REPURPOSING UNWANTED AND DAMAGED BOOKS

Nobody likes discarding books—especially if there is nothing wrong with them. Think of the money spent on reference materials you purge after so many years! Think of that great book that nobody checks out anymore. Think of that beloved book someone returned damaged—so damaged it is now out of circulation! What do you do with those? You put them on a cart hoping somebody would want them, but there are still too many destined for the recycling bin or the landfill. Stop! Here are a couple of ideas that will give you a reason to hang onto some of those volumes!

FINDING THE WORDS!

Materials
Discarded books that will go to recycling or to the landfill
Pastel cardstock or color copier paper
X-acto blade
Scissors
Glue or glue stick

Highlighters
Pencils/pens
Sharpie marker
Colored Pencils

Preparation
1. Using the X-acto blade, remove pages from selected reference books, and books of fiction or nonfiction.
2. Inspect the front and back of each page and decide which side is to be viewed and which side is to be glued.
3. Using scissors, trim the edges of the paper so they have even margins all around and can be mounted to a piece of colored paper or cardstock.
4. Glue the removed page to the colored paper or cardstock—eliminating as many bumps and bubbles as possible.
5. Set aside to dry. Prepare half a dozen extras per class in case a student struggles or there is a mishap during the composing or writing process.

Activity
1. Have students choose a discarded page you have mounted to colored paper or cardstock.
2. Have students select one or two colored pencils, 1 pen and/or pencil, 1 Sharpie marker.
3. Have glue available for repairs—especially if you used glue sticks as paper often unbonds.
4. Show students a finished product and announce that they are going to go word mining.
5. Demonstrate how to build a sentence using the words on the page. Point out that students the topic of their sentence will most likely not be what the story was about or what the text was about if it is nonfiction.

6. Practice a few times with students using some spares you have set aside for demonstration purposes. Ask students to help you! When students have had practice, have them work individually to create their own new sentence(s).

7. Ask students to work with a buddy and check their work, revising it if necessary.

8. Have students write their sentence(s) at the bottom of the colored sheet.

9. Have students decorate the margins with artwork that is associated with their new sentence(s).

10. Share time!

IMPORTANT NOTE! Liz likes to do this twice. The first time students complete the task using fiction. The second time, she asks students to use nonfiction. Students tend to struggle with the nonfiction when they realize their new sentence cannot be anything about the topic on the chosen page. The sentence has to be completely unrelated. This is where the work samples and modeling help students succeed.

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**BRAIN-SKETCHERS**  
(Repurposing an Unreadable Copy of a Classroom Novel)

**Materials**
- Unusable copies of novels (or other books of choice)
- X-acto blade
- Scissors
- Glue
- Colored Paper or Cardstock
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Sharpie markers
- Colored pencils

**Preparation**
1. Using an X-acto blade, slice pages from discarded books. Set those pages aside.
2. Using scissors trip the margins on the pages so they are fairly even.
3. Mount/glue the trimmed page to a piece of colored paper or cardstock.
4. Set aside and allow to dry.

**Activity**
1. Choose a page that has been mounted onto colored paper or cardstock.
2. Read the page and then decide how to represent what is on the page in a drawing or illustration.

3. After you have sketched it on the page of text, color/paint the illustration so that it “pops” off the page.

VARIATIONS

- Students can illustrate their favorite scene from a story or novel—even if it does not happen on the page the student selected.
- Students can take an entire discarded novel, remove the spine, remount/rebind pages using the bookbinding procedure demonstrated in the BOOKBINDING WITH A STICK activity.
- Students can illustrate a conflict or other element of fiction that makes the book enjoyable.