Leveling Up Life Skills through Tabletop Gaming

by Jason Gonzales
Technology Specialist for the Muskogee Public Library (Oklahoma)

About three years ago I had an ah-ha moment while playing a board game with my family. We were playing Concept, whereby two players are given a word or phrase and have to get players to guess that word or phrase by selecting from a number of pre-printed clues on a game board. For example if the word was milk I might select the clues liquid, white, and edible. Or if I was trying to get the players to guess Vincent Van Gogh I might select art, ear, scissors, and the globe. The structure of the game is to take a concept and break it down into smaller bits, and if successful, the group can guess the target word or phrase. This strategy is one of the components that makes up computational thinking (CT), a thought process used for problem solving. It was during that game of Concept that I realized I could use tabletop gaming to introduce and develop computational thinking to teens during my library events.

Computational thinking is comprised of four skills for problem solving. One can use any combination of these skills to create a strategy for tackling a challenge. During the game of Concept players use the decomposition skill of CT which involves breaking down a large problem into smaller, manageable parts. Abstraction is another skill of CT which addresses removing parts of a problem that are unnecessary so the core challenge can be addressed. In an escape room scenario I designed for our library last year participants faced a table with a lamp and eleven Polaroid photos. The players had to use abstraction to determine what elements of the puzzle were unnecessary in solving the puzzle. For example the lamp and the table did not factor into solving the puzzle. Once players dismissed those two elements of the setup they could focus on the photos to solve the puzzle.

Another skill of CT is algorithmic design, the step by step plan for solving a problem. Every game has algorithmic design represented by the rules. For a teen event I had youth create a customizable card game based on the 1000

See Gaming continued on next page
Blank White Cards game concept. Before they started creating their own cards we had to come up with some basic rules for gameplay, for example how does one win the game, how many cards does one start out with, what are the guidelines for card creation (ex. no card could be created that states the owner automatically wins or that another player is dismissed permanently from the game).

The final skill of CT, which is my personal favorite, is pattern recognition, analyzing a problem and looking for repeating sequence. I love playing Connect Four because of the constant recognition of patterns a player employs to set themselves up for the win. In the beginning of the game I am always trying to get three chips in a horizontal line to setup for the two optioned win. What is particularly effective about using tabletop gaming to introduce and develop CT skill in teens is that you can use gaming as an ice breaker or you can create a whole event around it. I primarily use table top gaming at the beginning of my teen STEAM events to bring the group together and set the tone for the rest of the activity. With the board game Concept we played for about 20 minutes before tackling coding. Following are some tabletop games I have used or plan to use in the future with teens.

For little to no cost Salad Bowl is a great game, and one of my all-time favorites because of how easy it is to play with four or more players. All that is needed is a writing utensil and scrap paper. Each player is given 3 small slips of paper and is asked to write down a word or phrase on each piece. For example I could write: Abraham Lincoln, the devil in a blue dress, and a mushroom walks into a bar. Everyone folds their slips of paper and places them in a container. Players are separated into teams. For the first round a player has one minute to get their team to guess the word or phrase they randomly drew by giving verbal clues (ex. the President during the Civil War). Once the minute is up the next team takes a turn and play continues until all the slips of papers have been used. Score is tallied then all the papers are returned to the container for round 2 which involves getting your team to guess the clues using charades. For the final round players are allowed to give one word clues only. This game utilizes the decomposition (coming up with several clues to describe a larger idea) and abstraction (mentally removing words/phrases that have already been guessed).

In Nerts, a game for 2 or more players, each player has their own deck of playing cards to separate their play from other players (the more the unique the better). Each player deals a pile of 13 cards, 12 face down, one face up, this is called the player’s Nerts pile. Then four cards are dealt face up and the remaining cards serve as a stock pile. When everyone is ready the game begins and all players play at once, attempting to get rid of their Nerts pile first. Players can play solitaire style (descending) to their four upward facing cards and/or start a pile (ascending) with an Ace in the middle of the table that anyone can play onto. Play is fast and furious and can get chaotic quickly with lots of players. After someone gets rid of their Nerts pile the round is over and everyone scores a single point for all of their cards played to the middle of the table (not on the 4 cards reserved only for them). And everyone loses two points for any of their cards left in their Nerts pile. There is constant pattern recognition going on during this game and some algorithmic design in determining whether to concentrate on the four decks in front of you or the various piles being created in the center of the table.

