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# Escape to the Library

Building a Library Learning  
Escape Room for Incoming  
Students

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# First Flight @ UNT

First Flight is a yearly event for incoming freshmen at the University of North Texas. This week helps new students begin their college experience by offering educational opportunities and a chance to meet their peers.

- **My Prep**
  - Preparation for college level work
- **My Life**
  - Connect with peers, campus involvement
- **My Health and Wellness**
  - Cultivating a healthy lifestyle
- **My Future**
  - Graduation and beyond



# Game On! @ First Flight

## My Life

Open gaming event in  
the UNT Media Library

A dark gray poster with white and orange text. At the top is the 'GAME ON' logo, where 'GAME' is white and 'ON' is orange with a power button symbol. Below it, in teal, is 'GAME ON! AT FIRST FLIGHT', followed by 'MEDIA LIBRARY, CHILTON HALL 111' in white. A teal horizontal line separates this from the next section. The text 'Come learn new games or challenge others in friendly competition through video and table top gaming. Join us for free food, prizes and to learn more about the library.' is in white. Another horizontal line follows. The dates 'MONDAY | AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>', 'TUESDAY | AUGUST 23<sup>RD</sup>', and 'WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 24<sup>TH</sup>' are listed in orange. A final horizontal line is above the time '4 - 9 PM', which is in orange.

**GAME ON**

GAME ON! AT FIRST FLIGHT  
MEDIA LIBRARY, CHILTON HALL 111

Come learn new games or challenge others in friendly competition through video and table top gaming. Join us for free food, prizes and to learn more about the library.

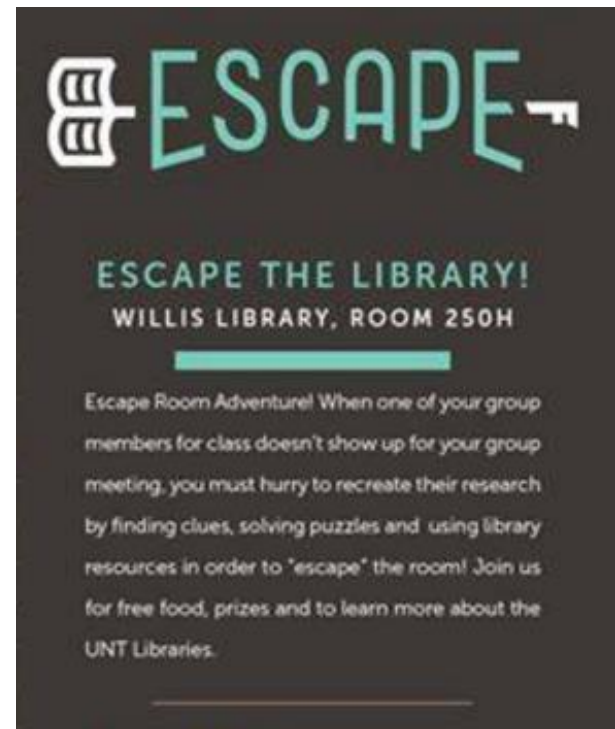
MONDAY | AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>  
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4 - 9 PM

# Library Literacy @ First Flight

## My Prep

Our goal was to engage new students by offering them an escape room to learn basic library literacy skills and encourage engagement with the libraries and librarians.



# What is an escape room?

The escape room: an immersive, real-life gaming experience where participants are given a role in a story, and must solve a series of puzzles to accomplish a goal and escape the room. Escape rooms require players to interact with elements within a room to reveal hidden information in a string of puzzles, and to solve each within a set timeframe to succeed.

# Escape Room – Key Components

- Basic components



# Escape Room – Key Components

- Puzzle clues can be almost anything:
  - Hidden physical objects
  - Clues hidden in decorations such as posters and paintings
  - Light effects that reveal a clue
  - Clues can be set objects
  - Symbols and the key to solve them

