Four functions in one label: RFID system top of its class

At Geelong Grammar School, operating the library has suddenly become a whole lot easier.
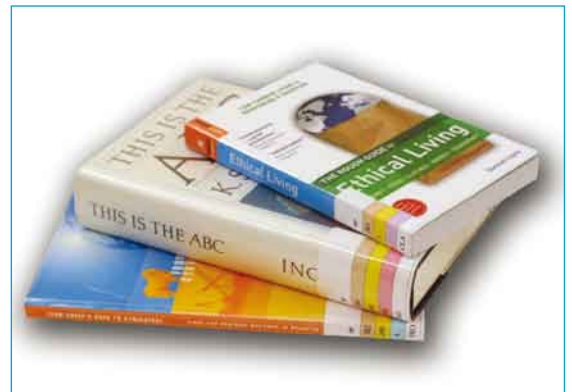
The Radio Frequency Identification system (RFID) recently installed at the school's Fisher Library has been a wonderful success.

Designed, built and installed by a local Geelong company, and featuring a unique, patented single tag system, it has dramatically reduced the time, resources and costs involved not only in making books shelf-ready, but in managing the entire checking-in, checking-out and stocktaking processes, as well as the option from the kiosk to renew items.

A single tag brings together four separate administrative functions into one easy-to-use application, a world-first technology. This labelling system goes beyond anything currently available. It provides a novel and innovative means of addressing RFID technology through the use of four identifying methods combined into a single tagging product designed to camouflage the RFID tag embedded in the unique colour-coded spine label. Other products on the market do not try and disguise the RFID tag, making it easy to remove.

The single-tag system consists of a single label placed on the back cover of a book listing the Dewey Decimal code, barcode, library identification and asset number. We can do more reporting because of the extra information that is stored on the tags. Accelerated identification and scanning of products is possible – almost any library item can be tagged – and no line-of-sight is needed for the tag to be recorded. The system allows checking-in and out of several items simultaneously.

The coloured spine labels display the call number, and contain barcode, library identification and asset number

But it's the system's stocktaking capabilities that have really excited library staff. With its ease-of-reading tags communicating information to the central database, the system not only provides instant shelf stock details, but also highlights books that are in the wrong place. It now takes one person less than half a day to do a full stocktake of 50,000 assets! Previously, that process would probably have

in this issue

Four functions in one label: RFID system top of its class (cont.)

required about a month, and would have involved multiple staff members.

The system, customised for Geelong Grammar's needs, comprises a counter station, self check-in/check-out kiosk, hand-held barcode reader and anti-theft gates.

The counter station delivers a staff loan device providing easy and efficient library loan counter operations. The RFID pad, which is both a reader and writer, connects to the library's existing computer system. The pad transmits data to the library management system (LMS) using SIP2 protocol. It can be used both as a loan device and as a book-ready device. Multiple reads are possible.

The self check-out kiosk – with its touch screen, RFID pad, built-in CPU and thermal printer – enables a speedy and efficient checking-out system, freeing library staff from desk duty processes. The system software interfaces with the kiosk touch screen, thermal printer, barcode reader and RFID pad. All data is visible onscreen

during a transaction, including return dates. Library terms, conditions and rules are automatically applied, and patron-specific messages (eg 'hold books') are displayed on recognition.

Installation of the hardware was seamless and very quick, and the software was streamlined to assist workflow to apply tags during implementation. The library was able to carry out the integration while the library was open, and staff managed to tag all 50,000 books in five weeks. It had been expected to take two months at least.

Total implementation of the RFID system was efficient and thorough, and it has proved to be a highly cost-effective investment in the school's library infrastructure by streamlining the huge amount of data associated with the library's operation, and minimising the time spent managing it.

Staff and students alike found the system user-friendly. We had initial training

assistance from the supply company and have easily been able to train other staff. All systems have been very straightforward – it's been amazing. We no longer have to be concerned about barcodes, labels, due date slips, security slips, spine labels or collection code stickers. The all-in-one tag means three to four times less work for staff.

The library staff has had a major input into the project, validating the concept, advising the supply company regarding the use of RFID in libraries internationally, and adding to their knowledge regarding processes, areas for improvement and world's best library practice.

The reduction in staff time and associated increases in efficiency and productivity mean that this system will pay for itself many times over in a short period of time.

Fran Walsh
Head of Library Services
Geelong Grammar
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An easy-to-use self check-out kiosk

Geelong Grammar's Fisher Library staff: Fran Walsh, Lee Allen, Vivienne Harvie, Tomoko Katakura

Library trainees are a great asset

The Resource Centre at Brauer College began a very successful traineeship scheme in 2006 in response to a shortage of staff.

Three years on, our trainees continue to provide a much needed and valued extra pair of hands, together with a youthful and fresh approach to the job. Staff and students have responded well: a trainee is a welcome role model in the library and living proof that librarians are not necessarily middle-aged!

Each trainee has been carefully chosen. A job description was created which was detailed and rigorous. The position was locally advertised and a shortlist created with interviews conducted on the basis of quality written applications. Interview questions were devised to ascertain who was best suited to the job. Importantly, we inquired into the likelihood of the candidate pursuing a career in the library and information sector. Other questions were designed to assess candidates' reading habits and IT capabilities. We felt it was vital that the traineeship be treated formally as a real job and not 'just' a position to be filled during a 'gap' year.

Box Hill TAFE was selected as the Registered Training Organisation because it enables the Certificate III in Library/Information Studies to be completed off campus – an important consideration for country schools. Box Hill TAFE provides a training plan and an outline of each of the different skill sets the trainee must prove competency in. Intended to be learned on the job and not just be the product of study, these skills are easily taught over the course of the year as part of a normal working week. They include 'providing quality customer service', 'searching databases', 'occupational health and safety', 'developing and using information literacy skills' and 'using multimedia'.

The trainee must also be registered through an accredited Group Training Organisation – in Warrnambool, WestVic Work Force – which provides the registration, overall supervision and paperwork necessary to ensure that proper procedures are followed to receive the government rebate. Trainees at Brauer College are paid according to the Department of Education School Service Officer (SSO) 1 pay scale and have exactly the same working hours and holiday and sick leave entitlements.

The formal assessment of these competencies must be carried out by a Level 4 Work Training Assessor. I was keen for our assessment to be carried out by a practising librarian, as I felt that an assessor trained in other work methods might not appreciate our craft or the unique challenges presented by a large, busy school library.

