

# Super SHARING STRATEGIES

## How can school librarians support Project CRISS?

By Elaine Buch, Ph.D.

*Elaine recently shared with us the following reply she sent to a media specialist who works in Iowa. This librarian wanted to know how she could support the use of CRISS in her building.*

“How can school librarians support Project CRISS?” is a great question! It is really good to hear from you and to think with you about how we can support the Project CRISS plan. It is always great to have contact with someone in Iowa!

I am really excited about the (CRISS) initiative and have become a District Trainer. I **hold the training sessions** here in the AT LMC (Addison Trails Library Media Center). That is because I love to work with teachers and our Staff Development program. We **invite teachers from our feeder district** to come here and be a part of the training, too! (I am a “solo” librarian with four great teacher aides in a two-story library that serves 1,800+ diverse students. It is very busy. We are all working hard to make AYP [Annual Yearly Progress] this year and Project CRISS is a big part of that plan.)

First of all, when I am doing a planning session with a teacher for a classroom research project, I offer to **lead the discussion on background knowledge**. Who else has access to so many resources to provide relevant information when the background knowledge is lacking! You can lead the charge in that area.

For students and teachers alike, I **model lessons** using CRISS strategies. An example is the PowerPoint® presentation I created for Banned Book Week, which we celebrate in our school. (Illustration follows this article.)

In our reference area, we **provide copies of the (CRISS) blackline masters (BLMs)** to the students who come into the media center. We store these BLMs with the other printed tip sheets we provide to help students be successful. We urge the teacher aides to learn how to effectively use the blackline masters so they can assist the students.

The big picture relationship between CRISS and our media center is the “Using Information” section of our Information Literacy model. **Using information skills** is basic to all information literacy models, and **Project CRISS provides the application piece** of what students need to know and do with the information they locate. Whenever we initiate a student research project in the media center, I try to **create a Webpage for the project** using Addison Trail’s Information Literacy model. The model itself is

heavy on metacognition, a key principle of CRISS.

The **QAR strategy** is very helpful when assisting students to understand the kind and number of information sources they will need for a project. Remember how knowing the type of question lets students know the type of response they will need? Once they know the *kind* of response, finding the resources to answer their research questions becomes easier. You can be a big help to the students by helping them understand the different kinds of questions, too.

Another resource we have designed is **CRISS strategies posters** that teachers display in their classrooms and which we display in the library. They are visible from every room in our center. Helping teachers is a great opportunity because, ultimately, it helps students be successful. Another poster we created ties the CRISS

strategies to what our building is calling *Essential Skills*. An example of this poster, which we distributed to all departments and classrooms, is at the end of this article. I also developed some Web pages which our teachers can reach through the library section of our school Web site. These provide additional support to our teachers as they work to incorporate CRISS into their everyday teaching.



### **About the Author**

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