



BOOKTALKING 2.0

No question. I could be a better booktalker. I don't read fast enough. I forget plots and characters. I never have enough copies to meet the needs and interests of the 850 teens who pass through my library doors. When I do prepare for a day of formal booktalking, my more aggressive readers grab the titles, and everyone else winds up frustrated on a waiting list. It just never works for me.

I needed booktalk support. Booktalk rehab. I craved intervention. Recently I realized that I didn't need to do it all myself. I could enhance my booktalking events with the excellent work of others.

Happily, Web 2.0 rescued me.

These days, we can all share, enhance, and ease the booktalking load through the magic of streamed media. And we can involve learners in creating and sharing with us.

We no longer have to compose them all from scratch, and we can easily scale them out to our school and library communities. Once we find the online booktalks that best meet the needs of our readers, we can link to them in our OPACs and reading lists and pathfinders. We can incorporate them in our own talks with students. We can use them as models for new student projects.

Online booktalks seem to come in two flavors these days. There's the traditional talk simply migrated to podcast or audio format. And there's the more elaborate movie trailer-style book promotion.

BOOKTALKS IN PODCAST AND VODCAST FORMAT

Bookwink's mission is "to inspire kids to read. Through podcasting and Web video, we hope to connect kids in Grades 3 through 8 with books that will make them excited about reading."

Selected as an Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), Great Web Site, **Bookwink** talks are thematic, approximately three minutes in length, and updated monthly. The site also features read-alike suggestions. Books are searchable by subject, grade level, author, or title.

Sonja Cole, a former middle school librarian with a Rutgers library degree, is **Bookwink's** host and booktalker. She left her library to follow another passion. "I loved my ten years of school library work," said Cole, "but I felt I could be doing more, . . . reaching beyond my 300 kids. What if my booktalks could get kids all over the world excited about reading?" Cole had been creating and presenting traditional booktalks for years when she began reading and thinking about Web 2.0 applications. Her friend Paul

Kim asked her to seriously consider the "video thing." Kim, now Cole's business partner, manages the technology and functions as **Bookwink's** art director and producer.

The technology is relatively simple. Normally Cole uses iMovie on her Mac and sets up a video camera in her dining room. Archived **Bookwink** themes include: volcanoes, mythology, love, the nineteenth century, sharks, World War II, and witches.

Cole has experienced a "wonderful, gratifying response" to **Bookwink**. Librarians write to tell her that once students see the **Bookwink** booktalks, titles "fly off the shelves." Cole is also excited about the potential for other teachers and librarians to create their own videos about books. She sees it as a creative performance outlet for learners, and she's heard from several teachers who have already used **Bookwink** as a model for student work. Cole would like **Bookwink** to become a video booktalk portal, and she invites teachers and librarians to create videos.

Longtime booktalk expert and middle school librarian Nancy Keane recently added podcasts to her popular **Booktalks Quick and Simple** site. Keane adds them at a furious pace of one every day. You can choose to visit the site or keep up with the additions by having an RSS subscription.

She began by adding audiobook clips to her Web site with permission from Listening Library. Her next big step was preparing audio-enhanced PowerPoint presentations of the state book award titles for her own school. She now provides these booktalks as podcasts for all of New Hampshire. Take a look at her podcasts of New Hampshire's **Great Stone Face Award** as well as the **Isinglass Teen Awards**.

Keane uses podcast booktalks in her own middle school program. She collects the booktalk titles on iPods and checks out those iPods to students. Her middle school students love this type of book promotion. "People often ask if they can copy my booktalks onto disks and iPods," says Keane. "I say, absolutely, as long as they're not making money on my efforts."

I asked Keane why her podcast booktalks are so popular. "I would rather hear someone talk about a book than read a description," she says. And she notes that her own talks have grown in quality. "I started out bland, [and] then I began adding

