. Be willing to get to know your volunteers and have fun with them.

Little things, like a space where volunteers can keep their belongings, will make them feel more welcome, as well as comforts like tea, coffee, and a few snacks to help them through more repetitive tasks.

New volunteers must be trained well, so teach them the basics of how the library operates, including the rules and procedures (Smallwood, 24). Give them time to ease into their new position with a couple of weeks of easy jobs. You could start with careful coaching on how to shelve books, and don't be afraid to shelve with them in the beginning stages. Not only will you get to know them better, but you can catch and correct any mistakes they might make: Dewey may seem obvious to us, but it's those decimals you have to watch out for!

By knowing your volunteers well, you'll be able to manage them that much better, so get to know their strengths and abilities. With the number of tasks that need doing, it's not difficult to find variety to keep volunteers interested (Smallwood, 24). This is just a partial list of what they might be able to do for you, your students and staff:

- ◆ processing, cataloguing new material;
- ◆ preparing book lists, resources for curriculum-related topics;
- ◆ organizing seasonal, author, or thematic displays;
- ◆ looking after book check-in, check-out, repair;

dateline

Monday September 24th

Change Minds — Change Lives

“Become active citizens for change in the world!”

Speaker: Peggy Thomas

Web Conference 4:00 pm ET

OLA Members \$75.00; Non-Members \$95.00

Wednesday October 3rd

Super Teaching!

Think Models for Instructional Improvement

“A perfect course to strengthen critical thinking skills!”

Speaker: Dr. David Loertscher

Audio Conference 4:00 pm ET

OLA Members \$54.00; Non-Members \$74.00

Thursday Oct 4th

Collaboration for Student Achievement

“Encourage all partners in the school to collaborate with you!”

Speaker: Dr. Lesley J. Farmer

Audio Conference 4:00 pm ET

OLA Members \$54.00; Non-Members \$74.00

Tuesday Oct 9th

Media Literacy Through Media Production

“Invite your teaching partners to join you for this one!”

Speaker: Melissa Jensen, teacher-librarian with Simcoe DSB

Web Conference 4:00 pm ET

OLA Members \$75.00; Non-Members \$95.00

Tuesday Oct 23rd

Graduating with 21st Century Skills

“Invite Administrators to this one!”

Speaker: Dr. Lori Roth

Audio Conference 2:00 pm ET

OLA Members \$54.00; Non-Members \$74.00

The Forest of Reading® Sessions:

Blue Spruce: Monday December 3rd at 4:00 pm ET

Silver Birch: Monday November 19th at 4:00 pm ET

Red Maple: Tuesday November 20th at 4:00 pm ET

White Pine: Monday January 7th at 3:00 ET pm

Special prices for those registered for the Reading Programs!