In recent years, Readers’ Advisory services have expanded from assisting library users with identifying books to read to assisting users with identifying materials for viewing and listening. These services consist of recommending titles of potential interest to the user to match the user’s interests and experience as well as promoting the collection.

1. **Library Support Staff (LSS) know the library’s collection and where to locate materials by type and genre.**

   Portfolio Development Suggestions

   1.1 Prepare an annotated floor plan of the library’s collection, noting the location of various formats and genres such as books on CD, musical CDs, DVDs, mysteries, science fiction, biography, etc. Briefly describe the type of materials in each collection. Prepare examples of end-of-range signs, labels, and/or images to identify collection areas for users. How might the current signage or collection arrangement be improved?

   1.2 Film a short video tour of the collections, record an audio tour, or write a narrative for a guided tour to be conducted by another staff person or a library user. The narrative should describe a self-guided tour from the entrance in which each collection area is located (for example, “On your left, just past the Circulation Desk, is the visual media collection including films and television programs in DVD and VHS formats.”)

   1.3 Visit other libraries and retail bookstores to compare and contrast signage and displays. Write about the similarities and differences of what you see. What techniques might retail stores adopt from the library’s signage and displays and what techniques might libraries adopt from retail stores?

2. **LSS have a general familiarity with popular and classic fiction, including a knowledge of authors, various fiction genres, and popular current nonfiction.**

   Portfolio Development Suggestions

   2.1 Prepare five briefly annotated booklists (bibliographies) with brief notations of at least ten titles on each list. The lists should represent popular or classic genres and include at least one list of current nonfiction titles. Discuss the criteria you used to choose the topics of the booklists and the books you included.

   2.2 Prepare a brochure or poster featuring four categories of fiction and four categories of current nonfiction. Compile a list of six author names in each category. Indicate why you chose the authors you included. Indicate any resources you used in making your selection.
3. **LSS know and use basic reference and review tools for classic and popular music.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

3.1 Prepare six lists of music (discographies) with brief notations of at least six titles on each list representing different styles of music. Three of the lists should represent popular music (for example, rock, country, folk, etc.) and three lists should represent genres of classical music (Renaissance, 20th century, minimalist, etc.). Indicate the sources you used to compile the lists and why you chose the genres you did.

3.2 Prepare six lists of music (discographies) with brief notations of at least six titles on each list of recordings by a particular performer or performing group. Three of the lists should represent popular performers and three lists should represent classical performers, performing groups, or composers. Indicate the sources you used to compile the lists and why you chose each performer or group.

4. **LSS know and use basic reference and review tools for film genres.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

4.1 Prepare six lists of films (filmographies) with brief notations of films, each representing a different film genre, with at least ten titles on each list. One genre should be foreign films. Indicate the sources you used to compile the lists and the criteria you used to choose the six genres.

4.2 Prepare six lists of films (filmographies) with at least six titles on each list of films by a particular director or featuring a certain lead actor or actress. Three of the lists should represent directors and three lists should represent particular lead actors or actresses. Indicate the sources you used to compile the lists and why you chose each director and actor/actress.

5. **LSS know formats and resources appropriate for persons with disabilities affecting vision, hearing, or understanding.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

5.1 Describe how you would approach making recommendations of library materials for a person of limited vision, a person who is severely hearing-impaired, and a person with a mental impairment such as Down syndrome. What questions would you ask to determine their interests and abilities? What formats would you recommend? Where would you find materials in appropriate formats if nothing is available in your library?

5.2 Describe how you would approach making recommendations of library materials for a person with learning disabilities or very low reading level. What questions would you ask to determine their interests and abilities? What formats would you recommend? Where would you find materials at appropriate reading levels for them?
6. LSS know and use online and print readers’ advisory tools and reviewing sources including current and emerging social media sites and techniques.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

6.1 For six fiction titles, locate reviews in at least three different sources, including both print and online. Do the same for six film titles and for six musical recordings. Which source is more authoritative? Which makes you want to read the book (see the film or hear the music)? Why? Would some reviewing sources be more appropriate or accepted by certain user groups? Based on the reviews, would you buy the title for your library’s collection? Why or why not?

6.2 Select at least five titles that would fill the request in the scenario below. What questions would you ask to determine what the user wants? Explain the sources for your recommendations and why you made the choices you did.

(a) “I just read the best book by Ray Bradbury. Can you recommend other authors I would like as much?”
(b) “I just read the best book that had a librarian as a detective. Can you recommend other books by other authors where the librarian solves the mystery?”
(c) “I really like romance books but I don’t want any graphic sex or dirty words. Can you recommend some authors for me?”
(d) “I like fiction set in exotic locations such as the Middle East. Can you suggest some authors or titles?”

6.3 Select three online and three print readers’ advisory tools and/or reviewing sources and describe for each how they can be used in general and how you have used them to assist persons in selecting something to read or finding out more about authors or their work. For what type of user, question, or situation is each tool especially helpful?

6.4 On the Internet, there are interactive sites and blogs that ask for user reviews and ratings of books and other media. Find such a site and read through the contributions. Pick five titles and compare the reviews/comments of the titles by contributors of reviews of the same titles in a professionally published source (print or online). What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to commentary and recommendation? Whose opinion would you be more likely to accept? Why?

7. LSS can briefly and succinctly describe the plot of a book, film, or other media and its appeal.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

7.1 Write six brief synopses of books and three brief synopses of films covering at least three genres such as mysteries, thrillers, or historical fiction. One example should be a book
that was made into a film. If the film differs from the movie, how would your synopsis be different?