Consequently, Michael Schack, currently Cataloguing/Systems Librarian at Warrnambool's TAFE Library, was approached. Michael has been a willing and effective collaborator in our training and assessment process, developing a number of straightforward, brief written and practical tasks designed to show evidence of the candidate's developing range of skills. Michael spends a couple of hours with us every few weeks to assess our trainees. He asks questions, observes them at work (eg working at the desk, consulting with staff), views written responses from the trainee and obtains a progress report from the library manager.

Our trainees' contribution goes beyond that which is formally assessable. They take away good, solid training and experience, plus a raft of generic skills that can be applied to any job.

Cancer Council's Big Morning Tea in the library – organised by our trainee, Meg MacFarlane

All three trainees have contributed widely to our co-curricular program and have brought their own range of skills and interests to the job. They have coached the dancers for our school musical, participated in school camps, been involved in a canoe trip, and taken part in our Book Week activities – including our famous rap dance on stage! They have shown creativity and resourcefulness beyond expectations: we have been privileged to have a wonderful series of

displays and artwork far beyond what any of us 'oldies' could achieve. Our trainees have given valuable advice and feedback on what the kids 'really' want, but have always been the most reliable of workers when it comes to modelling sensitivity across a range of issues and presenting a united front on behaviour and discipline.

Brauer Library Staff posing as Einstein, a publicity stunt for our version of the *Einstein Factor*, which formed part of Book Week celebrations and was organised with assistance of Meg MacFarlane

Our thanks go to Anna Lewis, Alicia Bates and Meg MacFarlane. Together they have brought a fresh perspective to the job and helped create the unique atmosphere that is Brauer College's Learning and Teaching Resource Centre.

Sharyn Anderson
Manager, Brauer College Learning and Teaching Resource Centre
Warrnambool, Victoria

Seven skills students desperately need

Today's students could fail at life because their schools are too busy teaching to the test.

Teaching to the test is a mistake, Harvard's Tony Wagner reminded the audience of his November 18 2008 keynote address to the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA), because it interferes with transmitting the seven 'survival skills' every student should acquire before graduating. Wagner's remarks came during a forum organised in Washington DC as one way to advance the 10-point 'Action Plan' SETDA had issued the day before.

As the Obama administration has taken over in the United States capital, SETDA and similar groups are offering advice on how federal policy makers and state and local education leaders can transform education and help students obtain 21st-century skills with the help of technology. 'With this summit and with the release of our Action Plan, we hope to figure out how to make the steps of crucial change more scalable,' said SETDA Executive Director Mary Ann Wolf.

Wagner, Co-Director of the Change Leadership Group at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, said economic change will come as soon as classroom and national practices involving instruction change as well. 'A lot of people think the skills that students need to learn for the workforce and the skills they need to learn to be a good citizen are two separate sets. But they're not. What makes a student successful in the global workforce will make a person successful at life,' he said.

Wagner said he hears two things repeated constantly by today's employers: 'We need people who can ask good questions, and we need people who can engage others in thoughtful conversations. When I asked them whether or not they needed students to know the latest version of software, they said no,' he added. 'They told me that technology moves so fast that it's hard to keep up with. [From] the time students graduate to when they get the job, it's usually changed anyway ... [Employers] ... don't mind training employees in technology – but you can't teach someone how to think.'

Wagner, who consults for public and independent schools, districts and foundations across the United States and elsewhere, said his visits to some school districts have highlighted why state standards need to change – and why teaching to the test is not the way to achieve success. 'I went to visit many science labs in these districts,' said Wagner. 'Some of them were great, achieved great test scores, and most of their students went on to postsecondary education. But some weren't so great, and here's why: I was watching a group of high school students in a science lab. One group had a problem, and the Bunsen burner was smoking. But they weren't doing anything about it – just waiting for the teacher to come by and fix it. But the teacher wasn't looking, so I went over, and I asked: "What's going on?" One of the kids said, "Don't know, not working." So I looked at them and I said, "Well, what's your hypothesis?" They all stared blankly. Finally one said, "Oh yeah, a hypothesis, that was one of our vocabulary words the other day, but I don't know what it means."' Wagner said the problem is that you can have all the equipment and technology you want, but 'if you don't teach kids how to think beyond multiple choice, you've got a problem.'

He told another story illustrating this same problem: 'I went to a school once that had a lot of AP courses. I went into one AP course on government. Here was this teacher asking kids questions, and of course, there's the one kid who keeps raising his hand, but the rest of the class was dead. The teacher asks the questions, the one kid raises his hand to answer, the teacher calls on him, the teacher moves on to the next question. This gets repeated over and over again. Finally the teacher asks a question the one kid doesn't know: "What's the Iron Triangle?" No one raises [a] hand. The poor teacher, flustered that he has to cover so much in so little time, says hurriedly, "OK, here's how you answer this one" and writes the answer on the board.'

Wagner continued: 'The problem is that teachers are teaching to tests – telling kids answers that they don't think [of] for themselves – and that's why students may pass high school but can't cut it in college or in the workforce.' Wagner suggested that states and schools move from content standards to performance standards, and he urged education stakeholders to think of ways to start assessing 21st-century skills.

'I realise education is a very risk-averse sector,' said Wagner, 'but assessments either drive instruction for the better or for the worse, and right now in the US, it's for the worse. If our assessments measured performance and 21st-century skills like the European PISA assessment, that would be another story.' Wagner said teaching to the test not only limits students' ability to think for themselves, but also discourages students from studying subjects they love. 'Once I was talking to this student from MIT,' he said. 'Very successful and had gone to an AP magnet school. "I used to love science and STEM subjects," he told me, "but all the testing turned me off. Now I'm going to become a teacher to try and change that way of teaching."'

According to Wagner, students of this generation are not unmotivated; they're just differently motivated. 'They're multi-taskers, they are drawn to graphics, they like instant gratification, they use Web 2.0 tools to create, and they love collaboration,' he said. 'If we can figure out how to grab their interest in learning, they'll become great thinkers and be eager to learn the basics.' Wagner presented a list of seven 'survival skills' that students need to succeed in today's information-age world, taken from his book *The Global Achievement Gap: Why even our best schools don't teach the new survival skills our children need – and what we can do about It*. It's a school's job to make sure students have these skills before graduating, he said.

1 Problem-solving and critical thinking
2 Collaborating across networks and leading by influence
3 Agility and adaptability
4 Initiative and entrepreneurship
5 Effective written and oral communication
6 Accessing and analysing information
7 Curiosity and imagination

'We are making adequate yearly progress at the expense of failing our kids at life. Something has to change,' he concluded.