Another card game I just discovered is called Muse. Muse is a short game (15 minutes) that can be played with 2 or more players. In Muse a clue giver draws a card featuring an intricate illustration. After looking at the card the clue giver gives a one word clue to their team describing the card. Before placing the card on the table the clue giver draws 5 more cards and shuffles them before placing them face up in front of their team and waiting for them to identify the correct card in a lineup given the one word clue. The challenge of identifying the target card involves using pattern recognition to decipher the clue among similarly illustrated cards.

In the board game Scotland Yard, a team of individuals make up detectives that attempt to capture a player designated as Mr. X. In the game Mr. X’s whereabouts are hidden on a giant map. One or more players control a number of detectives that move across the map from point to point in hopes of landing on a place occupied by Mr. X. At various intervals
during the game Mr. X’s location is revealed for one turn before hiding again. Scotland Yard is one of the longer games in this article, play can last anywhere from 45 – 60 minutes. But it’s a fun game that utilizes pattern recognition (is Mr. X traveling by water or taxi and where does those areas correspond on the map), and algorithmic design (as a detective am I going to cast a wide net to win the game or focus a specific area of the map).

In addition to the games I have mentioned to this point I also have found success in using logic based puzzles with teens. On social media every once in a while a logic based puzzle will pop up in the form of a visual math problem. For example an orange plus an orange equals 10. On the next line a group of bananas plus an orange equals 7. Then the last line features an orange plus a single banana plus an orange equals what? The usual trick is that a bunch of bananas equals 2, but a single banana equals 1. During an opening for a teen event we will work through some of these logic puzzles together. I always let the teens drive these problems solving adventures and they enjoy it. I also have found logic puzzles that are similar to Sudoku in terms of being compromised of a grid and having to identify information about a group of characters. For example this type of logic puzzle could consist of identifying which breed of dog belongs to which owner. These puzzles are accompanied by a few clues, like Bob doesn’t like poodles. Through a series of deductions you eliminate option for each dog owner until the solution remains. There is a lot of logical processing in eliminating options based on fewer clues you are provided. I have used these logic puzzles both to open events and as printed handouts left in the Makerspace for teens to explore.

Thankfully there are a lot of tabletop gaming resources to explore. There are local gaming groups, hobby stores, online groups, gaming conventions, podcasts, and YouTube channels featuring information on gaming. Specifically I found the group League of Librarian Gamers (boardgamegeek.com) produced by Teen Tech and Games Librarian Donald Dennis. Good luck and happy gaming!

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A popular option for teens are logic puzzles which are solved by a series of deductions.

Albert L. Scott Library wins award

Several members of the Albert L. Scott Library’s Christmas Parade float committee recently display the gold and red trophy they won for building the float with the ‘Most Holiday Spirit’ in Alabaster’s Christmas parade last year.

The float included a large, wooden gingerbread library, two Christmas trees decorated with stuffed animals, giant lollipops, and wreaths. Members of the committee include: Tanya Blake and family, Candice Murdock, Kim Roberts, Candra Shockley, and Frances Smith. The gingerbread library is currently in the Albert L. Scott Library meeting room.

![Albert L. Scott Library wins award](image)
On Feb. 6, for National Chopsticks Day the Oneonta Public Library held a Chopstick Challenge! event for teens. This is an incredibly fun event that can easily be adjusted to different budget levels (which isn’t too expensive in the first place).

We had four events starting with an M&M eating competition where they can only touch the candies with their chopsticks. There is actually a Guinness World record entry for this. We gave teens 50 M&Ms and challenged them to see who could finish first.

