Dazzling Displays & Rave Reviews

by Leah Krotz, Director
Belleville Public Library
September 26, 2013
“Library merchandising isn’t just putting a book on a display table. Library merchandising is showcasing your entire collection in the most appealing and organized manner possible with an artistic eye for detail. This is accomplished through thoughtful merchandise selection and placement, appealing displays, and housekeeping.”

~Jenny LaPerriere and Trish Christiansen,

*Merchandising Made Simple: Using Standards and Dynamite Displays to Boost Circulation*
Other things we do...

- Arrange stacks to entice browsers
- Un-clutter the front desk
- Weed, weed, weed!
- Mend and clean books all the time
- Put new book covers on books as needed
- Spine stickers for genres
- Series labels for series fiction
- Keep books straight and neat on shelves
Things to consider when creating displays...

- Purpose
- Audience
- Mood
- Location
- Relevance/timeliness
- Time
- Expense
- Duration
- Security
- Diversity
Design Principles to consider...

- Color
- Accessibility
- Balance
- White space
- Repetition and uniformity
- Focus
Components of a dazzling display...

- Library materials
- Basic structure
- Background
- Signage
- Props
- Extras
Library materials...

- Theme
- Format
- Attractiveness
- Availability
Basic structure...

- Tables
- Cubes
- Displayers
- Display case
- Slatwall
- Troughs
- Shelves
- Ends of stacks
- Tops of stacks
- Walls
- Windows
- Book carts
- Benches
- Even hay bales!
Background...

- Fabric
- Plastic
- Paper
- Carpet
- Astroturf
- Cotton batting (snow or cobwebs)
- Sand
- Objects (beach towels, tutus, quilts)
Signage...

- May or may not be necessary
- Acrylic sign holders
- Posters
- Whiteboard/blackboard
- Small captions
- Reviews
- Bookmarks
The possibilities are endless!

- Seasonal decorations
- Flowers
- Tools
- Cookware
- Clothes
- Sports equipment
- Toys
- Student projects
- Even live animals!
Extras

- Bookmarks
- Brochures
- Program materials
Your library display tool kit...

- Hammer
- Tape measure
- Poster putty
- Utility knife
- Scissors
- Fishline
- Store fixtures
- Pins
Where to get free (or cheap) stuff...

- Movie theaters
- Video or music stores
- Publishers
- Museums
- Patrons
- In the library storage room
- Staff
- In your kids’ toy chest
- Retail stores
- Garage sales
- Pageants, recitals and programs
Where to get ideas...

- Brainstorming
- While weeding or shelving
- Web
- Other libraries
- Bookstores
- Community events
- Programs
- What’s in the news
- Popular culture
- Library vendors
- 4-H reading projects
- Seasons/holidays
- Calendars of events
- Volunteers & patrons
Your library display tool kit...

- Hammer
- Tape measure
- Poster putty
- Utility knife
- Scissors
- Fishline
- Store fixtures
- Pins
Where to get ideas...

- Brainstorming
- While weeding or shelving
- Web
- Other libraries
- Bookstores
- Community events
- Programs
- What’s in the news
- Popular culture
- Library vendors
- 4-H reading projects
- Seasons/holidays
- Calendars of events
- Volunteers & patrons
Leah’s List of Display Ideas...

