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QR codes and iPads in the library

You may have noticed some squiggly black and white squares when you open your newspaper or walk past an advertising hoarding. They're turning up on T-shirts, mugs, business cards and shop windows with increasing frequency. These squares are called quick response (QR) codes, and they have a range of uses in the library.

A QR code is a type of square barcode which allows you to encode information such as text, a URL or an audio file. I first became aware of them through *Scan*, as well as discussion on OZTL net.

iPads trial

Our school, Pacific Lutheran College, is a Foundation to Year 12 school of approximately 800 students on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. We recently purchased two class sets of iPads to trial, with a view to possibly becoming a Bring Your Own Device school. One set of the iPads was given to a year 8 class whose core teachers were particularly interested in, and au fait with, technology. The students were able to take them home and become familiar with them and used them in the classroom. These students, their parents and teachers were surveyed at the end of the term-long trial, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

The other set of devices was available for booking by other classes and, importantly, was distributed to staff over the

Christmas holidays so that they could have time to play with them and become aware of their possibilities. Teachers were encouraged to consider ways in which the iPads could be used in the classroom to enhance teaching and learning.

iPads in the library

In order to ensure that we were leading the way forward in ICT use in the school, I decided to investigate ways in which the library could incorporate iPads in our program. QR codes seemed an ideal place to start for a beginner, as they are simple to use and create.

Not having owned even an iPod or iPhone before, I was a bit bewildered by the world of apps and Apple. I purchased an iPad from the library budget and, after some initial confusion (I kept pressing the volume button and wondering why it wouldn't turn on), and a quick visit to my tech-savvy 10 and 12-year-old nieces, I had the iPad up and running.

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QR codes and iPads in the library (cont.)

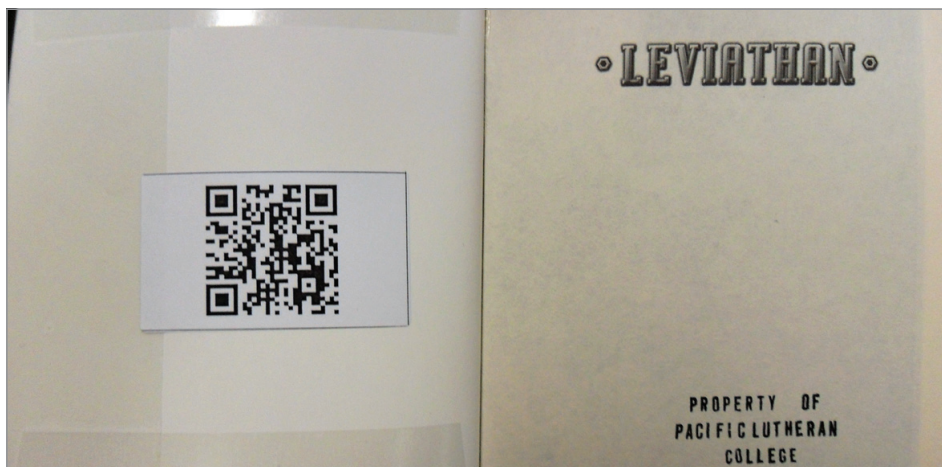
Library orientation and QR codes

At the beginning of the year I usually run a library orientation with our year 8 students (year 8 is our first year of high school in Queensland). I usually show them around the library and tell them about the different areas and rules. This year, I decided to convey the same information in a much more interactive way by using QR codes.

Creating the QR code

A Google search for 'QR code generators' revealed an array of options. I decided to use Kaywa (<http://qrcode.kaywa.com/>), but GoQRme (<http://goqr.me/>) is also very good. QR Stuff (<http://www.qrstuff.com/>) prints QR codes in colour and QR Voice (<http://qrvoice.net/>) allows you to link audio files to your QR codes. They all do a similar job. Find one that works for you.

I created the codes by typing the text or URL into the generator. I printed them out, wrote a description on the back of each one, and laminated them. I had the IT staff put a free QR reader app on the class set of iPads – I used QR Code Engage, but there are many others out there. With this app, the students just press the screen to start the scanning, hold the iPad up until the QR code appears in the viewer window, and the text or video or website appears on their screen. I stuck the laminated codes around the library, issued each pair of students with an iPad and a question sheet and sent them off on a treasure hunt. Afterwards, we debriefed together.



A QR code placed inside the cover of a book, linking to more information about it

Most of the QR codes contained just text – information about that section of the library and a question the students had to answer. Depending on the generator you use, only about 250 characters can be used on any one QR code. Some codes contained links to websites such as the library catalogue or home page, and a couple, such as the one on our DVD section and the one on our Sherlock Holmes display in the foyer, contained YouTube clips.

Review of using QR codes and iPads

The kids enjoyed the activity (even the teachers got involved), and it mostly went very well. I did encounter a couple of problems – the iPads had problems reading two of the codes which I'd printed out in too large a size (a 3-to-4 cm square worked best). Also, I hadn't realised that the iPads couldn't


recognise Flash, so a website I'd created that used Flash and a Voki didn't work.

I am planning a similar activity for our upcoming Open Day. I will issue prospective parents with an iPad or ask them to use their iPhones when they tour the library.

Further uses of QR codes

I've also started placing QR codes in the front of our fiction books, with a link to book trailers or the author's website. I purchased a box of laser labels, and have started printing these out and sticking them inside the covers. Exploring these using the iPads will form the basis of another library activity later in the term.

I have also started incorporating QR codes, containing links for parents to find further information on the library homepage or relevant websites, in my weekly newsletter piece.

I'm sure there are many other exciting ways that QR codes could be used in the library. I'm looking forward to discovering and exploring them. 



QR code being used by student with iPad



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Libraries in the cloud

As we look to the future, every K–12 technology leader reading this article should consider taking up the following challenges:

- forget about IT as you know it today;
- get ready to outsource IT;
- let go of the desire to control;
- embrace diversity in the IT environment;
- blow the lid off storage limits;
- stop saying things like, 'A wired network infrastructure will always be necessary because wireless will never be fast enough for everything.'

These bold predictions of the Consortium of School Networking (CoSN) are in large part a response to K–12 schools rapidly moving to 'cloud-based' networking environments. This is a radical shift with regard to how schools provide access to resources, computer applications and file storage for staff and students. Librarians need to understand the implications of this change.

What is cloud computing and what are its advantages?