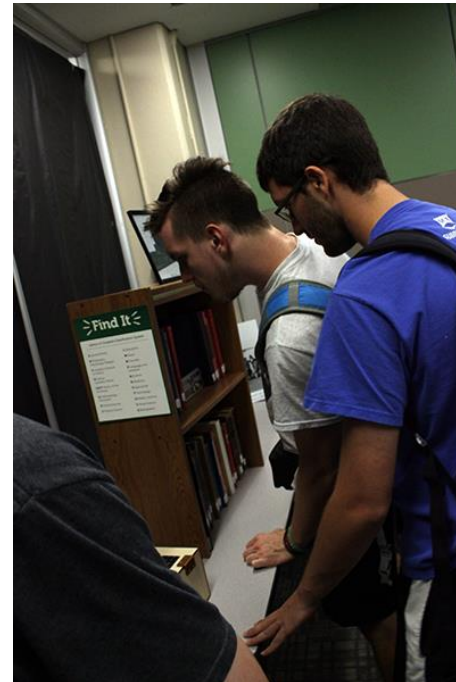
# Escape the Library





# Why use an escape room to teach library literacy?

- Real-life
- Collaborative
- Engaged learning



# Escape the Library



# Planning Process - Collaboration

Librarians who work directly with the student demographic you most hope to involve

- Media Library
- Music Library
- Special Collections
- Government Documents
- Subject Librarians
- Access Services
- External Relations
- Makerspace



# Planning Process - Collaboration

- December 2015 – First field trip to a professional escape room
- January 2016 – First Planning Meeting
- February 2016 – Learning Objectives Identified
- March 2016 – Content Identified for Inclusion
- April 2016 – Puzzles & Workflow Developed
- May 2016 – Makerspace Begins Building Puzzles
- June 2016 – Begin Testing with Librarians & Students
- July 2016 – Planning Promotions, Testing Escape Room, Assessment Designed, IRB Application
- August 2016 – Deans Council, Final Touches, FIRST FLIGHT

# Planning Process - Learning Objectives

- Differentiate Scholarly Resources from Popular works
- Distinguish between Primary and Secondary Sources
- Identify and Use Appropriate Search Tools, Including the Library Catalog and Online Databases, to find Relevant Books and Articles on a Topic
- Apply criteria to evaluate sources for currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose (CRAAP Test)
- Choose which UNT Library location to visit or contact for various purposes, select their subject librarian, and find where to go to ASK US for help.

# Planning Process - Learning Objectives

- ◉ Interact with a librarian
- ◉ Finding reserves
- ◉ Navigating the catalog
- ◉ Using streaming media access
- ◉ Call numbers in the stacks
- ◉ Connecting with subject librarians
- ◉ Finding library locations
- ◉ Success!



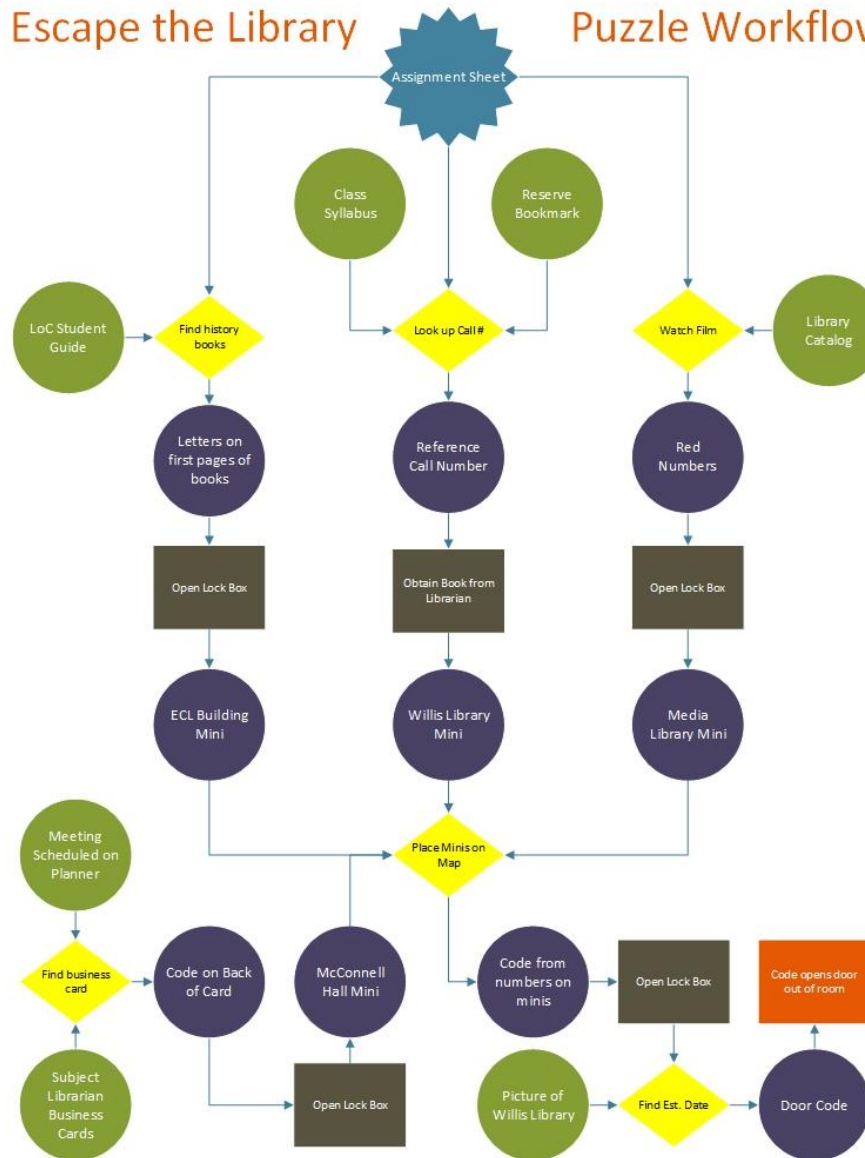
Over the last two weeks you have been working on a group research project for your Local Texas History class. After a few failed attempts at meeting as a group to finish the project, it is the day of your presentation, and your last chance to combine your information and prepare for your presentation. However, when you arrive, you notice that one of your project team members has left his materials here, but they themselves are nowhere to be seen!

