



# RA for All

Presented by  
Nancy Houseal  
KDLA's Division of  
Library Services

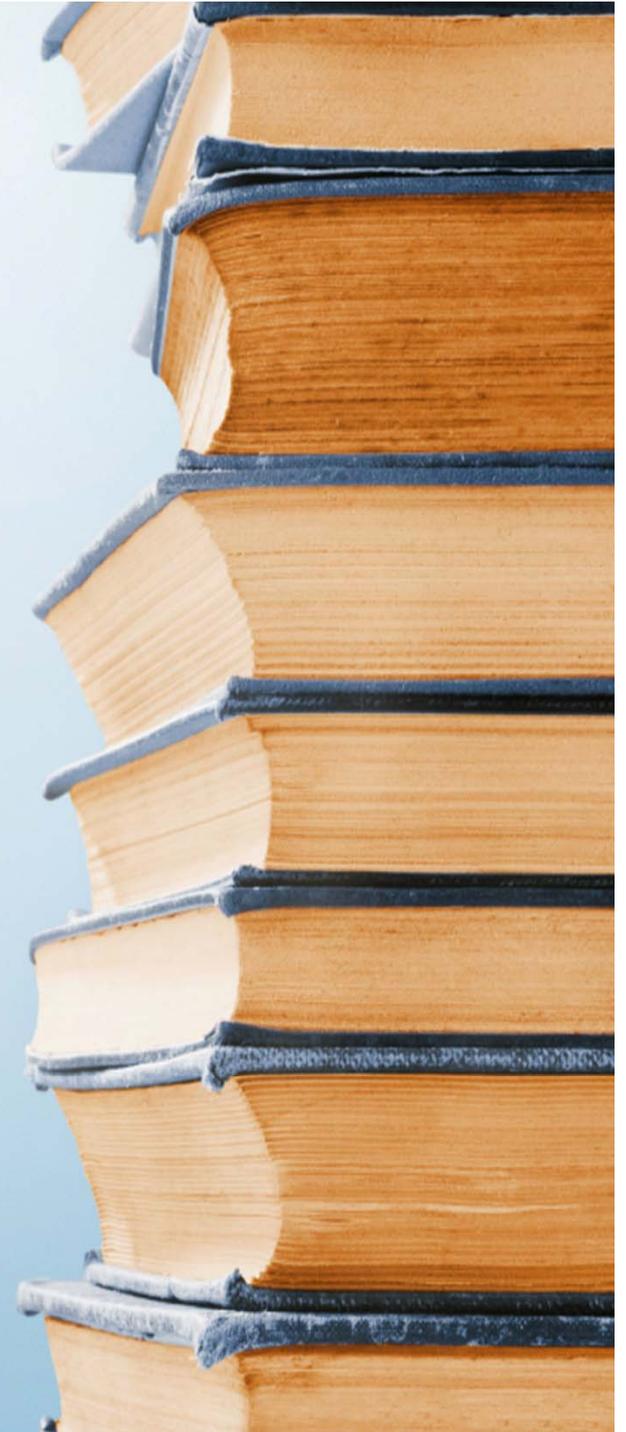
# RA Matters

- Each book has reader
- Each reader wants something from title
- Reading matters
- Connecting books to readers matters
- Listen to what readers like
- Offer suggestion that makes patron excited
- Requires certain skill set
  - Ask about reading preferences
  - Interpret answers (or non-answers)
  - Sensitivity to patron's needs and tastes
- Requires constant work and learning
- Requires reading—lots of reading

# Today's Goals

- Examine the types of readers.
- Discuss ways to provide RA assistance.
- Examine the different strengths library staff possess
- Explore ways to maximize staff effectiveness for RA services.

# Evaluate Your Readers



# How many of your readers are:

A  %

**Have more time,  
Prefer high interaction**

**These readers are familiar faces in the library, love talking books with staff, and are frequent attendees at book-related programming and events.**

# Type A Readers

- Familiar patrons
- Enjoy talking to staff
- Frequent stops at desk
- Converse about books
- Interested in what others are reading
- Join book clubs
- Other patrons ask their opinions

# How many of your readers are:

**B**  %

**Have less time,  
Prefer high interaction**

Your “drive-by” readers fit into this category. They love and use the library but don’t typically have lots of time to spend at the library.

