

Fifth Grade Book Club

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Community

Fall 2012

EDGE
PROJECT

Project Summary

My project was to form and teach a Book Club for a group of book lovers from the fifth grade at South Elementary School. I held two Book Clubs: one starting in April, and one this August. Students who turned in their permission forms came to the reading room after school on Fridays, eager to discuss what they had read that week. The book I chose, *Alcatraz versus the Evil Librarians* by Brandon Sanderson, was a great hit as it is both entertaining and cerebral for this age group.

Project Highlights

At the beginning of this school year, I started a new Book Club with the new fifth-graders. I had expected to receive as large a response as I did last Spring, but the response I got was hardly a third of the number I'd had before. I was surprised, but continued on more or less as I had planned, using revised lessons and material, tailoring them to the smaller discussion group.

Changing from a large group to a smaller one was a wonderful experience for me as a teacher, because it taught me that I could not merely rest on my laurels from the previous year. Each student is different, and each group dynamic is different, and I want to always be ready to rise to the next challenge.

From My Journal

"I found some great information on Alcatraz prison which I thought would be fun to share ... [but] my emphasis on Alcatraz's name prompted nearly all of the students to form and share 'hypotheses' on how he was connected with the prison. I had to assure them that the island and institution itself do not come into the story at all.

"The Session itself was great! We went over ... the author's foreword and began the first chapter ... pausing occasionally so that I could ask questions or highlight a certain point. We ended with encouragement that they could finish the assigned reading before next time."



Here students look for the answer to a question, looking in their own copies of *Alcatraz versus the Evil Librarians*. The chapters we were reading contained a reference to Plato's parable of the Shadows in the Caves, and we were looking for examples from the story to relate to it.



The students were all great readers, and readily involved in the story. Here, several students hands shot up, as they hoped to share predictions they had made while reading.