Learning NOT to answer their questions

There are many ways to teach information literacy – the formal classroom way, library visits, team and project-based methods, and more. No matter how you define 'reference work' today, it likely involves the process of accessing print and electronic sources, understanding a variety of containers (from books and videos to websites and serials), understanding how to ask questions of people in person and virtually through search engines ... as well as questions of ourselves. It's more than just a research skill. True information literacy has emerged as one of the defining life skills of our century. Building citizens who can learn and inform themselves throughout their lives in a new century of predictable massive change is the Holy Grail of our era.

How many types of literacy are there?

- Literacy (the ability to read and write)
- Information literacy (the ability to find, evaluate, and use information)
- Media literacy (the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create messages in a variety of forms)
- Digital literacy (the ability to use digital technology, communication tools, or networks to locate, evaluate, use, and create information)

Source: http://www.nirak.net/2007/09/12/information-media-and-digital-literacy

Teachable moments

I am a great believer in the power of the teachable moment. In the classroom of programmed teaching goals related to thinking and problem-solving skills, this might mean tying our lessons to local events: elections, autumn leaves, hurricanes, the Olympics, current events, newspaper units and more. No doubt the gift of a space shuttle launch during an astronomy unit or a national election during a politics class truly helps to make the lessons real and tangibly relevant to our students' views of their lives.

Learning styles

Another emerging fact about the web is that it can more easily and sustainably support a wider range of learning styles than some of our more traditional sources. We've long recognised that our learners come with a mosaic of learning styles, most articulately described by Bloom's taxonomy of learning styles. As early genomic researchers are starting to discover, humans may be predetermined to certain behaviours, including our learning preferences. When they discovered the gene for shyness, the behavioural cat was out of the bag. So now we're ready to embrace the question 'space' of our learners. It's an exciting time – so many questions, so little time!

Not answering questions

So ... what do I mean by the title, 'Learning to NOT answer their questions'?

The goal of most education is not to install a fact. We want our learners to *think*. In our modern output-oriented educational pedagogy, we know that mere facts have a very short lifespan.

in this issue

Learning NOT to answer their questions (cont.)

It means little to promote a specific fact into students' heads.

- Water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit (100 degrees Celsius)? Well, not too often – only perfectly clean, still water that's at sea level.
- What's the population of China? Today's answer won't be the same as next year's. Why memorise that?
- The periodic table? It continues to change as new elements are discovered or theorised.
- Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492? Nice mnemonic, but he really sailed three times to America, and the answer is at best incomplete.

So, what is the point of giving learners an answer? It merely fills them up with the knowledge nutrition that comprises the life skills they'll need to be successful adults.

Technological opportunities

We've always used technology to empower our users with the answers to their questions. In the last century, less than a decade ago, we went beyond our walls with tools like the telephone, email, letters, and reference forms to get the best answers to their questions. Indeed many libraries still depend on these tools.

In this century, we have a number of new tools that allow for conversations, such as instant messaging (IM), meebo, Trillian, Chatango, Facebook, Bebo, Skype, MySpace, and more.

What is the major difference in these tools? Well, for one they enliven the Web experience with real people talking to real people. It's not just text or graphical content. Unlike forms, letters, and emails, these tools model the telephone's modality – the conversation. What happens in conversations that happens either not at all or far less in text-based tools? The answer is social interaction, emotional content, and clarification. This is very important. We now have the tools that align with the primary mandate of reference work. We can improve the quality of the question in real time. We can return to our roots and enable the reference interview again. We can do what Google and their ilk do very poorly. We can relate to the users' needs and not just give them an answer that the computer algorithm assumes is right. Hah!

This is exciting. It also requires us to remind ourselves why we exist. We're not about answers alone. Every interaction with us improves the user. In no environment is this more evident than in school libraries. Each learner can leave every reference transaction a better informed and more capable person. That's pretty amazing.

The reference relationship

So, we're imagining the best scenario. We want to put content at the users' fingertips when they need it. We want to be there when they need it. We want to create intelligent, informed, and competent graduates. And we need to be there when they need us. I admire those librarians who provide reference services through the telephone but mainly offer IM and virtual reference services. Many just target the critical homework hours—3–6 p.m.—though truth be told, the midnight-cramming student is not a myth.

Here's a scenario: Paul, an eighth grader, messages in with his question on MSN – 'What's the population of China?' It would be so easy for Mary, the media specialist, to give him the answer, but she knows that Paul will be no better for the provision of the fact. She asks Paul where he thinks he'll find the answer. He answers Google or Wikipedia. She says that's fine, but is there a better place? Paul remembers his class visit to the library and that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is online on the school library's website. Mary reminds him that there are also excellent sources on the web on the library pathfinders and recommends the CIA Handbook resource. Wow—in less than four minutes, Paul has answers from several sources and is empowered with new resource-based knowledge. Mary encourages him to question all the sources and theorise about why there are differences in the numbers. For 90 per cent of this transformational reference experience, Paul was not getting the answer he asked for, but he was getting the experience and learning he needed. That's a far sight better than just ticking off the transactional experience and giving him a number. Paul will go farther for having had this experience.

So, this is exciting. For our questions, especially from K–12 learners, we have a magic moment with every reference transaction to transform our learners for life – for the better! We do this by respecting their real needs, understanding the variety of learning styles, and knowing deeply the literacy skills that we need to endow them with.

When you leave the reference desk, you should leave a better person – informed, empowered, and better skilled. Answers are just the beginning in education. It's the process that creates the teachable moments.

I once read that a huge proportion (if I remember right, a ratio exceeding 75 per cent) of autobiographies of famous, successful, opinionated people (who else would write an autobiography?) have positive passages of their memories of libraries and librarians' impact on their lives. As teacher librarians, you have hundreds of moments of truth every week to create these memories.

