

Evaluation @ your library™



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How well am I really doing?

My colleague received her notice from her principal that this was the year for her Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA). Mine isn't until next year, but this got me thinking about what the results would be if I were to be evaluated right now, and about evaluation in general.

Evaluation can take several forms, from a traditional pencil and paper test to observation and assessment of performance. No matter what the form, some people would rank being evaluated up there with going to the dentist or public speaking as their least favourite activity. Mention the word evaluation in a room full of educators and you'll hear words fly: assessment, nightmare, testing, report cards, rubrics, anxiety and so on.

Evaluation and assessment (and yes, there is a difference between the two but, for the purposes of this short introduction, I'll spare you the explanation) are not meant to be punitive. They are supposed to help us determine how well we are doing our tasks, how well we are doing with knowledge, thinking, communication and application. This, after all, is what we tell our students. It's what we believe as teachers. So, surely, it should be what we believe when we're the ones being assessed and evaluated! Assessment and evaluation provide opportunities for reflection and growth – and, when all is going well, for celebration. So let's consider evaluation @ your library. How do we participate in the assessment and evaluation of our students? How do we assess and evaluate our libraries and ourselves as teacher-librarians, library technicians and school library personnel? We need not wait for our turn at the TPA to think about evaluation!

And speaking of evaluation, *The Teaching Librarian* needed to examine and evaluate how it operates and the quality of what it prints. Last issue, we asked readers to give us feedback, using an online or print version survey (www.accessola.com/osla/survey). We still welcome your comments, but we've compiled the findings we have to date in a small article for your perusal.

Authentic, effective evaluation should prompt positive change, and one of the changes we've already made in the magazine is the addition of three new members to our editorial board. I want to welcome Julie Milan, Catherine Harris and Sandra Ziemniak to our fantastic team of editors. I also want to congratulate editorial board member Derrick Grose, who will be doing editing double-duty as the editor of the online journal for the Canadian Association of School Libraries. Here's to good things getting even better! ■