

# Blossom Hill Library Volunteer Handbook

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## Introduction

This handbook was created to help library volunteers to be effective. It is to be used as a reference when confused about what to do or where to put a book. It is the librarian's duty to update it and keep it current. If there is something that is not answered in this handbook, ask the librarian to explain and then update this handbook if changes have been made.

## Library leads

A library lead volunteer for each class is signed up at the beginning of the year. The duties involve:

- Recruit class volunteers. It is good to have at least 4+ volunteers as 2 are needed for each shift.
- Put a rotation schedule for class volunteers using a template (usually provided) that can be populated with a volunteer's regular day using the full school year minus holiday and other events affecting the volunteer schedule.
- Act as the communications liaison for any updates to the schedule that librarian or lead library volunteer might send to the library leads.
- Act as point of contact for changes to the class' group's schedule (for example, if a volunteer cannot make it, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to find a replacement and let the library lead know of the change).

## Library volunteers

### General Schedule for Working a Library Shift as a Volunteer

- Arrive at the library 10-15 minutes prior to the arrival time of your class.
- Until your class arrives, check the blue cart in the desk area and the blue bins around the library for any books that need to be re-shelved.
- Check the book drop for any books that need to be book dropped (checked in). Check them in and place them on the blue cart, ready to be re-shelved.
- When your class arrives the students will place their books in the book drop or the renewal basket. They will typically then hear a story read by the librarian. During this time process all books by book dropping them (checking them in) or renewing them as appropriate. It's important to do this right away because books on students' records will show up when they try to check out new books. We need their accounts to be updated before they can check out new books.

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- When the students are excused from the reading circle to search for books, one volunteer should go to the desk while the other helps students find books, continues re-shelving books or checks that teacher's assigned section of book shelves.
- The volunteer at the desk will then check out books to students at the desk.
- Volunteers can depart when their class leaves or they can help make sure all books are re-shelved.

## Check-in, renewals, and checking out books

An electronic wand is located at the computer (attached to the computer). On the computer are bar codes with the following titles: *Book Drop (Check in)*, *Renewal*, *Check Out*. On the desk is a book with all the students' names filed by grade, and then by class with a listing of all students and associated bar codes.

1. **Book Drop or Check-in books** – use the wand to select the **book drop (*check in*)** bar code on the computer and put the books in the blue cart to be restocked on the shelves.
2. **Renew books** are put by students in the basket by the door – use the wand to select ***Renewal*** bar code on the computer and then put the books next to basket for students to pick up. When students see the books are not in the basket they know the books have been processed and are ready to go.
3. **Check-out books** – use the wand to select ***check-out*** bar code on the computer, then go to the student's name and select their bar code. Check the computer to see whether it worked (it should be on the student's name and list the book just checked out). If the student is overdue or has more than two books, you will have to override it or not let the student check out the book. Usually, early in the report cycle, for grades working on big reports (missions, states, etc); the student can check a book out for more than two weeks. You should double check with the librarian before overriding anything.

**At the end of the year, students cannot check out ANY new books if they have an overdue book on their account (this does not include state books or other books currently being used for an ongoing class project). If a student's name is scanned and it shows one or more books out on loan, click "Details" to see the name of the book when it was originally due.**

## Putting Books back: from book drop, books in cart behind desk and blue bins

There are a few blue bins scattered around the library, sometimes filled with books, sometimes not. When students visit the library, with their classes or at lunchtime, they may look at books that they don't check out. The blue bins offer a place for them to put these books if they don't have time to put them back or don't know where they go.

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In addition to the blue cart in the desk area, these bins are another place to look for books that need to be re-shelved during your volunteer shifts. They are especially full during class visits that follow the lunch recess.

When students visit the library, they will put books in the book drop outside to check them in. It is your first job to get them checked in while they are listening to a story. Volunteers then place them on the blue cart in the desk area. Once all the books are checked back in they can be reshelved.

When in doubt about where something goes, just ask or stick it back on the blue cart. That is much better than filing a book where it can't be found.

