Jazz Up Your School Tours

Michelle Mallette
Youth Services Librarian
Surrey Public Library
What we’ll cover

- What are your goals?
- What will the kids remember?
- Tips and props
- The Brilliance of Booktalks
- How to be prepared for any tour, any time
- Resources
- Questions? Ask anytime, and at the end
What are your goals?

Library info
- Getting a card
- Avoiding fines
- Borrowing limits
- Return slots
- Online/phone renewals
- Others?

Collection info
- Materials
- Reference vs. circulating
- Online databases
- Web site links
- Others?
What will the kids remember?

In no particular order:

- You can borrow movies and computer games – but not Nintendo games
- It might cost money – reinforced if the items they borrow today are returned late!
- Puppets you use
- Jokes you tell – perhaps a story
- They couldn’t get a card/couldn’t borrow on their card
Your real goal: Make the library visit memorable, enjoyable and informative.
Return on investment!

- Forget the walking tours
- Rules discussion *can* be fun!
- Spend more time on the collection than on the rules
  - Psst! This means booktalking
- *Always* tell or read a story
Don’t Believe Me?

It’s Time to Walk the Walk!
Talkin’ ’bout rules

- Make it a game – but suggest raising hands rather than calling out answers
- Encourage clapping for right answers
- Fines *can* be fun! Make it math
- Be sure to talk about what borrowing means and why
- Emphasize how to avoid fines
Tips & Props: The collection!

- It’s Magic! Cheap at twice the price
- Hats off to a great book
- Cookbooks = mmm, cookies
- Sure winners:
  - Guinness World Records
  - Joke books
  - Toothy picture of a shark/T Rex
Tickle Trunk Props

Look around your library or office for:

- Toothbrush
- Hammer
- Ball or other sports prop
- Plastic food
- Hats – especially Dr. Seuss
- Puppets of any kind
The Brilliance of Booktalks

- Use only borrowable books on hand
- Use only books *you* like
- Make sure you have read the book!
- Fiction and nonfiction
- High-low books
- Practise, and do it with every tour
Booktalking Resources

Nancy Keane
http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/

Booktalks by Ruth Cox
*Tantalizing Tidbits for Teens*
*Tantalizing Tidbits for Middle Schoolers*

Nonfiction booktalks

*Gotcha covered! More nonfiction booktalks to get kids excited about reading by Kathleen Baxter & Michael Dahl*
Choosing a Story

- Funny always works (match with a song)
- Get audience involved: *Mortimer*
- Nonfiction can work well (*White Rabbit’s Color Book, Actual Size*)
- Draw and Tell – the pencil is your friend
- Fractured fairy tales – Grade 2+
- Urban legends for ages 13+
Be Prepared!

- Know 1 knock-knock joke
- Tickle trunk/bag/box
- Magic trick or prop
- Handouts by grade
- Returns trolley – the booktalker’s best friend
- Know stories to tell for all ages
  - Mortimer, better without book
  - Urban legends for teens
  - Draw and tell for all ages
Resources

- Your colleagues, especially former children’s staff
- Be wary of discussion lists – they can overwhelm, so cherry pick
- Rob Reid’s *Something Funny Happened at the Library*, ALA 2002, $37.95
My Contact Info

- By email: msmallette@surrey.ca
- By phone: Fleetwood branch of Surrey Public Library
  604-572-5922 ext. 329