7.2 Select a particular audience in your community (for example, a service club such as Rotary or Kiwanis, a senior activity center, a PTA group, etc.) and prepare a program of book/media talks for a 20-minute presentation on a topic of interest to them.

7.3 Video or audiotape or provide a script of a book talk that you prepare for an adult audience, covering at least five books. In your presentation indicate why you chose these books, describe the plot in an entertaining way, and engage the audience in a discussion of other books in the same genres.

8. **LSS can make recommendations without judgment regarding reading, listening, or viewing preference.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

8.1 What is your favorite type of reading? Make five recommendations of titles in each of three different genres other than your favorite (for example, if you like mysteries, recommend titles in fantasy, adventure, and romance), giving brief information about each title. What sources did you use to make your recommendations? Include both print and online sources.

8.2 What is your favorite type of music? If you like jazz, select three different genres of music other than your favorite (for example, classical, bluegrass or opera) and make five recommendations of musical artists in these genres. Give brief information about each artist and why they are significant to that genre. What sources did you use to make your recommendations? Include both print and online sources.

8.3 What is your favorite type of film? If you like romances, select three different genres of film other than your favorite (for example, cartoons, mysteries, or action) and make five recommendations of the best films that represent that genre. Give brief information about each film, the genre it represents, and why it is considered one of the best representatives of that genre. What sources did you use to make your recommendations? Include both print and online sources.

8.4 Imagine that a library user asks for recommendations for books on a topic about which you have strong negative opinions and feelings. What techniques would you use to deal with your feelings and opinions and remain nonjudgmental with the user? After you have prepared your techniques, discuss your ideas with other staff. Did this discussion change how you would handle the situation?

9. **LSS can respond to inquiries from, communicate with, and assist users with finding specific titles in their preferred format whether print, media, e-books, online, or other available formats.**
Portfolio Development Suggestions

9.1 Give three examples of a title in multiple formats (for example, print, large print, audiobook on CD, downloadable format). Explain how you would determine the user’s preference, how you would help them identify the preferred format in the library catalog, and how you would help the user obtain the title. Prepare this in writing or have someone make a video of you communicating with the user.

9.2 Write a guide explaining how a new library user would find titles in preferred formats using the online catalog or other guides in the library. Provide the meaning of any codes, terms, acronyms, locations, etc.

9.3 For fans of six popular authors, make a list of at least five other books by different authors that might appeal to the reader. Explain why the titles might appeal (for example, similar plot, setting, type of character, etc.). What sources did you use to make your recommendations? Use both print and online sources.

9.4 For fans of six popular films of the last three years, make a list of at least five earlier film titles that might appeal to the viewer and explain why the titles might appeal. What sources did you use to make your recommendations? Use both print and online sources.

10. LSS assist in developing, promoting, and implementing programs based on the library collections, such as book discussions, summer reading programs, film, and media programs and cooperating with community groups as appropriate.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

10.1 Describe three examples of a book discussion, summer reading program, and/or film program that you developed for a library audience. What techniques did you use to help promote the library collection? How do you know whether the program was successful?

10.2 Video or audiotape or provide a script of a program that you planned or helped plan. Evaluate the program and indicate what about it was successful and what you would do differently next time. Do you feel the program was successful overall and why or why not?

10.3 Interview staff from three libraries about their programming based on their library’s collections. How do they decide what program to offer? How and where do they advertise? Which programs were most popular, and why does the staff feel they were successful? Which programs were not as successful as anticipated and why does the staff feel this way? With what groups does the library cooperate in providing programs?

11. LSS assist in compiling resource lists and displays of books, recordings, films, and websites and emerging media by genre, historical period, subject, author, composer, or director.
Portfolio Development Suggestions

11.1 Choose a topic. Search the collection and prepare a resource list and a display on the topic that includes fiction and nonfiction books, and films, websites, and other appropriate media. The resource list should include at least 15 resources. Submit the resource list and a photograph of the display. Could the resource list and display be effective online as well as in the library? Describe how you would use social media to promote the display and invite participation.

11.2 Choose a national holiday or day of awareness or recognition of the United States or another country. Create a resource list and display for a celebration that would feature library and community resources related to the celebration. Could the resource list and display be as effective online as well as in the library? Describe how you would involve community agencies and groups. Describe how you would use social media to promote this activity.

11.3 Read five articles on the use of social media in adult readers’ advisory. Compare and contrast the articles. Identify a library that has used social media in adult readers’ advisory and interview the librarian. Prepare a report on the factors that make use of social media successfully and the factors that make it difficult.

12. LSS suggest additions to the collection based on trends in materials requested and borrowed.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

12.1 Based on statistics for the past three years, which fiction genre (for example, mysteries, romance, science fiction, western, chick lit, or graphic novels) is most popular at your library? Suggest five titles to be added in each of the most popular two genres. Indicate the tools you used to make your recommendations.

12.2 Based on statistics for the past three years, who are three of the most popular fiction authors at your library? Select two new titles for the collection that might appeal to readers of each of the three authors (six titles in all). Indicate the tools you used to make your recommendations.

12.3 Review the reserve list for fiction and nonfiction DVDs for the past six months and identify the top three most requested titles. If you had money to purchase ten additional items in the format, would you purchase added copies of the requested items, new titles, or a combination? Defend your selections and indicate the tools you used to make your decision.