

BOOK LOOKS

Lynette Buck

Pleasant Grove High School

buckl779@alpine.k12.ut.us

Preparation:

Select about 20-25 books from various genres and set them in an easily accessible area...on a book truck or work area, labeling each pile of books (this is so you can replenish a genre easily as books get checked out by various classes).

Table labels designating genres Examples: Anthropology, Historical, Poetry/Prose, How-To, Sports, Graphic Novels, Biographies, Psychology, Mythology/Folklore, Non-fiction, etc.

Materials:

8-10 tables with chairs at each table

8-12 books for each table, categorized by genre

reading acquainting slip for each student (pencil or pens available if needed)

Depending on the size of the class and teacher requests: 8-10 tables with at least four more books on the table than will be in the group. (A group of five should have about 10-12 books from the genre, groups of three should have at least 7 or 8, etc.).

This activity is done immediately after I give my library/media orientation spiel. It's called "Book Looks."

Ask the students if they are familiar with 'speed dating.' (Where, in a select setting, members of opposite genders, one gender sits while the other moves from one small table to another to get 'acquainted' and see if they want to connect at a later time). Then I explain they are going to be 'speed read acquainting, book looking.' I have set 10-12 books from several different genres on labeled tables and the teacher groups students, 3-6 per table, depending on the size of the class. I explain that if they will either read the fly leaf, the back cover, or turn randomly to the inside and read a paragraph, they will know right away whether the book is on their reading level, and possibly what degree of interest they may have in the book or genre. Students move from table to table and become "acquainted" with at least one of the books within a three minute time period..

(The timer is set for 3 minutes but they are asked to switch books at 1/1/2 minutes). This gives them time to "visit" with another book before they are required to switch. If they have interest in a book, they write down the information for further 'looks' or for check-out at the end of the activity. When the timer goes off, they rotate to a new genre.

Depending on the class, it can either have all non-fiction (honors or current enrollment) or a mixture of fiction and non-fiction. No one is allowed to select a book for check-out until they have visited all the genres. Then, they may go back to a table and take a book to check out for reading.

When teachers asked students for feedback regarding this activity, they reported that on a scale of 1-5, five being the highest, most students gave it a 5. We'll do this yearly as part of the orientation as the consensus was it is a great way to introduce students to the library, the collection, and genres most students would never have given a second "look."