# Type B Readers

- Work hard to find time to read
- Spend less time in library
- Frequent users of online catalog and holds
- Measures successful visit by how quick they get in and out
- Always looking for next book



# How many of your readers are:



**Have more time,  
Prefer low interaction**

These readers enjoy spending time wandering the stacks and checking out book displays but tend to shy away from interacting with staff.

# Type C Readers

- Have less-focused strategies for finding titles
- Like to browse
- Like to “discover” titles
- Linger in stacks
- Little interaction with library staff



# How many of your readers are:

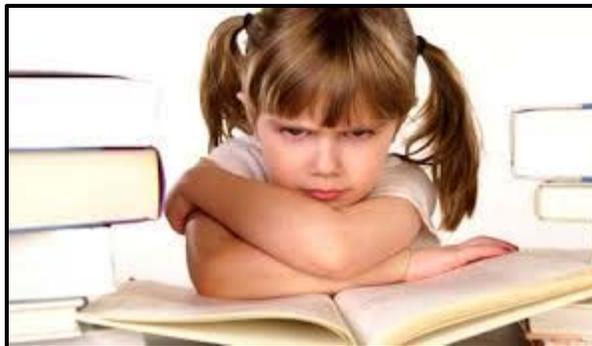
**D**  %

**Have less time,  
Prefer low interaction**

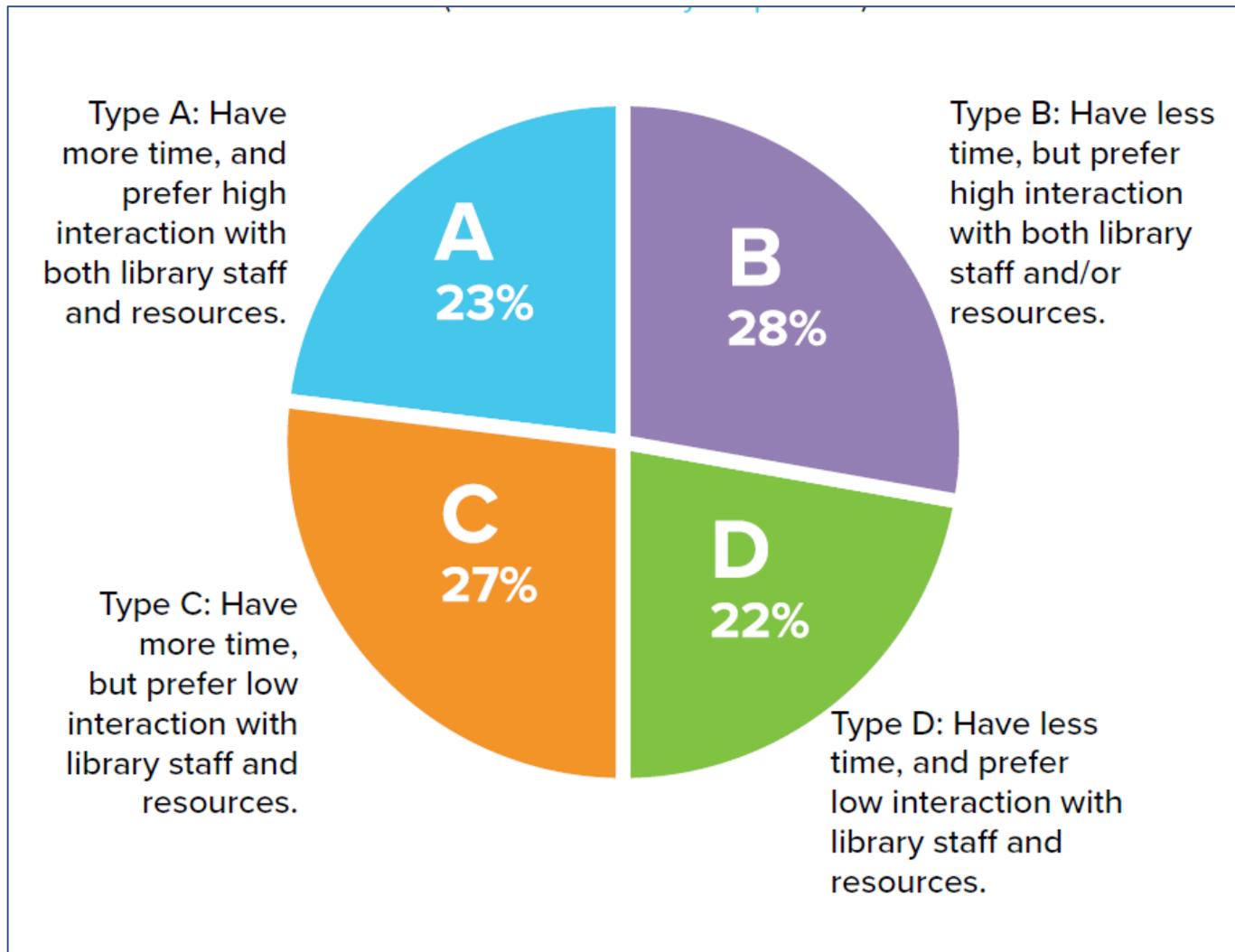
Those in this group may not identify themselves as readers and typically will only come into the library when they need help with a specific need.

