QR Codes in the Library

Mr. Curtis manages a middle school library. He loves helping students navigate all of the resources the library has to offer, whether using a computer to access the library catalog, researching a topic, or finding an appropriately leveled reading book. However, Mr. Curtis has struggled to get information out to students given the number of students in the school and time limitations. He notices more and more students with smartphones and decides to start using QR codes in the library to help solve this problem.

Mr. Curtis starts by creating QR codes with information about different sections of the library. Even without directly telling students about the QR codes, he notices a handful of students pulling out their smartphones to find the hidden messages. He then puts QR codes next to the library computers with instructions on how to use the library catalog. He even displays a QR code that takes smartphones directly to the library Web site.

The QR system begins to take hold and expand. Mr. Curtis starts creating QR codes for books he recommends. He places these codes in the stacks next to books and students increasingly use them to find their next book. Gradually, students start to catch on to the idea. After finishing a book, students start creating their own QR codes and Mr. Curtis attaches the codes to the inside covers of books. One teacher discovers what is going on and actually encourages the process. Together with this teacher, Mr. Curtis asks students to include a short summary and a critique supported with specific reasons. He also requires QR codes to be peer-reviewed before being published.

The QR codes are exceeding Mr. Curtis's expectations. Not only are they helping students navigate the library, QR codes are also increasing student ownership of the library collection.

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