Meris Stansbury,
Assistant Editor
eSchool News

Independent learning and literacy

The following two abstracts were written by the *Curriculum Leadership Journal* (CLJ) team and published in Volume 6 Issue 26, August 2008. The articles relate to issues of importance and interest to school libraries.

An independent learning project that can change the culture of learning in your school

Access June 2008
Patricia Carmichael

A project aiming to improve students' independent learning and research skills has been introduced for all junior school students at Concordia Lutheran College. The project is based on a new facility known as the Independent Learning Centre (ILC), an extension of the library that allows direct and uninterrupted access to resources and technology. It was first undertaken in first semester 2007 by 109 Year 9 and 10 students. Each student undertook an inquiry-based project known as a 'negotiated independent learning unit' (NILU) that they had individually designed with help from the teacher. The NILU projects were semester-long and required students to determine their own goals and a timeframe for these to be achieved. In the preliminary stage, students completed the 'VARK: a guide to learning styles' online questionnaire and were encouraged to use the results in their project design. Students delivered a PowerPoint® presentation of their progress at mid-semester and another presentation on completion. There was also a self-evaluation process that included a log book, questionnaires and teacher discussions. The project framework was implemented by the teacher librarian and a team of teachers and curriculum specialists. Project topics varied widely, and included a soil analysis after work experience at a soil-testing company and a documentary about

HIV in Papua New Guinea. On completion, 77 of the 109 participating students returned an evaluation questionnaire. Eighty-three per cent of respondents said that their research skills had improved. The majority cited a greater knowledge of library resources, better organisational and time management skills, and an increased ability to compose bibliographies. Seventy-five per cent of students found the learning styles information useful in designing their projects. Students particularly valued access to computers, the freedom to manage their own learning, space to research, and the freedom to make mistakes. Many students, however, found the units demanding and time-consuming and only 54 per cent said they would like to undertake another unit. The teachers involved felt it empowered students, fostered student-teacher relationships, and placed teachers in the role of 'ideas person'. Teachers who taught in the ILC subsequently became more open to co-operative planning and teaching with the teacher librarian.

Literacy debate: online, r u really reading?

New York Times 27 July 2008
Motoko Rich

There is widespread debate about the impact of ICT on the reading skills and dispositions of young people. Some commentators emphasise that online reading offers a rapid way to find a variety of sources and viewpoints on a topic and to discuss issues with other people. The non-linear nature of web text is also said to be better preparation than traditional texts for a world that 'doesn't go in a line' or fall into neat compartments. Other commentators dispute suggestions that electronic media will undermine reading, noting that such claims have been made 'at least since

the invention of television' and pointing out that the web actually requires engagement with text. Further support for online reading comes from its value to some children with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. However, many commentators worry that too much emphasis on web-based reading means lowering literacy levels, 'wrecking attention spans and destroying a precious common culture that exists only through the reading of books'. Cognitive neuroscientist Ken Pugh argues that reading a book involves reflection, imagination and logical thinking at levels far in advance of those needed to process the fragmented bits of text typical within the online environment. Other research has found that web readers are persistently poor at judging the trustworthiness of websites. Dana Gioia stresses the potential for personal development offered by frequent reading. Gioia is the chairman of the USA's National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which in 2004 published the keynote *Reading at Risk* report (see also Executive Summary). While many young people read fan-fiction websites or online comics based on Japanese anime cartoons, this material has many errors in spelling and grammar, and web fiction is commonly of poor quality. A recent study of disadvantaged Hispanic and black youth in Detroit found that participating students read more on the web than in any other medium, though they also read books and did not disparage the reading of novels or other printed literature. The article cites several reports on statistical trends in young people's reading of printed and online material. ❑

To receive the *Curriculum Leadership Journal,* register at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/leader/email_alert_registration,102.html

Development of a subject specialist library: GTAV Orbis Library

There are many active subject specialist associations across Australia. They provide support to teachers and can also offer resources to support teaching through a library.

The Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria (GTAV) has developed an extensive collection in its library to support teachers.

Like every other educational institution in Australia, GTAV works a balancing act to keep its finances on track so that it can support the teaching of geography in Victorian schools. It is of significant importance and a great feat that the GTAV has created its own subject-devoted library of both current and archival material. The GTAV Orbis Library is unique – we believe that no other subject association in Victoria has such an asset. The Orbis Library takes its name from the logo of the GTAV. The logo was chosen in quite an extraordinary way by the editors of the *GTAV journal* in the mid 1960s. At the time, the editors coped with the arduous task of editing by sharing a bottle of red. It is believed that the Orbis logo in fact started life as a claret stain on the galley proofs due back at the printers the next morning. Its potential became startlingly apparent and the doodling became an example of a medieval woodcut map of the fifteenth century known as a T-O map, or wheel map.

GTAV logo

In late 1991, it was decided that something should be done about the mass of 2,500 items gathered over time and at different locations by the GTAV. In its wisdom, GTAV employed a trained librarian to catalogue the items, which have now expanded more than threefold. Items are catalogued according to SCIS (Schools Catalogue Information Service) so that they are aligned with school collections. The collection now has over 7,500 items.

Fast forward to 2009 and the library is a vibrant place where members, trainee teachers and students utilise the collection of textbooks, journals, kits, computer software, DVDs, slide sets, maps, charts and posters. The library also offers support to the AusAID-funded Global Education Project – an ancillary project of the GTAV which aims to support teachers in developing a global perspective across all subject areas. The Global Education Project has its own small library collection which is utilised in the development of projects and professional development for practising and pre-service teachers. The librarian helps source relevant material.

Material is acquired by donations from individuals and organisations, requests from publishers, reciprocal publications from organisations, selected purchases and subscriptions to selected journals. Material can be utilised on site or borrowed. Borrowing is restricted to members – one of the benefits of membership – however non-members may utilise the material on site. The library is open 9am – 5pm, including on school holidays.

To maintain the collection and disseminate information, a trained librarian is employed six hours per week. That's usually just enough time to address the inquiries from GTAV staff, Victorian teachers and overseas.

This year the GTAV celebrates its fiftieth year of service to geography teachers in Victoria. The library has been a treasure trove of information for those who have been doing extensive research on the organisation's past. This research will be published to coincide with the Annual Conference of the GTAV in August.