# Type D Readers

- Only read when they have to
- Visit library to solve problem or deal with issue
- Focused on getting what exactly what they need as quickly as possible
- Infrequent visitors



# Typical Breakdown of Reader Types



# RA Help: Type A Readers

Have more time, prefer high interaction

- Use all of library's discover services
- Prefer services that involve contact with others (face-to-face RA, book clubs)
- Respond to services that present and push reading suggestions (e-newsletters, enriched catalogs)

# RA Help: Type B Readers

Have less time, prefer high interactions

- Reading recommendations and series information in catalog
- Prefer digital strategies (e-newsletters, form-based RA)
- Like librarian expertise without having to visit library

# RA Help: Type C Readers

Have more time, prefer low interaction

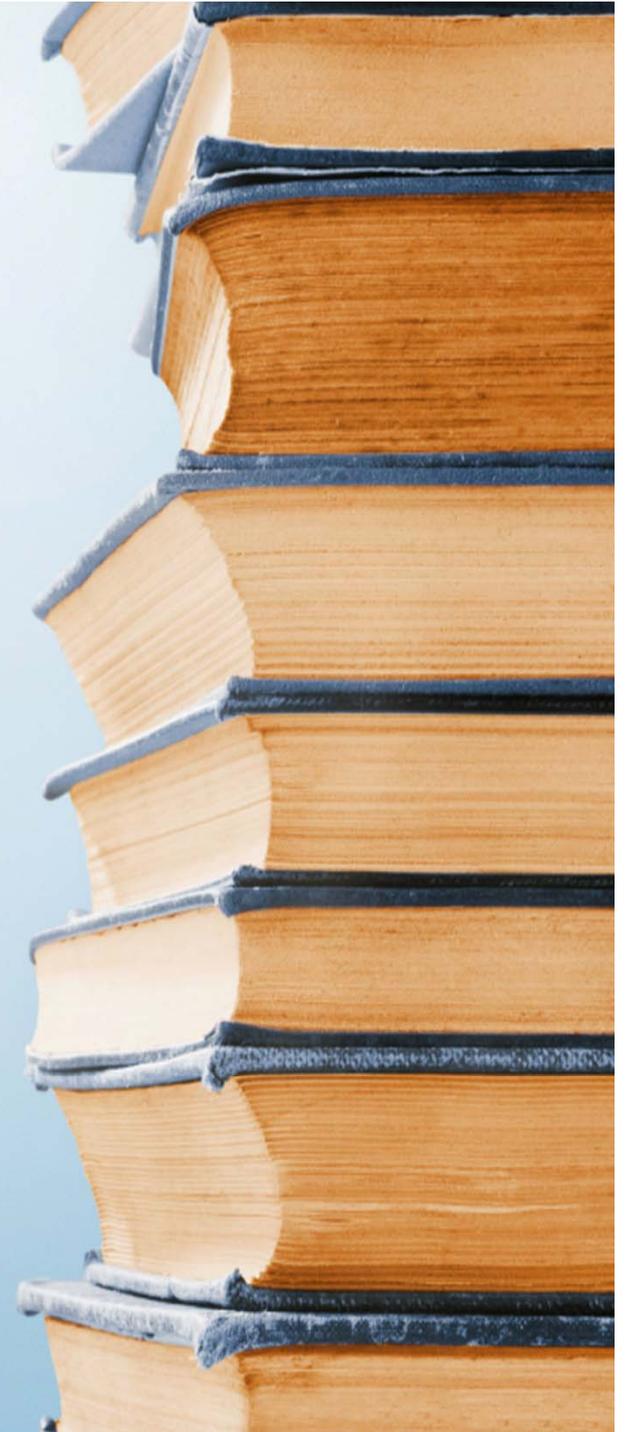
- Like services and strategies that enables them to easily locate titles without help
- Shelving by genres
- Spine labeling
- Shelf-talkers
- Displays
- Booklists
- Reading maps
- Post reminders of staff availability