Anyone who has used GoogleDocs, a set of online productivity tools that allows the creation of documents, spreadsheets, presentations and surveys, has experienced cloud computing (see Head of the Edge, *Library Media Connection*, May/June 2011, at www.doug-johnson.com/dougwri/googleapps-and-librarians.html).

Cloud computing relies on applications and file storage that reside on a remote server, with minimal resources stored on local computers' hard drives (a cloud graphic is often used to represent the internet on network diagrams, hence the name). If you have ever stored a file online, edited a photo with an online tool, or used a web-based email program, you have already experienced cloud computing.

There are many advantages to cloud computing. Since both applications and files reside on a network rather than on a specific computer, users can work on any project, anywhere. Given a computer with internet access – on a desk at school, a lap at home, in any computer

lab or coffee shop in the world, or even at Grandma's house – users can work without worrying about transporting files on physical media like flash drives, keeping track of the latest version of a document, or having the right software to open a file. Just as importantly, files can easily be shared and collaboratively edited in a cloud-based application without having to resort to email attachments and the confusion that multiple versions of attachments can create.

Unlike much software that resides on computer hard drives, web-based applications that perform a wide-array of productivity tasks are usually provided at no cost to the user. While not as comprehensive as Microsoft Office, iLife or Adobe Photoshop, these applications often have a surprisingly full feature set and are often compatible with popular commercial programs.

Cloud computing also requires less powerful – and therefore less expensive – computers. Using these inexpensive computers, free file storage and free applications can lower a school's computing costs. Money that would have been spent on student workstations in labs, big file servers, support staff, and expensive software can instead be used to pay for increased bandwidth, greater wireless coverage or maybe – just maybe – lower class sizes.

Ratios of one computer to each student are more feasible when schools make use of cloud computing. With a low cost netbook and the use of cloud software, student computers are virtually interchangeable. Therefore, if a device needs repair or is left at home, another machine can be easily substituted. At some point, schools will ask parents to provide basic computing devices for their children as a part of the school supply list. A few years ago, I was asked to purchase a \$100 graphing calculator for my son. How big a stretch is it to ask parents to provide a \$250 netbook computer that can be used in all classes today?

How can librarians take advantage of cloud-based computing today?

Before advocating for cloud computing for my staff and students, I decided to see if I could 'live in the cloud' as a computer user – both personal and professional – myself. Below is a list of how I have moved my main computing tasks to the cloud:

1. **Netbook:** Rather than using a full-scale laptop computer, I use a 10" ASUS laptop that cost about \$300. The smaller keyboard and screen size took some getting accustomed to, but I have found that I can work on the computer for long periods of time. The speed is acceptable, the battery life is good and the wireless connectivity is fast.


 Australian Library and Information Association


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Libraries in the cloud (cont.)

2. **Email:** Our district has successfully transitioned to Gmail accounts for all staff and students. I have long been a Gmail user for my personal email.
3. **Web searching and bookmarking:** I have long used a delicious.com account.
4. **Word processing, presentation creation and spreadsheet use:** After years of using Office, the move to GoogleDocs for my day-to-day productivity has been surprisingly easy. In fact, getting away from Office's 'feature creep' has been refreshing. The presentation program lacks animation, transitions, and in-program image editing. But for 95% of my work and for storing my files, GoogleDocs works just fine, thank you. Furthermore, the work I create is compatible with Office. Google adds features to its Docs suite on a regular basis. There are no skills in our information literacy/information technology curriculum that cannot be taught and practised using GoogleApps for Education.
5. **Photo storage and editing:** I've been storing my best photographs on a commercial storage site for years and editing them with Photoshop Elements. But Flickr and Picasa are online applications that work perfectly adequately for this amateur's editing and storage needs. Picasa gives iPhoto a run for its money as a photo organiser, and Picnik allows even more photo editing abilities.
6. **Web page editing and webmastering:** My personal blog, wiki, and website are already completely managed via

application service providers who use online tools for management and editing. Our school website and the professional association websites I help manage – Kiwanis, our lakes association, and our state library/tech association – are also managed using these tools.

7. **School specific tasks:** Without exception, all gradebooks, reporting systems, and communications in our district are web-based, as are our accounting and other management systems. Nearly every school document I create, share and collaborate on is stored on GoogleDocs rather than on my computer's hard drive.

8. **Library catalogue and circulation system:** Library staff and library users access our Destiny circulation/catalogue system via a web browser. For a nominal fee, a regional telecommunications agency hosts, maintains, and upgrades the system for us. No local storage costs or maintenance!

The future of cloud-based computing


It's a good time to consider the impact of cloud computing on our libraries.

- Does your school have a policy about student-owned devices that can be used to access the resources you provide in the cloud? Parents will not allow a simple ban on them, anymore than they allowed schools to ban mobile phones.
- Does your school have the reliable, adequate and secure wireless infrastructure to support dozens, if not hundreds, of student-owned computing

devices taking advantage of cloud-based applications?

- Is your school library helping teachers and students receive the training, resources and strategies to use the cloud?
- Is your school exploring cloud-based enterprise solutions like Google Apps Education Edition or Microsoft's Office365?
- Is your library using cloud-based applications to lower its operating costs?
- Might libraries re-purpose those general use computer labs, providing instead a combination of wireless netbooks that can be used anywhere in and out of the library and fewer, but more powerful, media production computers in common labs?

For some educators, especially technology specialists who have lovingly built in-house networks and may fear some of the changes in the quote that opened this article, a move to the clouds will be a significant change in mindset. They may see storm clouds!

But remember – every cloud has a silver lining, especially for our library users! 



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Connections

Connections is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS), a business unit of Education Services Australia. *Connections* is distributed to all schools in Australia. SCIS is committed to publishing informative and useful material relevant to school libraries, helping library professionals keep up to date with the latest in information services and technology.

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Social media and schools as professional learning communities

Social media is burgeoning, and is not going to go away. According to the Nielsen 3rd quarter report on the State of the Media; <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/social/>, nearly four out of five active internet users now frequent social media sites. While there is a great deal of negative publicity surrounding social media, such sites can in fact be harnessed to create a myriad of possibilities for schools as learning communities.

Well-known examples of social media include social networking site Facebook, microblogging tool Twitter, social bookmarking sites such as Delicious and Diigo, and common blogging platforms such as Wordpress and Blogger. Each of these provides a different way of connecting and communicating with others via status updates, short comments, sharing of photos, useful web links or more extensive articles.

This article considers the ways in which social networking tools may be used to overcome some of the obstacles schools face when attempting to develop a professional learning culture. It then examines a key social media service, Twitter, and the ways in which it may help educators to building a personal learning network, and before looking briefly at some other useful tools.