Don't answer students' questions right away. Create memories. Our society depends on you. 🔲

Stephen Abram
The Pipeline, MultiMedia & Internet @ Schools, Posted Nov 1, 2007
Stephen Abram, MLS, is vice president of innovation for SirsiDynix, chief strategist of the SirsiDynix Institute, and the president-elect of SLA. He is an SLA Fellow, the past president of the Ontario Library Association, and the immediate past president of the Canadian Library Association. Stephen is the author of Out Front with Stephen Abram *from ALA Editions. Stephen would love to hear from you at stephen.abram@sirsidynix.com.*

Games in the library

My work experience is in K-6 schools, much of it with English Second Language (ESL) learners. While their cognitive and conceptual development in their mother tongue may be on a par with native speakers, they understandably have a more limited repertoire of English language structures for expressing that development.

I believe the term 'games', when related to computers, does a disservice to the educational benefit of many of the sites available to students. Chess and board games, craftwork and recreational reading are readily accepted as valid educational pursuits. These same activities can be pursued online and at a variety of skill levels. Perhaps we should rename them 'differentiation links' or a similar term which better represents the true function of an 'educational game'. Many have great educational and social merit.

With respect to the concept of equity, some of our children still don't have a computer at home, let alone the internet. As such, the school library/resource centre is the perfect location for them to practise skills as basic as double-clicking, navigation or drag-and-drop. The students also have the opportunity to acquire navigation, browser and visual literacy skills in a risk-free environment. Within the current educational climate, compliance and curriculum dictates much of our programming content and lessons are so jam-packed that there is little time for the simple joys of software experimentation or serendipitous learning.

Additionally, some school playground areas are small and grass-free, and many of our students view their library as not only a place of learning, but as a passive play area where they can relax, retreat from heat or rain, and enjoy leisure time. Our students are aged five to 12 and I don't feel it is unnatural of them to want to 'play', or that I am compromising my professional integrity by providing them with the opportunity to do so.

Many of these 'games' possess educational merit as indicators of learning. Our Year 2 children have been investigating hot air balloons as a component of their text type studies (information report). Many of our children are ESL learners and the field of knowledge and technical vocabulary demands both text type and topic. Words such as 'envelope', 'burner', 'ignite', 'ascend', 'descend', 'venting', 'gores', 'gondola', 'valve', 'wicker' and 'propane tank' could have made it quite a gruelling experience.

Both the online game, *The Great Balloon Race* (http://pbskids.org/dragonflytv/games/game_balloon.html) and a labelled balloon diagram (made accessible only from the intranet site) uploaded to Jigzone have provided students with the opportunity to both consolidate new vocabulary and internalise the language structures necessary for the language functions of description and generalisation. The technical vocabulary was consistently modelled during demonstration of these sites, and used concurrently with less specific, yet more familiar structures. For example, click on the 'ignite' button to fire the burner and make the balloon ascend then ignite your burner and make your balloon go up. The impact was increased, of course, by using the interactive whiteboard (IWB) as the delivery medium. The learning experience is just as effective for native speakers dealing with unfamiliar technical vocabulary.

Here are some links you may find interesting.
- At Jigzone (http://www.jigzone.com/faq/map), individuals can:
  1 choose the level of difficulty and customise the type of cuts (process differentiation)
  2 upload personal files and make them into jigsaw puzzles – great for spatial learners (multiple intelligences)
  3 share with others by copying and pasting direct links or using embedding codes.

This site could be used to upload a photo jigsaw of class computers and teach correct terminology to young students.
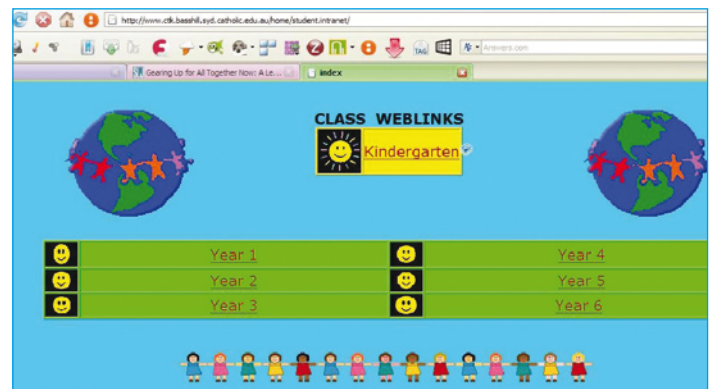- Are jigsaw puzzles educational? (http://www.talewins.com/help/jigsawed.htm)
- The purpose of puzzles (http://citybiz directory.com/FYI/what_is_the%20_purpose_of_jigsaw_puzzles.htm)

Games rule! 🖸

Susan O'Grady
Teacher Librarian/ ICT Reference Teacher
Christ the King School, Bass Hill, NSW

Children working cooperatively

An example of an intranet view to access games

From illuminated manuscript to iPod – copyright solutions for the digital age

The main changes in copyright legislation have always come in response to advances in technology. Is technology now advancing so fast that the legislation can no longer keep up?

Since the development of the Internet, there have been major amendments to the *Copyright Act 1968* every two or three years. In an effort to counter piracy, the media industry is resorting to its own technological fixes such as Digital Rights Management (DRM), Technological Protection Measures (TPM) and broadcast flags. While they *do* protect copyright owners, these measures can occasionally be in conflict with the legitimate rights of copyright users. This paper will examine the current situation from the point of view of library staff trying to find a way to serve their clients in spite of the copyright barriers placed in their way.

Early history

The history of copyright law tracks the development of technology. In ancient times, the written word was committed to stone and clay tablets, papyrus and vellum. Each copy was painstakingly transcribed by hand over many months, if not years. The idea of copying as 'piracy' was almost laughable. To copy a text was seen as a form of flattery. Books were extremely valuable physical objects.