# RA Help: Type D Readers

Have less time, prefer low interaction

- Efficient responses to assistance requests
- Have self-directed resources for life challenges
- Clear and adequate signage
- Informational materials in place

# Evaluate Your Staff



# How many of your staff are:

**1**  **%**

**Have more book knowledge  
Prefer high interaction**

**These are your RA experts. They read widely and often, and are very comfortable and skilled at providing readers' advisory to patrons.**

# Type 1 Staff

- Avid readers
- Read variety of genres
- Comfortable talking about books
- Popular with patrons wanting assistance
- Great on reference or circulation desk
- Book club leaders, book-oriented programs

# Strategies for Type 1 Staff

More book knowledge, prefer high interaction

- Make accessible to other staff
- Create materials that can be used by all
- Assign leadership roles in staff training



# How many of your staff are:

**2**  **%**

**Have less book knowledge  
Prefer high interaction**

These staff members are skilled at  
and enjoy interacting with the public  
but don't have extensive knowledge  
of different genres, authors, etc.

# Type 2 Staff

- Enjoy face-to-face interaction
- May not see connection between skills and RA services
- Can't respond to RA question if haven't read book



# Strategies for Type 2 Staff

Less book knowledge, prefer high interaction

- Staff education in RA processes and confidence in using RA resources
- Provide tools such as cheat sheets, brochures and bookmarks

## Reader's Advisory Training

1. Why we do reader's advisory
2. Reader's advisory skills
3. The reader's advisory interview
4. The different genres
5. The paranormal genre
6. The urban fantasy genre

# How many of your staff are:

**3**  **%**

**Have more book knowledge  
Prefer low interaction**

**These staff are wide and avid readers, may often identify as introverts, and often don't feel comfortable or skilled at interacting with the public.**

# Type 3 Staff

- Robust book knowledge
- Shy about face-to-face interactions
- Will keep expertise inside unless given responsibilities where sharing required
- Like sharing but not in high-pressure, fast-paced situations



# Strategies for Type 3 Staff

More book knowledge, prefer low interaction

- Assign tasks to create displays, booklists, bookmarks and other print materials
- Use to respond to form-based RA questions
- Use as editors of book-oriented newsletters

# How many of your staff are:

**4**  **%**

**Have less book knowledge  
Prefer low interaction**

**Staff members in this category may not identify as avid readers, and thus don't feel as comfortable responding to off-the-cuff questions from patrons.**

# Type 4 Staff

- Less book knowledge than other types
- Prefer structure to work
- No surprise requests