## Looking Up Books Using the Library Computers

- 1. Access the network:** Wake up the computer by moving the mouse or typing on the keypad. You will then have an opportunity to log in using a student's name. They are alphabetical by first name. Ask the name of the student being helping, use your own child's name, or type in another child's name. (This step is just to get you into the network and has nothing to do with a particular child's account. However, if teaching a student how to do it independently, then perhaps using that student's name is better.) Then enter the password, which in most cases will be "kids," although 5<sup>th</sup> graders have individual passwords and know what they are.
- 2. Launch Safari:** Click on the Safari button
- 3. Launch Alexandria Researcher:** Go straight to the URL/address bar (NOT the Google bar) and enter "bhslibrary/#\_" It should come up as when you type. The search screen will appear.
- 4. Enter search:** The search program is not very sophisticated so fewer words and simpler, broader searches are better. Better results are achieved by clicking the general "Search" button to the right rather than "Author," "Title," etc. buttons below. For example enter an author's first and last names or just last name and click "Search." Try it a few ways if the results are not achieved.
- 5. Check availability:** The book entry will either say "In" or "Unavailable." If you click on "Show Copy Information" it will tell you whether there is more than one copy available.
- 6. Write down the call number:** If the book is in, next you or the student writes the call number, which will begin with a number for non-fiction and letters for fiction. There are scraps of paper at Librarian's desk.
- 7. Find the book:** If the call number begins with numbers, direct the student to the non-fiction area of the library, where books are filed by the Dewey Decimal System. If it begins with letters, match the code from the call number with the coded placards on top of bookshelves

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throughout the fiction areas. Within these sections books are filed by the first three letters of the author's last name (which are also included on the call number, following the code).

## Helpful hints:

While the "Search" button will generally yield more comprehensive lists (as opposed to the "Author" and "Title" buttons for example), the "Series" button can be helpful in identifying titles in a series, finding which book comes next in a series, finding the latest addition to a series, etc.

Other helpful buttons include: Award Winners, What's New and Most Popular

## Non-Fiction Sections

### Dewey Decimal System filing

While the *non-fiction* section is filed according to the Dewey Decimal system, some groups of books have their own special sections. Many of these books are used by students for reports and having their own section allows students to find them easier.

### Non-Dewey Decimal System filing – books used for reports

Books in these sections **should not** be filed according to their numbers, but along with others in their groups. Additionally, in some cases as with Native American and state books for example, you'll see books belonging to a series, or perhaps more than one series. Books in each series share a similar book design, maybe a series title. Be sure to file books with the correct series.

Books with special sections include:

- Native Americans
- States
- Biographies
- Missions
- Countries

### The Animal Section

The Animal Section in the Non-Fiction area of the library is another very popular destination for students. The following are a few tips that will help ensure both students and volunteers can find the animals they are looking for:

- The easiest way to file an animal book is to look for the bookend/divider with that animal's name on it and stick the book to the LEFT of the divider.
- Animal names that are on the bookend/divider are also listed on the placards above each section. For example, you could look at all the placards until you find "Dolphin" and then look below that placard for the Dolphin section in the bookshelves.
- Animal books don't need to go in order within their section, just make sure you put the book to the LEFT of the bookend.

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- Placards also have number ranges. If an animal's name cannot be found, just find the correct number range and file the book in the "Misc" section of that bookshelf. (Or just leave it on the blue cart and Librarian can find its home.)
- Some general animal books are at the beginning of the animal section, to the very left, looking straight at the book shelf. These are filed by number.

## Wild Animals and Domestic Animals

There are in fact TWO animal sections.

### **Books between 590-599.999 = Wild Animals**

The "the Animal Section" includes books with numbers ranging from 590 to 599.999 in the Dewey Decimal System. Within this range, animals are assigned different numbers. For most of the popular animals, a section has been made with bookends to make it easier to find and file books. The bookends are labeled with the animal name and books go to the LEFT of the bookend. These labels are also listed on placards above each bookshelf so it's easier to see at a glance what animals are in each section. Each bookshelf also has a "Misc" section for books within that particular number range that do not have an individual section.