The printing press was invented in the 11th century in China, but it was not until the 15th century that Gutenberg (independently) invented what we came to recognise as the first press in Europe. Its use spread quickly and by the 17th century was sufficiently established in England for a law to be introduced granting members of the Stationers Company a monopoly to print books. Although this law gave these printers the exclusive right to profit from their work, it was not a copyright law as such.

The law that is acknowledged as the first Copyright Act was the Statute of Anne in 1709. This was 'An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of such Copies, during the Times therein mentioned'. It is worth noting that the 'Times therein mentioned' amounted to 14 years.

Some 78 years later, the US Constitution stated that Congress shall have the power 'to promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for *limited times* (my emphasis) to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries'. The first copyright law in the USA, the *Copyright Act of 1790*, also had a term of 14 years.

It is obvious from these early laws that the purpose of copyright law was to strike a balance between the legitimate interests of the copyright owner and the encouragement of creative works through the use of copyright material.

Comparisons with current law are striking. The reference to the 'encouragement of learning' and 'the Progress of Science and useful Arts' has disappeared and the term of copyright has expanded to 70 years from the death of the creator.

Modern developments

The law remained essentially unchanged until the beginning of the 20th century. The years 1909 in the US and 1911 in the UK saw the first 'modern' copyright laws. These Acts differed from the earlier ones by specifying that copyright also applied to musical compositions, maps, photographs and prints. The 1911 Act was adopted into Australian law and remained almost unchanged (it was amended only four times) until 1968, when the Australian *Copyright Act 1968* became law. This Act introduced the concepts of 'fair dealing' and 'library exceptions' in response to the widespread use of photocopiers. Even after 1968, the pace of change was relatively slow until the mid 1990s. It is interesting to compare the sizes of the Acts of the last 100 years:

- *1911 Imperial Copyright Act* (23 pages)
- *Copyright Act 1968* – original version (104 pages)
- *Copyright Act 1968* – 1995 reprint (233 pages)
- *Copyright Act 1968* – 2007 reprint (651 pages).

In the process, the duration of copyright has stretched from 25 to 50 to 70 years and the penalties for copyright infringement have become harsher.

What has happened to cause this flurry of legislative activity? There are two main causes. First, the growth of the large multimedia companies such as Disney, EMI and Time Warner has changed our perception of the value of copyright. Copyright is now big business and these companies are determined to exercise their rights. (It is telling that the US Act which extended the term of copyright, the *Copyright Term Extension Act* of 1998, is commonly known as the Mickey Mouse Protection Act. It was introduced just as Mickey Mouse was due to come out of copyright!) In Australia, the term was increased as a direct result of the Australia–US Free Trade Agreement, which has been widely criticised.

Second, the new digital technologies have made the opportunities for copyright infringement easier, but at the same time made detection more likely.

How have the changes in technology changed the situation for libraries?

The first technology to impact on the library exceptions of the Copyright Act was the fax machine. Before the advent of this device, a photocopy of a requested item was sent by 'snail' mail to the requester (whether they were another library or a remote client). The fax machine sped up this process but, in doing so, produced a second copy of the item. Only one copy was permitted under the Act. Two were not.

Developments have since come thick and fast and legislators have been unable to keep the Act current. We have had three major amending Acts since 2000 and each has been made partly redundant by new technologies before the print was even dry.

The technologies that have changed our methods of acquiring, copying and delivering information include scanners, electronic journals and books, memory sticks, the internet, MP3 players and email

Unwilling to stand by and watch their material being 'pirated', many copyright owners have taken steps to thwart illegal copying. Unfortunately their methods have frequently also been at odds with the legal

use of material, as permitted by the 'fair dealing' exceptions for research, study, parody, satire, and reportage. They have made the jobs of librarians more difficult by preventing the legitimate copying of works for ILL, preservation and other administrative purposes.

Digital Rights Management

Digital Rights Management (DRM) is the generic name given to a group of technologies that can be used to restrict access to, and use of, digital content. (DRM is often referred to as 'Digital Restriction Management' by its critics.) Other terms used to mean the same thing are 'Technological Protection Measures' (TPM) and 'Electronic Rights Management Information'. Although there are subtle differences in meaning, for the purposes of this paper I have treated them as the same.

At its simplest, DRM can be a password, protecting access to an online electronic journal.

It can be a piece of computer code embedded in material which prevents that material being copied. It can prevent a DVD purchased in the UK from being played on a DVD player in Australia. It can stop an MP3 file downloaded from iTunes being played on any player save an iPod. It can protect subscription TV from being viewed by non-subscribers. In short, it protects the rights of copyright owners.

On the one hand, this can be seen as a legitimate use of technology to enforce the rights of copyright owners and uphold the law. On the other, it can severely restrict the rights of copyright users to make legitimate use of copyright materials.

The most recent changes to the *Copyright Act 1968* went some way to recognising this problem. Libraries are now permitted to circumvent DRM in order to make use of copyright material for administrative purposes (eg to make an acquisitions decision). However, circumventing DRM is not a simple matter – it may require some computer expertise – and the Act prohibits

anyone from providing a circumvention service. So unless the library has an in-house expert, they may be unable to make use of this part of the Act.

DRM can also prevent access to material which could otherwise be used because the copyright term has expired or because it was issued under a Creative Commons licence. For instance, an electronic journal archive protected by DRM may contain historical material which is now in the public domain. DRM can prevent a student 'cutting and pasting' from an e-book version of a classic text such as *Pride and Prejudice*. There are many other examples from music, radio and film.

But DRM has a positive side for librarians: it can assist them in controlling the use of copyright material. It makes it difficult, if not impossible, to print or copy e-books. Librarians can also lend audio books on iPods, safe in the knowledge that they cannot be transferred. Books on e-reserve can be limited to single concurrent users.

