



CHAPTER 11

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR USERS

A school library is a Service Library. A Library even with a small collection can provide good library services provided all its resources are organized using modern techniques. The members should have open access to all documents.

1. Issue and Return: Circulation

Issue and Return of a book is the most important activity of the school library as seen from the angle of students. Therefore, the Circulation System (also called Charging and Discharging) selected or designed and developed for the effective control of the items borrowed from the library should be such that it is the least cumbersome and time consuming. There are various methods of Issue and Return such as Newark, Browne, Register, Passbook, Ranganathan, Slip, Computerise and so on. The Browne system of Issue and Return is most popular amongst the libraries as it is least time consuming.

(A)	Browne System - In the 'Browne System' the members are given Reader's Ticket(s) having a pouch to enable them to borrow books from the library. While issuing a book one has to simply remove the 'Book Card' from the 'Book Pocket' and insert the same in 'Reader's Ticket' and put the due date stamp on the Due Date Label. This is the simplest of all methods of 'Issue and Return'. The process does not take much time as no noting/writing work is involved. While returning the book the Librarian has to take out the 'Book Card' coupled with the 'Reader's Ticket' arranged behind date guides in the 'Charging Tray'. The book card is separated from the Reader's Ticket and inserted in the 'Book Pocket'. The 'Reader's Ticket' is retained by the library and kept in a separate sequence for future use or handed over to the student member as per the practice of library. At the close of the day, the Issue Record is got arranged and filed behind 'Due Date Guides'.
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(B) Computerized Issue System Issuing and discharging items of library stock using an automated system is usually quick and straightforward. Sometimes the system will indicate a complexity in the transaction, eg: you can be prevented from issuing an item to a borrower. Although in almost all cases the system will supply you with correct information regarding the status of the borrower and their borrowing activities, the underlying reasons may not be displayed on the screen.



Fig. 13. Issue Return through Library Software

2. Late Fine

Though it may be unfair to impose any fine for the late return of borrowed books, it is essential in a library so as to discipline the student members, but the amount involved in most of the cases is so trivial that it is embarrassment to the borrower as well as librarian. A formal receipt has to be written for the money realized and account submitted to the Principal's office. This practice should be done away with, as it is not worth the labour. But if it is unavoidable, the Account Section of the school should be informed about it for realizing the same along with the monthly school fee.

3. Conscience Box

An alternative method of realizing the fine for late return of books is through the instrument of a Conscience Box, designed and developed by Padmashree Dr. S.R.Ranganathan. According to this method, no formal receipt is to be issued to the borrower. The overdue charges are calculated by



the Librarian and the Borrower drops the computed amount in the Conscience Box. The key of this box remains with the Principal of the School. The Conscience Box is opened at a convenient time in the presence of the officials deputed by the Principal for the purpose and amount deposited with the concerned authority. The distinct advantage of this method is that, it saves time and develops civic sense and responsibility in library members.

4. Recall of Overdue Books

Sometimes, there may be such a heavy demand for a book, which has been borrowed that the librarian may ask the members to return the book. Instead of imposing fine for the late return of books, a 'Recall' system may be introduced to get the books back. This could be achieved simply by sending an overdue note to the concerned student through the Class Teacher. Experience of those who have resorted to this practice shows that the reminders sent by librarian/student-librarian are quite effective, especially with the members of teaching staff who are dilatory in returning the items borrowed.

5. Reservation of Books

Members should be allowed to make reservation for any book they need. There should be a provision to get any book reserved by any member of the library, be he/she a student or a teacher. This work should be taken seriously by the Librarian, and member requesting the reservation should be informed about the availability of the item as soon as possible. In case the reservation has been requested for a book, which is on loan, some sort of indication may be done in the 'Issue Record'. A flag or the 'Reservation Slip' itself may be clipped with the Book Card and Reader's Ticket so as to serve as reminder to the Circulation Librarian. The 'Reservation Slip' should contain the full particulars of the member to facilitate quick contact with him/her. If the reservation has been requested for a misplaced/untraceable book, a thorough search should be conducted for the item and member informed accordingly. In no case the member's request for a particular book should remain unattended to.

6. Loss of Books

If a borrower reports the loss of borrowed book, he/she is advised to replace the book with a new copy. If the book is not available in the market, the borrower may be asked to pay the current price of the book after getting it verified from the Publisher's catalogue or similar Book Trade bibliographies.

The price may also be got ascertained from the Accession Register and a formal receipt issued to the borrower. Necessary posting be done in the Remarks column of the Accession Register indicating "lost and cost realized vide Receipt No..... Dated "and the Principal of the school informed accordingly.



