

# **The Library Environment**

The library resource centre should provide a dynamic, stimulating and motivational environment for students and teachers.

To ensure the library resource center supports the learning environment for students, consideration should be given to:

- Resources
- Furniture
- Signposting
- Access policies (for staff and students)
- Accessories (e.g. plants, cushions, soft toys)
- Information technology (including cabling, wiring, etc)
- Space for resources, users, work area and service provision

Effective use of each of these aspects will enhance the quality of the library service provided.

## **Displays**

Displays are an integral part of any school activity or situation and are well suited to the library resource centre environment due to the availability (in most cases) of both space and resources.

A good display is the result of careful thought and planning.

- Why have displays?
- Who can help with displays?
- Display Formats
- Display Strategies
- Display Photo Gallery
- Display Planner

## **Why have displays?**

Displays can:

- develop understandings of curriculum or learning area content
- inform and explain
- enhance the appearance of the LRC and create an atmosphere conducive to learning
- publicise resources
- motivate users
- highlight school and community activities
- provide a showplace for students' work; and
- direct users.

## **Who can help with displays?**

- class teachers (and/or class roster)
- Library Officer
- students (voluntary or via assignment/task set)
- parent helpers
- community members
- children with special interests
- community agencies/groups
- commercial providers
- movie theatres
- other resource teachers

## **Student Involvement**

- Whole Class/Class roster
- Voluntary
- Coordinated by resource teacher with class input e.g. “Meet our Year 1s”.  
May include photos, pieces of art/craft, interests, hobbies, favourite toys etc.
- Every class or class member contributes a piece of work
- Assignments completed

## ***Individual/Group***

- Children with special interests e.g. rock collecting – includes samples, information & supplement with library resources
- Library Monitors plan, locate resources and set up displays
- Students create a display in answering a focus question
- Set task of creating a display (e.g. author of the week) as an assignment
- Allocate Learning Area displays to teachers with responsibility for the respective curriculum area.

## ***Parent/Community***

- Allocate volunteers to take on responsibility for one section of the library
- Invite different community members to contribute to displays for special events e.g. school’s anniversary
- Organise to rotate displays with other libraries
- Join organisations which provide displays e.g. One World Centre
- Organise a workshop to design letter banks, signs, pictures etc. for future use.

## **Display Formats**

The style of display chosen will depend on its focus. At all times we should consider the purpose of the display – What is it we are hoping to achieve?

- *Topic/Theme*  
Base display on a theme or topic e.g. pirates, seasons, creepy crawlies  
Use ideas from places for excursions, etc See links from:  
[www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmisis/eval/technology/internet/int36.htm](http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmisis/eval/technology/internet/int36.htm)

- *Learning Area*  
The display may support a specific learning area or learning process. These displays provide the ideal opportunities for collaboration with class / learning area teachers eg Society and Environment – Different World Environments  
*Special Events*  
Special events are highly relevant and may be features to stimulate imagination and spark interests.  
Promote resources relevant to the event.  
Link to school excursions / incursions / guest speakers.
- *Special Occasions*  
Special occasions such as the Olympics, Education Week, WA Week, Red Nose Day, etc may be highlighted.
- *Introducing an Author*  
For example: Meet Graeme Base  
Author of the Week  
Author's birthdays
- *Introducing a Series*  
For example: "Encyclopedia Brown" by Donald Sobol
- *Signposting of Permanent Features*  
New arrivals....  
This week....  
How to....
- *Literary Genre*  
Poetry  
Folk / fairy tales / fables / myths / legends  
Mystery and Adventure  
Humour  
Science Fiction  
Realism  
Fantasy
- *Community*  
Local events, problems, activities, resources  
Institutions, agencies, sporting and ethnic clubs  
Experts in various fields
- *Demonstrations*  
Invited guests to demonstrate various procedures / skills e.g. pottery, first aid, spinning
- *Resource Generated*  
New resources  
Posters, drawings, craft  
Neglected resources  
Items of interest e.g. antiques  
Have items brought from home (this is a rich source of materials!)  
*Historical Display*  
Feature an item as it changes through time: e.g. telephone, technology in general  
Feature life in a different period of time  
Get ideas, resources, help from the local Historical Society or Museum
- *Children's Inquiries*  
Base a display on answering questions posed by children.

## **Display Strategies**

### *Select labels/headings*

- Relate headings to students' interests – may include: a catch phrase, quotation, saying, proverb, slogan, statement or date
- Focus questions, keywords and explosion charts / concept maps help add interest, poems, songs, extracts from resources
- Store all letters created in a "letter bank"
- Create large letters / labels using the Overhead Projector.
- Have letter templates that are used to create letters of different colours and textures.

### *Select resources*

- Use students to help locate resources
- Discard old, unappealing resources (keep pictures from these discarded resources if they can be used for displays).
- Include a variety of formats; book, non-book, equipment, realia, moving items
- Use old calendars, postcards etc to add colour
- Household items e.g boxes, chairs, tubs, pots

### *Locate area*

- Small displays – bookshelf, window ledge, empty corner, table top, cabinets
- Large displays – walls, central floor area, mobile and / or fixed display boards, hang from ceiling
- Regularly shift / relocate display areas
- *Display backdrops*
- Fabric - use large pieces of hessian, velvet, cotton or felt, curtains, sheets or tablecloths
- Paper and Card - crepe paper, wallpaper, foil, corrugated card, brenex paper
- Props - screens, boxes, tables, polystyrene, trellis, fishing net, bamboo etc
- Stands - wire book stands, pegboard
- Fasteners - double-sided tape, plastic sleeves, rubber bands, Pins, plastic strips with Velcro
- Pictures from old calendars

### *Display Borders*

There are a wide range of materials that can be used to create effective borders:

#### Commercial borders

- Wide ribbon
- Lengths of calico, chiffon or other fabric
- Stems of leaves, branches etc
- Coloured / patterned cardboard or origami paper
- Twisted crepe paper or streamers
- Repetitive patterns
- Laminated napkins
- Circular paper
- Any thematic shape (eg rabbits, frogs etc)
- Paper plates

## **Useful Aids**

It is always handy to have a ready supply of items available to ensure the quick and effective creation of displays. The following items could be considered your “First Aid Kit” for quick and easy displays! A letter bank (keep it in an expandable file

- Self sticking Velcro
- Large dressmaking pins
- Double-sided adhesive tape
- Glue sticks
- PVA glue
- Blutac
- Staple Gun
- Nylon Fishing Line
- Bookstands

## **Keeping Records**

- Displays take time and effort to create so where ever possible you should try to retain / preserve your efforts.
- Materials used for one display can often be kept and recycled for future displays
- Take photos of your displays – these photos are not just a visual record but a trigger of ideas for other displays
- Any lettering that you use should be kept and used again. Keep in a “letter bank”. (A concertina file is a great way to store and access letters)
- Display planners – help you to plan your displays and can then be kept as a record for future reference.

## **Display Resources**

For copies of the displays templates select from the list below

[Calendar for Australian Schools](#)

[www.edna.edu.au/noticeboards/noticelist.html?id=1981](http://www.edna.edu.au/noticeboards/noticelist.html?id=1981)

[Display Planner](#)

[Library Signposts](#)