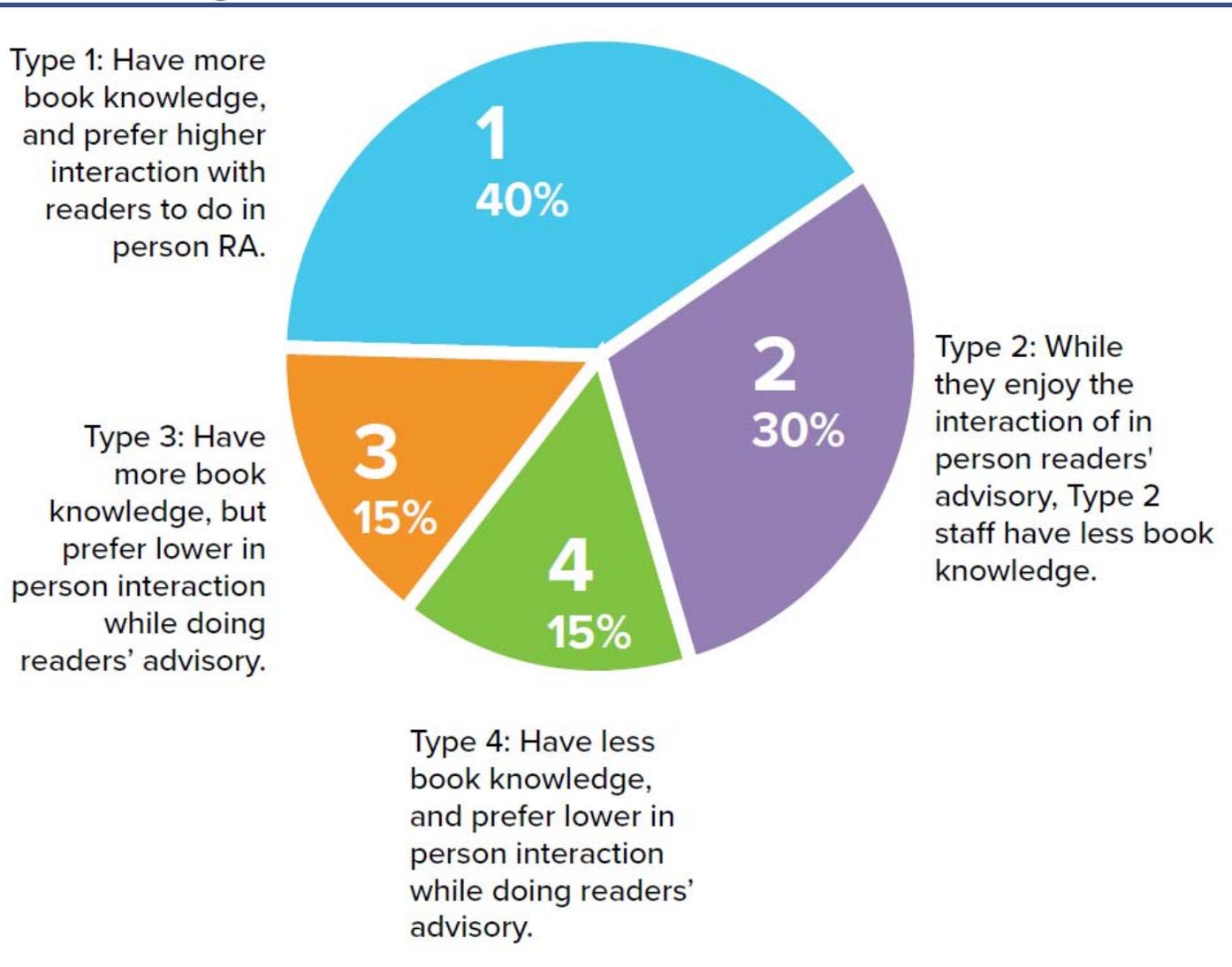


# Strategies for Type 4 Staff

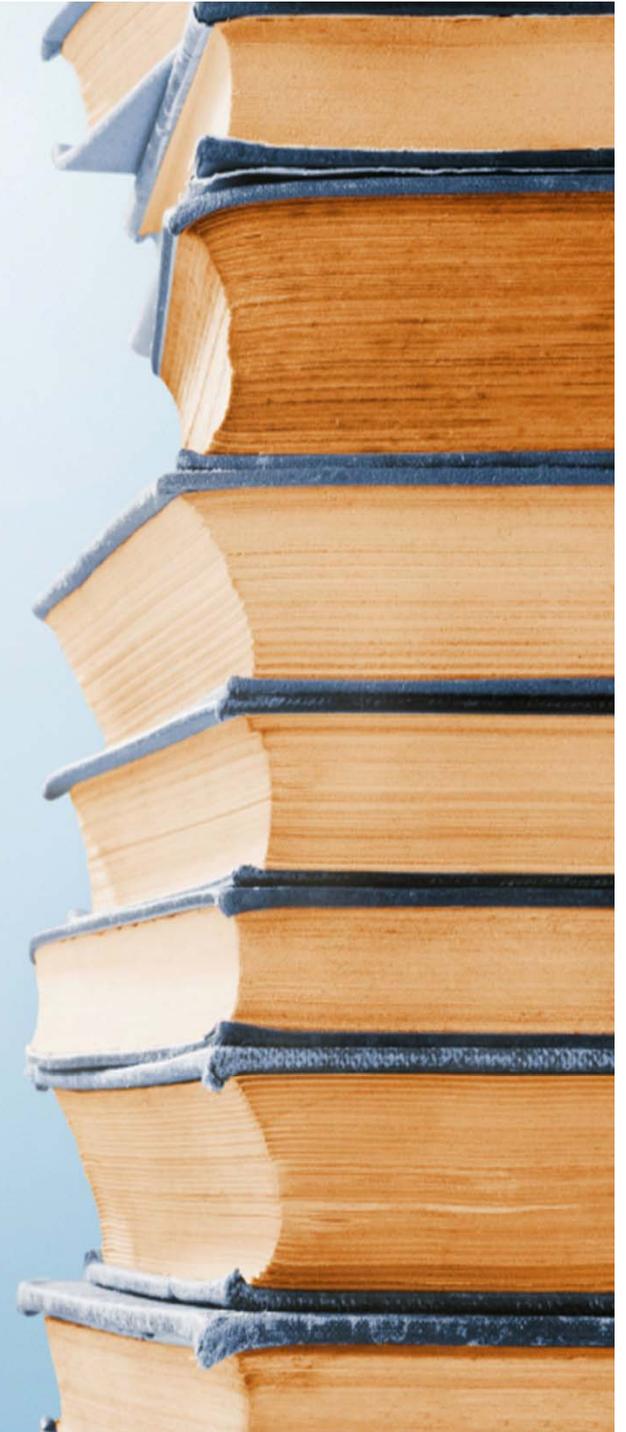
Less book knowledge, prefer low interaction

