Booktalking: Harnessing the Power of Sharing Books with Patrons

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Let’s Talk Book Talks
★ Power of sharing books
★ You are your community’s local book expert
★ Informal Booktalking
  ○ booktalking in the stacks
★ Formal and prepared book talks
  ○ marketing genius

Warm Ups
★ Take the pulse of your collection and the larger community conversation about books
  ○ Check return carts
  ○ Look at current displays
  ○ Bestseller lists
  ○ Daily book news
Booktalking in the Stacks: The Basics

★ Look for opportunities
★ Have an opening line
★ Remember: make sure book is on shelf!
★ Start with a soundbite
★ Keep the book on center stage
★ It's a dialog—back and forth
★ Develop your own style and patter
★ Be enthusiastic

Practice, Practice, Practice

★ Create more opportunities to booktalk
★ Staff to staff at the desk
  ○ doubles as an advertisement of your expertise and willingness
★ Enlist the help of regular patrons
★ Set goals and create friendly competition
★ Remember this is fun! You are paid to talk about books

Prepared Booktalks

★ What?
  ○ an enticing, prepared talk on a list of linked books
★ Where and When?
  ○ anytime people are gathered for a library event
★ Why?
  ○ endless marketing and circulation increase potential
Creative Booktalking for Adults

Definitions and Guidelines

★ Booktalk is a commercial enticing people to read the book
★ Effective booktalks lead to increased circulation
★ Don’t limit to new books
  ○ backlist is a booktalk’s bff
★ Know your audience
★ Do not summarize
★ Find a hook

What Kinds of Books Make Good Booktalks?

★ No single type is best
★ Hook to serve as central theme
★ What is NOT good
  ○ too complex, limited appeal or content
  ○ NO BLOCKBUSTERS
★ Mix: old and new, fic and nf, formats
★ Good covers!
★ Check your catalog
Order Matters

★ Take audience on a journey  
★ Beginning: grab their attention  
★ Middle: build to the climax  
★ End: leave them satisfied but still wanting more!  
★ Provide a visual either print or digital  
  ◦ to follow along and follow up

Talking Tips

★ Smooth transitions between books  
★ Match the style of your presentation to the books  
  ◦ positive and peppy for happy books  
  ◦ somber for serious books  
  ◦ humor for funny books  
★ Last book should be the most memorable!

It’s Showtime

★ Gather what you need ahead of time  
★ Handouts  
★ Books or nice pics of covers  
★ Notes!  
  ◦ script  
  ◦ notecards  
  ◦ post-its on backs of covers/pics  
  ◦ whatever works for you
Spring Is In The Air…

Halfway to Halloween

The Keep
by Jennifer Egan
Castaways
by Brian Keene

Mayhem
by Sarah Pinborough

Rot and Ruin
by Jonathan Maberry
Locke and Key  
by Joe Hill  
illustrated by Gabriel Rodriguez

The Ruins  
by Scott Smith

Questions?

Slides: rafortall.blogspot.com

RA for All  
Matching Readers With Books Through Your Local Public Library

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