Malletts Creek Branch
Youth Tour Guide

Ann Arbor District Library
Hi! I live right here in front of the Malletts Creek Branch of the Ann Arbor District Library, which is really handy — if you have hands — because I work at the Library as a tour guide. In my case, I have feet, and so do you. So we’re going to use our feet as we make our way around the Library, stopping at all the numbered locations on the tour map. If you have a question, be sure to raise your foot!
What’s Outside: bioswales, detention ponds

First, I bet you’re wondering: where is Malletts Creek? Well you can’t see it, but it’s here! It runs underground, through pipes, by the Library. And it pops up above ground, further down the road. So when we began building the new Library we wanted to be good caretakers of our neighborhood creek.

1. The bioswales & detention ponds help us do this.
A bioswale is a nice boggy area full of native plants where salamanders can eat bugs and relax. It also filters and cleans storm water that runs off the parking lot and directs it to holding, or detention, ponds. Eventually this cleansed water percolates down to Malletts Creek.
Now, if you stand here on the bridge by one of the bioswales and look up at the roof of the Library you might notice something unusual.

Yes! This Library has a green growing roof — it’s a **vegetated roof** planted with **sedum**. The plants soak up rain and lessen the amount of runoff water from the parking lot. And the dirt that holds the roots of the plants insulates the building, making it warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

(Hmm, I bet there are good bugs up there. Anyone want to give me a hand, or a foot, up?)

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**Bioswale & Meadow Plantings:**

1. Black-eyed Susan
2. Marsh Blazing Star
3. Bee-Balm (Bergamot)
4. Blue Flag Iris
5. Wild Ginger
6. Yellow-headed Coneflower
7. Swamp Milkweed
8. Wild Geranium
9. New England Aster
10. Blue Vervain
Let’s go inside. (Can someone with hands get this door for me? Thanks!)

Hands may be handy, but feet are neat because one of the first things your feet notice when you enter the Library is how nice and springy the wooden path down the center of the building is. This part of the floor is made from cork.

Cork is a renewable source of wood that comes from cork trees. The trees can be stripped of outer bark once every nine years for up to 200 years, and bark grows back!

Cork is good for a library because it does not conduct heat, sound or vibration very well. It is also very flexible and floats. (Hey! That sounds like me. Watch this — bet you can’t walk on your front feet!)
Did you know that in addition to Malletts Creek, which is underground, there is more water here you cannot see? Actually, this whole Library sits on water! That’s right.

Under the carpet and cork flooring, and running all through the cement, are hundreds of thin pipes and tubes carrying hot water. It is called a radiant circulating hot water system. This provides heat for the Library. (Hmm . . . This might be a good place to hang out all winter when the bioswales freeze!)

A network of tubes in one wall are supply and return lines to the boiler.

Oops! I almost forgot . . . look up. See those long metal pipes that run the length of the ceiling? Those are ducts that carry hot air for warming the Library when it’s cold and cold air for cooling the Library when it’s hot. So it’s not a bad place to hang out all summer, too.
What’s inside: making use of the sun.

5. **Now**, follow me over here to the south side. This wall of windows lets us look out at the beautiful gardens, and allows for plenty of natural light. That makes it easier for reading.

And the dark floor in this area soaks up the solar heat from the sun shining in. That also helps the Library stay warm. Why, you can kick back and soak up a few rays right here!

(Now, where are my sunglasses? And where are my ears to hold them up? Sigh . . . ears are handy, I mean footy, too!)
What’s Inside: staying cool.

6 In the summer when it gets hot, lower windows open to let in cool air. That cool air pushes the hot air out of windows in the top of four roof monitors. The monitors are those tall bays in the ceiling. In the monitor bays are fans. These fans also help move the hot air out of the building and cool the surrounding area. This convective cooling system creates a current of cool fresh air that’s always moving through the Library.

There are other things we do, too, to cool the building. All the south-facing windows have shades and outside awnings. The shades and awnings work automatically, when the building senses that it is too hot. Some days the shades will go up or down several times. And when it’s really hot, the red outside awnings extend. Wow! It’s almost like the building is alive!*

*Buildings like this one are often called GREEN, because they are environmentally friendly.
Finally, we chose the things that we put into our cool building with great care. So we have butcher-block furniture and carpeting selected because of the environmentally friendly way they were made and the ability of each to be recycled or reused.

And then, to top it all off . . . ta-da! We packed the building with the **coolest things** of all — books, magazines, computers, films on videotape and DVD, music, and friendly staff.

There’s even a **fireplace** and an **aquarium**!

We are proud that the Malletts Creek Branch Library was built with the vision of being a healthy building for the nearby creek, for our city, and for YOU.

Thanks for coming on the tour! Now have fun looking around and using the Library. (I would shake feet with you, but I’ve got a footful of books I need to check out.)
What do you remember from our tour?

Draw a line to the right answer. The correct answers are below, but don’t peek!

1. convective cooling  a. filters storm water & where your tour guide lives
2. bioswale  b. books, magazines, films, music, computers
3. vegetated roof  c. hot water heating system that runs through floor
4. solar heat  d. storm water is directed from a bioswale to this area
5. cork  e. system to vent hot air to the outside
6. awnings  f. feels “springy” and comes from trees
7. radiant circulating heat  g. where sedum grows
8. “cool stuff”  h. warmth that soaks into hard floor from the sun
9. detention pond  i. extend to shade on sunny days

Answers: 1e, 2a, 3g, 4h, 5f, 6l, 7c, 8b, 9d
The Library will teach, by example, responsible coexistence with the natural environment.