But DRM is not the only way in which copyright owners can enforce their rights. Most libraries acquire electronic journals and books under licence agreements which may limit their rights under the *Copyright Act 1968*, particularly in the field of document delivery. Obsolete technologies also pose problems. At what point is it permissible to transfer a videotape to DVD? Legally acquired collections on floppy disc or in a word processing format may be impossible to copy, either because the copyright owner cannot be traced or because they are protected by long-forgotten passwords.

A modern chained library?

From the Middle Ages until the 18th century, librarians prevented the theft of valuable books by chaining them to the shelves. Today's librarians are striving to find ways to release the wealth of information and entertainment in their libraries which has been 'chained' by digital coding, licence agreements and obsolete technologies.

Moyra McAllister
Copyright Adviser
Australian Library and Information Association

Reading, library resources and information literacy

The following two abstracts were written by the *Curriculum Leadership Journal* team and published in May and June 2008. To receive the weekly electronic journal, register at http://cmslive.curriculum.edu.au/leader/email_alert_registration,102.html

The classroom library: a place for nonfiction, nonfiction in its place

Reading Horizons
Vol 48, No 1, 2007, p 1–18
Terrell A. Young, Barbara Moss, Linda Cornwell

Most classroom libraries contain too little nonfiction. Nonfiction genres are estimated to comprise 84 per cent of adult, real-world texts and nonfiction material is often preferred by boys and children of primary school age. Around half of the classroom library should be nonfiction. It should be displayed enticingly and organised according to topic. When selecting nonfiction material, teachers should aim to motivate their readers by providing a variety of choices. Reviews of nonfiction series books are available online, and awards such as the Orbis Pictus Award and the Robert F. Sibert Award identify high-quality nonfiction books for children. The American Library Association's Notable Books List is also an excellent source of material. Small sets of books focused on a particular topic (eg the folktales, contemporary accounts, history and customs of a particular country) can be a worthwhile resource. Pairing a nonfiction text with a fictional account of its subject matter, such as an historical novel, can increase students' awareness of the characteristics of both genres. Good topics include volcanoes, animals, dinosaurs, black holes and biographies of sportspeople and musicians. The *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* series and *Kids Discover* magazines are also exciting and enjoyable. For students without English as a first language, providing nonfiction materials in their home language is a valuable literacy support. There should be multiple copies of some texts so the experience can be shared. Two appropriate texts for these literature circles are *Buried in Ice* and *Secrets of Vesuvius*. Reading aloud is an excellent way for teachers to stimulate interest, and students enjoy listening to quality nonfiction as well as fiction. Two-minute 'book talks', in which a teacher summarises or reads aloud an interesting extract from a book, are highly recommended. There should generally be no more than five book talks at a time, two or three of which should be nonfiction. One book well-suited to this format is *Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon*. Readers' Theatre scripts are another entertaining way of engaging with texts, and advice on how to adapt any passage into a script can be found on the website http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/English/readerstheatre.htm

Practice makes perfect: improving student research skills through evidence-based practice

Access
March 2008, p 15–21
Jonathan Heard, Genevieve Lynch, Penelope Haren

A new evidence-based program has been created in Victoria to address the lack of research skills in students from Years 3 to 10. Many students' research projects amount to slabs of factual material and do not demonstrate true understanding of, or engagement with, the topic. Many teachers do not explicitly teach research skills, assuming either that they will develop through practise or that students already have them. A team in Altona/Bayside Education Precinct (ABEP) in the western suburbs of Melbourne has designed and implemented a program that takes a constructivist approach to building students' information literacy skills. The program dovetails with a movement towards research and inquiry-based learning in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). The ABEP framework focuses on the first four steps in information literacy: define, locate, select and organise. The final steps, present and assess, tend to already be emphasised by students and teachers. A matrix of research skill goals at different levels was designed, taking into account wide variations in English proficiency and socioeconomic status. To target particular needs, students' current skill levels were assessed. Students were rated on a scale of 0–3 for a number of tasks relating to the skills of defining, locating, selecting and organising. Scores were poor overall, averaging between 1 and 1.5, with 1 indicating a poor understanding and 2 a satisfactory but incomplete response. An 'Academic Achievers' class scored higher on all measures but still showed substantial room for improvement. Both groups had particular difficulty with the more specialised skills of locating and selecting information. To give students' research a goal, an assignment template now requires the teacher to think of a 'Big Question' that students can use to apply factual information in an analytical, evaluative or creative way. Detailed handouts provide scaffolding to guide students through each stage of the process. The program is still in its first year, but teachers' anecdotal reports indicate that students are more fully engaged and have a far greater understanding of the research process. ▯

Website reviews

Andy Griffiths: Funny Books to Delight, Amuse and Disgust the Whole Family!
http://andygriffiths.com.au
Popular author Andy Griffiths has provided readers with an opportunity to read extracts from his books, find out the answers to frequently asked questions, investigate articles written by or about the author, and keep abreast of awards and news.
SCIS No: 1022559

BBC/CBBC: Me and My Movie
http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/meandmymovie
Students and teachers wishing to become involved in making movies will be inspired by the opportunities presented here. The website features sections on the basics of movie making, sound effects and how to upload movies on the site so that they may be viewed by others.
SCIS No: 1383108

Education Resources and Facilities
http://nga.gov.au/Education/index.cfm
The National Gallery of Australia offers teachers a variety of topical, diverse and stimulating online resources. Links are available to forthcoming educational events and an e-newsletter, *artsonline education*.
SCIS No: 1383111

Energy Hog
http://www.energyhog.org
The US Alliance to Save Energy has produced a fascinating interactive resource that students, parents and teachers can use to reduce energy consumption at home and school. Teachers are catered for with background information and lesson plans, while students will enjoy undertaking the challenges various games offer.
SCIS No: 1383116