7. Initiation/Orientation Service

The initiation/orientation of students into the use of school library has to be planned very carefully. For most of the students a visit to school library is the first encounter with the world of books. The students have to be made aware of the privileges they are entitled to as also the rules they are supposed to follow to derive full benefit. There are certain “do’s and don’ts” which need to be explained to students at the time of their first formal visit to the library. The whole programme has to be planned in such a way that it is free from boredom and at the same time enjoyable. Distributing a printed copy of the Rules of the Library to the members alone will not suffice.

A formal lecture at the beginning of the academic session supported by the PPT / video presentation of the library followed by a guided tour of various section/units of the Library will be quite useful. Enough attention should also be paid to explain to students about matters such as the

- ❖ art and technique of using the library catalogue (e.g. entry element of author’s name, noting down the Call Number of the Books, rules of alphabetisation followed for filing the catalogue cards).
- ❖ arrangement of books on shelves (e.g. Salient features of the classification scheme, location of different sequences, components of the call number).
- ❖ procedure of ‘Issue and Return’ of books.
- ❖ identification of reference books for getting answers to specific types of questions.
- ❖ consultation of dictionary, telephone directory, yearbook, encyclopaedia, gazetteer, map, globe etc.
- ❖ use, care and safety of library books.
- ❖ familiarization with the parts of a book.
- ❖ technique of using the index given at the end of book.
- ❖ procedure for “Reservation of book”.
- ❖ procedure for ‘Suggestion for new books’.
- ❖ responsibility of the member in case of loss of book or causing damage to book.
- ❖ getting a ‘No Due Certificate’ from Library when leaving the school.



8. Reference Service

Providing 'Reference Service' is the most important aspect of reader's services in a library. It requires the backing of a solid and sound collection of recent editions of reference books.

9. Current Awareness Service (CAS)

CAS is the service meant for the speedy announcement of newly acquired information or documents. The main objective of CAS is to keep the students and other readers abreast of current developments in their respective fields of interests as quickly and efficiently as possible. The members of the Library need to be informed of recent arrivals of periodicals in the library. A list of issues of periodicals received during the month/week should also be brought out and displayed for the information of students and teachers. It is also desirable to devise ways and means to bring to the notice of students and teachers, the contents of the articles published in newspapers and periodicals.

A 'List of Books Added in Library' may also be brought out from time to time and displayed on Library Notice Board. A copy of this may also be put up in teachers/students Common Room.

10. New Books Display

All the books added into the stock must be put on display for a pre-determined period so as to bring them to the notice of students and teachers.

11. Topical Sequence

On special occasions such as 'birth day' of an author or leader, festivals, sport events etc. relevant books may be separated from the general sequence and put on a 'Display' to bring them to the notice of students and teachers. When working with a group of students, the teachers may also request the librarian beforehand to take out a set of books related to the topic and send them down to the class for a particular period of time. A number of such sets can be prepared according to the need and age of readers, and distributed to class as and when required.

12. Press Clipping Service

Newspapers are the most important source of latest information. It would be most appropriate if the relevant cuttings of write-ups, editorials, letters, statements, news items, events etc. are organized in some logical order and stored in a classified manner on a computer for future reference in the library.



13. Graded Reading List

With the help and cooperation of teachers, the librarian can prepare a 'graded reading list' suited to the age and interest of class. This graded reading list can be of great help to the students in choosing a book from the library. Often students tend to keep to the same author and level of reading for a number of years simply because nobody has troubled to wean them away from a favourite author and introduced them to new ones. As a consequence, their vocabulary does not increase; neither do new ideas germinate and grow.

14. Bibliographical Service

The Librarian should provide at least a limited bibliographical service on special occasions such as 'debate/competitions', 'sports day', 'school foundation day', 'national holidays' 'festivals', etc. A select list of books available in the library on the given subject may be prepared and circulated amongst the interested groups of library members.

15. Inter-Library Loan Service

It is essential for a Librarian to have a close liaison with other libraries in the vicinity. In case of an urgent need he/she may draw on the resource of other libraries and procure the books on inter-library loan and make them available for consultation within the premises of the Library. If for any reason it is not possible to get the book(s) on loan from other cooperative libraries, arrangements may be made to get at least a photocopy of the material.

16. Reprographic Services



Fig. 14. Reprographic Service

When a reader requires one or more copies of the same size or in reduced or enlarged form, the same may be provided on a 'no profit no-loss-basis'.