### **Books between 636-639 = Domestic Animals**

The 636-639 range includes horses and other farm animals, followed by dogs, cats and other pets (including rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, etc.). Here there are also books on pet care. These books are across the aisle from "the Animal Section." Label stickers on the bookshelves that indicate the animals within the section.

So, to file animal books first look at the number to see whether the book belongs with wild or domestic animals, and then find where it belongs by number, animal or section.

## Fairy Tales

A great place to look for some of those classic tales and fables is the Fairy Tale section in the Non Fiction area. Located along the wall to the right of the reading circle as you face the windows, the Fairy Tale area generally spans the 398 numbers. There is also actually a separate Cinderella section labeled with a sticker, since so many variations of this story have been created.

Look at the 398s for a fairy tale books.

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## Fiction

### Purple Dots and Red Dots

Most of the books in our library have a colored dot sticker on the spine. In nearly all cases the color of the dot has nothing to do with where the book belongs. There are just two exceptions: Purple Dots and Red Dots.

Our library subscribes to the Accelerated Reader (AR) program which gives a ranking of books based upon difficulty as well as providing interactive reading quizzes that are required by many teachers beginning around the second or third grade. Throughout the library you will see AR code keys, which illustrate the reading level range for each colored dot. The AR program helps student select books at their individual reading levels and also provides teachers with insight into students' reading comprehension.

### Purple Dot Books

Purple Dot books are the first level on the AR reading code. These books are the primary level checked out by our first grade students. To help these new readers easily locate and search among Purple Dot choices or to put books away, Purple Dot books have their own section. It is located behind Librarian's reading chair to the right. The top and right edges of this section are bordered in purple. ALL BOOKS with a Purple Dot belong in this section. You'll notice some Purple Dots are large stickers and some are small. In both cases, the books go in the Purple Dot section. A few extra notes about the Purple Dot section:

- Purple Dot shelves are extremely well loved by our first graders, and the books are often a bit out of order. It is most important is to get the books back on the shelf.
- Within the Purple Dot section, there is an area designated for Dr. Seuss Purple Dot books. These are different than the "E FIC SEU" (Easy Fiction Seuss) books with different colored dots that are filed under "S" in the E FIC section.

There are two paperback baskets in the Purple Dot section. Typically E PB (Easy Paperback) Purple Dots are placed with authors' names A-L on the left and M-Z on the right. (If it's an E PB with a different colored dot, it goes in a lettered basket in the regular E FIC section.)

Lastly, since the Purple Dot section is directly behind Librarian's reading chair, it's a good idea to wait until she has finished reading before re-shelving Purple Dot books.

### Red Dot Books

Red dots represent Holiday books rather than a particular reading level. All of our Holiday books have a Red Dot and/or a Holiday-themed sticker on the spine. If it has either of these stickers on a book, it should be filed in the Holiday Section near the check-out desk. These books will also have labels with the appropriate categorization, but file them by Red Dot or

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Holiday sticker. For example, a Junie B. Jones book about Easter would say "S FIC PARK" (Series Fiction Park) on the spine, but also have either a Red Dot or Easter sticker, and it would go in the Holiday Section.

Books without dots of any color typically do not have a corresponding quiz in the AR database. This is helpful to know if a teacher has required students to read AR books and take the corresponding quizzes. Help direct students to books with a colored dot if one is inadvertently picked one without a dot.

## Teacher Sections

To help Librarian with this big job, the bookshelves have been divided so that volunteers for each class can maintain a specific area of the library. Among library volunteer duties is to check teacher's assigned section each time shift (time permitting of course.).

For example, volunteers for Mrs. Petty's class should make it a habit to look over Mrs. Petty's section each week during their class visit. This is the key reason why two volunteers are requested for each class. With two volunteers there are enough people to check in/check-out books, shelve books, help students find books AND check a portion of that teacher's assigned shelves (hopefully.). The sections often span more than one shelf, so just do a little bit each visit, picking a new section of your assigned area every time.