International Year of Astronomy 2009
http://www.astronomy2009.org
2009 marks the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first observations of the universe using a telescope. The contributions of astronomy to science, culture and human endeavour will be celebrated next year, with UNESCO proclaiming 2009 the International Year of Astronomy. Links to national websites, including those of Australia and New Zealand, are available.
SCIS No: 1340375

Lateral Learning Speakers' Agency
http://www.laterallearning.com
Teachers wishing to book prominent authors, illustrators or educators for school visits, conferences and festivals will find an extensive choice of highly regarded speakers through this agency.
SCIS No: 1383271

Ministry of Fisheries Student & Teacher Resources (Starfish)
http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Starfish/default.htm
This resource aims to educate students in Years 7–10 about the importance of ensuring that New Zealand's oceans and fisheries remain healthy and sustainable for future generations. The Staff Room offers learning outcomes and teaching activities, while the Kids Zone features games, images and factsheets.
SCIS No: 1106910

New Zealand Historic Heritage: Conservation
http://www.doc.govt.nz/templates/defaultlanding.aspx?id=34000
Part of the NZ Department of Conservation's website, the focus of this webpage is on the preservation of historic sites on public conservation land. The material available is a useful adjunct to local area and settlement studies.
SCIS No: 1383276

Peter Moore: Travel Writer
http://www.petermoore.net
Senior secondary students with an interest in travel and travel writing will here find a diverse selection of material from inspirational Australian travel writer, Peter Moore. The website features extracts from his books, writing hints, interactive maps and slideshows.
SCIS No: 1383278

Physics Flash Animations
http://www.upscale.utoronto.ca/GeneralInterest/Harrison/Flash
Ever needed to find an animation of Coulomb's Law or viscous motion to illustrate physics content? This categorised website contains Flash animations relating to several branches of physics. A link to a tutorial is available for those wishing to create their own animations.
SCIS No: 1259976

Six Day War: 1967 Arab-Israeli War
http://www.sixdaywar.co.uk
History students and teachers researching the Six Day War will be able to access a variety of primary and secondary sources, including cartoons, articles, movie clips, photos, historical documents, maps, timelines and quotes.
SCIS No: 1383301

Slow Food International
http://www.slowfood.com
A community engagement program, Slow Food International connects like-minded citizens from all over the world who embrace local food traditions, conserving biodiversity and safeguarding gastronomic resources for future generations.
SCIS No: 1327598

Tiwi Art
http://www.tiwiart.com
Visual arts students will be intrigued by the stunning Indigenous artworks that can be viewed via this website. Extensive information is available on the Tiwi Islands, and forthcoming exhibitions and collections of Tiwi art.
SCIS No: 1383308

Wordbox: For Young Australian Writers and Readers!
http://wordbox.bravehost.com
This resource includes an extensive array of links for Australian school students wishing to enter writing competitions, reading activities and literary events. The site is organised chronologically and also offers tips for getting work published and hints from aspiring and published writers.
SCIS No: 1383316

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

The Internet sites abstracted 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 may not be permanent.

SCIS is more ...

Qualified cataloguers create quality records

Sixteen cataloguers around Australia and New Zealand create over 40,000 new SCIS records every year. The cataloguers use internationally recognised standards and tools to create records for school library resources. Their specialised knowledge of the curriculum enables them to assign relevant subject terms and classification.

SCIS thanks schools for contributing resources for cataloguing. Your cooperation with the SCIS cataloguing agencies is a major reason for SCIS's success in schools in Australia and New Zealand.

Emily Pyers, SCIS Cataloguing Agency, Victoria

SCIS OPAC is more ...

A search of SCIS OPAC can sometimes be used to answer questions from staff and students. A teacher may be struggling to remember the name of a television program that they wish to use in a class. By searching SCIS OPAC, they may be able to identify the program title, series name and year of production.

For example, a teacher may ask if the student knows the name of the documentary on Benetton's marketing campaigns.

Using SCIS OPAC – Guided search, enter 'Benetton' as a Keyword and videorecording as GMD.

SCIS OPAC screen dump © Ex Libras Incorporated
An example of a SCIS OPAC search for a videorecording

From the results, you can then identify two titles that are related to the marketing or advertising activities of Benetton.

SCIS OPAC screen dump © Ex Libras Incorporated
An example of SCIS OPAC search results

To provide the teacher with the information:
• tick the relevant titles
• select the format 'Bibliography'
• print or email.
The email will be sent from 'Voyager@SCIS' and the subject line will be 'SCIS Opac search'.

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/productinfo/supplists.htm

In the summary lists, headings are marked with the following codes.
* 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

* Biography
N Celebrities
* Civilisation
* Commerce
* Creativity
N Cultural diversity
* Cultural relations
* Developing areas
* Economic development
* Economics
N Excellence
N Fair trade
* Free trade and protection
* Globalisation
* Indonesia
N Infrastructure
U Irian Jaya (Indonesia)

* Mass media
* Multiculturalism
A New Guinea
N Papua (Indonesia)
* Papua New Guinea
N Papuans (Indonesian people)
* Personal development
* Photographers
* Popular culture
* Public works
* Ramu River Region (Papua New Guinea)
* Social groups
* Social justice
* Success
* Sustainable development
* Town planning
N West Papua (Indonesia)

Connections

Connections is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS), a business unit of Curriculum Corporation. SCIS is committed to publishing informative and useful material for the benefit of library staff in schools. Our focus is helping library professionals keep up to date with the latest in information services and information technology relevant to school libraries.

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Challenges for teacher librarianship in the 21st century: Part 3 – Status and role

In Part 1, published in *Connections 66*, page 10, Barbara Combes discussed the challenges that technology presents to teacher librarians and suggested strategies to effectively respond. Part 2, published in Issue 67, page 5, covered the challenge of time and workload with strategies to help deal with these issues. Here she deals with a final challenge.