You and the rest of the group need the missing student's research in order to finish the project. Quickly, it is decided that no one will leave until the project is finished. You have twenty-five minutes to get the work done before class begins.



## Escape the Library

## Puzzle Workflow





# The Beginning



Research Paper Assignment  
Due: September 14, 2016

In the introductory assignment to this course you will write a brief overview of a topic specific to North Texas History.

Select one of the following topics. Use at least one primary source and two secondary sources. Your textbook MAY be used as a secondary source (\*hint: use the library website to discover accurate and useful information for this and other projects).

Please choose one of the following topics:

- The Civil Rights movement in North Texas
- The history of Denton, Texas
- The history of the University of North Texas
- Film and filmmaking history in North Texas
- History of sports in North Texas

Primary: Mean Joe Greene NTSU  
Video on Digital Collections  
watch for Red Numbers

1st Secondary: Use class textbook  
on Reserve at Library Desk

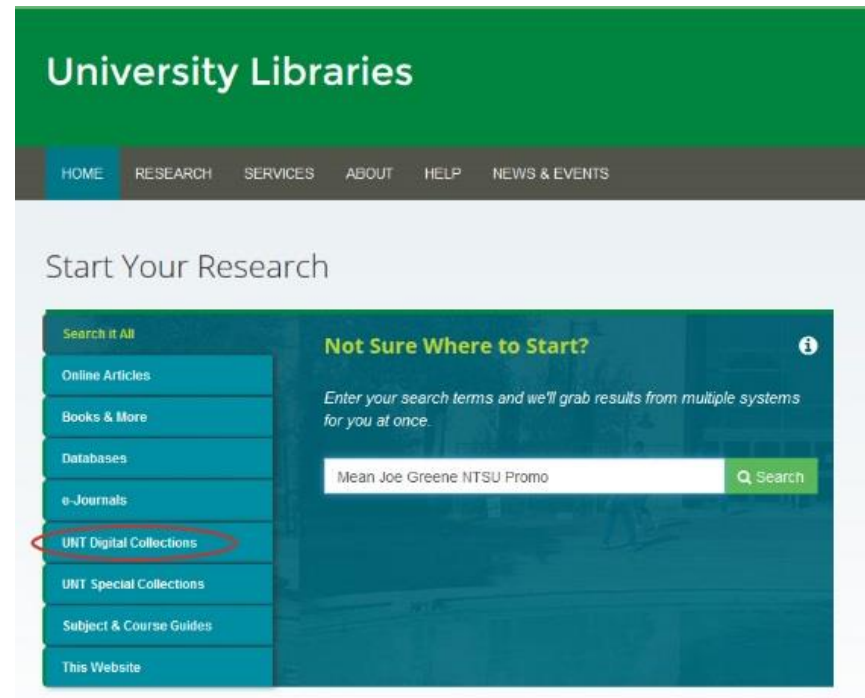
and Secondary: Find 1/3 American History  
books on shelf. Make sure to  
keep in order.

This assignment is due by midnight on Wednesday, September 14 and must be submitted through turnitin.com on BlackBoard (learn.unt.edu). Your paper should be at least 2 pages long and formatted following the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines with 12-point, Times New Roman font.

