

Matching the perfect book to the right reader is part art, part science. Presenting these gems in just the right way can capture the interest of future fans. We asked school library staff throughout the province how they introduce new books and novels to their students, staff, and patrons in exciting and innovative ways.

One strategy I have used to present the books from the Forest of Reading® to our students is a variation on the “Book Talk.” I prepare short descriptions on each book, usually found on the OLA site. Students pick a description randomly. They must identify the book from the description using the clues in the blurb, title, and cover illustration. It’s just like a scavenger hunt. In partners, they prepare a mini book talk to present their book to the rest of the group. After about five minutes, each pair presents their book to the group. In that way, the students are more engaged in the process and all the books in one category are presented in one orientation session. This has worked very well for me and for our students.

Evelyne Altcheck
Mazo de la Roche Public School
York Region District School Board

When introducing a new book I search YouTube and other Internet sites for unique online resources I can integrate into a short presentation. For example, when I introduced James Patterson’s *Maximum Ride* series I found a movie trailer on YouTube and a video clip featuring the author. Patterson’s website also featured five chapters from one of his books in an audio format. The sign-up list for this series is still growing, and the books have been circulating since the fall.

Randy Gould, Teacher-Librarian
Sir Alexander Mackenzie Senior Public School
Toronto District School Board

Student engagement and enthusiasm is key when introducing new material. My go-to strategy? Good marketing and creativity! This is evident when older, seemingly forgotten novels are suddenly reinvigorated when labelled “vintage” and are showcased on a shelf dubbed “Old School.”

Catchy expressions also prove to be quite motivational, like telling my students to “give a chapter a chance!” encourages them to read the first chapter from a novel and take it for a “test drive.” If they still don’t engage with the text? No problem – a new novel is always waiting to be explored!

Finally, the game “Random Quote” is something that I created in order to encourage greater student attention

and interest. When introducing a new text, I will choose an exciting passage and read it aloud to stimulate discussion questions from students – who said that? What happened? Where? Depending on your audience the level of questioning can be adjusted to support and enhance inferencing, synthesizing... whatever your current literary focus may be!

Marla Zupan, Teacher-Librarian and Grade 7/8 teacher
St. Bonaventure Catholic School
Toronto Catholic District School Board

Here are two things that we do to introduce new books to our staff and students:

With all credit going to an idea published in LMC, we send out a list of new titles (loosely group by subject) by email a few times a year. We include the name of a fake author/title (always a pun, courtesy of one of our library staff); for example, *Paris in the Winter* by Francis White. People are encouraged to email us with the “fake,” and all correct answers go in a draw for home-baked goodies. We average 40 responses each time – which means there are at least 40 people at our school who have cast their eye over our list of new acquisitions! This generates more than a few inquiries and items checked out.

We also hold a book display/mobile checkout in our staff common room once or twice a year (before Christmas/March/summer breaks), to show off the great books we have to many of the staff that say they have no time to come to the library. It’s a great social time, and stimulates a lot of conversations about books, authors, and issues.

Shelagh Straughn, Librarian &
Assistant Housemaster of Wright House
Trinity College School
Port Hope, Ontario

Helping students make the connection between a new feature film and the original novel can create a renewed enthusiasm for award-winning novels. The feature film *Because of Winn-Dixie* had just been released in the theatres. Many students and teachers were unaware the Newbery Honor Book had been published five years prior to the release of the film. I took advantage of my library news segment at our school assembly by speaking in role as India Opal, the irresistible 10-year-old heroine in the novel. After my presentation, I was overwhelmed with requests for the novel. I eventually had to buy additional copies. Teachers also mentioned the entire audience was hanging onto every word I said.

Wendy D’Angelo, Teacher-Librarian