LIBRARY ESCAPE ROOMS

Over the last two weeks we have run two separate Escape Room activities with Christina Brown and Donna Groettum’s College Skills classes. These activities introduce students to the library and its resources, teach students how to search the library’s catalog and databases, and help students grow comfortable with the library environment in a fun, modern way. A break from the traditional Escape Room model, which typically involves locking participants in a room where they must solve clues to escape the room, the HCC Library’s event blends the puzzle solving aspects of the more traditional Escape Room with activities along the lines of a Scavenger Hunt; students roam the library, find books on the shelves, search for articles in the databases, and check out items to solve the clues and finish before the other groups! A huge thank you to all of the staff who served as guinea pigs and helped test run the activity to make sure that it was easy enough to solve while still being difficult enough to teach students the skills they need to be successful in a library setting!

RETURN YOUR BOOKS!

Just a quick reminder to anyone who has library items currently on loan: please remember to return or renew those items before the end of the semester! Items that are renewed will be due on January 13th. Items that are not returned or renewed will be considered Overdue and may result in a fine.

YOUR LIBRARY, YOUR WAY

The HCC Library currently runs its acquisitions by purchasing items requested by patrons. This means that patrons have the ability to request that specific items be added to the collection, but it also means that the library collection will not grow and evolve without active participation by our patrons. If there are new movies that you would like to see, new books you would like to read, or materials that will help benefit your studies that the library does not currently own, please fill out a request form to let library staff know what materials will best suit your needs. Based on the requests of patrons at the HCC Library, we have added materials such as Becoming by Michelle Obama, the movie Pitch Black starring Vin Diesel, the BBC documentary The Blue Planet, The Firm by John Grisham, Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi, and Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens.
HOW TO SPEAK DEWEY
UNDERSTANDING THE DEWEY DECIMAL SYSTEM

Earlier this month I showed a group of students how to use the library’s online catalog and then explained how to find a resource from that catalog out in the stacks (library speak for our many bookshelves). Everything seemed to be going well until I started talking about the Dewey Decimal System. It was like I could see their eyes glaze over with disinterest and confusion. Who even knows what the Dewey Decimal System is anymore? And why should students care?

The Dewey Decimal System is an organization scheme for putting books in order by subject on library shelves. It was developed by Melville Dewey in 1876 to divide subjects up into number groups between 000 and 999. Each set of 100 numbers represents a different subject group; for example, the 100s are psychology and philosophy, while the 200s are religion, and so on through the 900s, which are history and geography. The system uses each digit and various decimal points to provide more specific subject details.

These numbers, known as call numbers, are printed on labels that go on books’ spines. If you know the Dewey Decimal number of a book (or a topic), you can go to that area of the library’s shelves, and use that number to locate the book or a certain subject area.

The thing that most people don’t know about the Dewey Decimal System is that each digit in each call number stands for a specific subject. The more numbers there are in a call number, the more specific the topic. For instance, take the number 641.824, the Dewey number for Pizza. Each digit in that number stands for a more specific topic, eventually narrowing down to the topic of Pizza:

600 – Technology and Applied Sciences
640 – Home and Family Management
641 – Food and Drink
641.8 – Cooking specific kinds of dishes
641.82 – Main Dishes
641.824 - Pizza

Each number builds upon the last – changing just one changes the entire topic. 641.821, for instance, is Casserole Dishes, whereas 631.824 is a specific type of soil fertilizer.

As useful as knowing what each Dewey number stands for might be, I understand that students, faculty, and staff don’t have the time or the interest to learn the Dewey Decimal System. This is why libraries put signs on the ends of each set of shelves to indicate what Dewey numbers can be found in each set of books. In the HCC Library these signs include descriptions of the subjects that can be found within each range of numbers, and on our shelves, you can find signs that indicate the start of commonly researched topics, such as Music, Nursing, Autobiographies, and Cooking.