

LIBRARIAN SPOTLIGHT



Nicole Weimer

Nicole Weimer is the library media specialist at Shaker Middle School, where she serves students in grades 6–8. For the past four years, Nicole has used News-O-Matic in the library to support the school's strong literacy and digital citizenship initiatives.

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“Using News-O-Matic in the library helps us advance digital literacy at all grade levels,” Nicole explains.

As middle school students become more aware of global and local issues—and how those issues affect their own lives—having access to reliable, age-appropriate news is essential.

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“It can be a challenging time for students as they try to understand what’s happening in the world around them,” Nicole notes, making trusted news sources especially important.



School:

Shaker Middle School



District:

North Colonie Central School District



Location:

Latham, New York

A Variety of Ways to Use News-O-Matic in the Library

Shaker Middle School’s library operates on a 100% flex schedule, giving students and teachers the freedom to use News-O-Matic in a variety of meaningful ways.

The platform is regularly used for **current events sharing, particularly when major news stories are unfolding.**

Students also rely on News-O-Matic as an **in-depth research source** for longer projects that may span several weeks—and **it’s a popular choice during independent reading time.**

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“I appreciate the variety of ways News-O-Matic can be used to enhance the curriculum,” Nicole says. **“Whether students are learning about current events or exploring something they didn’t know before, it’s a trusted source they can rely on.”**

Partnering with Teachers to Support Classroom Learning

Nicole regularly partners with teachers to enhance classroom instruction with relevant News-O-Matic content. When 6th and 7th-grade social studies teachers identified that students needed **support in understanding how the United States government works**, Nicole stepped in with curated News-O-Matic article recommendations to reinforce those concepts.

She also shared News-O-Matic content to support units on **Ancient Civilizations**.

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Students love exploring different cultures,” Nicole shares. **“With News-O-Matic’s current events content, students can see how the past ties to the present—which makes learning about history even more relevant and interesting.”**

Content and Interactive Features That Deepen Engagement

Students easily engage with News-O-Matic articles, which are written at five Lexile levels so students can read at their just-right reading level. Designed with middle school learners in mind, News-O-Matic goes beyond text by incorporating visuals, audio, and interactive features that enhance comprehension and engagement.

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Students find News-O-Matic visually stimulating, and they enjoy the sounds as well,” Nicole explains. **“That makes them want to explore not only the articles, but also the accompanying videos, maps, and other resources.”**

She adds, **“While other news content used in the library can feel dry and text-heavy, News-O-Matic is different. It meets students where they are—written at their level to be both informative and interesting.”**

Middle school students also enjoy sharing their opinions through News-O-Matic’s polls, and they frequently gravitate toward the platform’s Fun Facts and trivia-style content, which adds an element of discovery and enjoyment to their reading experience.

A Librarian’s Perspective

From a librarian’s perspective, Nicole values that **every News-O-Matic article includes citations**, helping students understand where information comes from and why proper credit matters. She also sees a growing need for tools that **help students strengthen their critical thinking skills**, especially as students navigate an increasingly AI-driven world.

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News-O-Matic plays an important role in helping students analyze information, ask questions, and think more critically about the news they consume. **With its versatility and high-quality content, News-O-Matic is an effective resource for the library.”**



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