Social media and professional learning communities

A school which is a professional learning community focuses upon removing the walls between classrooms (metaphorically in all cases, physically in some!), encouraging collaboration, dialogue, ready access to colleagues and an openness to challenge understandings and currently accepted knowledge. Time is provided not only for professional development in the traditional sense of in-service days, but also for collegial discussion and reflection. Teachers feel free to engage in co-teaching, team teaching, mentoring, and peer observation.

If learning communities are to develop, teachers need time to collaborate, leadership support, and access to useful information, but research suggests that schools face major obstacles in offering these resources. (Roberts and Pruitt 2009 p3) Social media can help to meet these needs.

Social media providing ways to collaborate

It is almost impossible for teachers to coordinate meeting times due to the variety of competing demands they face throughout the working day. However, by embracing the asynchronous nature of social media, collaboration can occur at a time that suits each individual. Social media can also be used for collaboration across geographical locations: teachers are just a few keystrokes away from colleagues locally and globally. Social media can be used to gather instant feedback, mentor colleagues and attend online conferences (Ferriter et al 2011).

Social media providing leadership support

There is usually only one principal in a school. However, the ratio of leaders to staff does not have to determine the amount of support a leadership team can provide if social media is used as a way to supplement face-to-face communication. Meetings that a leadership representative cannot physically attend can be shared online, or the input collected and considered by leadership at a later date. Members of a leadership team can 'check in' with staff by posting a tweet, posting a discussion starter or asking for input using a variety of channels.

Social media providing information

This is a key role of social media when used in a professional context. Questions can be posted online for response from colleagues and/or experts. Social bookmarking services, another form of social media, are brilliant for discovering new websites and sources of information.

Using Twitter

Twitter is a form of social media known as microblogging, through which members share information in succinct posts, or 'tweets', of 140 characters or less. Tweets are shared with other Twitter users, known as 'followers', who have chosen to keep track of that person's messages. Following the tweets of educational experts is a way to obtain tips about useful websites, upcoming educational trends and links to quality digital resources. Often seen as the domain of B-Grade celebrities and those who wish to share the endless minutiae of their lives,

Twitter is in fact a powerful communication tool and vast source of information for educators.

Here are the introductory steps in using the Twitter service.

Step 1: Sign up for a Twitter account

Log on to www.Twitter.com and join. Twitter provides excellent assistance at <https://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics> if you experience any difficulty. Consider using your real name for your Twitter handle. Although privacy online is always important, if you are using Twitter purely as a professional learning network, it is easier for others to find and follow you if you use your real name, and building your network is one of the key purposes for using Twitter in this way.

Step 2: Find people to follow

There is no pressure to begin 'tweeting' immediately. Ease into Twitter slowly by following some key educationalists, and become familiar with how they frame their posts, and the type of information they share. Once you have followed one or two people, you can expand your network by viewing who they follow. It is likely they follow people with similar interests. If you don't know where to begin, have a look at sites such as <http://wefollow.com/> or <http://listorious.com/> or <http://www.twellow.com/>. These sites are digital directories or yellow pages of Twitter users.

Step 3: Learn some hash tags

Twitter uses the hash symbol (#) to identify key words used in Tweets. When a user is tweeting about a particular topic, the use of a hash tag means it will be easier to search for this post at a later date. Many educational conferences now have a conference hash tag, so that users can follow the tweets made by participants attending – an example is #iste12 – the hash tag for the upcoming ISTE Conference in San Diego in 2012. Already people are posting ideas for their conference presentations.

Other great hash tags for educators getting started with Twitter include:

#Edtech – tweets to do with technology in the classroom

#education – tweets to do with education

Social media and schools as professional learning communities (cont.)

#edchat – a weekly discussion about all things education (discussions on Twitter that occur at an appointed time are often called ‘TweetMeets’)

#teachmeet – connecting teachers all over the world

#ozteachers – Australian teacher chat

Step 4: Manage your posts

The number of tweets may seem overwhelming at first. A useful way of managing Twitter is to download an application such as Tweetdeck www.tweetdeck.com/, which interfaces with Twitter, and allows you to organise your searches so that they are easily viewable.

Other useful social media tools

Twitter is not the only tool that educators can use to broaden their personal learning network.

LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/, is growing in prominence as a networking tool for professionals. While it began as a place for business people to share a virtual summary of career highlights with potential employees, it now also provides online discussion spaces for groups of like-minded educators, on topics such as 21st Century Education, Educational Leadership, Teacher Training <http://tiny.cc/zbwze>, and Curriculum Development <http://tiny.cc/86m8x>. A search reveals 4,779 groups to choose from, and membership is drawn from around the world.

Diigo, <http://www.diigo.com/>, is a social bookmarking tool, a place to organise, store and share web links. It is also a very active online learning community for educators. Diigo provides spaces for collaboration www.diigo.com/learn_more/collaborate, groups <http://groups.diigo.com/index> and the opportunity to discover new web links via email digests <http://tiny.cc/ik758> of the most recently saved websites.

Blogs are another source of up-to-date educational information (see, for example, the award winning blogs <http://tiny.cc/g9tat> listed by the hosting service Edublogs <http://edublogs.org/>). However, accessing each blog is time-consuming, and may be inefficient, since blog authors post at irregular intervals. Time-poor teachers may be better off subscribing to a selection of blogs using an RSS feedreader <http://tiny.cc/lcz98> such as Google Reader <http://tiny.cc/1wu1i>. Using RSS, new posts from all the blogs you subscribe to may be read at one location. For more information see, for example, the article by Mo Moumenine on the IncreaseRSS website <http://tiny.cc/ut4ss>.

Conclusion

Education in the form that we have today was developed when knowledge was scarce, and communication channels limited. When learning could only occur in the presence of an individual who held all knowledge, it made sense to create institutions where a fixed curriculum could be delivered to age-grouped classes, and to measure ‘mastery’ via tests of content knowledge. Today, knowledge is not scarce, and individuals have access to multiple communication channels. This has significant implications for education. Not only does it mean that the role of teachers must change, it also means that for schools to be considered professional learning communities, they must increasingly orient themselves within the wider world beyond the classroom walls. Social media provides the channels for this open communication to occur. It is through adopting new modes of accessing, sharing and creating information that teachers and students will be able to work together to transform education for the 21st century.

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For further information from Kay Cantwell follow the ResourceLink blog at <http://resourcelinkbce.wordpress.com/> and Kay’s Twitter account at <http://twitter.com/#!/KayC28>. ResourceLink is Brisbane Catholic Education’s Information and Resourcing Centre.

