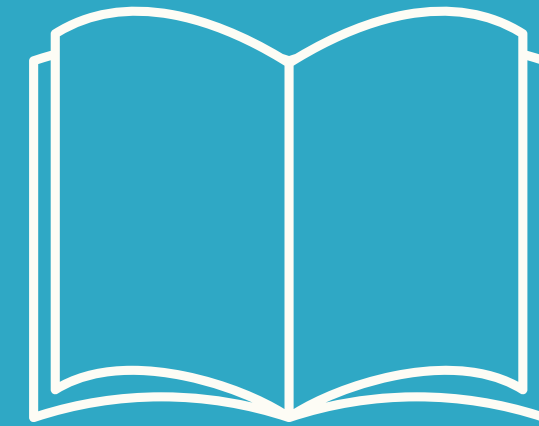**Mina Leazer** | **Seward Park Campus Library**

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL LIBRARIES

How to clone, duplicate, and maximize your impact as a school librarian

SPARK STUDIOS

SPARK LIBRARY

SPARK SPACE

Agenda

01 Introduction

02 Teaching for Learning

03 Building the Learning Environment

04 Empowering Learning through Leadership

05 Community Partnerships
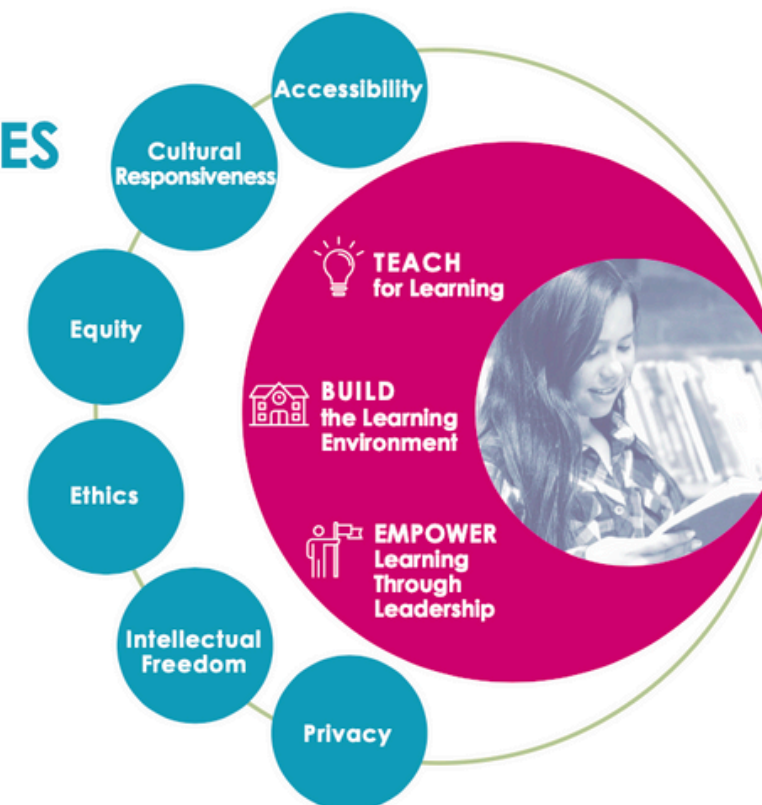
06 Final Reflection

Where We Began

In taking stock of our library programming, there were three main areas of focus I wanted to target based on my analysis of the School Library Program Rubric:

- **Teaching for Learning:** Literacy, Inquiry, and Social Responsibility
- **Building the Learning Environment:** Resources
- **Empowering Learning Through Leadership:** Outreach

TEACHING FOR LEARNING
LITERACY AND INQUIRY

The school librarian teaches some inquiry skills in isolation, or is lacking opportunities to collaborate.

Learners rarely have an opportunity to pursue inquiry learning on their own in the library and seldom go beyond the gathering of facts for teacher-directed activities.

Inquiry skills are taught for the acquisition of knowledge and some problem-solving.

Ex: During news literacy week, though teachers wanted to teach these materials in their classes, there was no set up structure for me to seamlessly integrate into their curriculum, so we just exchanged wishful emails of "wouldn't it be nice?".