Geography as a subject is definitely alive and well. The Victorian bushfires in February served to remind us how much we all need to understand the basic geography of this country. There are active geography subject associations in a number of states across Australia, including New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. The Australian Geography Teachers' Association is the umbrella group which focuses on geography at a national level. It is with great anticipation that we look forward to the GTAV Orbis Library supporting the next 50 years of geography education in Victoria.

Libby Hillman
GTAV Librarian
GTAV website: http://www.gtav.asn.au/

The library in action with material available to all to use on site

Website reviews

Alexander McCall Smith

http://www.alexandermccallsmith.co.uk/Pages/Home.aspx
Official homepage of prolific Scottish author, Alexander McCall Smith. Although McCall Smith has written many children's books, the site focuses on his adult books, including the *Number 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* series, the *44 Scotland Street* series and the *Sunday Philosophy Club* series.
SCIS No: 1402215

Designer Aboriginals

http://www.bronwynbancroft.com/index.html
Showcasing the stunning artwork and book illustrations of noted Aboriginal artist Bronwyn Bancroft, this website is suitable for use in primary and secondary schools. Subsections include a biography, exhibition details, selected paintings and comprehensive information regarding her book illustrations.
SCIS No: 1168026

Education – Australian Human Rights Commission

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/education/index.html
Education is a major role of the Australian Human Rights Commission and this is highlighted by the wide-ranging material available on this website. Students are catered for with resources explaining what human rights are, their origins, how these rights are protected by law and the relevance of human rights to their own lives.
SCIS No: 1402202

Elders Weather

http://www.eldersweather.com.au/
Geared to national and local weather forecasts, this website allows users to type in a postcode or town name to access current data, short-term and long-range forecasts, radar and satellite images, weather charts and climatic indicators. World weather information is also available.
SCIS No: 1402223

European Discovery and Colonisation of Australia

http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/australianhistory/
A wealth of material regarding the impact and significance of this period of Australian history is available from this Australian Government site. Students can browse authoritative texts, links, video footage, artworks and reflections on Australia by a selection of writers.
SCIS No: 1251391

Governor-General of New Zealand

http://www.gov-gen.govt.nz/
The official website of the Governor-General of New Zealand, the Honourable Anand Satyanand. Features include the role of the Governor-General, the Constitution of New Zealand, press releases, a picture tour of Government House and a variety of associated links.
SCIS No: 1402226

HeyJude

http://heyjude.wordpress.com/
Judy O'Connell, Head of Library and Information Services at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, has created an absorbing and significant blog focusing on emerging Web 2.0 technologies and their consequences for schools, school libraries and teacher librarians. Links are available to O'Connell's presentations, Web 2.0 toolkits, relevant publications and student resources.
SCIS No: 1402238

Interactives. The Rock Cycle

http://www.learner.org/interactives/rockcycle/
Students will enjoy exploring this interactive geology website which looks at the formation and characteristics of the three main types of rocks: sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous. Suitable for both senior primary and junior secondary students.
SCIS No: 1402248

Microscope Imaging Station

http://www.exploratorium.edu/imaging_station/index.php
Students have the opportunity to study the microscopic world by undertaking a virtual tour of the Microscope Imaging Station in San Francisco. Subjects include living things, human health and disease. Students are provided with high resolution images from research grade microscopes, background information and videos. A selection of teacher resources can be easily accessed.
SCIS No: 1329132

New and Recommended – Auckland City Libraries

http://www.aucklandcitylibraries.com/new-and-recommended.aspx
Auckland City Libraries has created an intriguing database of resources, including books, DVDs and music that have been recommended by their librarians or website members. Teacher librarians will enjoy browsing the librarian list.
SCIS No: 1402253

Philips – A Simple Switch

http://66.245.160.26/philips/asimpleswitch/
This award-winning website focuses on the impact that switching from regular incandescent bulbs to energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps has on climate change. The site encourages individuals to change and shows the benefit to the environment of that single change. The interactive software also shows the influence of multiple changes.
SCIS No: 1402267

Renewable energy sources

http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/jmresources/energy/renewable.html
Teacher librarian Jackie Miers has compiled an impressive collection of renewable energy links. The links are grouped into general renewable energy sites and specific sites relating to wind, solar and geothermal power, hydropower, biomass and ocean energy.
SCIS No: 1402271

Storylines

http://www.storylines.org.nz/
Storylines Children's Literature Charitable Trust of New Zealand promotes public awareness of reading and literature and ensures that NZ children can access high-quality literature. Its website features profiles of NZ authors and illustrators, upcoming festivals, awards, news and links.
SCIS No: 1402287

YABBA – Young Australian Best Book Award

http://home.vicnet.net.au/~yabba/
By giving children the opportunity to vote for their favourite books, the organisers of this annual award aim to promote Australian children's fiction and develop discerning readers. Details regarding membership, nominations, the shortlist, voting, previous winners and additional resources can be accessed.
SCIS No: 1402296

Reviewed by Nigel Paull
Teacher librarian
South Grafton Primary School
Email: npaull@telstra.com

SCIS is more .....

Changes and challenges

2009 has been a year of change and challenge for SCIS and our user community. In early 2009, Anne Camfield retired as manager of SCIS. Anne joined SCIS in 2002 in a role focusing on product development and technical support and was appointed manager shortly thereafter. Anne oversaw the first redevelopment of the SCIS website; was involved in both the publication of the fifth edition of *SCIS Subject Headings* and the gestation of the *Schools Online Thesaurus* (ScOT); and ushered in many enhancements and upgrades to *SCISWeb* and other products. Leonie Bourke was appointed manager following Anne's retirement. Leonie joined SCIS in 2000, becoming responsible for cataloguing, Voyager system support and special projects. With a strong background in cataloguing and bibliographic standards, and in collaborating with the education department agencies that support the SCIS service, Leonie is looking forward to continuing Anne's work in improving and enhancing SCIS. Taking advantage of Web 2.0 tools, our redeveloped website now offers opportunities for us to be more proactive/flexible in offering information about our services and for you to contribute and share your comments.

Enhancing the resource discovery experience

If you have searched SCIS OPAC, you will have noticed the eye-catching book cover images. The majority of these images are provided to SCIS by Bowker. SCIS has negotiated an agreement with Bowker which allows us not only to make the SCIS OPAC look attractive, but to make the images available to you for display in your school's online catalogue. However if you wish to use book cover images for another purpose, such as a blog or booklist, you will need to seek permission from the copyright owners.