- Barbie dolls and books
- Quilt books with a quilt or quilt blocks
- “Beat the Cold...Read Something Bold” with bright colored books and bright cellophane background
- “Quack Open a Good Book” with stuffed ducks and maybe duck books
- “Take Flight...Read” with model planes or paper airplanes
- “I’m Buggy for Books” with fake bugs
- “Share a Book” with two dolls or animals sharing a book
- “Beach Reads” with beach balls, beach towels, beach tote, bucket & spade
- Art books with paintbrushes and palette
- “Hang Out and Read” with palm trees, vine with monkeys hanging from it
- “Caution...Readers at Work’ with crime tape, posters, cones, signs (2/06)
- True Crime books with police tape (9/13)
- “Warm up with books” with quilt, blanket or mugs of hot chocolate
- Cookbooks with wooden spoons, wisks, etc.
- New Year theme: “I Resolve to...Read More Books, Try Something New, Read to my Kids”
- Biographies with enlarged pictures of famous people
- Civil War (4/09)
- Pioneer stories
- Featured author
- Local history/genealogy
- Magazines (10/07)
- Newberry and/or Caldecott award winners
- Diet books with tape measure (1/06)
- Movies with film reels (2/05)
- “Read a Movie”... books made into movies
- “Reading is Fun” giant Cat in the Hat, Dr. Seuss books (3/13)
- “Round up a Good Read” use with cowboy hats or lariat and horse books or westerns
- “Snow Many Books” with quilt batting for snow and winter books
- Repair books with toy tools
- Medical thrillers with toy doctor stuff
- Farm books with toy implements
- Livestock books with toy farm animals (8/13)
- Fishing books with lures
- Computer books with old CD-ROMS (4/09)
- Music CDs with old vinyl records (11/12)
- Patriotic books with flags or bunting (7/13)
- Racing books with checkered flags (8/06)
- Train books with train set (especially cool on table with train running around them!)
- Kansas books with sunflowers (1/06)
- County Fair theme...ribbons, flags, etc. (8/08)
- Truck books and construction videos with toy trucks, road signs, etc. (3/06)
- Valentine books with stuffed bears, hearts, etc. 2/06
- Pet Care Books with stuffed animals 6/06
- Old maps as background for travel books or audio books, w/ toy cars 7/06
- “Dog days” of summer...dog bones, paw prints, etc.
- “Pet Picks”...staff’s pets’ favorite books...display photo of pet and sign with a paw print
- Beat the heat...books with the words “ice,” “snow,” “cold,” etc. in the title
- “Too hot to cook” display of light cookbooks, such as salads, sandwiches and frozen desserts
- “Potluck favorites” display of cookbooks with red-checked tablecloth, picnic basket, etc.
- Food preservation...display of canning, drying, freezing food books with wooden spoons and canning lids, jars, etc. (9/06)
- "Little House on the Prairie" display with log cabin (8/06)
- Could also use non-fiction pioneer books with log cabin
- "Christmas in July" display of holiday craft books...decorate with Christmas theme
- "Think Pink" with pink books (Teen 07)
- "True Blue" with blue books (Teen 07)
- "A Good Book Never Goes Out of Style" with hats, gloves, costume jewelry, Football theme...have poster in basement, use small footballs, etc.
- March Madness...basketball books, etc. (3/09)
- Green books...used Feb/March 09
- Books to Read While Your Husband Watches the Super Bowl
- “So many books~so little time”...books with Time, Minute, Hour, etc. in the title
- “You won’t believe what we found in the library”
- “Too Good to Miss”
- “Get a Life” or “Famous Faces” for Biographies
- Librarians’ Favorites
- School’s Out” use books on crafts, outdoor activities, camping, summer sports, etc.
- “Wild, Wild West” ...westerns, use cowboy hats, bandanas, lariat, etc.
- Use “Help Wanted” section of newspaper as background for job search materials
Use sheet music as background for display of music books or music CDs
“Worth a second look” with various eye cut-outs
Match staff baby pictures with name and favorite children’s book (4/07)
Wooden crates with packing excelsior “New Books Have Arrived”
Mardi Gras or New Year’s theme with beads, balloons, masks, confetti
Use “Funny” glasses with noses and mustaches with theme “Keep your nose in a good book”
“Books I Want for Christmas” have patrons or staff answer and display with books and wrapped packages
Military books with toy soldiers and/or flags
Treasure chest...use a trunk with books spilling out
Use a stepladder to display books on home improvement (4/11)
Map of a country with books, etc. and items that pertain such as flags, dolls, souvenirs
Pirate books with swords, hat, and gold plastic coins (5/13)
Spring cleaning...household hints, organizing books...use dustpan, mop, spray bottle, etc.
Use a saddle and other tack with a horse, rodeo or cowboy theme
“Chicken Soup” books with soup pot, wooden spoons or cans of Campbell’s soup
Bird guides, birdwatching with nests, binoculars, birdhouses
Vintage suitcase and/or globe to display travel books
- Car care books with toy cars
- “Chick lit” with stuffed chicks
- Fairy Tales or Fractured Fairy Tales with witch’s hat, princess crown,
- Game books with playing cards
- Financial planning books with play money (3/09)
- Jane Austen display...flowers, vintage looking items, lace or doilies
- Puzzle or riddle books with puzzle pieces
- “Take me Away,” romance books with candles, wineglasses, flowers
- Party planning materials with party hats, noisemakers, balloons
- Books about royalty...tiaras, purple velvet backdrop (11/08)
- Tearjerkers...tissue boxes and tissue in each book
- “Bet You Can’t Read Just One” display series books with empty Lay’s potato chip bags
- “Hungry for a good book?” Use play food
- Sewing books with fabric scraps, buttons, etc.
- “Treat Yourself to a good book” with candy or candy bar wrappers
- “Read a Latte” or “Reading is my Cup of Tea” with steaming mugs
- “Reading is a Scream” with ghosts or scary faces (10/09)

Please help me brainstorm more ideas!
I’d love to hear about or see pictures of YOUR displays!
Send to: leahkrotz@nckcn.com
Resources...

- Merchandising Made Simple: Using Standards and Dynamite Displays to Boost Circulation ~ Jenny LaPerriere and Trish Christiansen
- Public Libraries Image Handbook ~ Kevin Hennah
- Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping ~ Paco Underhill
- The Responsive Public Library: How to Develop and Market a Winning Collection ~ Sharon L. Baker and Karen L. Wallace
- Creating the Customer-Driven Library: Building on the Bookstore Model ~ Jeannette A. Woodward
Web Sites...

- http://www.sldirectory.com/cal.html#festival
  (Tons of events for every day of the year)
  (Lots of resources for signage, display and marketing)
  (A photo set on Flickr of library displays)
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NZ0t6BkhUg
  (Emotionally intelligent signage)
- http://schoollibrarydisplays.blogspot.com/
  (Blog of creative displays...most would work in public libraries, too)
- http://www nwcentral org/files/Presentation%20on%20creating%20displays.ppt
  (A PowerPoint by two Seattle librarians with some good ideas and pics)
- http://pinterest.com/LeahKrotz/library-display-ideas/
  (Pinterest board where I pin display ideas from other libraries)
- http://vimeo.com/14239008
  (Video archive of a similar program I presented for WebJunction Kansas)