TEACHING FOR LEARNING
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The school librarian teaches learners to research ethically and seek multiple perspectives.

Only curated resources are available to be accessed by members of the learning community as appropriate for grade and developmental level.

Library is sometimes the center of engagement for the learning community, where learners of all ages come to share thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

Ex: When I'm invited into the classroom to teach research skills, these social responsibilities often fall to the wayside in the interest of time. I'm often asked by teachers how to "get" access to articles that are paywalled, but none have the time to wait for the long process it takes to gain appropriate copyright access.

BUILDING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
RESOURCES

The school librarian independently develops a budget in an effort to meet the instructional and independent learning needs of the educational community.

Library program receives only New York State school library materials aid reimbursement allocated as part of the state formula. Additional school district funds are not provided to supplement the library program budget to purchase a variety of resources.

Resources in a variety of formats are curated to provide access to information to meet the needs of learners.

Ex: I have many "wish" budgets set up for building the learning environment, but I'm often at the mercy of principals who wish to "throw me a bone" in terms of our real needs. In the absence of a true funding source, we have limited resources.

EMPOWERING LEARNING THROUGH LEADERSHIP
OUTREACH

The instructional impact of library resources, collaborations, and policies on learning is regularly communicated using some communication tools to make the impact of library evident to teachers, school library system, and school administration.

The school community, including students, faculty, and administration, receives occasional updates on library resources and services.

A library advocacy plan offers mechanisms for promotion such as a website, newsletter, electronic or digital communication, and a calendar of activities.

Ex: There is a monthly-ish newsletter, an updated social media, and an updated website, but the audience seems sporadic and uninvolved.

Mission Statement

Seward Park Campus Library exists to serve the **diverse community and needs** of Seward Park Campus. The library seeks to be a **unifying space** for the five high schools located on this campus - a mixing ground that both highlights the universal needs of its patrons while also tailoring to each school's unique needs. The library also seeks to be a place where elements of the School Library Program program, including but not limited to **teaching for learning, building a learning environment, and empowering learning through leadership**, remain fundamental to sustainable library programming.

Community Partnerships

Pursue individualized inquiry and learning

Activate diverse resources outside of the curated resources in the library

Enable the use of resources outside of the library budget (through funded partnerships)

Create visible opportunities for engagement across the schools of the campus

Founded in 1985, City Lore's mission is to foster New York City – and America's – living cultural heritage through education and public programs. We document, present, and advocate for New York City's grassroots cultures to ensure their living legacy in stories and histories, places and traditions. We work in four cultural domains: urban folklore and history; preservation; arts education; and grassroots poetry traditions.
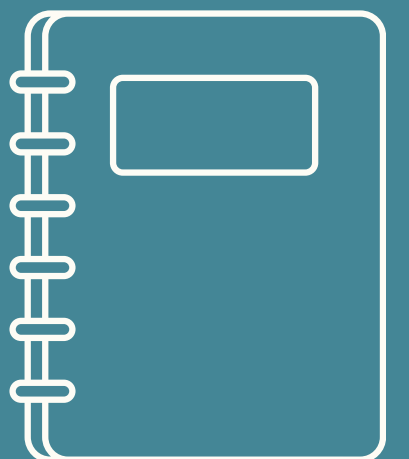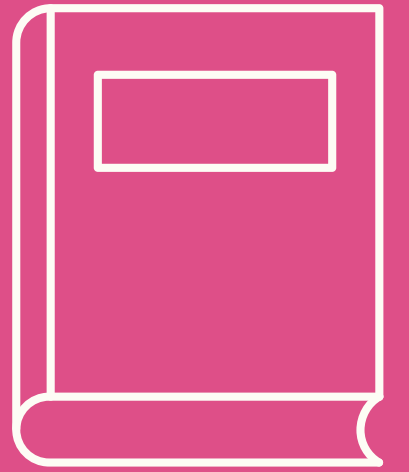
FROM HARITHAKA TO HIP HOP

From Harikatha to Hip Hop:
Integrating Library of Congress Primary Sources
on Traditional Music and Dance into the Humanities Curriculum