# Navigating the Catalog

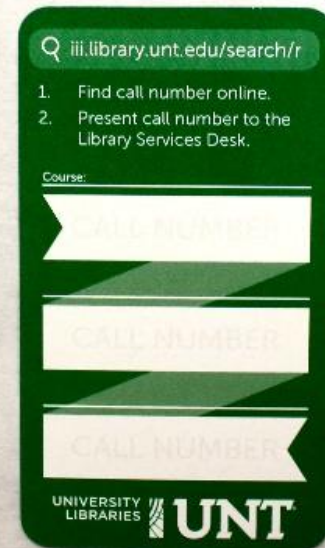
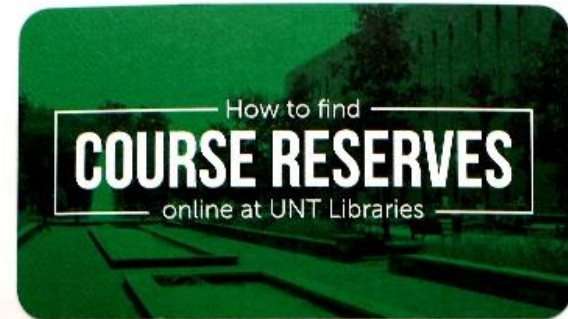
- How to search
- Accessing digital collections

["Mean" Joe Greene NTSU promo video]



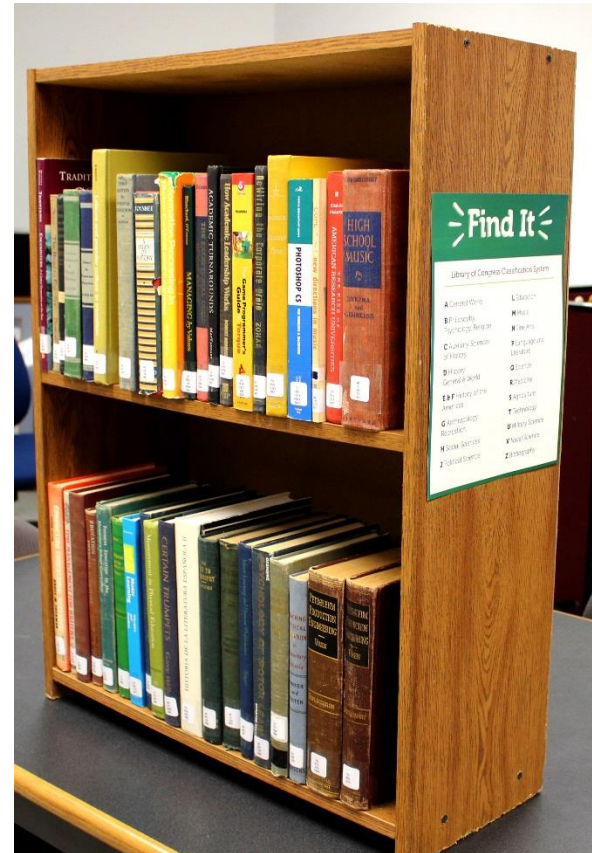
# Finding Reserves

- Class textbooks
- Searching reserves in catalog



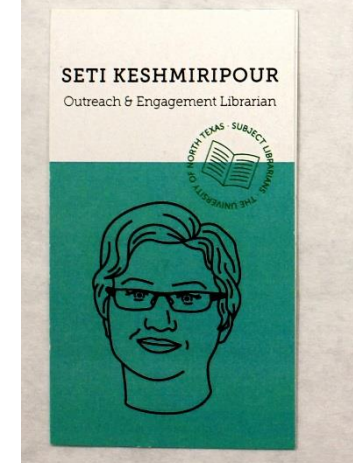
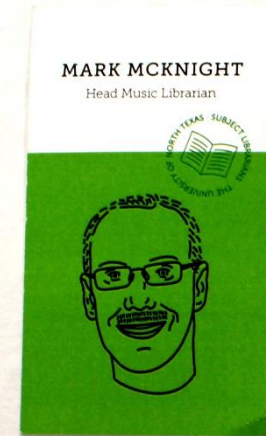
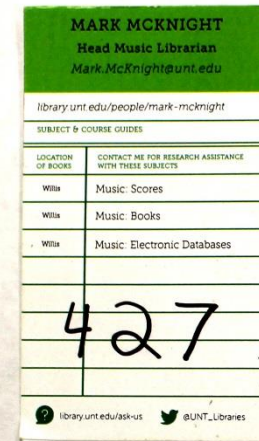
# Call Numbers in the Stacks

