

# Library Orientation - Breakout EDU Style

Saskatchewan School Library Association

THE MEDIUM – FALL 2016

Megan Hernberg  
SSLA



# Library Orientation - Breakout EDU Style

Saskatchewan School Library Association



“Hey, what are you doing for library orientation this year?” This question and a need to disseminate the large amounts of information we want students to know about the library at the beginning of the year, is what led a small band of Teacher Librarians to venture into the world of BreakoutEDU.

BreakoutEDU is game-based learning at its best. It allows educators to engage students in targeted knowledge and skill acquisition in a fun and practical way. It gets students thinking critically, problem solving, and working

collaboratively all while playing a carefully crafted game. The goal of the game is to break into a locked box.

To get started all you need is a BreakoutEDU kit (available at this online store <https://store.breakoutedu.com/>), a story for the game, and some puzzle clues. The students bring their enthusiasm, problem solving skills, and fun!

Our main goal in creating this game was to get grade 4-8 students visiting different sections of the library and finding books using important information when identifying call numbers. Our game had students deciphering book locations using the title, author, Dewey Decimal number, and Destiny Quest. Each book they found contained a clue or puzzle that led them to the call number of their next book and finally to the clue to unlock their lock. Inside the first locked box was a smaller box with a four-digit lock. All books had a feature in common that would help them solve this final puzzle. Students used this and a cipher to unlock their prize. For this game the prize was doodle bookmarks and their barcodes to take books out of the library.

The engagement of students in this activity and the learning they accomplished was tangible. Almost all students walked away saying they understood the keys to helping them search and find books in the library better. They also had a better appreciation of how books get lost in the stacks and the importance of making sure books aren't just put back anywhere on the shelf.

On the student reflection given out after the activity, students were asked to describe their Breakout experience in one word, here are a few of their responses.

*“Educational, because we learned so much about the library,” - Paige*

*“Epic! I was excited to find out what was in the box and it helped me learn teamwork.” – William*

*“Fun and Hard. Fun, looking for clues. Hard, figuring them out.” – Carter*

*“Fun, because it was cool, hard, and challenging.” – Caid*

*“Exciting, because everyone was running around and when we found a clue we got hyped.” - Josh*

I am very grateful to Laurie Hnatiuk for introducing us to BreakoutEDU and to Leslie Basky, Cheryl Anderson, Jana Scott Lindsay, and Dawn Morgan for their help in developing the game. We truly are better together!