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Website reviews

60 tech tips in 60 minutes

<http://www.schrockguide.net/60-tech-tips-in-60-minutes.html>

Created by education technology expert Kathy Schrock, this extensive website offers a range of clearly written tips for getting the most from computers, software, iPads and digital photography.

SCIS no: 1547665



AIS

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais>

The official Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) website disseminates a variety of material relating to various sports, sport-related news, research and information on how to support sport. Currently, the upcoming London Olympics is a major focus of the site.

SCIS no: 1255127



ClassMarker

<http://www.classmarker.com/>

An award-winning website, ClassMarker allows educators to devise online tests and quizzes which are marked instantly. Although this is a commercial website, educators are able to use an abbreviated free component for up to 100 tests per month.

SCIS no: 1436115



CSIROPedia

<http://csiropedia.csiro.au/display/CSIROPedia/Home>

Since its inception, Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) has made many significant contributions to science, from polymer banknotes to wireless LANs. This website provides details of these achievements as well as background information on the men and women who helped instigate them.

SCIS no: 1547675



Energy savers

<http://www.originenergy.com.au/energysavers/>

Origin Energy has developed this resource in order to encourage students to understand the concept of energy and ways in which to be energy efficient. The site has links for teachers to online resources and details regarding the availability of printed resource packs.

SCIS no: 1547690



Funbrain

<http://www.funbrain.com/>

This engaging website features over one hundred educational games that can be used to enhance literacy and mathematical skills. Created by Pearson Education, the free site also features comics and online books (including the perennial favourites *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and *Amelia Writes Again*).

SCIS no: 1074572



Greatest engineering achievements of the Twentieth Century

<http://www.greatachievements.org/>

Students interested in engineering, physics and technology will be engrossed with the feats of twentieth century engineering highlighted on this site. Features include diagrams, photographs, interviews with engineers and a timeline.

SCIS no: 1036123



Learning through ICT resources

<http://www.in2edu.com/index.php>

Developed by an ICT teacher in New Zealand, this website offers a detailed information literacy program – essential for the effective use of ICT. A diverse collection of online resources to support teachers complements the program.

SCIS no: 1547719



MoneySmart teaching

<http://teaching.moneysmart.gov.au/>

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission have produced this resource to provide students with the knowledge to make astute financial decisions throughout their lives. Resources are grouped for primary teachers, secondary teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, gifted and talented student and parents.

SCIS no: 1547842



Online Survey Software

<http://polldaddy.com/>

PollDaddy is a digital tool that teachers can use to create surveys, online quizzes and polls. The results are tallied to enable instant quantitative feedback. A basic service is provided free, while more comprehensive or more frequent usage attracts a subscription fee.

SCIS no: 1547848



Out on a limb – A guide to getting along

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/conflict/index.html>

Emanating from the University of Illinois, this engaging website encourages students to undertake various open-ended animated scenarios relating to feelings, behaviour, and other points of view. Advice on how to handle these experiences is also provided.

SCIS no: 1277738



Website reviews (cont.)

PicLits

http://www.piclits.com/compose_dragdrop.aspx

Promoted as a creative writing resource, PicLits essentially contains colourful images and a crisp, clear layout matched to selected keywords. Students will be inspired to match the provided words with the appropriate image to 'capture the essence, story and meaning of the pictures'.

SCIS no: 1547865



Scan

<http://scan.nsw.edu.au/>

Published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities, 'Scan' is a leading refereed journal that focuses on the interaction between information in a digital age and effective student learning'. In mid-

2012, *Scan* will change from a print-based publication to an interactive online journal. Subscription details and further information is available on the website.

SCIS no: 1547886



Zite: A personalised magazine for iPads and iPhone

<http://zite.com/>

Currently available for Apple iPads and iPhones, Zite allows readers to create individualised, online magazine tailored to their own interests. As these interests are refined, Zite hones in on content applicable to the user and suggests additional material.

SCIS no: 1547904



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The internet sites selected in *Website reviews* are often of a professional nature and should be initially viewed by teachers and library staff to determine suitability for students. The links, content and address of these sites are subject to change.

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- purchase ebooks directly using your Google account.

iBookstore

The iBookstore lets you browse books and other publications and download them directly to your iPad, iPhone or iPod touch.

- download iTunes
- download the free iBooks app from the App Store
- browse ebooks and other publications through the iBookstore
- search by title, author or genre
- tap the ebook to see more details, peruse reviews or read a sample
- purchase and download ebooks directly to your iPad, iPhone or iPod touch.

*Please note: Books can only be viewed using iBooks on an iPad, iPhone (3G or later) or iPod touch (2nd generation or later).

Advocating for librarians – as opposed to libraries

These days, a significant number of librarians today practise our profession outside the bounds of physical libraries. Indeed, the information industry – comprising publishers, vendors, database and website design firms, SEOs, and independent consulting firms – is one of the biggest employers of librarians today. Many special librarians successfully practise without ever setting foot in a traditional 'library'. Several of my recent employers, including my current one, employed hundreds of librarians at every level of the organisation. In this piece, I will share my views on how to market your value and skills as an individual professional without being tied to a physical library. In particular, I will share what I think works when advocating for yourself.

Be the brand

As Mahatma Ghandi once said: 'You must be the change you want to see in this world'. We must choose to model the image and behaviours that we want others to know us by. This concept may seem basic, but if you want to be positioned as approachable, you must model approachability. The same goes for being smart, friendly, accessible, tech savvy, networked, helpful, caring, knowledgeable, a good trainer, and every other attribute desirable in a great librarian and information professional. So, what do you do that creates this image? What is the unique and significant combination of skills, attitudes, and aptitudes that your organisation can't do without?

Tell stories

A major issue in our profession is the fact that what we do and how we deliver value is invisible, and mostly experienced in the subjective minds and lives of our users. The tangible aspects of our work are secondary to the end-user experience of increased confidence in decisions, increased learning and knowledge, and the creation of new knowledge and inventions. Pointing out the tangible aspects of our work tells but a small part of the story of our value to an organisation. Our great facility with technology, content in all formats, and search and discovery needs to be positioned in context rather than as just a

simple collection or skill. The information professional has the valuable and unique role to pull these skills together and to make the 'magic happen'. Promote our profession by telling stories that reinforce the experience of what we do.



