
SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO BOOK TALKS

Inspire readers. Spark curiosity.

A book talk is a short, engaging presentation designed to entice students to read a particular book. Think of it as a movie trailer for a book. No spoilers, just enough intrigue to get students excited about reading!

Components of a Successful Book Talk

1. Hook

Start with a question, dramatic line, or interesting fact that grabs attention.

"What would you do if you woke up one day and no one could see you?"

2. Summary (Spoiler-Free!)

Briefly describe the premise of the book. Mention the setting, main character(s), and main conflict, without giving away the ending.

3. Tone & Voice

Match your tone to the book's genre. Use suspense for mysteries, excitement for adventures, and emotion for dramas. Use your natural voice. Enthusiasm is contagious!

4. Personal Connection (Optional but Powerful)

Share why you loved the book or why it made you think.

"I couldn't put it down. It reminded me of how hard middle school can be."

5. Call to Action

End with an invitation: "Come check it out! First come, first read!" or "If you like [another book], you'll love this one!"

Why Use Book Talks?

- Promote independent reading
- Increase circulation
- Connect students to books they might not find on their own
- Build excitement and community around reading
- Highlight a variety of voices and genres

Ways School Librarians Can Use Book Talks

| Method | Description |
|------------------------|--|
| Live in Classrooms | Partner with teachers to pop into classes with quick talks tied to curriculum or reading time. |
| During Library Visits | Start each class with a book talk. Build it into your routine. |
| Video Book Talks | Record short videos and share them on your library's website, learning platform, or morning announcements. |
| Book Talk Displays | Use QR codes on book displays linking to videos or scripts of book talks. |
| Student-Led Book Talks | Empower students to create/share their own book talks. |

Tips & Tricks

- **Practice makes polished:** Rehearse to keep talks concise (2–3 minutes is ideal).
- **Know your audience:** Tailor your book selections to grade level, interests, and abilities.
- **Rotate genres:** Feature graphic novels, nonfiction, poetry, historical fiction, etc., to appeal to a variety of tastes.
- **Use props or read a line:** A backpack for an adventure story, a dramatic quote, or a mysterious item can make your talk pop.
- **Create a book talk binder:** Store your scripts, ideas, and favorites for easy reuse.

Remember: You don't have to be theatrical - just passionate! When students see you light up about a book, they start to believe that reading is something to get excited about.