The challenge of status and role

A major challenge for teacher librarians over the last ten years has been establishing our status in the school community and clearly communicating our role. After the heady days of the 1970s and 1980s, when the importance of school libraries was clearly recognised through centralised funding and professional staffing, we have now reached a stage where libraries of all kinds are under threat, even though research tells us that proactive school libraries make a huge difference to student learning outcomes. Across the US, Canada, Australia, Europe and the UK, libraries are underfunded and understaffed. In some cases, they have been closed or transformed into internet cafes. There are several reasons for these changes.

There is a belief on the part of politicians, systemic educators and senior administrators that technology can be used to provide a wide range of 'free' resources for schools (SOCCI, 2000). Underpinning this belief is a basic lack of understanding about information as a commodity, the internet, issues such as copyright and intellectual property, and the hidden costs of technology.

Library professionals who have focused on the service and management aspects of their role at the expense of teaching and learning have contributed to the library's poor image. We have not placed the library squarely at the centre of the school's core business – that is, teaching and learning. Many of us have seen the teacher librarian's role as simply that of providing an opportunity to 'escape' from the classroom. Parents, industry stakeholders, administrators and society are demanding a more professional attitude and more accountability from teachers. They want graduates who are

flexible and adaptable – who are able to cope with a constantly changing workplace and learn new skills as they go. Rather than being an escape option, the library should be the centre of teaching and learning for the whole school community. The TL should be leading and supporting educational change.

A lack of succession planning has only enhanced the stereotype of librarians as grey-haired, middle-aged women who are technological dinosaurs in a new information age. Instead of plunging into this brave new world, many of us are still standing nervously at the water's edge, afraid to get our toes wet. Many who have successfully begun swimming are still caught up in the service ethic and fail to capitalise on their expertise. Teacher librarians and librarians are not perceived as leaders in their school communities, either in terms of curriculum or technology.

Clearly, if we are going to survive, this perception needs to change. *We* need to change. We need to accept that part of our role is educating administrators, teachers and the school community about the new information landscape and our role within it.

Strategy 1 – Learn to prioritise

Prioritise your time and value yourself. These are two important steps towards changing perceptions about your status and role within the school community. Have a booking sheet for library staff, so you can plan and set aside time for your professional and teaching duties, management/ housekeeping tasks and collaborative meetings. Avoid crisis management and actively discourage teachers from using the library and yourself as stop-gaps for their poor planning. Your time and expertise is valuable and you need to let them know it!

Strategy 2 – Be realistic

Change is an intimidating process, both for an individual and their organisation. Incremental change and education are the best strategies to use here. Slowly introduce new procedures, plan your staff/school community education program and always let people know well in advance if you are going to change things. Always ensure that change is for a specific purpose related to the

teaching and learning outcomes of the school. Also, save your energies for the important things. Don't shift furniture, re-write policies and procedures or change things unless there are clear cost-benefits for the school (and then make sure that you articulate those benefits). Use technology as a tool to make time and space in your day. Don't allow library management to overwhelm you or dictate why and how you do things. Take charge and be in control. Of course, in the real world this takes time, patience and persistence. Always take little steps, be kind to yourself and remember your value.

Strategy 3 – Become a strategic planner

Use the following strategies to differentiate yourself (Green, 2004) and become a leader.

- Observe your colleagues closely. Who is the most powerful or influential person in the school? It may be the principal, but could also be the deputy, the registrar, the teaching-learning coordinator, the computer teacher or even the secretary in the front office. Target this person and find out how they see your role and the role of the library. You cannot change your status if you don't know how you are perceived by the key players in the school.

- Make decisions based on educational outcomes rather than organisational ones. You must have a clear educational vision and couch all your discussions with staff in an educational context. This gives you credibility as a teacher and information specialist. Provide professional development for staff to help them become more technologically literate. You will gain respect and influence.

- Don't just belong to educational committees and groups within the school, offer to chair them. As the chairperson, you will be doing what you do best – delegating and organising tasks, and collecting and collating information. It is always the chairperson who knows what is going on in the school.

- If you have complaints, then keep them focused on educational issues. Always have positive suggestions ready, and be ready to be an active participant in any solutions.

- Become the resident expert on how students learn best in your school. Know the current strategic goals of your education system and the school, relate these to the curriculum, identify the gaps and seek to fill them.

Strategy 4 – Learn to delegate and collaborate

Know your staff, empower them and work with them to build a cohesive library team. They need to feel valued too. Always be a model for best practice. You and your team (even if the team consists of one untrained library officer and some volunteer parents) should present a united vision of the role of the library in your particular school. While your library should always have a client focus, avoid simply doing things for teachers and students. Make every occasion, no matter how small or trivial, a teaching-learning opportunity.

Strategy 5 – Don't make assumptions

Don't assume anything. Successful curriculum programs engage students only when the students know and clearly understand what is expected of them.

- Use technology to enhance learning outcomes for students, rather than just as an administrative or organisational tool.
- Create templates, 'how to' FAQs, instruction guidelines, skills review sheets, pathfinders and directional signage to assist your students.
- Get away from the library or information skills model and work towards integrating skills development where it is most relevant to the student – at the point of need during a curriculum program.
- Don't assume that students know how to evaluate information, participate in group discussions, take notes or write assignments.
- Work with teachers to develop generic information literacy templates to scaffold and guide student learning. Initially this will be a lot of work, but the templates are re-usable. As learning objects, they provide consistency for students and allow you to develop a highly structured, safe learning environment in which students can exercise autonomy and independence.
- Become a curriculum designer and specialist support teacher for staff, and a facilitator and guide for students.

