2009

Review of Best New Media, K-12: A Guide to Movies, Subscription Web Sites, and Educational Software and Games

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Publisher's Statement

Recommended Citation

Still, Kristine Lynn. (2009). Best New Media, K-12: A Guide to Movies, Subscription Web Sites, and Educational Software and Games. Collection Management, 34(2), 147-148.

As new technologies continually emerge, the task of narrowing down how best to integrate these interesting resources into meaningful ways in both classroom and library settings can be intimidating for teachers and librarians alike. Barr has taken into consideration the necessity of such an invaluable resource, especially in these ever changing times, by pulling together this wonderful collection. As we are aware, the definition of "literacy" has changed over time and continually will change as new envisionments for literacy emerge. In a review of many "definitions" that theorists have discussed, a trend that seems to have emerged is the broadening of this notion of literacy. In previous times, literacy has typically been thought of as "print-based." With so many new forms of literacy abounding, the definition and thinking about how to acquire essential literacy skills will continually expand in an effort to encompass a wider range of text types to include movies, websites, educational software and games.

The organization of this resource book is very user friendly and abounds with practical information. The table of contents is clearly broken down into two major categories of materials to use with younger children (grades K-3) and materials to use with older children (grades 4-12). In addition, the breakdown for materials to use with older children (grades 4-12) is further delineated into ten subsets which include Literary Forms, Language and Communication, Biography & Memoirs, History and Geography, Philosophy & Religion, Society and the Individual, Guidance and Personal Development, Physical and Applied Sciences, and Recreation & Sports. In addition, major subjects are also arranged alphabetically.

This book has been designed to assist librarians and media specialists with the four tasks of evaluating existing collections, building new collections or enhancing existing collections,

providing guidance to young patrons, and preparing bibliographies and events. Additionally, due to the ways in which this book has been organized, it will surely serve as a wonderful addition to the bookshelves of those teachers specifically interested in incorporating the latest media into their daily teaching.

Further, the arrangement of this volume corresponds nicely with others in the Best Book Series which is invaluable to loyal Best Book Series subscribers. The majority of materials presented in this volume (software, computer games, and websites) are organized by subject throughout the book. However, since computer games are more difficult to categorize, many of them are also linked to a specific topic for user ease. In addition, the Subject Index organizes computer games by subject and by genre which include; *action, action/adventure, adventure, fighting, first person shooter, party, puzzle, racing, role playing, simulation, and strategy.*

The volume includes pictorial representations to denote the format for DVDs, software, games, and Websites. In addition, platform uses are delineated and include the following; Windows, Macintosh, Play Station 2, Play Station 3, PSP-Play Station Portable, Game Cube, Nintendo DS, Game Boy Advance, Xbox, Xbox 360, and Wii.

The most considerate aspect of the volume, in my opinion, is the use of appropriateness ratings. As the Internet continually evolves and offers more information than imaginable, parents, teachers, and librarians alike are all concerned with the safety of exposing children to multiple forms of media. This volume includes ratings which have been assigned by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (www.esrb.org/index-js.jsp) and include the following: E-Everyone, E10+ - Everyone 10 and older, T-Teen, T13 – Teen 13 and older, and M – Mature.

This book should be a welcome addition to the shelves of librarians, practicing teachers, and teacher candidates.

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