Tell your stories here www.flickr.com/photos/39039882@N00/5335291744
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Mine your network

One of the most valuable assets of any professional is your network. You likely know more people in your organisation than nearly anyone else, thus allowing you to connect people who need each other. You are part of a professional network within a school library association, as well as the rest of your library network – and don't forget your personal network of friends and relatives. When you put these networks to use for your enterprise, you extend your value beyond your own skill set. These networks can be put to use to solve problems and make progress. Find the overlaps between your network and your users – no one person knows everything, and not everything is available in print or digital format. Advocate for yourself as a connection to the entire world of knowledge.

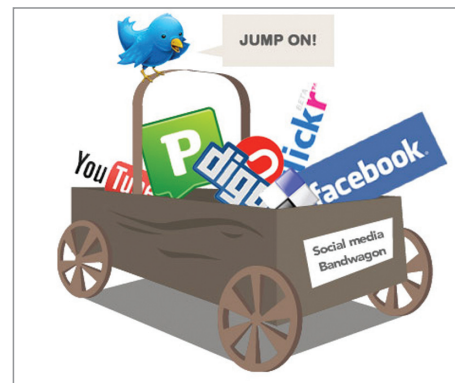
Be visible

It is one thing to be present and available in your library – you'll make connections with your core customers. However, if you only stay in the library, you'll rarely encounter others who can bolster your reputation and influence your success. Take every opportunity to attend meetings, socialise, and go to industry meetings and conferences. Get on conference programs and try to present at internal meetings

and industry conferences related to your organisation's area of expertise, not just at library conferences. Try to write for industry periodicals, too. The more you have a presence in your users' world and not just your own profession, the greater the perception of your reputation and value.

Share

Blog, tweet, and write articles, books, and columns. Build a reputation in your field and your industry or sector. Visibly demonstrate your knowledge and expertise and your critical thinking skills. You have more knowledge about the information space than you may acknowledge to yourself. Access to information is power, and sharing power is a powerful thing. You know many of the magic keys and techniques that will help your users in their day-to-day professional challenges. Be the guru that you can be. Share your insights and knowledge regularly, and position yourself as the helpful go-to person who makes a difference.



Jump on the social media bandwagon www.flickr.com/photos/73532212@N00/2945559128 An illustration for the Kyan blog blog.kyanmedia.com/archives/2008/10/15/get_on_the_social_...
Creative Commons licence: Attribution, non-commercial <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/deed.en>

Check out your signature

What does your physical office look like? Is it professional or is it clerical? Are there items on display that suggest your talents, such as degrees, awards, and pictures? If you weren't present, what would people learn about you from your space? Consider your email signature. Does it include anything other than your name? Are your degrees

Advocating for librarians – as opposed to libraries (cont.)


listed on it? Are there links to web pages and other collateral that speaks to your talents? How about your stationery – do you use a personalised letterhead? Are your business cards up to date, and do they include your social media presence? All of these things represent you when you're not physically present. Ensure that they exude the image and positioning you want.

Promote yourself

There is a difference between bragging and informing people about interesting projects or work that you have done. Telling people about this work serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it makes you part of the social ecosystem of an organisation; secondly, it positions you as a professional node and valuable contact. Shyness doesn't work. If you're an introvert, mine the literature for ways to make that work for you so that your contributions aren't overlooked. If you're an extrovert, then learn to engage all people you work for – especially those who don't match your style. Ensure that your strategies are multi-dimensional and hit on all cylinders. A true professional uses a variety of styles.

Choose your positioning carefully

Librarians run the risk of being too closely identified with our tools and environments. This can be a difficult position, especially for special librarians. We run the risk of being perceived as too tied to a particular positioning in our customers', users' or organisational hosts' minds. The concept that we are limited to books, content, physical libraries, technology and tools can easily serve to devalue our role when the information ecology changes. Carefully choose to tie your value to the unique value-added professional services and advice that makes such a difference in your users' lives.

Advocate for yourself as an information professional. The physical library is a secondary benefit that, without you, becomes a simple book collection. What are your magic beans? 



Stephen Abram

Stephen Abram, MLS is a Past President of SLA and is Vice President, Strategic Partnerships and Markets, for Gale Cengage Learning. He is an SLA Fellow and the past president of the Ontario Library Association and the Canadian Library Association. In June 2003 he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award and the ALIP Roger Summit Award in 2009. He is the author of Out Front with Stephen Abram and Stephen's Lighthouse blog. This column contains Stephen's personal perspectives and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of Gale Cengage Learning. Stephen would love to hear from you at stephen.abram@gmail.com.

First published in *Info Tech Column*, August, 2011 and *Information Outlook*, September 2011 Issue, available from <http://tiny.cc/djr56>.

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Water for the Future

As part of the Australian Government's 10-year *Water for the Future* initiative, a suite of Australian Curriculum aligned water education resources has been developed to support teaching and learning in Years 7–10.

The new resources explore how natural water systems work, their interaction with human use and the nature of sustainable water management practices required to balance the needs of our communities, farmers and the environment.

Each resource package focuses on the water systems in one of four key water resource regions in Australia, namely, the Great Artesian Basin; the Murray-Darling Basin; The Lake Eyre Basin; Northern Australia and the Wet Tropics. Through investigating the nature of water resources, how they are used by different communities and by exploring

sustainable practices, students are encouraged to learn and think critically about water issues.

Ideal for SOSE teachers, the packages also link strongly to Geography and Science. The resources include lesson plans with teacher support information; student activities, resource sheets and worksheets; Australian Curriculum links; colour maps and charts; and resource links for teachers.

Available for free from www.environment.gov.au/water/education



For more information on *Water for the Future* visit

www.environment.gov.au/water/education

SCIS professional learning

Why does SCIS provide professional learning?

Both the 2010 SCIS user survey and the 2010 strategic review of SCIS report produced by Libraries Alive! revealed a strong demand by school library staff for SCIS training and professional learning opportunities.

The SCIS professional learning program is primarily designed to provide training in the use of SCIS and to improve the capacity of school library staff. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to highlight the full range of SCIS services and products. It also provides networking opportunities for school library staff, particularly para-professional staff for whom there may be limited opportunity for training relevant to the school library context. The information about SCIS professional learning can be viewed at www.esa.edu.au/scis/professional_learning.html.

How does SCIS schedule and prioritise professional learning activity?

Naturally, restraints on time, staff and budget limit our capacity to offer professional learning opportunities. Current SCIS practice is to capitalise on opportunities for combining travel with existing commitments, and to organise and present workshops in partnership with other organisations, where possible. We try to vary the locations at which these sessions are held so as to maximise equity of access, and are keen to provide workshops in country

areas where organisers are able to guarantee sufficient attendees to cover travel and accommodation expenses.



