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# SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO PRACTICAL PARTNERSHIPS

## **Why Librarian-Teacher Collaboration Matters**

Strong partnerships between school librarians and teachers enhance student learning, increase engagement, and inspire fresh ideas. By working together, librarians can help alleviate the burden on teachers, support deeper learning, and create dynamic classroom experiences. Collaboration allows educators to divide and conquer, leveraging each other's strengths to better serve students.

## **Shifting the Narrative: From Keeper of Books to Instructional Partner**

To be seen as an instructional partner, not just a book curator, school librarians must actively integrate into the teaching and learning process. Some schools even ask teachers in interviews, "How do you plan to utilize the library?"—highlighting the library's instructional role. Perhaps this is a discussion for the librarian to have with school administrators. Building visibility and credibility as a teaching partner requires intentional effort and strategic collaboration.

## **Practical Tips for Building Strong Teacher Partnerships**

1. **Remember What It's Like in the Classroom:** Teachers are balancing multiple responsibilities. Approach collaboration with empathy and realistic expectations.
2. **Avoid Overwhelming with Resources:** Offer curated, manageable recommendations tailored to teachers' specific needs.
3. **Build Trust:** Start small, follow through on commitments, and demonstrate your value over time.
4. **Solve a Problem:** Identify challenges teachers face and provide meaningful solutions.
5. **Do the Heavy Lifting:** Take on the research, resource curation, and tech integration to make collaboration seamless.

6. **Take Action:** Think of one teacher to reach out to, one tool to share, or one lesson idea to implement immediately.

### Who to Collaborate With

- **Teachers You Have A Relationship With:** Start with those you know and expand from there.
- **Team Leaders & Department Chairs:** They influence curriculum decisions and can help spread the word.
- **Administrators:** Show them the value of librarian-teacher partnerships and get their support.
- **Tech-Savvy Innovators:** Partnering with teachers who embrace technology can lead to exciting collaborations that showcase the library's impact.

### What to Collaborate On

- **Complex Concepts:** Provide support for topics that require deeper exploration or multiple perspectives.
- **Topics Teachers Feel Less Confident Teaching:** Offer resources and co-teach to fill in knowledge gaps.
- **Activities That Require More Support:** Design and facilitate hands-on learning experiences.

### Easy Ways to Get Started

- **Work with Classes on a Regular Schedule:** Establish a rhythm of collaboration with teachers you already see frequently.
- **Campus PD Rotations:** Offer professional development sessions to showcase how the library can support instruction.
- **Present at District or Area Events:** Gain visibility and credibility as an instructional leader.
- **Attend Trainings and Conferences:** Find local and online events that provide networking and professional learning opportunities.

**By intentionally fostering partnerships, school librarians can amplify their impact, empower teachers, and ultimately enhance student learning. Start small, build trust, and take proactive steps to integrate into the instructional fabric of your school.**