SCIS catalogue record for 'Pushing and pulling' learning object

To make it even easier for you to get the book cover images, *SCISWeb* ordering now has an option to download any matching cover images once you have placed an order for SCIS records. Many library system vendors have streamlined the process of obtaining cover images, so check with your local system support team if in doubt about how to use the images in your system.

Records for learning objects published by The Le@rning Federation (TLF) now also link to colourful images which give a glimpse into the content of each learning activity, as in the example of the 'Pushing and pulling' assessment learning object on the bottom of this page.

You may also notice that records for TLF learning objects now include a link to Scootle. Anyone can use the search and browse tools of Scootle. To find out who can access the other features of Scootle, go to http://www.scootle.edu.au/ec/p/accessing_scoole

Scootle homepage

ScOT is more.....

Speaking of Scootle ... *Schools Online Thesaurus* (ScOT) terms are the basis for the 'Browse by topic' function in Scootle. ScOT hierarchies have been carefully developed around curriculum areas to provide an intuitive browsing structure.

ScOT terms have been added to SCIS catalogue records since July 2006. Starting in 2009, ScOT terms are added to all records on the SCIS database, so there is now a large pool of records with ScOT terms. ScOT uses a natural language approach to discovery of resources rather than the 'card catalogue' type of pre-coordinated subject heading strings used by most traditional library systems. All current library systems work well with the traditional subject headings string approach; newer systems tend to be able to work with either or both approaches. Library system vendors should be able to provide advice on whether changing your SCISWeb preference to receive ScOT terms is a viable option for your system.

SCIS subscriptions 2010

The cost of a subscription to *SCISWeb, SCIS Subject Headings Online* and *SCIS Authority Files* will not increase in 2010. In October 2009, invoices will be dispatched to schools not covered by a bulk subscription. Look on our website for payment information: http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/

New and revised subject headings

A summary list of new and revised SCIS subject headings is provided in each issue of *Connections*. For the detailed lists of new and revised subject headings, see the SCIS website at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis

In the summary lists, headings are marked with:

* Existing allowed headings which have been updated with changes to references or notes
N New headings
A Headings which were previously USE references but are now headings in their own right
U Previously allowed headings which have become USE references
D Deleted headings

N Armed forces - History
* Art
* Clothing and dress
* Concertos (Piano)
* Military history
* Piano music
* Pianos
N Public art
N Regimental histories
* Street art
N War - History

How school libraries support literacy achievement

1 Provide access to global resources – through a network of public and academic libraries, websites, thematic resources, local community resources and human resources.

2 Provide connections between curriculum outcomes and learning resources.

3 Provide support for reading programs through school-wide literacy promotion.

4 Provide support for cross-curricular programs through science fairs, heritage fairs, research projects, presentations, website development and telecommunication projects.

5 Provide help to students in selecting materials to match level and interest.

6 Provide teaching for children in how to use resources for their learning.

7 Provide teaching for students of dozens of information literacy learning outcomes.

8 Provide collaborative teaching and learning to integrate new ICT and other resources.

9 Provide school councils with assurances than someone is purchasing good quality resources and spending budgets wisely.

It's important to remember that a school library is just a place to store materials. However, a school library with a qualified teacher-librarian is a powerful educational force for curriculum implementation, for the efficient and effective use of learning resources, and for students' achievement of a wide range of learning outcomes.

Ray Doiron, Ph.D.
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Interactive whiteboards are not an answer in themselves

Interactive whiteboards (IWB) are rapidly making their way onto the 'must have' list for many schools.

In the same way that computers became imperative, IWBs are gradually being seen as a *fait accompli* for the classroom. There is a certain amount of sense to this. The advantages that IWBs offer tie in very closely with the overall integration we see happening with technology in general.

To explain to the uninitiated, an IWB is essentially a giant mouse pad with a screen, a device somewhat akin to the tablet PC (without the PC) but with 'touch screen' functionality. So essentially all we are doing with an IWB is driving the software that lives on your computer in the same way you do with a mouse.

As the world goes digital, one bastion at a time, it seems like a natural progression for the classroom to follow suit. Indeed, there is pressure at a curriculum level to increase the ICT ability of students, and not just in what we used to call computer studies, but across all subject areas. No mean feat! For this to happen, teachers will need to invest many hours of their already pressured time to obtain the curriculum in a digital format. To quote a line from the movie *The Mission*, 'We live in a world, and the world is thus.' It's just what teachers in this day and age have to do … right? Well, that may be the case, but will

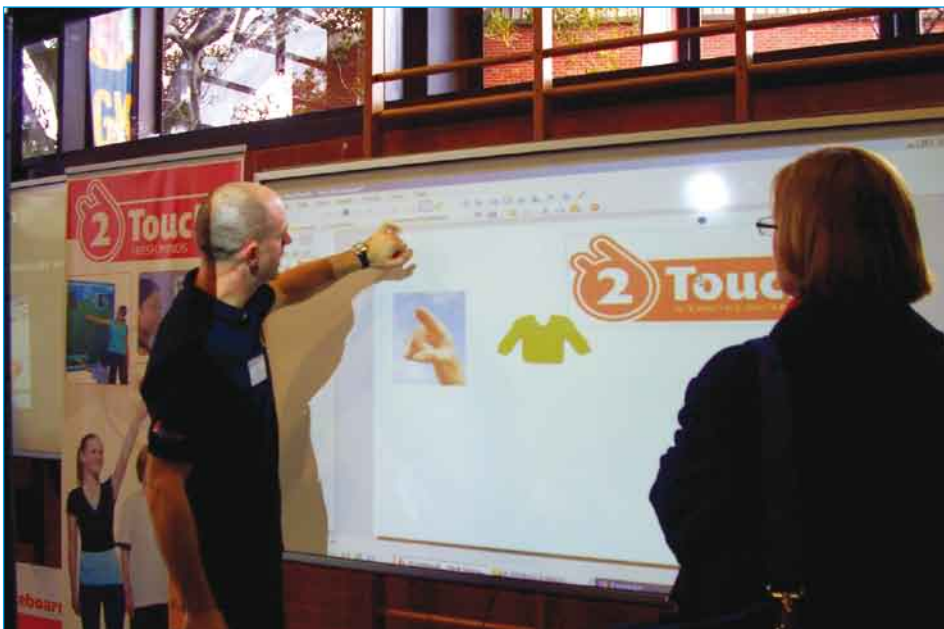that change anything from a learning point of view? Probably not!

