

Library of Things

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LIBS 658: Knowledge Resources-Collections

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1. **Gardening Supplies-** This collection would include shovels, hoes, maddocks, gardening gloves, seeds, gardening books. I would also have several tillers that could be checked out because they make creating a garden so much easier. The target audience would be any age person in the community. There is no better time to learn to be self-sufficient. Children need to learn how to grow their own food. These tools would be all someone needed to start a garden at home.
2. **Sports equipment-** Basketballs, baseballs/softballs, soccer balls, footballs, tennis balls, tennis rackets, fielding gloves, bats. This collection would be mainly for children and teenagers. There are lots of kids in the area who would love to be involved in sports in school but can't afford to buy the equipment. I am a firm believer that sports and extracurricular activities keep kids out of trouble.
3. **GED/Tutoring-** Most of the collection would consist of people. I would also have a collection of textbooks and study materials, print and online, that would be used to teach the materials. I would love to have teachers- current and retired- who would volunteer to tutor. It would also require online programs that are tailored to teaching to the test. Although the graduation rate isn't terrible in our area, anyone who doesn't have a high school diploma is at a huge disadvantage. This collection would be targeting anyone who didn't finish high school and wants to take that step.
4. **Cooking/Baking Collection-** This collection would include a huge variety of pots, pans, cooking utensils, blenders, and cookbooks. There are times when people need to use a certain kind of pan, like a bundt pan, but they don't use it enough to justify buying one. By being able to check out these items from the

library, people could decide which items they enjoy using so they could only have to purchase those items. Cooking is one of the most important things a person can ever learn. This collection would require having people from the community coming in to teach cooking safety and cooking tips. This would be beneficial for all community members.

5. **Musical Instruments-** This will be an expensive collection. I would love to have, at least, five of every instrument in the collection. This would include band instruments, string instruments, keyboards, percussion... all of them. We would also need books that teach each instrument. My dream would be to have music teachers come in and teach theory classes and do private lessons as well. Our area high schools all have strong band programs, but there are many kids who can't afford instruments. There are programs that allow students to rent instruments from local music stores, but sometimes the financial burden is still too much. Even though this would be mostly directed toward school age kids, it would be open to all ages of people. You are never too young or too old to learn music.
6. **Tradespeople-** This will require lots of money and people. This collection would require experts from each trade to donate their time or be compensated for it. In order to have a successful collection, we would need lots of entry level tools for use for demonstration and teaching basic skills. Necessary items would include drills, welding equipment, tools for electricians, plumbing tools, tools for HVAC repair, and contractor tools. As things change, I am very much a supporter of my students learning a trade. There is so much money to be made as a plumber,

contractor, mechanic, electrician, welder, HVAC, etc. The target group would be teenagers who are deciding what career they would like to train for, although adults would benefit from this as well. This would allow people to get enough information to see if that is something they would be interested in pursuing before spending money for trade school or some other kind of formal training.

7. **Financial Advising-** This collection would require financial budgeting software and spreadsheets, a program similar to the one used in Virginia high schools that covers things like taxes, loans, credit scores, and things like that. It would also require educated adults who have been trained in finance. Although high schools in Virginia teach a personal finance class, I don't think they fully learn and understand what it really means to be financially responsible. This leads to adults who are not able to manage money or invest and save for the future. So, this collection would be for teenagers and adults as well. Some jobs and professions require credit checks before hiring, so kids must be aware that their decisions about money and credit can affect their probability of being hired.
8. **Summer Activities Collections-** Kayaks, canoes, tubes, picnic supplies, passes to Fairystone State Park, passes to the local public pool, and vouchers for free swimming lessons. Our area has a lot to offer with the rivers, lakes, and state parks. There are several places to put in kayaks, canoes, and tubes on your own. If the library offers them to be checked out, more people would have the opportunity to take their family out for a picnic and a river or lake adventure. More people would also be able to take advantage of our local public pools and Fairystone or Goose Point beach access with free passes. In order to be able to

fully experience the fun of the water, swimming lesson vouchers would be perfect for getting kids, or adults who don't know how to swim, comfortable in the water.

This would be a collection that could be enjoyed by all ages of our community.

9. **Camping/Hiking-** Tents, camping chairs, cooking equipment for camping, inflatable sleeping mats, backpacks for camping, and vouchers for campsites.

With the access to state parks in our area, we have a plethora of camping and hiking opportunities. This is a great way to get families out in the fresh area and into nature. This would be great for families and all ages.

10. **First Aid/Life Saving Skills-** This collection would include first aid supplies such as bandages, splints, gauze, AEDs, dummies for practice, and certified medical personnel. Everyone could benefit from these skills. It would be great for teenagers who plan to babysit, adults who take care of older parents and family members, or anyone who could jump in and perform life-saving skills in case of any kind of emergency. Many CPR classes charge a fee, so if the library could offer this service, more people would be able to take advantage of it.

Reflection

When deciding what collections to choose for my library, I had several things in mind I knew I needed to consider. My local library serves an area that I have lived in all of my life. People used to rely on furniture and textile factories to make a decent living, but the loss of so many factories in the area and surrounding areas changed all that. When I was growing up, many people in my community didn't feel that it was necessary to go to college because they knew they would be able to get a job without one. In many cases, a high school diploma wasn't even required. Mindsets like that are hard to break, and it has been very difficult for some to realize how important education is. So, several of my collections have to do with tools that will help people graduate or get a GED and work towards an occupational goal. Some of the other collections came from all the recreational opportunities we have for families around our area. Like most things, they all require money and equipment, so being able to borrow from a library would make things so much easier. The other collections, such as gardening, cooking, First Aid, and financial advising, are things that are important to everyone. Those are all skills that everyone should have to be able to be self-sufficient and better themselves. Some challenges I discovered would mostly be finding people to help the collections run smoothly. Several of them would require professionals from health care, trades, and businesses. Although I am sure there would be more success if all these people were paid instead of just volunteering their time, there would be a better chance of having plenty of people on hand. However, it is very difficult to get people to find time in their busy schedules to take on the kind of commitment it would require to help these collections reach their full potential.

