Genrefying: Tales from the Trenches

Laura Gardner and Wendy Garland
@LibrarianMsG @dancelibrarian
Pros

- More student-centered organization system
- Easier browsing
- Students understand genres better
Cons

- Why ditch Dewey? This has worked for many years.
- Well established system used in libraries all over - shouldn’t we be helping our students learn to use this?
- Time-consuming
Inspiration at DMS

- Students kept asking why the library wasn't organized like a bookstore with a fantasy or sports section!
- I saw the impact of genrefying the Biographies
- I finally got an assistant and felt ready to take on the task
- Fiction only this year, but nonfiction got a HUGE weed and some re-labeling to put books with similar topics (ex: all Ancient Greek books in 938 instead of with buildings, medicine, military)
Step 1 at DMS: label ALL the books...
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Left spine label and decided on genres
Step 2: Moving day!

**First**... Sports, horror, historical fiction and mystery - carts

Fantasy/scifi A - G - tables

Realistic - move it down!

**Then**...put the fantasy/scifi back

**Then** the rest!
In the thick of it...what a mess!
Moving took 1 day

3 adults, 19 students and many sore muscles later...DONE!
Kids were so excited to be part of it!
Step 3: Labeling

We made an art contest for kids to design our new signage, but results weren’t what we were hoping for. Here were our temporary signs.
Step 3: Labeling

The literacy coach made me beautiful new signage that somewhat matches the spine label genre stickers.
Step 4: Sharing the news

 Surprise!
The library is now organized by genre in the fiction section.

Realistic
Fantasy/SF
Historical
Mystery
Horror
Sports (behind graphic novels).

We will change info in the library catalog over the next few months. Ask for help if you need it.

@olivia_denis nice pose olive tree
Step 5: Changing the catalog

bo-ring. No quick way to do this in Koha (MassCat).

Changing location as books are returned to the library.
The inspiration - Fairy Tales

- Location confuses students
- Circulation very low
Step 1 - Weeding

- Weeded half of the unread collection
- Generated reports
- Volunteers found
- I reviewed

- Generated reports of books that didn’t circulate in 10 years
- Volunteers pulled
- I reviewed
Step 2 - Labeling

- Created labels on colored paper
- Left Dewey on the spine
Labeling
Relocation

- More appropriately located next to picture books
- More browseable - fewer titles to browse
Assurance (my cheerleaders)

MSLA Twitter Chat
March 18, 2014
The test
Before - the alphabetized fiction section

Pros
- Easy to locate the specific book you are looking for

Cons
- Not browseable
- Students need me “Mrs. Garland, where are the animal books?”
The goal

- More browse-ability within genres
- Student independence
- “New” books of interest are discovered
Step 1 at Avery: Categorize the books

- Adventure
- Animals
- Fantasy
- Historical fiction
- Humor
- Mystery
- Poetry
- Realistic
- Scary/Unexplained
- Science fiction
- Sports
The catalog
The challenges

- Where does this book go?
- "Helpful" volunteers incorrectly labeled books
- Which sections belong where?
- Books that cross genres
- Improper shelving by volunteers
Which genre should I choose?

- Where will your students expect to find it?
- Ask student helpers!
Student responses

“I think it is very easy to find things in the library.”

“I found new books.”
Student responses

The Box: Genres in the Library
The stats

- 25.44% increase in circulation
- 44 hours
- 2 volunteers (+ me)
- 2 children
The takeaways

- Don’t wait -- jump in!
- Not as time-consuming as anticipated
- Students can and will help - “Where would you look for this book?”
- TOTALLY worth the time -- much more independent browsing
- Volunteers will make mistakes...