Responses from SCIS workshop feedback forms 2011

Can we request a SCIS workshop?

SCIS staff can provide a range of workshops in areas including cataloguing, school library management, information literacy, resourcing the curriculum and social media in education. Depending on the interests and needs of your staff, you may like to consider a selection of relevant topics from 'Making the most of SCIS', detailed on the professional learning page, or you can view some examples of previous sessions at www.slideshare.net/scis.

It is possible to design your own SCIS workshops. Costs for these workshops are negotiated on an individual basis, with factors such as time, content and travel costs taken into account. When taking advantage of this option, SCIS invoices the organisation

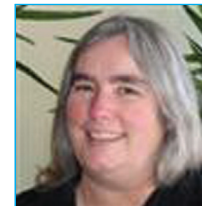
or school coordinating the event for the total cost. Please contact SCIS to discuss your request and to obtain a quote via email: scisinfo@esa.edu.au

Professional learning calendar

Curriculum Press also maintains an events page listing upcoming conferences, seminars and workshops with experienced presenters. View the complete list at <http://curriculumpress.edu.au/professional-learning>.

| Date | Presenter | Seminar Title | Seminar blurb |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| 30 April 2012 | Meredith Shears (Master Trainer, The Real Game Series) | The Real Game 2.1 Digital Edition (Years 7-8) | The Real Game engages students in the big questions about their future through role-play and scenarios relevant to their age groups. It engages students in learning for the real world. It supports core curriculum and addresses general capabilities. Venue: Wodonga Senior Secondary College |
| 4 May 2012 | Dr Ian Lowe | Get creative with maths – use maths300 | A new era in mathematics education is being ushered in with the advent of an Australian Curriculum. Now is the perfect time to revisit your approach to teaching mathematics to ensure it is creative, dynamic and rich with engaging content. Attend a maths300 workshop! maths300 workshops for teachers of the middle years (Yrs 5-9) |

Curriculum Press professional learning webpage



Pru Mitchell
SCIS Subscriber
Coordinator
Education Services
Australia



Global Education has a new address new look, enhanced resources, regular updates

The Global Education website has been redeveloped to make it an even more valuable resource for encouraging global perspectives across the curriculum.

- **new** navigation and Web 2.0 functionality
- rich collection of **revitalised** and **enhanced** activities arranged around the global perspectives framework
- **updated** global issues, country profiles and case studies
- an **extensive** gallery of images and videos for classroom use



linked to
the Australian
Curriculum



globaleducation.edu.au
is an AusAID project

Subscribe to the Global Education newsletter and be the first to know about events, new resources and hot topics. You can also participate in stimulating online discussions about global education with other teachers from around the world.



www.globaleducation.edu.au

National Year of Reading

The National Year of Reading is an ambitious campaign that aims to help turn Australia into a nation of readers. A series of events and programs has been designed to support a universal appreciation of the benefits of reading, as well as to promote a reading culture in every home, school and community in the land.

Throughout the week beginning on 14 February 2012, celebrations welcomed the start of the National Year of Reading.



Federal Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth Peter Garrett speaking at the launch of the National Year of Reading

In Canberra, the Prime Minister told guests assembled at the National Library of Australia that she '[wants] Australia to be many things: a prosperous nation, an innovative nation, but I certainly want us to be a reading nation ... I want every Australian to know the joy and pleasure that comes from books and reading.'

At the launch, Julia Gillard and Simon Crean also announced the winning titles in the Our Story project. This project aimed to identify eight books (one from each state and territory) for the National Year of Reading collection. These books will form the basis for Australia's biggest reading group in 2012. Also on stage was award winning author, actor and National Year of Reading patron William McInnes, the ABC's Jennifer Byrne and children's author Boori Monty Pryor, as well as a class of children from two Canberra schools.

Events all around the country

In Queensland, the National Year of Reading was launched with a breakfast focusing on that state's Dads Read campaign, which will run throughout 2012. The campaign involves famous fathers, including sporting heroes, reading to children.

Other events included an evening reception at the State Library of New South Wales, a

celebration in Adelaide's Rundle Mall, and the work of a chalk artist in Perth's Arts Precinct. Celebrations were held at schools, libraries and bookshops in hundreds of communities Australia-wide. There will be plenty of opportunities for students to get involved with events, activities and workshops throughout the year.

The National Year of Reading touring exhibition opened in Darwin on 1 February. The exhibition will travel to every state and territory, and will be displayed for three weeks at a variety of venues. The exhibition is built around original artwork from Alison Lester's much-loved picture book *Are We There Yet?* The theme of travel, exploring the Australian landscape and making connections with people from diverse backgrounds has been extended to a competition and activities for younger children. For primary school children, therefore, the exhibition will be well worth a visit.

There's also a competition for students aged between 12 and 18. Read This! asks young people to nominate a book that they think their peers should read during 2012. Their nomination can take the form of a book trailer, picture, video or song – indeed, any creative response will be considered for one of the top prizes. This competition is being run by the Centre for Youth Literature (www.insideadog.com.au) and Spine Out (www.spineout.com.au).

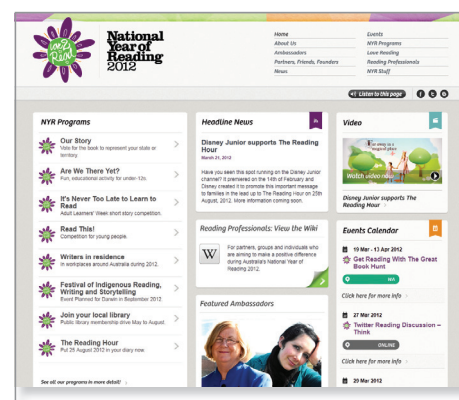
In the latter part of the year, a highlight of the campaign will be The Reading Hour. Based on the concept of Earth Hour, The Reading Hour will encourage families across Australia to join together for a simultaneous reading session. It will also encourage families to continue reading together for an hour or so a week – whether that be 20 minutes three times a week or 10 minutes nearly every day. The Reading Hour will be held on Saturday 25 August.

Not too late to join in

Role models are fundamental to the creation of a reading culture, and the team behind the National Year of Reading is encouraging maths and science teachers to walk into their classrooms with a favourite work of fiction tucked under their arm. For teacher librarians, the campaign is not only a chance to promote books to students, but also to

remind teaching colleagues about the many benefits of reading at any age.