Next, we challenged them to build a Lego tower in 15 minutes using chopsticks. The tallest tower built in that time would be the winner. Fifteen minutes ended up being a perfect amount of time for the challenge. There’s a learning curve in getting started as you need to adjust to pick up Legos using chopsticks, but after making adjustments, building a tower goes pretty fast. The higher your tower, the harder it is to keep going, especially if you didn’t build much of a base. Tall towers also tend to fall over and needed repairing. Speaking of, there were a few things I let them do with their hands instead of chopsticks: getting Legos out of the tubs, putting them on the table, picking up Legos that fall to the floor, and standing a fallen base upright. Any pieces added to the tower needed to be done with chopsticks.

Third was the hex nut stacking challenge. I gave everyone eight hex nuts, and instructed them to either stack every hex nut on its side or have the highest hex nut tower at the end of five minutes. I didn’t think anyone would be able to complete the challenge, but they surprised me by doing it in half that time.

The fourth event — ping pong relay race — was planned for after hours and waited by having a little of impromptu game of ping pong. With the library was closed, the players were off! We were more space-limited than I anticipated, so I narrowed it to teams of girls vs. boys. Both teams had five ping pong balls they had to move from one pint jar to another, then race and tag the next member to complete the challenge. Ping pong balls are extremely difficult to pick up with chopsticks. If a ball is dropped, I would allow them to pick it up with their hands and hold it in the open palm of their other hand manipulating the chopsticks. I had to keep reminding the teens to not hold the ping pong ball and only allow it to rest in their palm. I also allowed them to pick up the pint jar with their hands to allow a better angle to get the balls out of the jar.

Prizes awarded — including cup ramen and boxes of pocky — were given out at the end of each contest.

Overall, this fun program was super simple, and can easily be modified to work with items you already have on hand. We already had several chopsticks from a previous program, Legos, and ping pong balls. To round out the challenges, we only needed a box of hex nuts and some M&M’s. We also bought some Skittles just in case anyone wasn’t a big chocolate person or was allergic, but I probably wouldn’t worry about it next year. Only one person opted for the Skittles, and that was only because he preferred their taste to M&Ms. He regretted that choice because they’re smaller — and harder — to pick up with chopsticks. All in all, everyone had a lot of fun and we’ll definitely be doing this again next year!
Finding Narnia: The Story of C. S. Lewis and His Brother
written by Caroline McAlister
illustrated by Jessica Lanan
Release date: Nov. 19, 2019

I’m a sucker for good watercolor illustrations, so I was pretty much in love with the art of this book from the start. They also fit the story of C. S. Lewis (or rather, Jack, as he preferred to be called) well. They are soft and muted, but given enough definition with lines to keep it from being too dreamy.

I also enjoyed the story. I was concerned it might be too wordy, but McAlister kept the story brief and focused on the tale of two brothers instead of expanding it to cover the author. It was a twist I appreciated, as I doubt the targeted age range would know or care about who C. S. Lewis is. Overall it is a solid picture book, but its appeal is to adults who love Narnia over children. I think children would sit and listen readily enough due to its brevity, nice artwork, and pleasant storyline, but I doubt it will be a bedtime favorite. A nice addition if you’ve the money for it, I’m sure older Narnia enthusiasts with young children will check it out at least once, but it’s not a high priority buy to me.

My Ocean is Blue
written by Darren Bebeuf and illustrated by Ashley Barron
Release date: March 3, 2020

I really enjoyed this picture book. It has the feel of collage style art, as if the artist painted colored textures for each major part and then cut & pasted them all together. Perhaps something done digitally with brushes and layers? It was soft and pretty, paired with the story perfectly, and gave it a unique feel which I appreciate.

The story itself was short and simple. A young girl talks about her ocean, identifying parts of the ocean experience in words that highlight opposites and differences, while reminding the reader it’s all part of one big whole. It goes hand in hand with the art as well. “My ocean is shallow.” matches a picture of birds at the edge, and “My ocean is deep.” features the girl jumping off the dock to her waiting mother. With just those elements, I would call it a good picture book for kids. But what I love is that the main girl walks with forearm crutches. Nothing is said about it, it’s just another element in the story. I think that kind of visibility is great in a book geared for younger readers. Both for kids who might also need to use crutches, temporarily or more permanently, and for those who don’t. Overall, I’d recommend it for any library’s collection.