## Key things to look for when maintaining your section:

- Are the books in appropriate order? (Alphabetical, Dewey Decimal, by number for series books, etc.)
- Are there books in this area that shouldn't be here?
- Are any books upside down, sideways, covering other books?
- Does the shelf need to be straightened up?

## Paperback Fiction

Paperback fiction books are some of the most frequently misfiled books in the library because there are so many types. Be sure to double check those labels before shelving your books. There are also placards above each section of bookshelves to help find your way.

Here is a quick tutorial:

**PB FIC** - This is **Paperback Fiction** and this section resides within the bookshelves on the far side of the library. Books in this section are filed by the first three letters of the author's last name.

**S FIC** - This is **Series Fiction** and there are two sections, one for grades 1-3 and one for grades 3-5. Series Fiction for lower grades is located within the shelves on the non-fiction side, the shelf facing the reading circle and the shelves directly behind. Upper grade Series Fiction is on the



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other side of the reading circle, where all Series Fiction used to be. These books are filed by **series name** even though the author's last name is on the label (for example file under: Harry Potter, Disney Fairies, Magic Treehouse, etc.). If the series isn't obvious, it's often mentioned on the front or back cover in the book's description.

**E PB - Easy Paperback** books are paperback picture books and they reside in the bins within the picture book section. These are filed by the first letter of the author's last name. The books are not alphabetized within each bin, so simply match the first letter to the bin and you're done. (Special exception: E PB books with a Purple Dot are filed in the purple dot section directly behind Librarian's reading circle chair.)

**X FIC - Easy Fiction** are typically early chapter books for new readers and they are designed by an "X" above the label, either with a sticker or pen. These are filed by first three letters of author's last name in their own section of the bookshelves where the PB FIC books are located.

**C - Comic** books are filed within the nonfiction area behind the lower grade Series Fiction.

**Holiday - Holiday** books have a holiday sticker on the spine and are filed close to Librarian's desk. They are filed by author's last name.

**Newberry Award** - There are a few paperback **Newberry Award winners**. These have a Newberry sticker and a year on the label. They are also filed close to Librarian's desk in a special Newberry section. Only winners are filed here and they are filed by year they won the award. Newberry finalists may have a Newberry sticker, but no year, and these are filed elsewhere in the library according to their labels.

## Hardback Fiction

Hardback fiction is located along the West wall (opposite the front door) and these books are filed by author's last name.

## Series Fiction

With the "S FIC" label, it's tough to know whether the book goes in lower grade Series Fiction or upper grade Series Fiction, and the letters below that "S FIC" code don't seem to match any of the labels on the Series Fiction shelves. Here are a few tips:

- Series Fiction is filed by the name of the series, not by author's last name. (For example the Nancy Drew series is filed by "N.") So determine first what the series is and then it is apparent.
- To determine the name of the series, take a look at the book. Some may be obvious, like Harry Potter, Magic Treehouse and Diary of a Wimpy Kid. For those that are not

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obvious, read some of the descriptions on the front and back cover or leaf through the first and last pages. Often you will find an excerpt saying, "Other books in the XXXX series include..." or "...An exciting sequel to the XXXX series." They may also have a list of books in the series. If it's still elusive, just ask the librarian.

- There are two Series Fiction areas. Sitting in the librarian's reading chair, lower grade Series Fiction would be on the right, upper grade Series Fiction would be on the left.
- To figure out whether a book is lower grade or upper grade fiction, there are a few things that can be done. First, look at the cover. Often the illustrations will give a clue as to whether it's for younger or older audiences. For instance, rainbows and fairies will typically be in the lower grade section. Second, there are placards on the top of the lower and upper grade book sections which list the names of the series on the shelves below (like in the animal section). So look at the placards to find the series. Third, every book has a pencil-written code in the lower right corner of one of the first pages. It has the AR level, points, and it will usually say "LG" for lower grade, "MG" for middle grade and "UG" for upper grade.