Many organisations are linking together during the National Year of Reading. Schools are a natural hub for this kind of activity, and the campaign is an opportunity to test out extended partnerships between school and public libraries, teachers and parents, and community groups that haven't previously had the opportunity to work together towards a common goal.



National Year of Reading website

Take a look at the National Year of Reading website (www.love2read.org.au), and follow the link to the wiki for reading professionals at <http://love2read2012.wikispaces.com/>. Here you will find all kinds of useful information, including the names and contact details for ambassadors and friends of the campaign, booking agencies for visiting authors and illustrators, and items including logos and posters to download free of charge.

It is anticipated that some 2,000 activities will take place through community groups and in Australian schools, libraries and bookshops throughout the National Year of Reading. If you would like to be an active participant in the campaign, you can register to receive news of behind-the-scenes planning and activities by visiting www.love2read.org.au/registration.cfm.

More information can be found on the official website: www.love2read.org.au. 



Sue McKerracher
Director, The Library Agency

SCIS is more.....

Who owns what? Who can put what where?

With continual advances in electronic media – electronic books in so many formats, e-book loan platforms, cloud computing, book cover images – some customers are concerned as to how these items impact on their licence agreement with SCIS. Understandably, they don't want to be caught out accidentally violating the terms of their agreement. Other customers are unaware of having ever made such an agreement. Reasons for violations may be as simple as a change of library management, with the new incumbent not advised.

Therefore, we thought it timely to draw people's attention to the existence of the agreement and to provide a brief overview of it. Depending upon how long you have been a SCIS subscriber, you would have either signed a hard copy agreement (pre-2010) or selected to agree to the terms online. The content of both versions is the same.

Some important points:

1. No person is authorised to access *SCISWeb* without agreeing to be bound by the terms of the licence.
2. For the subscription period, the subscriber is granted a non-transferrable licence to use SCIS. The subscriber may copy Book Cover Images from *SCISWeb* for use only:
 - (i) on subscriber's online library catalogues;
 - (ii) on subscriber's website including blogs, wikis, online newsletters and school intranet;
 - (iii) within the Licensed Site;
 - (iv) for Internal Educational Purposes.
3. Copyright in all SCIS records remains with SCIS and these cannot be copied,

distributed or transferred either by the subscriber or a third party.

4. Copyright in all book cover images displayed on *SCISWeb* remains with the copyright owners.
5. The subscriber must take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidential nature of SCIS records.

While there is no doubt more riveting reading in your library, we recommend at least a brief look through your agreement. That way, you have the full picture.

The agreement can be found at www2.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/scisweblicence.pdf.

It is possible that the current agreement will undergo review this year, so stay tuned. For now, stick to the terms of the one you have and if in doubt, you can always ask for clarification.

You can find more information about SCIS and Copyright at www.esa.edu.au/scis/copyright.html.

SCIS collection growth 2011

Thanks to our wonderful team of cataloguers across Australia and New Zealand, the SCIS collection of quality catalogue records continued to grow throughout 2011. As of March 2012, there were more than 1.5 million (1,544,205) bibliographic records in the SCIS Catalogue, including 4,663 for e-books.

These records were catalogued using terms from the SCIS Subject Headings list, which at this time contained 534,544 authority records.

SCIS records also contain relevant subject terms from the Schools Online Thesaurus (ScOT), and currently there are 239,808 SCIS


records that have ScOT terms as well as SCIS Subject Headings. The ScOT thesaurus is also being used by the Australian Curriculum and the National Digital Learning Resource Network to provide a description of the new curriculum and resources available for it. It can be found online at <http://scot.esa.edu.au>

Collection enrichment services purchased from third-party providers means SCIS can now provide cover images for around 500,000 catalogue records.

SCIS usage 2011

Dedicated library staff among the SCIS subscriber base were busy in 2011, downloading nearly 8 million (7,864,867) high quality, consistent, education-specific SCIS catalogue records for use in their school library catalogue systems. This represents a 3% reduction of records over total SCIS downloads in 2010.

This reduction is probably due to the fact that there has been a gradual, but significant, increase in the number of schools moving to newer library systems that support Z39.50 searching and retrieving of records. Records downloaded using the Z39.50 protocol are not included in the total download statistics.

The reduction may also be indicative of reduced purchasing budgets for school resources, and a move by schools to the acquisition of digital resources. There is as yet no corresponding system for managing metadata records for such resources. 



Pam Kadow
Acting Manager, SCIS
Education Services
Australia

Connections readers' survey

Let us know what you think

We invite all readers to take the time to participate in our survey. We want to know what you think of *Connections*, whether you have any ideas for possible improvements and whether you think that it would be appropriate for the newsletter to be available solely in electronic format.

We have created a simple SurveyMonkey questionnaire with nine questions, which we estimate will take less than five minutes to complete. We would be greatly appreciative if you took the time to let us know what you think.

We are always seeking ways to improve *Connections*, and we greatly value your feedback. The survey can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/s/HMNS3GX.

Educational Lending Right

Educational Lending Right (ELR) is an Australian cultural program administered by the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport.

SCIS manages the ELR school library survey on behalf of the Department. The ELR school library survey collects data in order to estimate the number of copies of specific titles held in Australian school libraries. These book counts are the basis for payments to Australian book creators and publishers. The payments are made on the basis that income is lost from the availability of creators' and publishers' books in educational lending libraries and to support the enrichment of Australian culture by encouraging the growth and development of Australian writing and publishing.



Danielle Clode wrote:
I was amazed to discover that so many school libraries had purchased copies of "Prehistoric Giants". Not only did my ELR payment provide much needed income, but also recognition that people value my books and find them useful. It has inspired me to continue with the next book in the series.

Behind the scenes

Each year the Educational Lending Right (ELR) school library survey is conducted, with 600 schools selected to take part. We contact the schools from September to December in order to request that they participate. However, there is also a considerable amount of work that takes place before these dates. We must first seek permission from education departments to approach schools, collect enrolment figures and ensure library system vendor involvement.

Permission to approach

All Australian education departments are asked to grant permission for us to approach the schools in their jurisdiction that have been selected to participate in the survey. Letters are dispatched in term three to the appropriate departmental employees and Catholic education officers. The letter explains why SCIS wishes to contact schools, and requests their participation in the ELR school library survey. We record the responses and note any conditions that are made for contacting schools in particular jurisdictions.

