# Data Analysis Brief nO. \_\_\_

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## Background

### Purpose

The Juvenile Nonfiction (JNF) collection has historically been shelved within the Adult Nonfiction, making it hard to browse. Because this collection is basically hidden within a larger collection, it has also traditionally had lower circulation numbers, leading to heavy weeding of hardly used materials. At the Downtown Library, we had the additional consideration that the JNF collection was on a different floor than the other materials intended for youth. This physical barrier prevented our young members from encountering, browsing, and finding materials intended for their age group. This project was intended to better connect young members with materials designed for their reading levels and age group.

## Approach

### Data Sources

I used the circulation data available from the Circulation By Branch report in CARL.X. I used the circulation data for the print TNF (Tween Nonfiction) prior to August 2016 at the Downtown Library as our benchmark for success. To that point, the highest number of checkouts recorded was 837 in March of 2016. For the same period, the highest number of checkouts for the print JNF collection was 266 in February of 2016. Success based on checkouts would be established by an increase of 70% in a 4-month period after the collection relocated, with the anticipation that the period would include school-year use by John Rex Elementary.

I also reviewed the number of on shelf browses from the same CARL.X report. On Shelf Browses for the print TNF collection prior to August 2016 maxed at 1,449 in April 2015. On Shelf Browses for print JNF maxed in August 2016 at 643. Success based on on-shelf browses would be established by an increase of 55% in a 4-month period after the collection relocated.

### Methodology

I needed to establish the amount of shelving space that the JNF collection would require once moved so that we could purchase the correct amount of new shelving along with allocate enough floor space for the collection. To estimate the amount of shelf space needed, I measured a selection of JNF materials and determined an average thickness of JNF materials as ½”. From this I could estimate how many shelves we would need based on how full we wanted the shelves. The collection had 4,427 items in September 2016, with approximately 94% of the materials on the shelf. Using the number of 4,161 items of on-shelf materials, we estimated that we would need 70 shelves if they were filled to 30” (60 items/shelf) or 80 shelves if they were filled to 26” (52 items/shelf). After an aggressive weeding process to remove old outdated materials, we had 3,883 items remaining in inventory in January 2017, with a steady 94% staying on shelf.

We ordered shelving that would allow for 80 shelves. There were two ranges at a 66” height with 4 main shelves in each stack, plus a shorter bottom shelf for oversized materials. With the reduction in collection size from weeding, we were able to plan for several ‘windows of opportunity’ where we could display materials face-out throughout the collection.

## Summary of Key Findings

The shelving arrived in early May and the collection completed its move the first week of May. John Rex Elementary (a main source of our checkouts) had one week of checkouts after the collection moved before they went on break for the summer. Since the relocation was completed later than originally planned, we waited to review success measures until John Rex had been checking out in the fall for a full month (end of September).

In the 5-month period after the shelving was relocated, we saw an average increase in checkouts of 60% from 2016 to 2017 over the same period of time. While it was not the 70% we hoped for, it was a significant increase in usage, and we did see increases in checkouts year over year during the summer of 207% and 179% for June and July respectively.

On Shelf Browses of JNF, on the other hand, decreased for the same period from an average of 580 per month to 366 per month.

## Detailed Analysis

In year over year data when looking at just JNF books and paperbacks, we saw the following changes:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Month | 2016 | 2017 | % Change | Rex visits |
| May | 234 | 153 | -34% | 1 week |
| June | 114 | 350 | 207% | Summer |
| July | 110 | 307 | 179% | Summer |
| August | 180 | 288 | 60% | Summer |
| September | 264 | 347 | 31% | 4 weeks |

## Discussion

The reduction in On Shelf Browses for JNF could be correlated to a change in the access and availability of the materials. During the 2016-17 school year, librarians brought curated selections of JNF materials to the first floor and displayed them on a cart for the John Rex students. This meant the materials were browsed and pulled off the cart heavily since there was little alternative for viewing the materials on a shelf. Librarians pulled the materials that were already high circulating and high interest, so browsing was high when the collection was displayed in this manner. This could make the argument to continue pulling high interest materials for on-going displays.

The end panels chosen for the collection were selected because of the ability to display materials in the shadow box design. At this time, there is no data on whether this design has increased circulation of the displayed material.

## Conclusion

The data clearly shows that the move was a success in increasing the overall usage of the collection. Anecdotal evidence from the teachers and parents at John Rex also indicates high customer satisfaction with the move. Weeding for age and usage will be easier with the collection co-located, which will also likely increase circulation.

## Recommendations for Further Study

A recommendation for further study would be to look at what the impact would be on interfiling TNF and JNF rather than leaving JNF as a separate collection. Future studies could also track materials displayed on the end panels to see if they have increased circulation over other materials.