Classroom Teachers at P.S. 11 in Queens collaborate with Theater/Visual Arts Teaching Artist George Zavala

TEACHING ARTIST
YADIRA DE LA RIVA

Since my childhood years growing up in the border community of El Paso, TX and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, I loved creating imaginary worlds, imitating characters and scenarios that I saw on TV while secretly wishing I was a child superstar! I was inexplicably drawn to the freedom and beauty of expression in a way that left me curious and eager to **explore the world of storytelling through performance.**
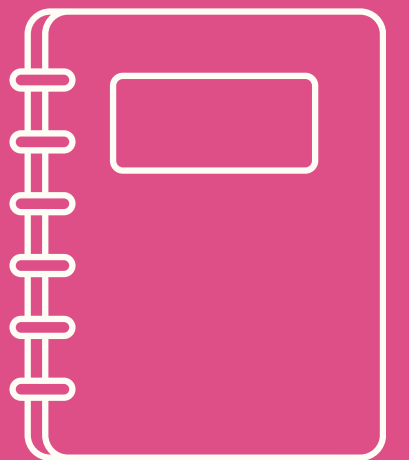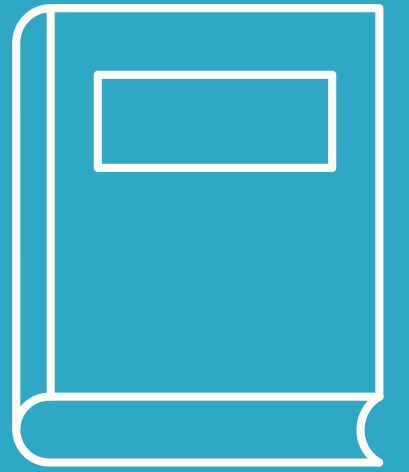
ACTIVATE THE LIBRARY!

Purpose: Though Yadira's primary work was in acting/storytelling, our partnership enabled us to brainstorm how to cultivate her strengths with the goals for the library.

Objective: To think of new ways to engage library patrons with the materials in the library.

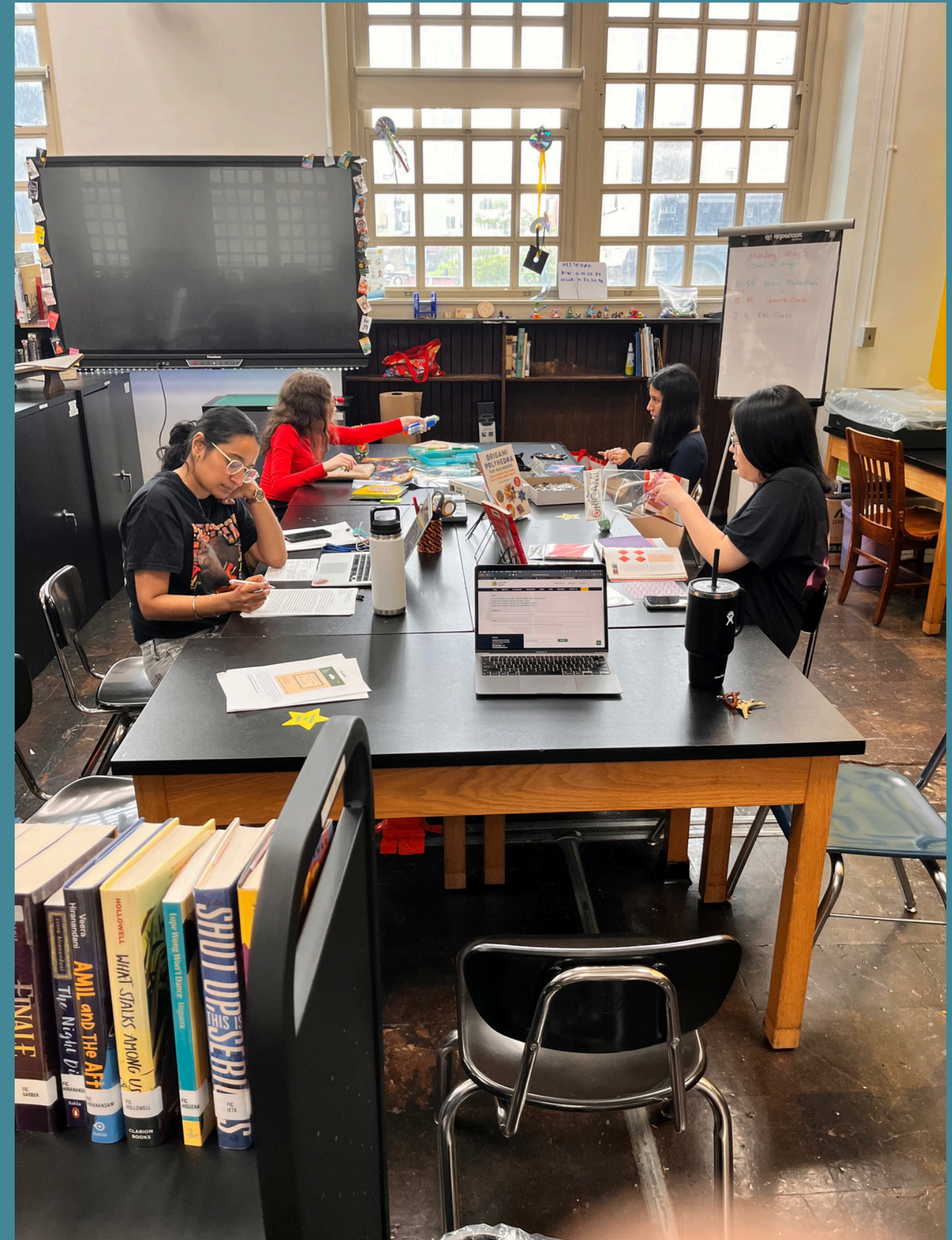**Goal:** To create student-led passive programming throughout the library.

