

Reading Conversations: Building a Community of Readers

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Image: Unshelved

Why?

Build and support a reading culture that encourages literacy and a lifelong love of reading.

GOAL: Increase annual circulation by 10% by 2020.

OBJECTIVE: Increase Whatcom County residents' recognition that WCLS fosters their love of books, reading, and sharing stories in all forms.

STRATEGIES:

1. Develop consistent, cohesive message about WCLS being the BEST place for books; all programs and events have a book/story component.
2. Enhance staff competencies related to reading & reader conversations so the public gets excellent service and thinks of WCLS as a resource for books and information about books.
3. Position reading at the center of WCLS's service to youth.
4. Embrace book clubs. Support private clubs and establish library-sponsored discussion groups
5. Assist community partners in increasing adult literacy.

Why did we focus on readers' advisory? Support WCLS strategic plan area #1 Reading by "enhancing staff competencies related to reading and readers' advisory"

- Excellent service
- WCLS seen as resource for books and info about books

Why Reading Conversations? Readers' advisory has "expert" connotation, intimidating to staff. RC is peer-to-peer. We learn from others.

Start where they are!

How?

I'm glad I can talk to you about fictional characters as if they were real, and have you still think I'm sane.



your eCards
someecards.com

2016:

- Reader Bingo Challenge for all staff – prizes: ribbons to attach to nametag – Reading Superhero for bingo, Reading is My Superpower for full card
- RC workshop sessions for reference staff – 3 hr
- RC workshops for all other staff on talking about books, reading resources – 1 hr
- RC internal blog posts – resources, techniques, tips, sharing titles
- Internal RC wiki – competencies - Readers' Advisory: general training resources (Seattle Public Library's RA conversations facilitated by Nancy Pearl), links to genre information & blogs, children- and teen-specific links

2017:

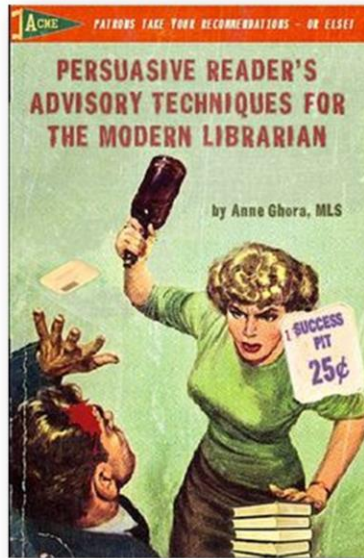
- Another reading challenge for staff (passport focusing on genres?)
- Genre- and resource-specific workshops – in person, may develop online quick-tips sessions

Where?



- Encourage all staff to talk about books and reading among themselves and with patrons
- Share titles and authors on internal message board/whiteboard
- Talk about books/audiobooks/magazines at staff meetings – just 1 or 2 sentences
- Start Reading Challenge among branch or dept. staff - post bingo cards to see what everyone is reading
- Post reviews on library's catalog (WCLS has BiblioCommons, using generic branch accounts so not tied to any individual staff person)
- Counting Reading Conversations (like annual week-long reference count) with patrons, patron-initiated or staff-initiated, last week in June and again after staff development day in October
- Staff development day in October with keynote David Wright, plus RC workshops

Expectations



[Pinterest.com/baslade/i-is-for-librarian](https://www.pinterest.com/baslade/i-is-for-librarian)

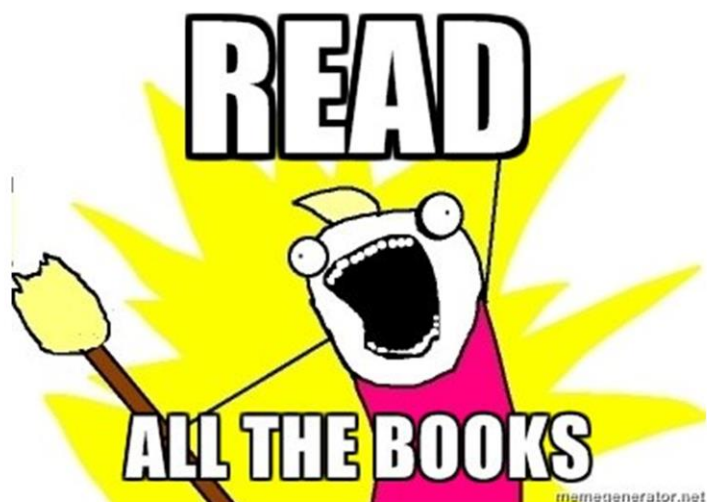
- All staff involved – across levels, departments, public/non-public service areas
- Professional manner
- Ongoing conversations – not just one & done
- What are expectations in your library? What can you do in your job/library? Or with family/friends?

Barriers



- Time
- Privacy – invitation by customer as opening to discuss reading/watching/listening
- What are barriers in your library?

Going forward



What will you do?

- Read a book in 5 minutes
- Discuss with supervisor/management at my library

Thank you!



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