

or to popular culture.—Sharon Reidt, *Technical Services Specialist, Rice-Aron Library, Marlboro College, Marlboro, Vermont*

Professional Materials

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Editor

Active Learning Techniques for Librarians: Practical Examples.

Andrew Walsh and Padma Inala. Chandos Information Professional Series. Oxford: Chandos, 2010. 146p. Paper \$75 (ISBN 978-1-84334-592-3).

Active learning engages participants in their own learning while giving instructors an alternative to lecturing. Acknowledging that librarians may not have formal training in instruction techniques but are expected to train users in how to find, evaluate, and use information, the authors of *Active Learning Techniques for Librarians* provide targeted activities to insert into library instruction sessions to increase student skills and participation.

The organization and design of this practical workbook is similar to Ryan L. Sittler and Doug Cook's *Library Instruction Cookbook* (ALA, 2009), with a few notable differences. Individual activities are not explicitly tied to specific information literacy goals and therefore may not fit with pedagogical plans or learning outcomes. Some British terminology may not be immediately clear to speakers of American English. However, the variety of activities and techniques shared make this title a valuable addition to an instruction librarian's shelf of tricks.

More than fifty activities covering a range of types and technologies are included in the book. The authors provide details such as required materials, suggested uses of the activity, and "how to" notes on managing each activity. Suggested variations include the use of interactive tools, such as whiteboards and clickers, as well as low-tech items like notecards and stickers. The authors point out potential pitfalls to consider, usually addressing classroom management concerns. Timing for each activity is not given, possibly because there are too many variables, including class size and enthusiasm level.

Lesson plans are the basis for the final section. Blank templates give a practical guide to structuring a plan for a session, including a reminder to try to change the type of activity every ten minutes or so. A set of ten sample plans show how several activities from the book can be combined into a cohesive library session ranging in duration from thirty to ninety minutes. The lesson plan section expands upon the individual techniques shown earlier in the book by including recommendations for target audience, class size, expected outcomes, timelines, and required handouts and equipment. The examples of how the activities can be linked to create a fully formed session add to the versatility of this collection and are a great strength of this title; this reviewer only wishes more premade mash-ups were included.

Although the activities are designed for academic librarians, many of the activities could be used as is or could be modified for school media specialists and public librarians. Intended for use in one-shot sessions, the activities appeal to both new and established librarians who provide instruction. Librarians new to active learning can get their feet wet trying out one of the activities at the beginning or end of a session or launch directly into a one-hour lesson plan. Recommended for all librarians who teach as part of their job.—Amy F. Fyn, *Reference and Instruction Librarian, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio*

Boomers and Beyond: Reconsidering the Role of Libraries. Ed. by Pauline Rothstein and Diantha Dow Schull. Chicago: ALA, 2010. 152p. Paper \$55 (ISBN 978-0-8389-1014-6).

With the first ten years of the new millennium now behind us, the wave of writing about the learning and behavior styles of the millennial generation might be coming to a close as academics turn their focus back to the rest of the population, and from this comes *Boomers and Beyond: Reconsidering the Role of Libraries*, compiled and edited by Pauline Rothstein and Diantha Dow Schull.

The first section spotlights "Older Adults: Essential Concepts and Recent Discoveries" and centers around the human development aspects of aging, including lifespan, spirituality, and work purpose after fifty. This section reads like a textbook, with statistics and figures from government agencies, Meals on Wheels, and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Part two of the work focuses on institutional opportunities for libraries. This section also covers many of the human development aspects of aging but does offer a few ideas for library programming for older adults. One example is an "Active Wisdom" conversation group, in which seniors participate in sharing life experiences. Other examples include film series and tool kits focused on retirement planning and opportunities. An entire chapter is devoted to promoting tolerance of varying lifestyles and ethnicities: the chapter "Reclaiming the 'Public' Library: Engaging Immigrants, Building Democracy" shares the message that that libraries should provide space for all to learn and grow.

The final section of the book presents librarian perspectives, with essays written from three points of view regarding service to the older generations of patrons. Tables and charts regarding online pursuits, web design considerations, website usability, and information needs pack this final section. A contributing author biographical section and a complete index round out this resource.

Although this book's topic is interesting and definitely one that has not been highlighted in recent years, *Boomers and Beyond* is underwhelming. Ideas for programming are not plentiful with the usual "how-to" and "here's what worked" kinds of information normally bountiful in librarian resources. Instead, *Boomers and Beyond* takes a far more academic but less useful approach. However, this book would be useful for