Connected
Library

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QR Codes in the Library

Those small, pixilated squares (also known as QR Codes) have popped up everywhere in the media and libraries have started using them as well.

So what can these little QR Codes offer to libraries and teacher-librarians? They can offer choice in how teacher-librarians share information, choice in how students access information, and choice in how students might share their learning on a particular topic or assignment.

They contain information that when read by a QR Code Scanner on a mobile device, will take you directly and instantly to specific pieces of information. Teachers wishing to create QR Codes need to use a QR Code Generator. QR Codes can link to websites, videos, documents, or podcasts.

The following websites offer just a taste of how teacher-librarians and libraries are using QR Codes to augment their traditional library resources and programming.

ACCESSING INFORMATION

From Tech Trend to Teaching Tool: Taking the QR Code Plunge!
http://bit.ly/TY2l8y

This blog asks readers to consider how QR Codes might fit into the library. The author challenges teacher-librarians to think about how students are using and accessing both the print and virtual resources available in the library and suggests ways QR Codes might encourage students to engage more readily in their library experiences.

QR Codes in the Elementary Classroom & Library Too!
http://slidesha.re/PSqh1h

This first resource, written by Gwyneth Jones (also known as the Daring Librarian), describes what a QR Code is and how to create a QR Code. She then offers a wide variety of ideas for using QR Codes in the library including linking to websites, videos, podcasts, book reviews, author pages, and blog posts.

Library Scavenger Hunt
http://www.thedaringlibrarian.com/2011/03/qr-code-quest-library-scavenger-hunt.html#uds-search-results

In this Library Scavenger Hunt created for English Language Learners, Gwyneth Jones links creative commons images and clues to QR Codes which she then posts throughout the library. Students complete this QR Code Scavenger Hunt as an interactive and fun way of orienting themselves to the resources and routines of the school library.

Promoting your School Library using QR Codes
http://www.thedaringlibrarian.com/2011/09/qr-code-scanning-for-parents.html

Gwyneth also challenges teacher-librarians to promote and share what is happening in their library with the parent community. In this post, she shares an example of how she uses QR Codes to promote the school library with the wider parent community.

Library Virtual Tour
http://www.lawrence.edu/library/tour/

Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin gives patrons a virtual tour of their library by posting QR Codes in different sections of the library. When

Abilence Christian Universiy (ACU) Library: Photo Gallery
http://www.flickr.com/photos/aculibrary/tags/mobiletagging/

In this Flickr Photo Gallery, Abilence Christian Universiy (ACU) Library demonstrates how they use QR Codes to promote library events, link to various "how to" videos, and to share themed book lists and "related reads." There are lots of great ideas for accessing important information around the library.

students scan the QR Code, they are linked to information about that particular area of the library as well as a map of the facility.

Collection of YouTube Videos: QR Codes in the Library
http://bit.ly/Pt8Nsk

In the first video in this collection, the target audience is students. The librarian explains the purpose for the QR Codes posted around the library and how to access the information using mobile devices. Another video discusses how you might link students to book reviews or additional information about a book by adding a QR Code to its cover. Watch this series of videos to get lots of ideas for using QR Codes in your library.

STUDENT LEARNING

Transliteracy — QR Codes and Art
http://langwitches.org/blog/2011/11/22/transliteracy-qr-codes-and-art/

QR Code Art Gallery
http://blogs.southfieldchristian.org/pixelsandpaintbrushes/2012/05/29/qr-code-art-gallery-superheros/
Both these sites share examples of how to turn a traditional bulletin board display into an interactive learning experience for students using QR Codes. In both examples, students include a QR Code with their art work and writing. The QR Code links to audio recordings of their stories and poetry.

Classmates visit the display of work, scan the QR Code using a mobile device, and complete an activity linked to the display.

Engage Their Minds: QR Codes
http://engagetheirminds.wordpress.com/category/qr-codes-2/

Twelve Ideas for Teaching with QR Codes
http://www.appitic.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83:twelve-ideas-for-teaching-with-qr-codes&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=302

These two sites share a number of student projects and ideas for integrating QR Codes in student work. Examples include links to student book reviews, online portfolios and resumes, QR Code classroom coupons, interactive bulletin boards, and a QR Code year end reflection.

READY TO GET STARTED? USING QR CODE GENERATORS

In order to create a QR Code, you need to use a QR Code Generator. While there are many free generators available, here are a few that may pique your interest.

Go QR.me
http://goqr.me/

This is your basic QR Code generating site. You can choose the size of the QR Code, edit the colour, choose an embed code, link to text or a URL.

Tag my Doc
www.tagmydoc.com

This free service adds a QR Code to documents making it easier to share and retrieve documents. The user uploads a file and a QR Code and a URL is created for that document. The QR Code can then be included directly on a file for printing or sending, downloaded as just the QR Code, or shared via email, Facebook or Twitter.

Voice Memo
http://qrvoice.net/

Type a sentence of up to 100 characters and the generated QR Code will speak your phrase when scanned. This is available in a variety of languages.

SnapTags™
http://www.spyderlynk.com/

SnapTags are customizable QR Codes that can be purchased by businesses to enable their logos to become interactive. ∎

Dear Rita Resourceful,
I feel pretty bad about my total neglect in the buying of gay fiction and LGBTTQ resources at our high school. I'm the librarian at an arts-focused high school and gay students make up a larger proportion of our population compared to other high schools in our region. I'd like to purchase some suitable resources but am anxious about how to begin.

Signed,
The Rainbow-friendly Librarian

Dear Rainbow-friendly Librarian:
A great place to begin improving any high school collection is by checking the age and content of your sex-ed books. Your collection should include:

- Texts with inclusive language
- Texts with tips on safer sex for same-sex partners
- Texts from multiple perspectives (not just straight)
- Titles recommended by progressive sex-ed organizations in your community

Dear Rita,
Until recently our school's collection of leveled books used for guided reading were housed in a small storage room. The room is now scheduled to be our new vice principal's office and our principal wants the leveled book collection moved to the library. I have mixed feelings about accepting the books. What's your take, Rita?

Signed,
Lev L. Quandary

Dear Lev,
Do you have a choice about whether or not to accept the books? If you do have some say in the matter, you might want to suggest another teacher-only area of the school. One of the best aspects of school library as a learning commons is that kids can take out resources. Guided reading texts by their nature must only be taken out by teachers and it's a shame to waste precious floor area on resources that kids can't borrow.

Dear Rita,
Middle school students just don't take out books! They'd rather surf the

> ❝ **As a librarian, you help students locate the texts they crave, wherever they may be.**

We welcome any questions you may have for Rita Resourceful. To protect Rita's identity, please email them to tingleditor@gmail.com, with the subject Ask Rita, and we'll be sure to pass them along!

net than even glance at the books on the shelves. They have a point. The dynamic nature of online resources with hyperlinks, search functions, embedded audio video, maps and custom graphics is immensely captivating. Are libraries passé?

Signed,
R. Buksdun

Dear R. Buksdun,
The advent of new communication technologies has perhaps diminished the importance of the book and with it, libraries housed in buildings, but

what has not diminished is the need for well-written, authoritative and engaging reading material. As a librarian, you help students locate the texts they crave, wherever they may be.

Dear Rita,
I'm taking over a library in a K-5 school where there are very few shelves but a lot of bins. Some of the bins are organized by genre, some by author, and some by subject and some by popularity. I'm reluctant to change the whole system because the students are used to it, but I'm also worried that this will be a shelving nightmare. To bin or not to bin…that is my question.