How then do we employ this technology to better enhance learning and thus student outcomes? The answer lies at the pedagogical level. Imagine, if you will, a talented, enthusiastic teacher (much like yourself) standing at the front of the classroom guiding a room full of young minds through the complexities and nuances of a subject area. At our teacher's disposal is a wealth of activities and images a mere click or two away. As a science teacher, it has often been necessary to disappear into the prep room to retrieve a video or poster that will help to illuminate a particular point or bring alive this new tangent we've found ourselves on thanks to a great question from the third row. Imagine being able to retrieve these resources (and better ones – imagine interactive posters!) while remaining in front of the class. Or, on those rare occasions when our talented teacher doesn't know the answer, the class can turn into a live demonstration of how to find an answer (that sounds like The Habits of Mind – we are really cooking here!). Imagine all the possibilities, of which these are but a glimpse.

As we venture into a new topic, our teacher can be collecting information from various sources and building a document that details

this particular journey of discovery. The teacher can become less of an expert and more of a facilitator (gulp) in the learning process, guiding the overall direction and highlighting important landmarks along the way. In doing so, the ownership of the content may shift more to the students than the teacher – a powerful factor in achieving higher student outcomes. This newly created document then becomes very useful for review purposes and for creating any assessment pieces. We could get students to prepare supporting documents relating to different aspects or highlights that we can then link to from within the core document. At the end of the topic, have students create a summary document or a table of contents.

IWB Net refers to the interactive whiteboard as a 'Digital Convergence Hub'. Quite a mouthful! What it means is that the IWB can become the point of access to an increasingly wide range of 'digital learning objects'. These can range from simple Word or PowerPoint documents to fully interactive software packages such as Easiteach or Crocodile Clips or … I'm sure you can think of a myriad of other applications. Then there's all those DVDs in the science department, and those really great YouTube clips you've saved or The Le@rning Federation content your Curriculum Coordinator has squirreled away on the intranet somewhere.

Digital infrastructure and organisation is obviously a critical component of this 'Hub' idea. There are content management solutions out there that can help with that, such as Command Systems DVC or ClickView (to name but two). Our teacher is able to access a range of these 'digital learning objects' quickly and efficiently and in doing so cater to a wide range of learning styles

A demonstration of the 'touch screen' functionality on an IWB

A group of teachers peer teaching

Interactive whiteboards are not an answer in themselves (cont.)

in the classroom. This idea of covering the different learning styles, I believe, is a big factor in the benefits list for IWBs.

The clincher for all of this is making teachers aware of these resources, and helping them to get comfortable with using them and the IWB itself. This becomes the responsibility of the school and the teacher in concert with one another. The placement of the boards in a school should be such that a teacher can have regular access. This is more a note for secondary schools. I've had discussions with schools that have chosen to put the IWB in a common classroom or a bookable space (especially when a limited number are purchased). This can actually create a barrier to use (this is borne out in discussions I've had after the fact). The first question to ask here is, 'How often is any one teacher going to get access to the board?' We need to look at this with our pragmatic hats on. If any one teacher is only going to get two hours a week or a fortnight in front of the IWB, how likely are they to invest the large amounts of time usually required in the ramp-up phase? On the other hand, if someone has a whole subject in front of the board, then surely there is a greater chance of them developing some digital lessons and exploring the various applications available to that subject. This may/will mean you have to limit the number of users. The research indicates that regular access is a key factor in effective use. You're better off having a handful of champions than a staffroom full of disinterest.

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We acknowledge the author and DIB Australia as the source.

For more information on interactive whiteboards, contact DIB Australia on (03) 9457 4800.

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Book review: Selecting children's books

Children's Books: A practical guide to selection
By Phyllis Van Orden and Sunny Strong
Neal Schuman publishers, New York, US
SCIS No: 1405730
ISBN: 9781555705848

Children's Books: A practical guide to selection is divided into three sections: selecting books for children, which lays out general criteria and guidelines, and addresses the importance of a diverse range of materials; special selection criteria for specific genres (picture books, fiction, folk literature, rhymes and poetry); and special selection criteria for specific subjects, including reference books. Newer types of materials such as graphic novels are addressed, though the selection of audio and e-books for children is not. Various formats and genres are covered in depth. One learns about evaluating picture books and assessing their pictorial elements; evaluating wordless books; judging classics; selecting series books, historical fiction, fantasy, mysteries, sports and animal stories and much more.

Chapter 4, 'Using Selection Tools Effectively', is a useful guide to these tools and how to evaluate and choose the correct ones. Here the authors thoughtfully address a topic often ignored in books on selection, which tend to focus more on the selecting of materials and less on how to locate and assess the tools that can inform decisions.

Each chapter concludes with cited references, a list of sources and, in some cases, recommended books. Chapters are enriched by boxed 'spotlights' and 'stoplights' that offer practical advice, as well as figures featuring key information points. For example, Figure 1.3 charts the characteristics of literary elements in various genres. These can easily serve as ready-reference or tips sheets for quick consultation.

Ten full-page colour plates from picture books demonstrate the criteria to be considered when selecting these materials. Four appendices supplement the text: a glossary of selection terms, a bibliography listing resources to aid selectors, a directory of organisations that support the creation and use of children's books, and a collection of selection policy statements and resources. This volume is further enhanced by four indexes: authors, illustrators, referenced books and subjects. The font is clear, with key words appearing in bold, and the pages are laid out in a way that is pleasing to the eye.

This is a wonderful book and a required purchase for all interested in selecting books for children. Phyllis Van Orden has impeccable credentials. She is past president of both the Association for Library Services to Children and the Association for Library and Information Science Education and has authored or co-authored nearly 30 books. Sunny Strong has collaborated with Van Orden on several of these. Together, they have written a practical, informative, attractive and entertaining book.

Peggy Johnson
University of Minnesota

This review was originally published in *The Australian Library Journal*, November 2008

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Book review: Promoting teenage reading

Serving Teens Through Readers' Advisory

By Heather Booth
American Library Association, Chicago, US
SCIS No: 1405417
ISBN: 9780838909300

This book is intended to help librarians and others who work with teens make 'book connections that teenage patrons will remember many years from now'. Its focus is as much on reading's pleasures as its other educational or life benefits.

The book is well-structured, easy to read and easy to use. Part 1 is a brief history of teens and reading in libraries in the US, followed by a very interesting section on what motivates teenagers to read and why reading is important to them – for their educational prospects, personal enrichment and enjoyment.