What if Bunny’s NOT a Bully
written by Lana Button
illustrated by Christine Battuz
Release date: March 3, 2020

The art style is not my favorite. It feels like someone took a wide variety of fabric patterns in muted colors, cut them up, and pasted them together. If the illustrations were more simplified it might have worked better for me, but between everything for the backgrounds AND the multiple characters it was too much. It wasn’t bad, but it didn’t suit my personal taste.

That being said, I am a sucker for rhyming picture books and this one had a good message. It isn’t that bullies are just misunderstood, but more that sometimes people make mistakes and it might be worth giving them another chance if they say sorry. If this was a picture book for older children, I’d probably be a little more critical (because this a VERY complicated issue, and there needs to be a balance between giving them a chance and protecting yourself.) However, for this age group and the fact that it’s just trying to address one specific element, I’m good. The illustrations do get character feelings across, likely would appeal to others besides myself, and the story’s solid, so if you want to include a book in your collection to inspire kids to forgive and others to apologize, then I’d go for it.
Homewood (above): We do monthly scavenger hunts with the teens. I let the Teen Advisory Board vote on the theme for each month, and we hide various images around the department. There is a note on each image for them to bring it to the desk to claim their prize! We have a box filled with candy and other nifty things for teens to claim.

Oneonta (right): Don’t have a lot of space for your teens? Buy a bulletin board, decorate it, then add it to the end of your teen bookshelves! There is a space to request/recommend books (which we collect monthly and post the results), a flier with locations for sensitive/important information in their NF section and various hotline numbers, and just enough room left to post the flier for our next teen event!
COOL DATES TO REMEMBER

MARCH IS:
WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH
YOUTH ART MONTH
MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH
PLAY THE RECORDER MONTH
NATIONAL CRAFT MONTH
NATIONAL NOODLE MONTH

APRIL IS:
MOVE MORE MONTH
NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH
NATIONAL HUMOR MONTH
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS MONTH
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL MONTH
NATIONAL SOFT PRETZEL MONTH
NATIONAL INVENTORS MONTH

MARCH 1 — NATIONAL PIG DAY / NATIONAL PEANUT BUTTER LOVER’S DAY
MARCH 2 — DR. SEUSS’S BIRTHDAY / READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY
MARCH 3 — WORLD WILDLIFE DAY
MARCH 4 — NATIONAL GRAMMAR DAY / NATIONAL HUG A G.I. DAY
MARCH 5 — NATIONAL POTTY DANCE DAY
MARCH 6 — NATIONAL OREO COOKIE DAY / NATIONAL DENTIST’S DAY
MARCH 7 — NATIONAL CEREAL DAY
MARCH 8 — INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY
MARCH 9 — NATIONAL NAPPING DAY / NATIONAL MEATBALL DAY
MARCH 12 — NATIONAL PLANT A FLOWER DAY / NATIONAL PANCAKE DAY
MARCH 13 — NATIONAL EARMUFF DAY
MARCH 14 — NATIONAL LEARN ABOUT BUTTERFLIES DAY / NATIONAL POTATO CHIP DAY / NATIONAL PI DAY
MARCH 15-21 — POISON PREVENTION WEEK
MARCH 16 — NATIONAL PANDA DAY
MARCH 17 — ST. PATRICK’S DAY
MARCH 19 — LET’S LAUGH DAY
MARCH 20 — MR. ROGER’S BIRTHDAY / SPRING EQUINOX
MARCH 21 — WORLD POETRY DAY
MARCH 22 — UNITED NATIONS WORLD WATER DAY
MARCH 23 — NATIONAL PUPPY DAY / WORLD METEOROLOGICAL DAY
MARCH 25 — MANATEE APPRECIATION DAY
MARCH 26 — MAKE UP YOUR OWN HOLIDAY DAY / NATIONAL SPINACH DAY
MARCH 27 — NATIONAL SCRIBBLE DAY
MARCH 28 — RESPECT YOUR CAT DAY
MARCH 30 — TAKE A WALK IN THE PARK DAY / NATIONAL DOCTOR’S DAY / NATIONAL PENCIL DAY