Enrolment figures

Schools with fewer than 100 students are not included in the selection process. To ensure that only schools of a suitable size with more than 100 students are approached, we need to collect the current enrolment data for all Australian schools. In order to do this, we contact all the state and territory education departments and request all current enrolment statistics. This data is usually provided from the February school census.

Library system vendors

The ELR school library survey can only be undertaken in schools using specific library management systems. The library systems

compatible with the ELR survey software are Amlib, Athena, Bibliotech, Bookmark, Circ/Cat, Destiny, Libcode, Softlink Alice, Oliver and Oasis and SirsiDynix. We work with the vendors to ensure that the ELR survey software continues to be compatible with their library systems.

Selecting participants

To be statistically valid, the ELR school library survey must gather data from all types of schools and from all sectors in Australia. There are three types of school: primary, secondary and combined. All eight Australian states and territories are included. 600 schools in total from all types and sectors are selected and invited to participate in the ELR school library survey.

Front of house

In September contact is made with these 600 schools by phone, email and mail to notify them of their selection and encourage participation. The important messages conveyed in communication with schools are that it is quick and easy to participate and that only book counts are extracted from data collected.

Privacy protected

The privacy of all schools will be rigorously maintained. No individual library is identified in the survey results. All school data collected for the purposes of the survey is destroyed once the survey process has been completed.

Data collected

The data collected from all participating schools is used to help determine payments to be made to authors and publishers under the ELR scheme. These payments encourage the creation and publication of more Australian books for Australian children.



Lee Fox wrote:
I feel great pride when I see my books in the school library, where students can borrow them whenever they like. My ELR payment lets me know two things: that kids love reading my books and that my work is highly valued by educators. Thanks so much to all those who support ELR.

More information

More information about the ELR school library survey is available from www.esa.edu.au/scis/elr.html

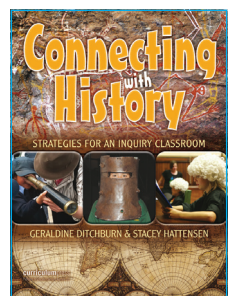


Anthea Amos
*SCIS Projects & Information Services Coordinator
Education Services Australia*

Resources for classroom teachers

This page features highly recommended professional resources to support teaching practice. Please visit www.curriculumpress.edu.au for a full list of titles and to place your order.

Connecting with History Strategies for an inquiry classroom



96pp / Epub ebook
Authors: Geraldine Ditchburn & Stacey Hattensen
Publisher: Education Services Australia
RRP: \$39.95 print, \$32.00 ebook

SCIS no: 1524112 print,
SCIS no: 1524119 ebook
ISBN: 9781742005423 print,
ISBN: 9781742005447 ebook
Years: 3–6

Designed for classroom teachers who are not history specialists, this new book provides practical, adaptable scaffolds and ideas to make history inquiry stimulating and accessible.

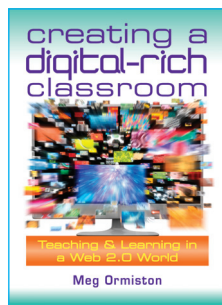
Drawing from the Australian Curriculum, *Connecting with History* provides:

- strategies that foster the development of key historical skills, knowledge and understanding;
- advice on using strategies within an inquiry framework;
- examples of the strategies at work in the classroom;
- brief, easy-to-use formats;
- tools to support students in thinking about what they learn;
- suggestions for adapting the ideas further.

Newsflash: Geraldine Ditchburn, the book's co-author, will present a workshop in Melbourne on 29 May for primary teachers who feel in need of some guidance about implementing the new Australian Curriculum: History.

For more information or to book your place, visit www.surveymonkey.com/s/GD29May12. See the Curriculum Press website under 'Professional Learning' for more professional learning opportunities throughout the year.

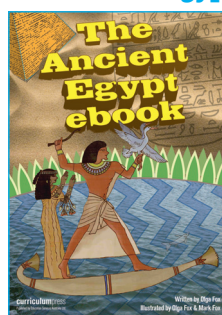
Creating a Digital-Rich Classroom Teaching and learning in a web 2.0 world



139pp
Author: Meg Ormiston
Publisher: Hawker Brownlow Education
RRP: \$27.95
SCIS no: 1499208
ISBN: 9781742398020
Years: F–10

Today's students are very tech-savvy. This book helps teachers to design and deliver lessons in which technology plays an integral role. It provides practical strategies for using web tools to create engaging lessons that transform and enrich content. There is a particular focus on web 2.0 applications that promote collaboration, such as social networking sites, live video streaming, blogging and wikis. These web 2.0 tools promote endless new ways of learning, such as online linking between students in the classroom, or with students overseas.

The Ancient Egypt Ebook



Epub ebook
Authors: Mark Fox & Olga Fox
Publisher: Education Services Australia
RRP: \$31.99
SCIS no: 1539697
ISBN: 9781742005386
Years: 7

The Ancient Egypt Ebook takes students back in time to meet famous ancient Egyptians such as Tutankhamun and Cleopatra, understand the Ancient Egyptian quest for immortality, investigate how the River Nile influenced society and civilisation, discover how to read hieroglyphs, and marvel at the monumental structures that still stand in Egypt today.

A lively text with illustrations, maps and engaging activities, this book will make history come to life for Year 7 students exploring the ancient world.

Double Trouble (DVD)



13 episodes, 2x
DVDs + Learning and Teaching DVD-ROM
Publisher: Australian Children's Television Foundation
RRP: \$99.95
SCIS no: 1543141
ISBN: KIT000180
Years: 5–9

The *Double Trouble* TV series is about two 16 year olds: Yuma, who lives with her wealthy father and step family in Sydney; and Kyanna, who lives in a community in the central Australian desert with her mother and extended family. Separated at birth, these twin girls are each completely unaware that the other exists until a twist of fate sees them bump into each other in Alice Springs. When the two of them discover their connection, they agree to swap lives for a day. Little do they know the trouble they will find themselves in!

The *Double Trouble* Learning and Teaching Resource DVD-ROM offers interactive and engaging content in order to explore Indigenous perspectives through a multidisciplinary approach. Students can view selected video clips and apply their understanding by completing the relevant interactive activity sheets. The teaching activities reference an inquiry approach where students explore and respond to different tasks and project ideas.

The resource contains:

- twenty-nine video clips selected for relevance to themes and activities in teaching resources;
- sixty-three subject-based learning resources and interactive activities presented as case study investigations;
- production information, including interviews with key production personnel and stills of locations and characters.



Susan Mullins
Sales and Marketing
Coordinator
Education Services
Australia



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**Supports the Australian Curriculum
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