Strategy 6 – Staff professional development

Share your expertise and knowledge with teachers. You want to position yourself and the library as the information and curriculum hub of your school community. You want to be perceived as a curriculum leader, designer and professional development support teacher. You want to be the catalyst in your school for the development of innovative and exciting teaching-learning programs aimed at literacy and information literacy skills. It is the library (or 'information hub') that will help students to become lifelong learners, not silos of outdated content locked away in subject specialist areas. It is your role to help teachers and students to make connections across the curriculum, transfer generic skills and further develop their literacy and information literacy.

Strategy 7 – Promotion and advertising

Initial perceptions are very important. Use the below strategies to change your image from someone who is focused on the management of the library to someone who is vitally interested in curriculum and student learning outcomes.

- Always arrive early and leave late. (Though there is a fine line between being perceived as hard-working and being perceived as disorganised.)
- Always carry a box of books in a trolley. This sends a message to other staff that you are hard-working and a teacher too.
- If a request was unreasonable, don't be afraid to tell the person how it will be done much better next time, when you have time to provide the resources and assistance required to help students achieve their learning outcomes.
- Actively advertise yourself to your parent community. Their support can be invaluable and provide more publicity than anything else.
- Choose your collaborative partners wisely. Look for innovators and people who are more open to working differently. Note that this may not necessarily be the younger teachers in your school.

Changing perceptions and your status in the school will be a slow process, but persistence, careful planning and the smart use of technology can make a difference.

Conclusion

We have much to do and overcome as a profession. There are new challenges on the horizon as technology influences the information landscape, funding becomes tighter and the expectations of society become greater. We need to meet these challenges head-on.

Teacher librarians are a resilient and determined bunch. Our most enduring characteristic is a capacity to move forward, change and support each other by sharing best practice. So if you only take away from this article a little bit of hope, one new idea/strategy, a new contact, a reaffirmation that what you do has value, and the recognition that your job involves much more than library management, you will have begun the journey. Rediscover learning along with your students, and keep yourself young in mind and heart. 🔲

Barbara Combes
Lecturer
Edith Cowan University

'Google Generation' is a myth, says new research

A new report commissioned by Joint Information Systems Committee and the British Library counters the common assumption that the 'Google Generation' – young people born or brought up in the internet age – is the most adept at using the web. The report, by the Centre for Information Behaviour and the Evaluation of Research (CIBER) team at University College London, claims that although young people demonstrate an ease and familiarity with computers, they tend to rely on the most basic search tools and lack the critical and analytical skills required to assess the information that they find on the web.

The report, *Information Behaviour of the Researcher of the Future* (http://www.jisc. ac.uk/media/documents/programmes/reppres/gg_final_keynote_11012008.pdf), adds to our growing understanding of a subject that should concern all who work in further and higher education – the changing needs of our students and researchers and how libraries can meet them. The traits that are commonly associated with younger users – impatience in search and navigation, and intolerance for any delay in satisfying their information needs – are now the norm for all age-groups, from younger pupils and undergraduates through to professors.

This report shows the many roles the information professional can and must play in an age in which many think that all answers are only one click away.

(By the way, Google is a name grabber but this paper is more about online and web info in general.)

JISC and The British Library

This article was first published by *ResourceShelf* on 16 January, 2008 at 1:21 am.

http://www.resourceshelf.com/2008/01/16/%e2%80%98google-generation%e2%80%99-is-a-myth-says-new-research/

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Educational Lending Right

ELR from a recipient's viewpoint

Every year around May, my friends and I start checking our letterboxes and asking each other, 'Have you received anything yet?', usually adding, 'I wish it would come soon. I have a lot of bills to pay!'

We are talking about lending rights, of course. As children's writers, we are especially thinking of ELR (Education Lending Right). I earn about three times as much from ELR as I do from PLR (Public Lending Right).

If you think we spend our days sitting in cafes being artistic, think again. Most of us have day jobs. I work full-time at Sunshine College in Melbourne. In 2008, I spent most of my long-service leave writing a book for Ford Street Publishing, so I did actually spend time in cafes. I was using their free WiFi.

One of my friends has only recently gone to writing full-time, after several years of writing educational books and designing websites. But he has a wife who is working so she can support him, if necessary. I know a successful fantasy writer who works for the railways, another who is a university academic, one lawyer and several teachers. Australia's population makes it hard to write full-time and make a living. You rely on every dollar you can earn, and you daydream about working part-time.

I write mostly nonfiction. Once a publisher accepts my proposal, I do research on weekends and evenings in between preparing classes and marking. I'm on the computer every night. The editing process can take months: no matter how good your book is, there is always something that the publisher wants changed. Sometimes they ask you to find photos for the book. Sometimes the artist will use the photos as a reference for the illustrations. A standard advance from a trade publisher is between $2,000 and $3,000, whilst educational publishers pay around $500. Not much for months of work, is it? You do this for love, not for the money! But money helps to pay the bills while you continue writing.

If you are writing for a trade publisher, you will earn about 7.5 per cent of RRP in royalties, once the advance has been earned back, but that takes time. My last book, *Your cat could be a spy* (part of the 'It's True!' series), had sold well over 6,000 copies before I started to receive royalties, because most sales were through Book Club, which pays a percentage of the net rather than RRP. This means you get about a quarter of your usual royalties. Education royalties are *always* a percentage of the net profit.

Are you beginning to see why we writers greet our ELR cheques with cries of joy? Even if the advance has not been earned back yet, ELR means you can still be earning something on your book. Likewise, when your book has gone out of print, you can still receive some income from it until some student steals it or a teacher-librarian decides to weed it from the collection.

My Children's Book Council Notable Book, *Potions to pulsars: Women doing science*, has just gone out of print in Australia after 12 years (the Chinese edition is still around), but I will still have money from ELR payments for a while.