APRIL 1 — APRIL FOOL’S DAY / NATIONAL WALKING DAY
APRIL 2 — WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY / NATIONAL BURRITO DAY / NATIONAL PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY DAY
APRIL 3 — WORLD PARTY DAY
APRIL 5 — NATIONAL DEEP DISH PIZZA DAY
APRIL 6 — NATIONAL SIAMESE CAT DAY / NATIONAL STUDENT ATHLETE DAY
APRIL 7 — WORLD HEALTH DAY
APRIL 10 — NATIONAL SIBLINGS DAY / NATIONAL HUG YOUR DOG DAY
APRIL 11 — NATIONAL PET DAY
APRIL 12 — NATIONAL GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH DAY
APRIL 13 — NATIONAL SCRABBLE DAY
APRIL 16 — NATIONAL HIGH FIVE DAY / WEAR PAJAMAS TO WORK DAY
APRIL 17 — NATIONAL CHEESE BALL DAY
APRIL 18 — NATIONAL HA IKU POETRY DAY / NATIONAL VELOCIRAPTOR AWARENESS DAY
APRIL 19 — NATIONAL GARLIC DAY
APRIL 20 — CHINESE LANGUAGE DAY
APRIL 21 — NATIONAL BULLDOGS ARE BEAUTIFUL DAY / NATIONAL KINDERGARTEN DAY
APRIL 22 — EARTH DAY / NATIONAL JELLY BEAN DAY
APRIL 23 — NATIONAL PICNIC DAY
APRIL 24 — ARBOR DAY / NATIONAL PIGS IN A BLANKET DAY
APRIL 25 — NATIONAL DRUG TAKE BACK DAY
APRIL 26 — NATIONAL PRETZEL DAY
APRIL 29 — INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY / INTERNATIONAL GUIDE DOG DAY
APRIL 30 — INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY / HONESTY DAY / NATIONAL RAISIN DAY
DIY Bug Hotel
courtesy of babbledabbledo.com

Spring is coming! And with that comes bugs. Here are the directions for making a different type of "Bug Hotel":

Materials
Small wood or heavy cardboard box
Hot glue gun
White glue
Bug-friendly materials including newspaper, sticks, bark, bamboo, pebbles, leaves, pine straw, yarn, wool, etc.

Directions
Have children go on a hunt for various bug materials. With items gathered, break them into smaller pieces, making sure they fit snugly into the box compartment before gluing them in place.

Put a layer of white glue in each compartment and glue your objects in place. Use hot glue for heavier objects, and repeat this gluing process for each compartment in your box. Allow glue to dry for a few days. Then, hang or place the box outside away from doors or windows (a garden area is good). Observe which insects your hotel attracts, and what materials attract which bugs.

Walk on Eggshells
courtesy of Steve Spangler Science

The phrase "walking on eggshells" is an idiom that is often used to describe a situation in which people must tread lightly around a sensitive topic. What if eggs are really stronger than most of us realize?

Warm-up: Squeeze an egg without breaking it

Start by covering your demonstration area with a large plastic trash bag. Remove any jewelry you might be wearing on your fingers.

Place a raw egg in the palm of your hand, and wrap your fingers around the egg completely.

Squeeze the egg by applying even pressure all around the shell. Get past your fear of breaking the egg and really give it your all. The egg should not break.

If you are feeling really brave, take an egg in the palm of your left hand and squeeze even harder with your right!
Main event: Egg walking

Materials
Two to eight cartons of eggs
Trash bags

Start by spreading trash bags out on the floor and arrange egg cartons in two rows on the bags. Inspect the eggs to make sure there are no breaks or fractures of any kind to weaken the shell. Swap out flawed eggs, if any.

It’s also important to ensure the eggs are all oriented the same direction. One end of the egg is rounder than the other, and by making sure the eggs are all turned the right way, your foot will have a more level surface to stand on.

Remove socks and shoes. Find a friend to help you step up onto the first carton of eggs. The key is to make your foot as flat as possible in order to distribute your weight evenly across the tops of the eggs. If the ball of your foot is large, you might try positioning it between two rows of eggs instead of resting it on top of an egg.

With your foot properly positioned, slowly shift all of your weight onto your leg and lift your other foot on top of the second carton of eggs.

