

# Libraries with Digital Breakouts

Libraries have already started embracing this new technique of designing digital breakouts for creating educational content such as information literacy and bibliographic instruction lessons. These are but a few examples of the types of digital adventures that can be created with library patrons in mind. While the following are geared toward a school library audience, they demonstrate the challenges and learning outcomes that can be incorporated into these online games and can provide inspiration for their applicability to all types of libraries to engage patrons.

## Book Fair Mixup

<https://sites.google.com/cfschools.org/book-fair-mixup-breakout/home>

Lisa Newgard

Elementary Teacher Librarian

Orchard Hill Elementary School

This excellent library breakout game designed by an elementary teacher librarian challenges students to save the library's books by solving five puzzles to unlock cases containing them before they are taken to the book fair by mistake. This fun breakout features five word and number locks. Chock-full of images displaying new releases and suggested reading, this type of breakout would make an excellent reader's advisory tool in all types of libraries.

## Stop the Virus

<https://bthslib.weebly.com/stop-the-virus.html>

Joy Ferguson

Librarian

Brooklyn Tech HS Library

High school librarian Joy Ferguson designed a breakout game that challenged students with the quest "Can you stop the virus?" in this pandemic-themed hybrid breakout game. Students taking a library

orientation class were motivated to find books within the catalog, learn how to open the databases and filter search results, and get to know library resources to save civilization as we know it. This combination of a live event and an online breakout consisted of a flipped classroom model with a preview website activity, an in-person introduction, and three questions with the option to either find a book or continue to play three more questions. Teams of two sat together to take on the challenge. This type of digital breakout could work well for information literacy classes in academic libraries as well.

## My Summer Vacation

<https://sites.google.com/cfschools.org/my-summer-vacation-breakout>

Lisa Newgard

Elementary Teacher Librarian

Orchard Hill Elementary

Designed to teach users how to use the library, this five-lock digital breakout challenges players to find out where Melvil Dewey has disappeared to after his summer vacation, solve all of the puzzles, and escape from the library. One particularly entertaining puzzle included in this breakout is a postcard that is written and encoded with Dewey Decimal classification call numbers! It is an excellent example of a breakout game that is designed to complement bibliographic instruction curriculum.

## Let's Talk about Books

<https://sites.google.com/dcgschools.com/lets-talk-about-books/home>

Sandi Ellis

Teacher Librarian

Dallas Center—Grimes Middle School

This fun reader's advisory digital breakout was

designed to promote new and diverse books to students who think that they have already read everything “good” in the library. The breakout features four word and number locks, and the library collects email addresses of players to follow up with these patrons afterward. This style of an online breakout game could easily be adapted to all types of libraries in order help patrons discover the breadth of their resources and offerings.

## **Book Series Breakout**

<https://sites.google.com/dcgschools.com/bookseriesbreakout/home>  
Sandi Ellis  
Teacher Librarian  
Dallas Center—Grimes Middle School

This middle school library breakout was created to promote a book series as well as individual titles to students. Players adopt the persona of a student chosen to name the best books for readers of middle school age, but the list has gotten messed up. Students must find the contact information for Common Sense Media before an incomplete list is published with their name on it. Four locks guard their friend’s journal with the contact info. Clever clues such as video trailers promoting YA titles and Iowa Teen Award nominees, as well as a poster featuring YALSA’s Teens’ Top 10 list, make up the clues to this breakout’s solution. This type of breakout would be an excellent tool for academic libraries to develop in order to support bibliographic instruction for a particular class such as first-year English or for public libraries to promote a summer reading program.