PROCESS

Research Method: Learn how to use the Library of Congress catalog as a means of research. Visit The Museum of the City of New York to view passive programming in action.

Objective: Practice acting and performance as a way of conveying information. Think about storytelling as a means to relating information.

Goal: Devise student-initiate passive programming websites using one or more of the methods.

PROCESS PHOTOS

Initial training with City Lore where Yadira and I had time to plan out our lessons and we learned about teaching artists as resources.

Interns begin their initial exploration of the Library of Congress - a steep learning curve.

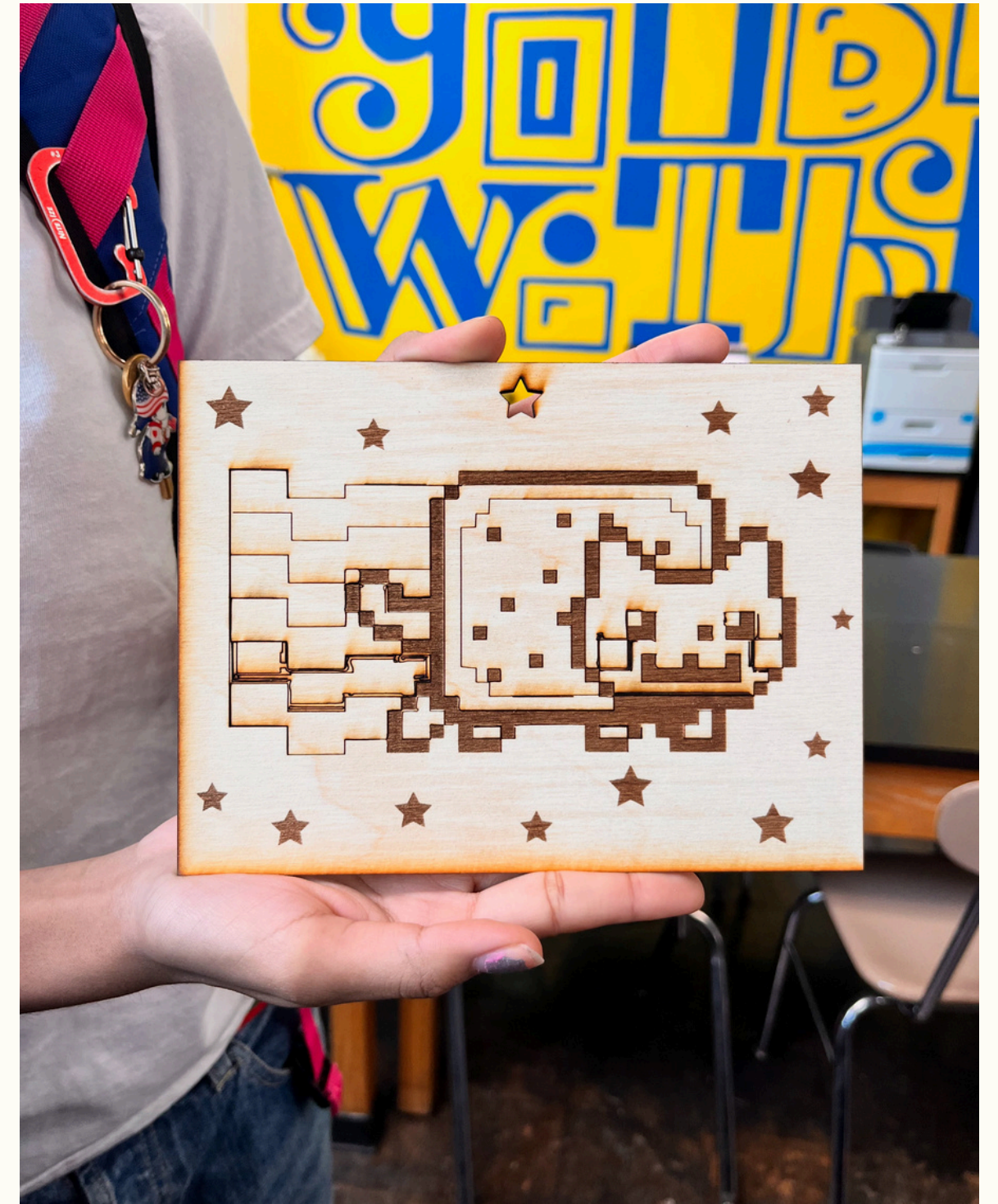Yadira leads us in performance theatre based on our favorite scenes from novels.

PROCESS PHOTOS

Students begin thinking about how to use the Makerspace to support their project goals.

We visit the museum to think about how passive programming works in the MCNY.

Students build using the Makerspace to "activate" interest in corners of the library. Precursor to our cat station.

PROCESS PHOTOS

We used our engraver to create our own mahjong tile for our mahjong station.

