Common reading or OneBook programs seem like a natural fit for libraries. After all, what is the universal symbol for a library? A book. Yet when Colleen Boff and others surveyed libraries in 2006 to gauge their involvement in OneBook programs, library participation ranged from total management to no involvement at all (Boff, Schroeder, Letson, and Gambill 271-283). For example, the University of Texas at San Antonio has a Common Reading Experience program. When I asked their library about their involvement, they had never heard of the program. At Louisiana State University, library involvement was limited to creating a bibliography and having librarians host a few discussion groups with freshmen.

On the other hand, Collin County Community College librarians are very involved in their “Book in Common” program, including being on the selection committee, participating in panel discussions, and manning booths at “Book in Common Day.” Librarians at Trinity University in San Antonio create an information literacy assignment for incoming students. The ten best annotated bibliographies are invited to a reception with the author of that year’s chosen book.

Thankfully, the University of Texas at Arlington Library has an excellent level of involvement in the OneBook program, with the Information Literacy program area (IL) serving as the hub for its involvement. IL’s mission is to present a point of first contact for the library to undergraduate students, primarily freshmen. Since OneBook focuses on first-year students, the fit is natural. Furthermore, IL teaches information literacy skills to thousands of students in freshman English 1301, the same course where OneBook is taught.

Library involvement with OneBook includes the selection committee, research assistance, exhibits, advertising materials, and instruction. Library instruction relating to OneBook was covered in a separate presentation.

**Committee involvement**
The library has been active on the selection committee since the beginning of the OneBook program. The selection committee solicits book suggestions from the entire campus, then winnows the nominations through criteria such as length and suitability. Next, the committee reads the final selections, debates the merits of each, and recommends the top two or three to the university president and provost for their approval.

Over the years, the selection committee has changed makeup and size. For example, the first two years of the program included a public librarian on the commit to get broader community involvement; however, OneBook’s audience and goals and the public library’s audience and goals were too dissimilar to make the partnership productive. The committee also tries to draw from different areas of campus. In addition to the English Department and the library, committee members have included representatives from the nursing and biology departments, and from campus services like Students with Disabilities and International Education.
**Research Guides**
The library takes the lead role in developing and designing research guides to accompany the OneBook. With the program’s first book, *The Kite Runner*, the OneBook faculty co-chair felt that a guide would help the student understand the book. *Kite Runner* is set in Afghanistan, a country the United States had been at war with for five years at that point, but was unknown to many students. We included a timeline of Afghan history because scenes in the book refer to actual historical events.

I’m an audiobook listener, which sometimes gives me a unique perspective on books. The author, Khaled Hosseini, reads *Kite Runner*, so I heard how he pronounced the words. I wanted to give our students that same opportunity for deeper understanding, so we included a pronunciation guide and a dictionary. This was by far the most difficult part of developing the *Kite Runner* guide. First, I made phonetic transcriptions based on the audio book, then used several very old Afghan to English dictionaries for the definitions. Native speakers checked my work. The dictionary has become very popular, garnering over 6000 hits since 2006.

The size of the guide doubled when we selected *Maus* as our 2007-08 OneBook, in part to include some of the extensive literature about the holocaust. *Maus* was different, too, because it was a graphic novel. The faculty OneBook co-chair developed a separate one-page guide about how to read graphic novels for those who had not experienced the form before.

Subsequent research guides have followed the precedent set by *Kite Runner* and *Maus*. All the guides have been written by librarians and UT Arlington faculty, designed by the library, and printed on campus. The typical print run is 3000 copies.

**Bookmarks**
OneBook faculty co-chair, Dr. Laurie Porter, suggested that the library develop bookmarks as a way to advertise OneBook events. One side of the bookmark would feature an image related to the book while the reverse would include a calendar of events. The bookmarks were designed by the library and printed on campus.

**Exhibits**
The library has usually produced a small exhibit to complement OneBook. In 2008-2009 for *History of Love*, two librarians constructed the exhibit “Best Books Never Written.” *History of Love* is the title of a book within the novel itself, giving the exhibit organizers the idea to have an exhibit of famous books that only appear within literature. Examples included *Princess Bride*, *Hogwarts, a History*, and *Necronomicon*. The designers used books that were being pulled from circulation and created fake dust jackets for the books. The library’s circulation desk reported a few attempts of people trying to check the books out.

Another *History of Love* exhibit featured books mentioned within *History of Love*. Curated by the OneBook faculty co-chair, Dr. Chris Conway, the exhibit included *The Little Prince*, *Street of Crocodiles*, and *Don Quixote*.

**Events**
The Library provides facilities and support for OneBook events throughout the year. For *Kite Runner*, the library hosted an event relating to the OneBook theme of Power called “Meeting of
the Minds: Nixon, Mother Teresa, and Six Other Luminaries (played by UTA faculty) Talk About Power.” For Maus, we hosted Holocaust survivors Mr. and Mrs. Schiff, who spoke of their experiences.

Conclusion
The UT Arlington Library is a proud and active partner in the campus’ OneBook program. From book selection to support materials and instruction, the library works to support the program’s goals of building community, especially for first-year students. For examples of our research guides, please see Resources at www.uta.edu/onebook. For examples of bookmarks or for questions, please contact me at ebarker@uta.edu.