It has a refreshing, non-judgemental approach to reading matter, quoting recent research that suggests that 'just one positive book-reading experience can lead to lifelong enjoyment of reading and, by extension, all of its inherent benefits'. Many parents can identify with this statement after seeing teenagers launched into reading after just one John Marsden or Harry Potter experience. Booth acknowledges the importance of graphic novels, comics, magazines, 'fluff' or 'trashy' novels and the internet in teen reading. This 'light' reading, sometimes dismissed as not 'real' reading, is actually beneficial because it is effortless reading, which improves fluency, increases confidence and in turn leads to more advanced reading choices. She also discusses research on the benefits of teens self-selecting their reading material.

There is a lengthy section (Parts 2 and 3) on readers' advisory (RA) work for teens. Basic RA concepts, the RA encounter and appeal characteristics are covered, along with tips for adapting adult RA tactics to improve teen RA services. There's a useful chapter for adults on what to do if you have not read teen fiction since you were a teenager. Then, in more detail, Booth explores elements that make for a successful RA encounter with teens. Part 4 deals with RA for homework assignments and covers RA by proxy – that is, how to handle parent requests for reading matter for teens in ways that both satisfy the parent and interest the teenager.

Part 5 describes many resources, both print and electronic, that help match books to teenagers' interests. It includes guidance on creating resource lists, annotated book lists, displays and promoting services for teens. The appendices present popular authors listed in broad genres/sub-genres, 'sure bets' (books to turn to when you are stumped), and a list of book awards voted on by teenagers in the USA.

Practical tips and suggested questions are identifiable at a glance, being set out clearly in 'figures' throughout the book. There is a glossary of terms and an up-to-date bibliography. The thorough index includes authors, titles, subjects and series, and its readability is enhanced by the use of different typography for different types of entries.

I highly recommend this practical book to librarians planning or delivering young adult services in any type of library. Read it, too, if you are a parent wishing to encourage your teenager to read.

Sherrey Quinn
Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

This review was originally published in *Australian Library Journal*, November 2008. Permission granted by author and ALJ.

Educational Lending Right

When is a survey not a survey?

The Educational Lending Right (ELR) School Library Survey has no questions to read and answers to write, no boxes to tick, no numbers to circle and no comments boxes to fill in. So how can it be a survey? The ELR School Library Survey is conducted by either running a software program in the school library system or simply extracting a backup file. The ELR School Library Survey software counts the number of copies of selected book titles held in the school library catalogue. The privacy and confidentiality of schools' data and records are rigorously maintained.

What is Educational Lending Right?

Educational Lending Right (ELR) is an Australian cultural program administered by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. ELR has two objectives:

• to make payments to Australian creators (authors, illustrators, translators, compilers and editors) and publishers on the basis that income is lost from the availability of their books in educational lending libraries
• to support the enrichment of Australian culture by encouraging the growth and development of Australian writing and publishing.

ELR payments are based on estimates of the number of copies of specific titles held in Australian educational libraries. These estimates are obtained from the results of annual surveys of the holdings of selected school libraries.

Are these payments valued?

Australian creators have expressed their appreciation for the payments they have received from the ELR scheme. As Bronwyn Bancroft, Australian book illustrator and artist, says, 'It's essential that our books may be borrowed from libraries for free as this is egalitarian, but the author/illustrator must be compensated for the loss of income. When ELR first came out, it was like Christmas and a birthday all at once... We work very hard as authors and illustrators and this recognition allows us to move on for the sake of all Australians.'

Bronwyn Bancroft, Australian book illustrator and artist

Will my school be involved in the survey?

Each October, 600 schools Australia-wide are approached to take part in the survey. Schools selected meet specified criteria based on enrolment size, location and library system used. Schools selected to participate will receive a package of information from Curriculum Corporation at the start of term four.

What do I do if my school receives the ELR package?

If your school receives the ELR package in October, please read the cover letter which explains how to participate in the survey. The package includes easy-to-follow instructions on how to run the survey in your library system.

It is appreciated that, for many schools, term four is very busy with end-of-year activities including stocktaking, organising book prizes for graduating classes and writing final reports. It is estimated that running the survey will take a very small amount of time. In the 2008 feedback forms from participants, the majority of schools reported that it took *only a few minutes* to run the survey and send the results.

Australian book creators value and rely on ELR payments, so this is an opportunity for you to support their work. ▢

ELR Project Officer

ELR – Encouraging the growth of Australian writing and publishing

What's new at The Le@rning Federation

It's time to browse through the catalogues of The Le@rning Federation to find out about the latest content available to your schools.

Interactive whiteboard learning objects for early years

The first objects specifically designed for use with interactive whiteboards have been released. These include the *Letter Detective* series, which provides the opportunity for students to explore concepts of environmental print by locating letters in signs. The representation of letters in a variety of fonts is explored through animation. Students explore and sort capital and lower case letters and listen to letter names within an alphabet chart. The *Procedural texts* series is also designed for interactive whiteboards.

Letter detective: shops: five activities TLF ID L9481

English and literacy

The *Wonderful words, creative stories* series is now complete. Students add adjectives and adverbs to simple sentences and receive immediate visual feedback on their choices. The features for this series of learning objects include pop-up hints to assist students when creating new texts. There are also three optional extension activities on powerful words, each with a free text-entry field and print feature.

Several new objects are available under the *Poetry Anthology* series designed for Year 9-12. These objects include examples of poetic forms and explanations of poetic features such as theme, imagery and mood. Students can print their own anthology, including selected poems, their own responses and poems.

Languages other than English

New learning objects for French, German, Indonesian and Italian have been added. The *Lost bike* series is now available in French, German and Italian. Students use the respective language vocabulary and phrases associated with size, colour and bike accessories.

Mathematics and numeracy

The digital curriculum content from Mathematics and numeracy supports and enhances students' understanding of key mathematical concepts. The new *Time tools* series allows students to explore 12-hour time, or 12-hour and 24-hour time, on both analogue and digital clocks. Students read times on a master analogue or digital clock in the Time challenge task and adjust the time on other clocks to match the Master clock. A matching game provides opportunities to recall and match times on both analogue and digital clocks. The learning objects in this series include a 'Tell me more' feature with supporting animations. There are 12 different learning objects available in this series.

Time tools: 24-hour to the minute TLF ID L9642

Another new series is the *Timetable* series, where students solve complex timetabling problems by calculating times and durations using a range of clock types and time notations. The learning objects include scaffolded feedback for correct and incorrect answers. A number of objects have also been licensed from HOTmaths.