Our most popular station was unfortunately the one that required the most work.
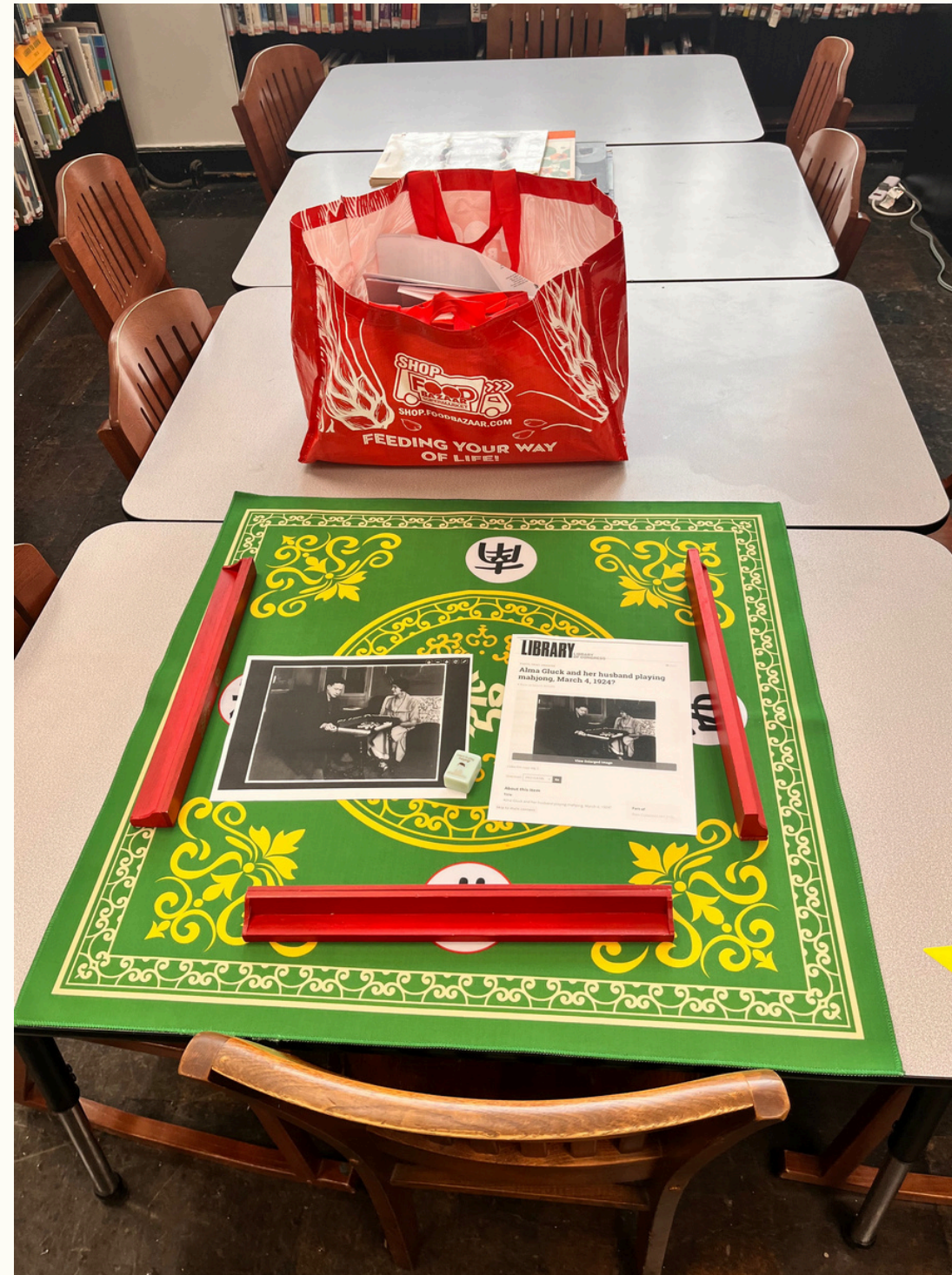

Cat station realized. This station has been the most passively active.

PROCESS PHOTOS

Origami station - where we discovered YouTube has overtaken origami book directions.

Mahjong station - we included an original source we found from the Library of Congress of an 1930s mahjong set.

Mystery quest that led to the dictionaries station - but which will eventually lead to the D&D section.

