



Features of an Accessible and Inviting Classroom Library

Guiding Question:

How can you develop your classroom library and its utilization?

One of the main purposes of an accessible and inviting classroom library is to motivate students to read *during school* and *at home*.

Organization

- books on shelves, in bins, facing outward
- bins clearly marked and categorized by:
 - genre (historical fiction, poetry, graphic novels)
 - topic/theme (geology, friendship, sports, identity)
 - author (Polacco, Meyers)
 - series (Bluford High, Dear America, Judy B. Jones)
- books are individually labeled/stickered for easy return to the proper bin
- “favorites” displayed (teacher/student recommendations)

Books

- large quantity of books (400-500 titles recommended)
- wide range of text by genre
- reflective of curriculum
- varied range of reading levels
- responsive to students' interests

Utilization

- check out system in place (clip board, sign in/out, pocket chart)
- students have regular access and time to select books
- anchor charts guide students in book selection

Investment

- students take part in organization/ set up
- student librarians help maintain, check in/out books
- students recommend books to one another

Visual Appeal

- comfortable sitting areas (pillows, rug, soft chairs)
- clean and neat
- attractive signs
- plants, artwork, posters



Teacher Self Assessment of Classroom Library Practices

Questions for consideration:

Read the document, **Features of an Accessible and Inviting Classroom Library**. Use a highlighter and mark the features and practices which you currently utilize. How do you rate your classroom library and related practices?

- Strengths?

- Areas for improvement?

What are your priorities in terms of improving your classroom library so that it will help motivate your students to love reading?

Goal /Activity	Complete by (Date)	Completed on (Date)

Beginning

(Insufficient number of books, not accessible.
Students may not use the library at all or very little.)

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purchase individual copies rather than books sets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start with broad categories initially (fiction, history) and then as more books are acquired, create bins with more narrow categories (fantasy, Civil War)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purchase inexpensive bins at dollar store, IKEA, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple check out system (notebook, binder with students' names /book)• Assign and train students librarians for maintenance/ check in-out
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Label books with stickers/symbols to fit bin categories as the library expands
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire more books: donorschoose.org, Scholastic, thrift stores, wish lists

Intermediate

(Semi-functional: some books and organization, but needs improvement in establishing systems. Students may use the library occasionally and may/may not invest in its use.)

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide broad categories (fiction, history) into bins with more narrow categories (fantasy, Civil War)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Label books with stickers/symbols to fit bin categories as the library expands
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish regular times for students to select and check out books
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple check out system (notebook, binder with students' names /book)• Assign and train students librarians for maintenance/ check in-out
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish time for students to read during the school day• In departmentalized middle schools, coordinate with other teachers so that on any given day, students have at least 20 minutes a day to read during school)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire more books: donorschoose.org, Scholastic, thrift stores, wish lists

Advanced

(Exemplary: sufficient books, organization and systems to motivate readers.
Students use the library regularly and are invested in its utilization.)

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish practice of regular “book talks” given by both teacher and students• Consider developing a rubric (collaboratively with students) for what makes a good “book talk”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If not already done, label books with stickers/symbols to fit bin categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure regular times for students to select and check out books
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple check out system (notebook, binder with students’ names /book)• Assign and train students librarians for maintenance/ check in-out
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure time for students to read during the school day• In departmentalized middle schools, coordinate with other teachers so that on any given day, students have at least 20 minutes a day to read during school)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage students to use library fully by highlighting underutilized bins by “toe dipping”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider assisting other teachers at your school to share your best practices regarding classroom libraries