

Ed Extras

Helpful information about learning brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD OnLine

Book Swap for Kids

Libraries and bookstores are great options for building a home library. Another great resource for books is a book swap. Consider organizing one for your neighborhood or block. It can be a simple afternoon undertaking, or with more time and effort, a fun event that will become an annual tradition! Below are some suggestions for organizing a book swap for kids.

Before the Swap

1. Invite a range of readers. If everyone you invite is in first grade, you'll end up with too many books on a similar reading level. Consider inviting older readers who can swap chapter books and younger readers with picture books and "I Can Reads."
2. Encourage families to bring "good" books, in hopes of avoiding too many grocery store, give-away, or TV-character based books.
3. Think about what you're willing to swap and what you're not. For example, do you want to swap DS games? Wii games? Music? Audiobooks? Decide ahead of time and let everyone know what to bring and what to leave at home.
4. Think about different categories of books. Make signs and provide separate tables for each type of book. Some examples include: Mysteries, Jokes & Humor, Nonfiction, Graphic Novels, Picture Books, Biographies, Series books, Historical Fiction.
5. For more fun, have kids make simple bookmarks for the books they're bringing that includes a short two-sentence summary or rating of the book.

At the Swap

1. Ask swappers to sort their books onto the tables using the labels you've set out.
2. Most swaps are book for book, which means if you bring 5 books, you take 5 books. Give a child a token or ticket for each book they bring to swap. Tokens can then be used to "pay" for swapped books.
3. Have a few adults on hand to help the kids make their choices. Adults can steer kids towards books on the right reading level or interest area. Encourage the kids to recommend books, too. Enlist them as the "expert" for books they brought to swap.

After the Swap

1. Decide what to do with the leftover books. Maybe you can form a book bin for the pool to encourage poolside reading. Other options include donating unclaimed books to your library, homeless shelter, or children's hospital.
2. Sit back, relax, and enjoy a good book! Thanks to your book swap efforts, your child will be able to do the same thing!

For more information, read "A Fresh Look at Your Home Library"

www.ReadingRockets.org/article/29495



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