PROCESS PHOTOS

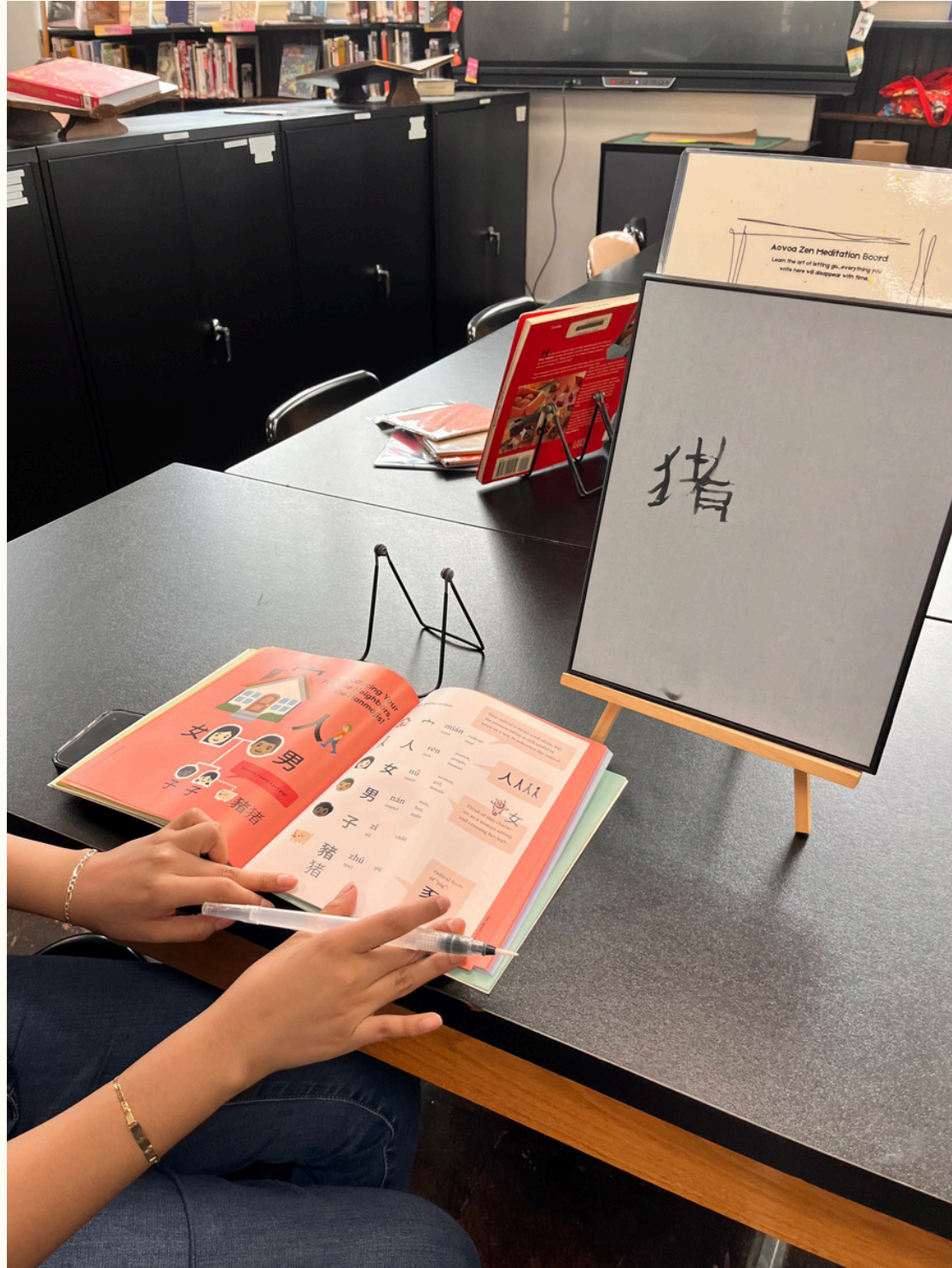A record with a QR code leading to the top songs of America from the LOC.

Hidden plaques which encourage further investigation from patrons.

Origami station - activated!

PROCESS PHOTOS

Hanmoji station inspired but our current stations, made after our project.

Interns hand-crocheted bookmarks to offer as prizes for our most popular station.