- Identifying LoC call number subjects
- Using posted library guides





- Identifying subject librarians
- Access to assistance from subject librarians



# Finding Library Locations

- Finding library locations on map



# Assessment - Participation

250 Students

170 Completed Surveys



# Assessment - Participation



More than 20 librarians and staff worked to provide information about the libraries to students waiting to do the escape room



# Assessment - Participation

- Three full-time librarians, 2 full-time staff and 6 part time students worked to keep the escape room running smoothly:
- Resetting the room
- Participating as the "Ask Me" librarian
- Card swiping
- Prepping students



# Assessment – Survey Results

**95% of Participants Feel "More Prepared"  
to Use the Libraries after Completing the Escape Room**

"...I learned how to find and use call numbers"...

"...how to find a book that is on reserve..."

"...I just feel more comfortable wording my questions"...

# Assessment – Survey Results

**30% of participants (51) had never talked to a librarian**

**99% of feel that they are likely to talk to librarians  
again at UNT**

"Asking for help is in fact  
helpful!"

- STUDENT IN SURVEY

# Assessment – Survey Results

## **The Most Helpful Thing I Learned Today Was...**

"don't be afraid to ask how to do something"... "don't be afraid to ask for help"...

"librarians are here to help"... "librarians have answers"

"teamwork dude"... "talk to people"...

"pay attention to details"...

"there are libraries and librarians for specific subjects"... "where to find a librarian for my specific major"...

# Observations

- This event was a great way to engage students and staff around learning
- There was excitement centered around learning basic library literacy skills
- There was a desire for similar programs from the library



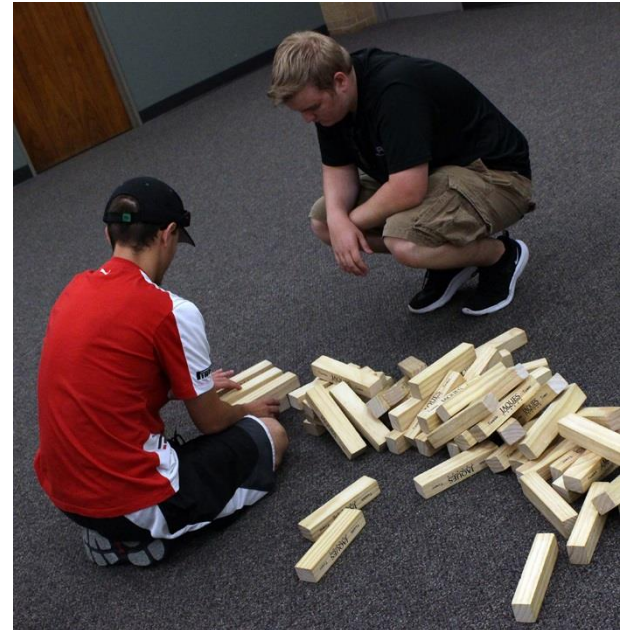
# Lessons Learned

- Scheduling
  - Schedule each task
- Training
  - More training for room participants
- Puzzles
  - Locks break
  - Technology can fail
- Testing is key



# How can you get started?

This is all so overwhelming!  
I can't do it!



# Visit an Escape Room

Take a field trip to a local escape room. This hands-on experience is necessary to fully understand an escape room. Take any stakeholders and decision makers with you.



# Breakout EDU

Breakout EDU is a great way to begin creating immersive learning experiences without creating a full room. The Breakout EDU site includes premade tabletop breakouts that you can use or modify to your needs.

<http://www.breakoutedu.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/breakoutedu>



# Breakout EDU



# Escape Room Enthusiasts

This Facebook public group is a place for people to engage and improve the practice of escape rooms. Generally for commercial escape rooms, but a good place to see what exists for this genre.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/escape-room-enthusiasts/>

# Thank you for attending. Questions?

Feel free to contact us about engaged learning through gaming in libraries.



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# Resources

<http://www.breakoutedu.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/breakoutedu>

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/escapeeroomenthusiasts /](https://www.facebook.com/groups/escapeeroomenthusiasts/)

# Reference

- Nicholson, S. (2015). Peeking behind the locked door: A survey of escape room facilities. White Paper available at <http://scottnicholson.com/pubs/erfacwhite.pdf>