You will hear creaking sounds coming from the egg carton, but don’t get nervous. Ask your friends to step away so your full weight is on the eggs. If you have more than two cartons of eggs, walk across them!

STEAMing along

STEAM factor

Plain and simple, the shape of the egg is the secret! The egg’s unique shape gives it tremendous strength, despite its seeming fragility. Eggs are similar in shape to a three-dimensional arch, one of the strongest architectural forms. The egg is the strongest at the top and the bottom (or at the highest point of the arch). That’s why the egg doesn’t break when you apply pressure evenly to both ends. The curved form of the shell helps to distribute pressure evenly all over the shell rather than concentrating it at any one point. However, eggs do not stand up well to uneven forces, which is why they crack easily on the side of a bowl. This also explains how a hen can sit on an egg and not break it, but a tiny little chick can break through the eggshell. The weight of the hen is evenly distributed over the egg, while the pecking of the chick is an uneven force directed at just one spot on the egg.

If you guessed that the egg carton probably played a role in keeping the eggs from breaking, you’re right. Joseph Coyle is credited as the inventor of the first container made specifically to keep eggs from breaking as they were transported from the local farm to the store. As the story goes, Coyle invented the egg carton in 1911 as a way to solve a dispute between a farmer and a hotel operator who blamed the farmer for delivering broken eggs. Coyle designed a container made out of thick paper with individual divots that supported each egg from the bottom while keeping the eggs separated from one another. As legend has it, the fully loaded egg carton can even be dropped, and if it lands just right, the eggs will survive the fall.
**March 4**

**Women and Girls: Gender Equity in Computer Science Education**

In honor of National Women’s History month, Karen Peterson, Founder & CEO of the National Girls Collaborative Project will highlight the challenges and opportunities of encouraging more girls across the country to pursue STEM activities and careers, and the importance of CS education in this process. She will be joined by voices from the field who will share information about their programs: Toni Robinson, President of Digital Girls, Inc. and Cathy Law, Director of the STEM Academy @ OSU. (National Girls Collaborative Project) [https://bit.ly/389ZgJw](https://bit.ly/389ZgJw)

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**March 5**

**Cultivating Protective Factors for Safe Libraries and Resilient Communities**

Join this webinar to explore the ways the library functions as a “protective factor” and how to build community resilience through more compassionate and inclusive policies and practices. (Webjunction) [https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction.html](https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction.html)

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**March 10**

**Promoting Digital Citizenship in the Library**

In this webinar attendees will learn about digital citizenship. Digital citizenship includes privacy, behaving ethically online, and being safe and responsible in digital environments. As facilitators of digital knowledge consumption and creation, librarians have a unique role to play in fostering digital citizenship among their users. The presenter will share ideas for how librarians can encourage and promote digital citizenship, and provide recommendations for resources and community partners. (Utah State Library) [https://www.eventbrite.com/o/usl-training-208844751](https://www.eventbrite.com/o/usl-training-208844751)

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**March 12**

**A History in Going Fine Free - A Look at the Impact It Could Have On Your Community**

Going fine free is not an easy decision for any library, but Brenda Cameron, a Library Systems Coordinator for FVRL, is passionate about the impacts it has had on their library and their community. She has seen why eliminating fines has brought more people into the library especially since “fines most affect those least able to pay them.” She believes in the positive impact going fine free can have for all libraries. (SirsiDynix) [https://sirsidynix.com/events/2020-03/](https://sirsidynix.com/events/2020-03/)

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**Ready 2 Read: 1000 Books Before Kindergarten**

The 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program is an easy way to encourage families to read and help young children develop their early literacy skills by setting a goal for kids to read 1000 books before heading off to kindergarten. Not only is it fun for families and kids to participate in, it’s easy for libraries to set up and run! Come and listen to two libraries, Allynne Ellis from the Billings Public Library, and Jamie Greco from the Glacier County Library, give their perspectives on and experiences with the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program. (Montana State Library) [https://mslservices.mt.gov/ASPeN/Events/](https://mslservices.mt.gov/ASPeN/Events/)