Science

New content in Science is based on current research findings in science education and pedagogy. The objects foster skills – such as scientific inquiry, data interpretation, analysis and synthesis – which are transferable to daily life and offline learning opportunities. New learning objects are available in the *Energy chains* series.

Learning objects for senior secondary science have also been added. These include the *Galvanic cells* series and *Electrolytic cells* series. In the *Galvanic cells* series, students find out about the design of galvanic cells. They set up different galvanic cells and observe the cell reactions. Students analyse galvanic cells to deduce the relative positions of a number of metals in the electrochemical series. In the *Electrolytic cells* series, students learn about the design of electrolytic cells and the reason behind the design. They learn about the key steps involved in the large-scale production of aluminium and in chrome-plating, the reasons for these steps and the design principles behind the commercial electrolytic cells used in these processes.

New digital resources from Scitech and Australian War Memorial

Several new images have been licensed from Scitech, which has joined the list of TLF partner institutions. Scitech is a hands-on science museum with exhibitions, programs and services designed for people of all ages. They pride themselves on making science an inspiring and exciting experience.

New clips, including *With the Dardanelles Expedition: Heroes of Gallipoli*, are now available from the Australian War Memorial.

Papuan guide helps Australian soldier to field hospital, 1942 TLF ID R8594

Reproduced courtesy of Australian War Memorial. Photograph by George Silk.

An increasing number of assessment objects are also available. For details, please download the latest content release notes from the TLF website.

Access TLF's digital curriculum content

Information on how you can access TLF's range of digital curriculum content is available on the TLF website: http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au.

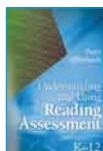For any TLF specific enquiries, email info@thelearningfederation.edu.au.

Rohini Mehta
Communications Officer
The Le@rning Federation

Resources for classroom teachers

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

Understanding and Using Reading Assessment K-12

36 pp facilitator's guide + 206 pp book; supplementary CD-ROM
Author: Peter Afflerbach
RRP: $58.00
SCIS No: 1410279
ISBN: 9780872075856
International Reading Association
Understanding and Using Reading Assessment, K–12 will help you examine and choose reading assessment in relation to current understandings of the reading process, students' development and the culture of schooling. Each chapter focuses on a particular type of reading assessment to familiarise you with the broad array of assessments available; uses the CURRV framework as an organising principle to help you consider the Consequences, Usefulness, Roles and responsibilities, Reliability and Validity of the assessment; includes questions and tasks that invite you to apply the knowledge you have gained from the chapter; and concludes with 'Reading Assessment Snapshots' which highlight important reading assessment issues that pertain to some or all of the assessments covered in this book.

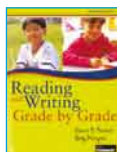## Reading and Writing Grade by Grade

252 pp book with supplementary DVD
Authors: Lauren B. Resnick and Sally Hampton
RRP: $79.95
SCIS No: 1410285
ISBN: 9780872077683
International Reading Association
An indispensable tool for analysing literacy skills and setting specific targets for learning for your kindergartners through third graders. You'll discover what abilities and understandings K–3 students can be expected to have about the print-sound code, comprehension, reading and writing habits, written genres, and language use and conventions.

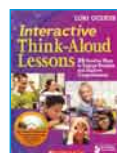## Interactive Think-Aloud Lessons: 25 surefire ways to engage students and improve comprehension

144 pp
Author: Lori Oczkus
RRP: $52.00
SCIS No: 1410263
ISBN: 9780545102797
International Reading Association
Bestselling author Lori Oczkus builds a convincing case that the interactive think-aloud is the best way to engage students in the work of comprehension. Drawing on her years of experience in the classroom, Lori shares 25 classroom-tested think-aloud lessons she uses to model strategies including connecting, predicting, inferring, questioning, summarising, monitoring/clarifying and evaluating.

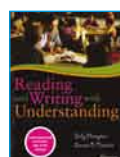## Reading and Writing with Understanding: Comprehension in fourth and fifth grades

140 pp
Authors: Sally Hampton and Lauren B. Resnick
RRP: $59.95
SCIS No: 1410291
ISBN: 9780872077676
International Reading Association
Students in the upper primary grades are ready for the excitement and rewards of reading and writing with increasing comprehension. But how can you prepare these nine to 11-year-olds to meet – and beat – the challenges of increasingly complex texts? What do fourth and fifth graders need in order to grow as thoughtful readers and effective writers?

Bright Beginnings for Boys: Engaging young boys in active literacy

178 pp
Authors: Debby Zambo and William G. Brozo
RRP: $52.00
SCIS No: 1410272
ISBN: 9780872076839
International Reading Association
Motivate your grade K–3 boy students by looking at picture books with characters who demonstrate positive values and using strategies targeted to boys' unique learning needs. Elementary educator Debby Zambo teams with William G. Brozo to bring you this essential resource on getting young boys hooked on reading at an early age.

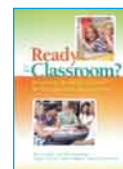## Ready for the Classroom?: Preparing reading teachers with authentic assessments

188 pp
Authors: Mary A. Avalos, Ana Maria Pazos-Rego, Peggy D. Cuevas, Susan R. Massey, Jeanne Shay Schumm
RRP: $54.00
SCIS No: 1410266
ISBN: 9780872074682
International Reading Association
This vital resource provides assessment tools to help teacher educators get a complete picture of candidates' learning. Using IRA's *Standards for Reading Professionals (Revised 2003)* as evaluative criteria, the cases and rubrics in this text can foster the use of high-level, critical thinking skills among candidates by having them suggest what should be done for each case and why, basing their responses on theory, experience or research. You'll be able to use these tools to assess candidates' understanding and application of course materials and to show how teaching and K–12 performance standards are met using real-life applications.

What Research Has To Say About Reading Instruction (Third Edition)

440 pp book + 60 pp guide with supplementary CD-ROM
Edited by Alan E. Farstrup and S. Jay Samuels
RRP: $74.95
SCIS No: 1410276
ISBN: 9780872071773
International Reading Association
This third edition maintains a balance between theory, research and effective classroom practice while presenting solid information and astute insights from the most current research and policy work in the area of reading. Teacher educators will find this volume to be a valuable resource for both pre-service teacher preparation and graduate-level courses. The professional development community, school administrators and policy makers will also find it indispensable as they seek to implement programs consistent with rapidly emerging legislative and policy mandates.