



# Planning Your Book Fair



## Mrs. Nelson's Book Fair Planning Packet



Guidelines for a Successful Book Fair



Book Fair Company

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# Suggested Book Fair Time Line

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- Confirm your book fair dates with **Mrs. Nelson's Book Fair Company**.
- Confirm your dates on the master school calendar.
- Decide on a location. Check on facility needs.
- Schedule an author or illustrator for a school program.

One Year  
Ahead

- Meet with your planning committee and school staff to plan the fair.
- Assign volunteers to be responsible for money handling and restocking during the fair.
- Choose a theme for publicity and decorations.
- Schedule a book talk for the students.
- Plan a family night program.

4 -6 Months  
Ahead

- Announce your book fair in your school newsletter and/or through email.
- Continue developing theme and decorations.
- Circulate a sign-up sheet at a PTA/PTSA meeting for volunteers.
- Develop plans for your teacher/library wish list.
- Prepare press releases, posters, flyers, banners and decorations.
- Give us your reading lists if you would like us to select those titles from our stock.
- Tell Mrs. Nelson's of any author/illustrator signing at your fair (so we can order books).

2 -3 Months  
Ahead

- **Publicity!** Announce your upcoming fair in the school newsletter and on your marquee.
- Display banners and posters in classrooms, the cafeteria, the school office or other high-visibility areas around campus.
- Confirm schedule, location, time and program with book talk speaker, author and/or illustrator.
- Begin gathering supplies (calculator, cash box, rubber bands, etc).
- Check on family night details (refreshments, volunteers, etc).
- Prepare the daily work schedule for your volunteers.
- Make name tags for your volunteers.
- Send a press release to local newspapers.

One Month  
Ahead

- Send 1st and 2nd publicity flyer home with students (1 each week).
- Remind volunteers of their assignments.
- Display murals, banners and posters on classroom doors, office and around campus.

1-3 Weeks Ahead

- Clear out the facility you'll be using.
- Set up tables and clean if necessary.
- Decorate your facility.
- Gather supplies.
- Post schedules for volunteers, class visits and book talk(s).
- Hold book talk(s) to highlight books for the students.

Day Before Set-Up

*It is VERY important that these items be completed PRIOR TO (not during) delivery.*

- Book fair chairman and at least 3 other volunteers assist our staff with set-up (about 2 hours).
- Begin class tours of the book fair and selling to students.
- Ask teachers to select their wish books.
- Send family night flyers home to remind students and parents.

Set-Up Day

- Enjoy the excitement you have created about books and reading!
- Tabulate money daily.
- Call or fax to request restock titles (see Restocking on p.7).
- Keep fair neat.
- Train volunteers.
- Send home one last notice about the book fair.

Remaining Book Fair Days

- Clear out all IOU's and holds.
- Inform teachers of wish titles not purchased.
- Remind take-down volunteers of their schedule.

Prior to Take-Down

- Calculate final receipts.
- Chairman and at least 3 volunteers help pack up fair (about 1 hour).
- Clean up facility, return tables, take down decorations, etc.
- Schedule next year's fair.

Take-Down Day

**Relax!** You and your volunteers have done a great job! Mrs. Nelson's will

send you a summary of your sales and earnings. It would be a nice gesture to send thank-you notes to all your volunteers and mention them in the school newsletter along with the results of your fair.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call us at 909-865-8550.

# Facilities

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- You will need a **large room** that can be locked when not in use, such as a cafeteria, library, multi-purpose room or even a large classroom. If after-school functions are normally held in the same room as the book fair, the books must be secured or supervised.
- You will also need **tables**. We recommend 6 to 8, 6' by 2 ½' tables (or comparable), which can be set up for the duration of your fair. Some schools use cafeteria tables which work very well, while others acquire their tables from the district office or borrow them from other schools. In addition to the tables for displaying books, you will need a few tables in your check-out area for cashiering and displaying "hands-on" merchandise that needs to be closely supervised, such as bookmarks. Allow ample walking room between tables.
- If your school only has a smaller room available, we can customize your book fair to fit that space.



## Book Fair Committee

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You will need to recruit a dedicated committee of volunteers to assist in planning and running your fair. We suggest the following as ideal:

- A minimum of 2 to 6 people to serve on your planning committee. It's a good idea to include at least one teacher/librarian/principal in the planning process.
- A minimum of 4 volunteers to help with set-up and take-down of the fair.
- A minimum of 2 to 4 volunteers to work "on the floor" during selling hours. They will help supervise the children, answer questions and straighten the books. During peak or rush times, such as lunch, after school and parent night, you should have at least 4 volunteers circulating among the books, for security as well as assistance.
- 2 or 3 volunteers to cashier. Try to keep the same people as cashiers throughout the duration of your book fair to ensure that the money is handled properly.
- 1 volunteer to be responsible for money handling.
- 1 volunteer to keep track of your restock needs (see Restocking on p.7).
- As book fair chairman, try to keep yourself free to mingle and assist on the floor. Don't get tied to a register—you need to be available for overall supervision, questions, etc.

**Remember: the more volunteers you have to help, the more successful your book fair will be.**

## Some Suggestions for Finding Volunteers

- Ask room parents and/or teachers to recruit from their classrooms.
- Post sign-up sheets in the school office and at school functions.
- Request volunteers through your school newsletter and the back-to-school packet.
- Recruit volunteers from your entire parent population. Include parents from all grades.