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**March 17**

**Stellar Series Nonfiction: Spring 2020**

What do series nonfiction publishers have in store for readers this spring? Join us for this free, one-hour webinar featuring representatives from Amicus Publishing, Bellwether Media, Black Rabbit Books, Rourke Educational Media, and Scholastic Library Publishing—and find out! Titles presented will range from grades K through 12. (Booklist) [https://www.booklistonline.com/webinars](https://www.booklistonline.com/webinars)

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**TWO RESOURCES, ONE GOAL: HELPING ALABAMA SUCCEED**

**LearningExpress Library & HomeworkAlabama**

- Online tutoring for grades K-12
- College placement resources
- Help for all ages and skill levels
- Certification testing & GED preparation
- Career resources

Find both on our Resources & Research Links Page

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**March 2020**

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**WHAT’S UP?**

**Webinars**

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**YAKETY YAK**
March 19

Advocacy from A to Z

Let’s face it: one of the trends in the library industry is having to do more with less. How can you achieve your goals without sacrificing service when budgets and time are stretched thin? The key is advocacy. Join ALSC’s Advocacy and Legislation committee for an exploration of advocacy as it relates to children and children’s library services. You’ll get concrete tips on how to advocate for the patrons you serve, regardless of whether your advocacy happens at a local, state, or federal level. A&L will consider, too, the impact your advocacy can have on your community and profession. (Association for Library Service to Children http://www.ala.org/alsc/elearning/live-webinars

Library Programming and the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day

On April 22, 2020, people all over the world will be commemorating the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. The Earth Day Network invites you to join us in this webinar to get ideas and inspiration for how your library can celebrate with us. Through the year of 2020 we are coordinating cleanups, teach-ins, citizen science projects, art exhibitions and more! Youth and adults in over 190 countries around the world celebrate Earth Day and this anniversary year is an exciting opportunity for you to join a global movement working towards a cleaner, more sustainable environment. (North Dakota State Library) http://library.nd.gov/webinars.html

Tech Balance: Family Engagement Tools to Talk Tech and Media Habits with Parents

In this edWebinar, we will be sharing and brainstorming interactive exercises and discussions to use with parents of young children to promote a healthy balance of media and technology at home. Rocío López, the manager of community partnerships for the Common Sense Latino Program, shares best practices in leading workshops with lower-income and monolingual Spanish-speaking families and provides tools and resources. (edWeb.net) https://home.edweb.net/webinars/

March 24

Caring for the Mind: Providing Mental Health Information At Your Library

In Caring for the Mind, participants will learn how to effectively provide mental health information at their libraries. Participants will learn about the best electronic resources to consult as well as ways to improve their print collections. Best approaches for handling interactions with emotional patrons will also be discussed. Other topics covered include: bibliotherapy; assessment/testing; and the future of mental health. (National Network of Libraries of Medicine) https://nnlm.gov/training/classes-by-availability-scheduled

March 25

Pretty Sweet Tech

Special monthly episodes of NCompass Live! Join the NLC’s Technology Innovation Librarian, Amanda Sweet, as she guides us through the world of library-related Pretty Sweet Tech. (Nebraska Library Commission) http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL

Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Behavior

Trauma in young children is much more pervasive—and much more destructive—than we ever thought. The research on trauma has made it clear that children’s challenging behavior is not intentional, but is instead driven by fear and a protective strategy for coping with their experience. Working with children with challenging behavior and especially those who’ve experienced trauma is probably the most stressful aspect of the teaching profession which can result in secondary traumatic stress (STS), the symptoms of which can mimic those of post-traumatic stress disorder. (Early Childhood Investigations) https://www.earlychildhoodwebinars.com/webinars/

March 31

STEM for Little Sprouts: Connecting Science Through Children’s

Early childhood professionals know that getting children excited about science is only part of the challenge. Today’s young learners need more than excitement and motivation – they need opportunities to actually DO more science on a daily basis. Steve Spangler shares his creative ideas and strategies to teach hands-on science through the medium of children’s literature. Participants will learn how to use elements of the storyline to enable students to think more like scientists. You’ll be ready to create a collection of STEM experiences your children will never forget. (edWeb.net) https://home.edweb.net/webinars/