

## Library Visits - Ruth Smith

More than half my sales each year are to libraries. This may be an avenue you would like to pursue. After calling ahead to make the appointment, here's how the visit might go.

I arrive **on time, dressed nicely; friendly & confident** that she will fall in love with these books. I have a catalog & pen for each of the people I'm meeting. It may be just the children's librarian, or also young adults' librarian, a teacher or principal, or a buyer. I tell them it is fine to **circle things in the catalog** if they'd like & I'd be happy to write up orders for them, or work with whatever procedure they want to use.

If their patrons include small children, I start at the board books. (I have my books prearranged in **catalog order**.) As I hand them one book & let them look at it, we look at that page in the catalog together so they can circle the **whole series!** You want them to use the whole catalog to order from rather than just the samples you brought. Then we look on those pages at information about books I don't have with me. I point out ones that are new, revised, or that I particularly like.

I bring books I particularly like, but probably not models, nor sticker, flap & slot books. As we get past the board books, I tell her that most of the books come in both paperback **and library binding**. I let her hold a librarybound book & show in the catalog the (P), (H) & (L) and mention that I brought mostly paperback editions so I could bring more for her to see. Even though the librarian's time is precious, we take quiet time to look at & even read books if she seems to want to.

**Sticking with catalog sequence** through the catalog prevents skipping over something she may want. I continue handing her a book & looking at that catalog page together, letting her ohh & ahh & circle the series, then look at the others on that page before moving on to the next book or page.

I draw her attention to the First 1000 Words series, since she will want all of those in library binding. She may already have them in hardback before the nice revisions which include multiculturalism and more modern illustrations. I point out the computer books and Internet Linked books, showing how the internet links work and noting that we have **the most current, up-to-date editions published**. Overall, we don't have to say much about the books. She's very familiar with books & knows what she likes and needs.

When we get to the kits I tell a little about Kid Kits and move on to the titles in Spanish in case they're interested in those. Sometimes there are extra funds for Spanish books. I tell her that the books come within **2 weeks OR can come with shelf ready processing** if she would rather. If she is interested in that, the order form for all cataloging products is on the back of the mini S&L order form. The form will answer her questions about that.

I reiterate that I will work with **whatever ordering procedure she wants** to use. (Every S&L order I've had has used a different procedure. She may give you a purchase order right then, she may need to request a PO from the school or library acquisitions office so you come back in a few days to pick it up, she may not have access to funds for months, she may need to spend her money now or lose it, or she may need to send it directly to the company - make sure she includes your ID# on her order.) Again, **I offer to write up her order** from what she has circled in the catalog & I ask if there are titles she would like in **multiple copies**. She may want more than one copy of books she expects will get **high circulation**.

**Listen** to what she says & see how you can service her the best. While not taking up too much of her time, remember to smile, ask her about herself & be friendly enough that she will want to see you again. You will probably get an order from her every 6 months when the new titles come out or when she gets her money. It is OK to ask her when her funds are available or when she does her buying or when you should contact her next. She has money that she HAS to spend on books; we have books she wants. Just help her make it as **easy** as possible for her. You can ask her if there are **other librarians** or Library Media Specialists she recommends that you visit.

*Smile & be confident that we have the best books and the best bindings available. Giving your service to the librarian will help more children have access to these great books.*