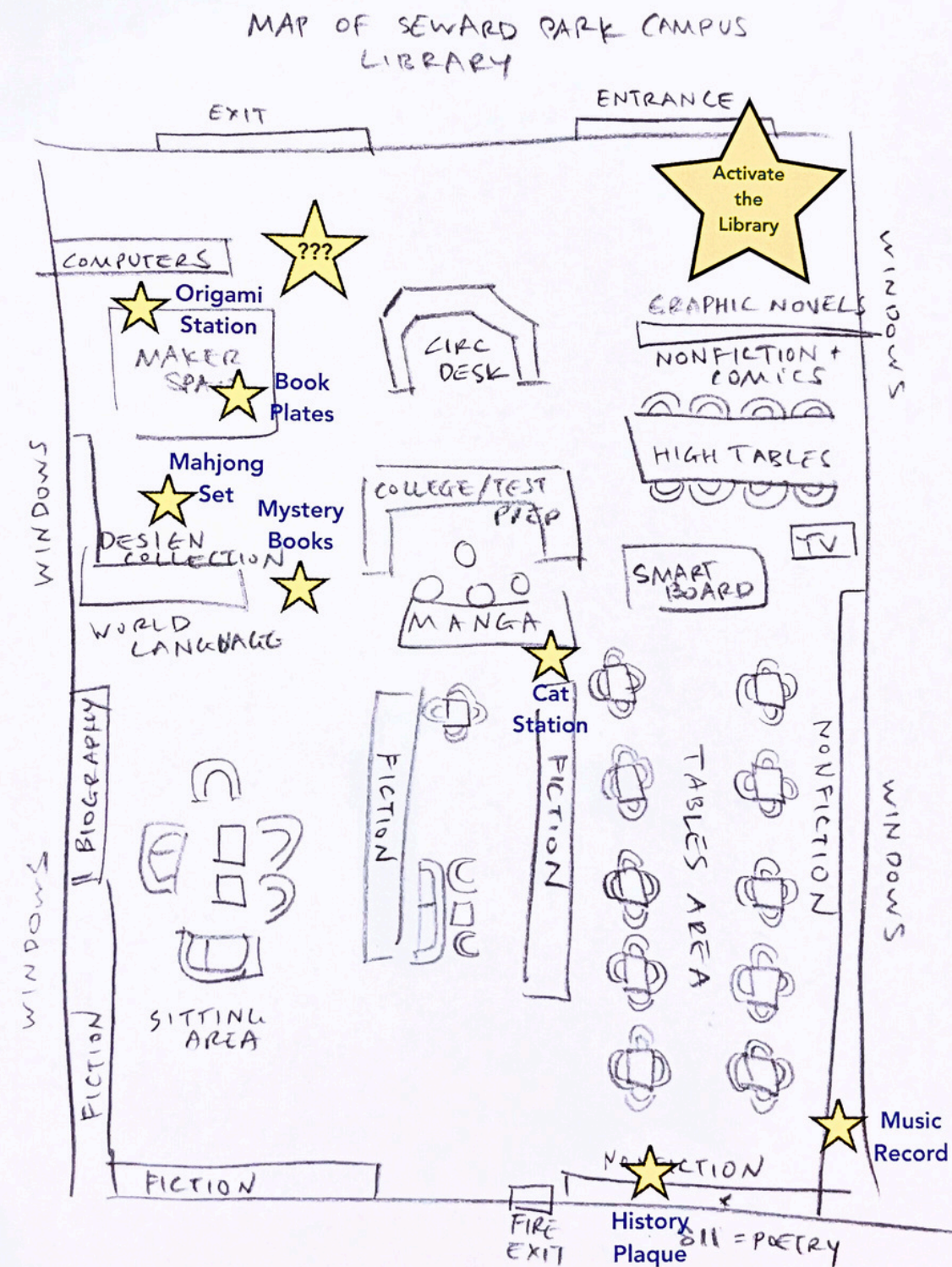A relieved librarian who had a helping hand and thought partner!

REFLECTION

- Teaching artists provide invaluable common planning/think time that can difficult to obtain with teachers - so they may be helpful in fleshing out details.

- Having a project that was "outside" of class was helpful to explore research for research sake. It was good to have a genuine inquiry project (though only a beginning, for sure).

- Community partnerships helped me to tap into budget and funding resources that were "beyond" books. Acting workshops were new for me, but now I can see how they can work in a library.

- I used this project to apply for grant funding, and we won! And perhaps more importantly, I don't feel burned out because of the help I received.

Conclusion

Going through this process has helped me to see that sustainable library programming will involve finding community partnerships that will help us to sustain our goals. As a solo librarian, I would not have been able to carry out any of this programming on my own - but having a host of factors working together allowed this program to exist.

1. A school leader who saw fit to provide me with a class of student interns who would receive credit for their work in the library as interns.
2. A community partner who was committed to using the library and a librarian as a resource.
3. A teaching artist who was invested in the goals of the library and participated in common planning to make the partnership meaningful.
4. A larger librarian network that recognized the work we did and continued to support it through resources.

RESOURCES

- City Lore: www.citylore.org
- Library of Congress: www.loc.gov
- School Library Program Rubric: https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/school-library-services/slmpe-rubric-2016.pdf
- Yadira dela Riva: www.yadiradelariva.com