Digital Citizenship “I Believe” blog entry

My Reflection

by [Betsy Damon](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/user/view.php?id=20904&course=20852) - Tuesday, July 22, 2014, 8:22 PM

* I believe that it is appropriate for a parent to complain about material in the library (digital or hard copy).
  + I think everyone has the right to express their opinion and libraries need to have policies in place that cover what procedure will be followed when someone expresses an unfavorable opinion about material. “Being prepared for questions and concerns is the first and most important step to defusing challenges before they become crises.”(Maycock, 11)
* I believe that library/technology staff should prevent students from choosing materials that are mature for them.
  + While it is fine to try to steer students away from materials by alerting them to some features that might be disturbing (would be like letting a [student](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838)who has shown a phobia of ghosts know that there is a ghost in the story), I don’t believe we should prevent students. One thing we can clarify from our students is why they are interested in a specific book because if it is because “Suzie said I should read it” then we might want to get the students to examine if it is really a book they WANT to read.
* I believe that a students’ right to privacy is as valid as a parent’s right to know.
  + I go back and forth on this one when we talk about circulation. The [history](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838) should not be saved since it doesn’t really serve a valid purpose. Yes, we know what books they checked out and returned but we don’t know if they really read them, their level of understanding, etc. When it comes to items currently checked out, I as the librarian may notice a pattern over time of what is being checked out by being aware of my students and then I could discuss any concern with staff similar to observing someone having trouble walking down a sidewalk and alerting a police officer of a possible problem. Regarding overdue materials, if I as a parent get a bill for $24.95 to replace a lost book, I certainly want to know what the book was so I could try to find it before I shell out the $, so if I am a student who doesn’t want my parent to know what I’m reading then I need to be responsible and make sure the book is returned on time
* I believe that if a student has failed to return a book then he/she should not be allowed to check out additional books. Similarly, if a student abuses the Responsible Use Policy of the district, then access to [school computers](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838) should be denied.
  + This is a case of logical consequences. If you can’t show responsibility for having a book out then you shouldn’t be allowed to take out additional books. This could be modified to have some prescribed restitution actions that would “earn back” or allow restrictions to be temporarily lifted. Maybe students could check out book but the books couldn’t leave the classroom until the missing book came back or until the librarian felt assured that there would be no further missing books. Maybe in the case of access to computers, the student could be required to use a particular computer whose screen is very accessible to an adult that would be overseeing the use. There is a dual edge here. We want the students to learn to be responsible but we also want them to have the materials, information, and access they need to be successful in school.
* I believe that if students become frustrated when they cannot access certain websites then they should be unblocked.
  + I have issues with filters though I understand that they fill a need to provide a sense of security for parents that schools are [monitoring](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838) what their children can access but Johnson points out that filters “[g]ive teachers, librarians, administrators, parents, and legistlators a false sense of security”(130) and if you are a [teacher](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838) and want your students to do [online research](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=201838) about counties in Massachusetts then the group trying to cover Middlesex county may find much of their search blocked. It is also easier to say that students can’t use game websites because of the filter than to determine which of those websites are valuable resources that should be allowed to be used. With the speed that internet sites pop up, it is almost impossible to monitor everything and block only the most extreme sites so we have ***thrown out*** access to valid sites (***the baby***) ***with*** a generalized filter (***the bathwater***!) but Johnson does suggest that we “[b]ase the choice of filters…on features and customizability, and choose the least restrictive settings of the installed filter.”(130)
* I believe that books in the library should be leveled according to instructional reading levels.
  + I am moving into a very progressive library with regards to how it views easy readers. While we commonly associate the “E” on a spine label with “easy reader”, in this library the LMS has used the term “everybody books” instead sharing the philosophy that everybody can read these books from grandparents and parents to young children. This takes the stigma away and makes it acceptable for everybody to check out “E” books! We also have series books in baskets on the tops of the shelves so “Fly Guy” is next to “Magic Tree House.” I believe that color coding similar level books is fine that way if a student knows they liked a “yellow-dot” book then other books with yellow dots should be at the same reading level. I wouldn’t publish what levels the dots refer to instead having children find books from reading group and checking their colored dot. Separating or identifying levels stigmatizes students who may find reading a challenge thereby pushing them away from wanting to read which is what will help make reading less of a challenge and more enjoyable.
* I believe that it is a good idea for teachers to friend their students on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and personal blogs.
  + This is never a good idea and is in many employee handbooks as a big no-no and possibly a situation that could cost the teacher their job. While we want to create a community in our classrooms and schools, we need to keep ourselves out of their home communities. There is too great a burden to be perfect role models 24/7 if they have access to us away from school as well and no one can be perfect all the time. If a student really feels they need to be interacting with you outside the normal everyday, it would be wise to bring in the guidance counselor to see if there is something going on that needs to be addressed or if there is a need and opportunity for positive adult role modeling through a mentoring connection. This would give a structured and appropriately-monitored framework of interaction to protect both the child and the teacher.

Johnson, D. (2013). *The Indispensible Librarian: Surviving and Thriving in school libraries in the information age*. Denver, CO: Linworth.

Maycock, A. (2011). [Issues and Trends in Intellectual Freedom for Teacher Librarians](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/pluginfile.php/452446/course/section/147542/Maycock_-_Issues_and_Trends_in_Intellectual_Freedom.pdf)[.](http://www.plymouth.edu/courses/brokenfile.php#/295964/user/draft/895377829/Maycock_-_Issues_and_Trends_in_Intellectual_Freedom.pdf) Teacher Librarian, 39(1), 8-12.