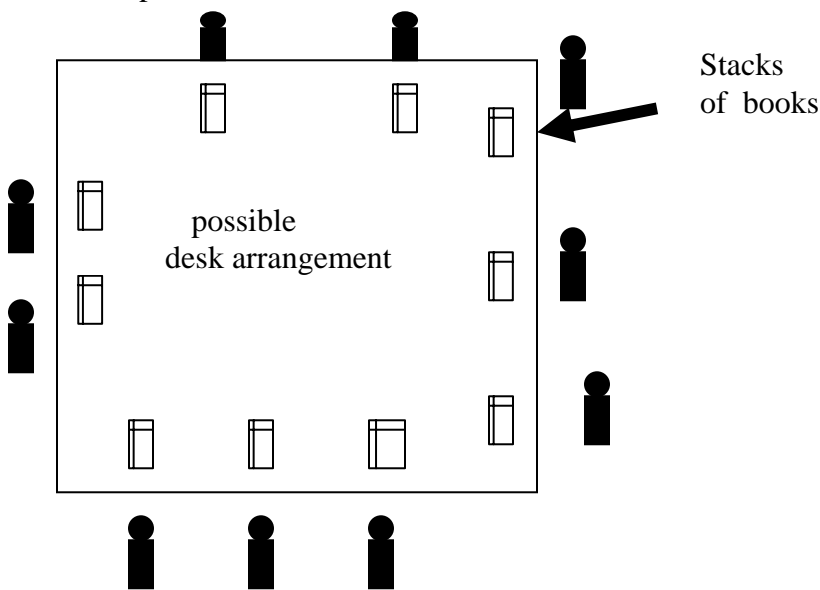


Organization : Lead Hunt

Objective: To get kids to recognize the power of leads and how a lead can make or break text.

- Select a variety of books that would interest students at varying levels. You will need about 2-3 times as many books as you have students.
- Use large sticky notes to cover the titles and part of the covers of the books. Use small sticky notes to mark the page where the story begins (where the lead is) so that students can flip to them quickly. *(This is optional-but doing it helps keep the activity moving along and also prevents students from passing judgment on books based on their titles and pictures on the cover. It also saves time because the students only need to write a number instead of a whole title for each rotation).*
- Number the books. *(If you don't use sticky notes on the covers, students will just write the titles on their tally page (attached)).*
- Place the books in piles of 2-3 around the room so that there are the same number of piles as there are students.



- Pass out the attached tally page. *(Remind kids they need something to write with and the tally paper- that's it).*
- Explain that they are to open the first book in the pile, read the lead and quickly decide if they'd like to read more. Tell them to write the number (or name) of the book on their sheet and to rank the lead from 1 (don't want to read) to 10 (curious and want to read more). They should repeat this quickly for each book in their stack.

- Watch the timing as kids complete their sheets. It usually takes about 30 seconds to a minute for them to do this- when many have done their stack, ring a bell or blow a whistle to have them move clockwise to the next stack of books.
- Have students repeat this and rotate until their tally sheet is full.
- DEBRIEF: On the board, tally which titles (or numbers) received the most votes. Record each student's highest scores.. Read these leads out loud and discuss why they are compelling and effective leads. Discuss how often the best leads are the ones that get your brain to start asking questions. (*An example would be from the book **The Chocolate War**; the lead is "They killed him." Students immediately wonder who "they" and "him" are*).¹ If necessary, touch on how some leads are not complete sentences and why that's acceptable English.
- Explain to students that leads should make the reader be drawn in. It can be a question, an interesting statistic, an exclamation, a funny statement etc. But, the lead brings you into the writing so that the author can then explain the context and develop the piece.

Sample Books:

Shredderman

Lead: Bubba Bixby was born big and mean, full of teeth and ready to bite.

No More Dead Dogs

Lead: When my dad was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, he once rescued eight Navy SEALs who were stranded behind enemy lines.

The Cat Ate My Gym Suit

Lead: I hate my father.

Stargirl

Lead: When I was little, my uncle Pete had a necktie with a porcupine painted on it.

Peter and the Shadow Thieves

Lead: A mango, thought Peter. The perfect weapon.

Top Secret (nonfiction)

Lead: Shhhh! Spies are working.

The Boston Coffee Party

Lead: Emma popped a handful of berries into her mouth.

The Golly Sisters Go West

Lead: The Golly sisters sat in their wagon.

Lead Tally Sheet

[illegible]