- Provide clear, easy-to-follow guidelines
- Show library's latest appropriate, book-focused newsletters
- Have RA tools available

# Typical Breakdown of Library Staff



What should you do?  
Your RA / IQ



# Situation #1

A patron calls in on a cell phone (with driving noises in the background) asking if there's a book after Archer's *Be careful what you wish for*. The patron says, "Everybody just blew up and the book ended so there's got to be a sequel."

- a. Tell the patron it is against the law to talk on cell phone while driving.
- b. Tell the patron you are unfamiliar with the series.
- c. Use the catalog or other online resource to get the titles in the series.

# Situation #2

When asked for your personal views on genres or authors when doing readers advisory, what is the best way to respond?

- a. Point out the poor reviews and aggravating habits of an author.
- b. Lovingly begin to expound upon your favorite genre and author and why it is so fascinating.
- c. Remain neutral on the subject and let them know you read widely across all genres and are always trying out new authors.

# Situation #3

When getting a reader to discuss what they find enjoyable to read, what are some things you should be listening for and making mental notes on while you listen?

- a. What the reader says about characters they enjoy.
- b. If the reader makes any comments about style of writing or use of language by authors.
- c. How the reader discusses settings when talking about a book they enjoyed.
- d. Any special attention the reader gives the plot or storyline in works they have found fascinating.
- e. All of the above.

# Situation #4

In addition to encouraging a reader to talk about CLaSS (Characters, Language, Setting, Story) in the books they have enjoyed, what else might help you make a good recommendation?

- a. What motivated the reader to seek out a new book.
- b. How much time they devote to reading.
- c. What radio station they listen to on a regular basis.

# Situation #5

If a patron has concerns about the appropriateness of a title, what is the best way to respond?

- a. Immediately pull the book from the collection and place it in the back to be reviewed and discussed by staff.
- b. Find a senior librarian or administrator immediately to handle the complaint.
- c. Listen to the patron carefully while letting them openly express their views and let the conversation run a natural course.
- d. Print out a Request for Reconsideration form for the patron to fill out.

# Situation #6

When giving an impromptu booktalk, what other element might you want to consider mentioning in addition to memorable scenes, outstanding characteristics of the main character, mood of the book or memorable scenes, and read-alikes?

- a. Summary of the theme / main idea of the book.
- b. Publisher information.
- c. Reading level.

# Situation #7

A parent and teen wander up to the desk, and the parent asks for help finding a book for the teen who doesn't like to read. But s/he needs a book for school. All preliminary questions are answered by the parent.

- a. Tell the pair to search the catalog.
- b. Direct questions to the teenager and only the teenager.
- c. Tell the parent the teen should not be forced to read a book.

# Conclusion



# KDLA Can Help

- In Frankfort  
502-564-8306
- Outside Frankfort  
800-928-7000  
(choose option #3)
- Email and phone: 8:00 – 4:30 (ET) M-F
- Onsite visits: 9:00 – 4:00 (ET) M-F



# Remember

- Continuing Education Events Calendar

<https://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/staffdevelopment/Pages/ContinuingEducationCalendar.aspx>

- Follow-up email (may take 1-2 weeks to arrive)
  - Training certificate
  - Evaluation survey link



# Download Presentation

In the File Share box:

- Click "RA for All "
- Save to my computer"
- In the pop-up window:
- "Click to Download"
- "Save"
- Choose where to save it
- "Save"