Don't get me wrong, it's good to be working in a school with my intended audience. But I dream of the day when I can sign up for temporary work, and spend the rest of my time writing and visiting schools as a speaker. ELR will help me to do that.

Sue Bursztynski is a children's author and former Children's Book Council Notable Book recipient.

ELR 2008–09 School Library Survey

Thank you to the 300-odd Australian schools who have responded to the annual ELR school library survey. It was wonderful to experience the positive support from school library staff across Australia.

The data collected by schools is currently being used by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) to ascertain the payment levels to be made to Australian authors, illustrators, editors, translators, compilers and publishers later this year.

ELR Team

In the café where Sue writes

The Le@rning Federation

Assessment objects

Digital assessment objects (AOs) are now available as part of the digital curriculum content that the Le@rning Federation (TLF) has been developing since 2001. With a similar design to interactive learning objects, the AOs are:

- engaging for students
- effective in achieving their design purposes and efficient for teachers to use
- educationally and pedagogically sound and consistent with the learning outcomes they address.

AOs provide assessment information that enhances and support students' learning in three focus areas: Mathematics/Numeracy, English/Literacy and Science.

AOs have a feature or function not easily provided by paper-and-pencil assessment items. For example, students interact with a simulation to predict an outcome of an onscreen action; the responses for some item types are automatically marked; and some AOs are adaptive. Adaptive AOs contain item sets across a range of difficulty levels, with the number of correct student responses dynamically influencing the next set of items provided.

Formative assessment

The overall purpose of AOs is to help both teachers and students determine levels of student understanding. Importantly, they also have a formative assessment focus, guiding the teacher and the learner to areas for further learning. Each AO contains assessment questions embedded with the task. Typically, students engage with an interactive stimulus and answer associated questions by responding in a variety of ways. The student's responses to questions are captured and incorporated in a report generated at the end of the task. The information contained in the report is intended for use within the classroom setting either as a diagnostic or a formative assessment tool during the course of learning. The report provides opportunities for students and teachers to reflect on learning and consider the next appropriate step in the student's learning progress. Some misconceptions held by the student might also be revealed.

Here are some AOs in the three focus areas: Mathematics/numeracy, Science and English/literacy.

Mathematics/numeracy

Triathlon: assessment L8274

Triathlon: assessment uses distance–time graphs to represent the performance of an athlete in the three disciplines of the triathlon event: swimming, cycling and running. Teachers can print a report for each student that includes a section in which both the student and the teacher can comment on the student's learning progress.
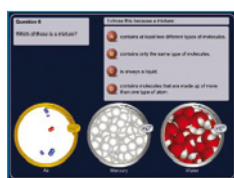

Spinners: assessment L8277 (Years 3–6)

Spinners: assessment focuses on conceptual understanding. Students create spinners to match specified data outcomes. In some cases, students have to create two different spinners capable of spinning the same outcome.

Science

Fair test: use a fair test: assessment L9260 (Years 7–8)

Fair test: use a fair test: assessment asks students to set up a fair scientific test investigating the effects of light on the growth of tomatoes. Students are required to analyse their results and decide the best answer to a customer's question about how much light is needed to grow tomatoes successfully.

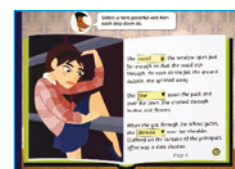**Types of matter: using particle model: assessment L8486**

Designed for senior science students, *Types of matter: using particle model: assessment* tests understandings of the particle nature of matter. Students interpret particle arrangements to classify various types of matter as solid, liquid, gas, pure substance, mixture, element or compound. Students look at the characteristics of a substance to identify any changes to its physical state.

English/literacy

Lights, camera, action: assessment L8471

Teachers can use *Lights, camera, action: assessment* to test students' understanding of how camera shots can be used to tell a story in films. They select which shots would work best and give reasons for their choices. Once completed, students can view their film and print out an assessment report for the teacher to assess.

Super stories: the Principal's office: assessment L8469 (Years 5–7)

Super stories assesses students' choices of verbs, adverbs and images to tell a story.

Participate in evaluating assessment objects

To register your interest to participate in ongoing in-school evaluation trials for AOs such as the ones described above, visit: http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au/for_teachers/teachers_wanted/teachers_wanted.html

Access TLF digital curriculum content

Information on how you can access TLF's range of digital curriculum content is available at: http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au/for_teachers/access_information/access_information.html
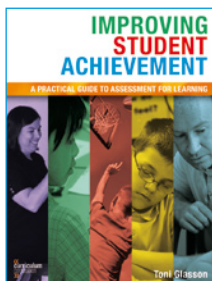
For any TLF-specific enquiries, email info@thelearningfederation.edu.au

Rohini Mehta
Communications Officer
The Le@rning Federation

Resources

Improving Student Achievement: A practical guide to assessment for learning

139 pp
Author: Toni Glasson
RRP: $42.00
SCIS No: 1363662
ISBN: 9781742003078

Research has confirmed that assessment for learning is a powerful tool that can raise teaching and learning standards – but how do teachers get started?

This book provides practical guidance for using assessment in the classroom. It looks at the learning partnership that should ideally develop between students and teachers as they plan and set goals for successful learning.

Students are introduced to key strategies, including:
• strategic questioning
• thinking to guide powerful learning
• effective feedback, which includes peer feedback and self-assessment.

This book is an excellent resource for teachers of all levels who are looking to incorporate assessment for learning into their pedagogy.

Reading for Media Literacy

72 pp
Author: Anne Vize
RRP: $34.95
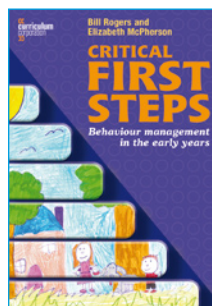SCIS No: 1363657
ISBN: 9781742003054

What does it mean to be media literate? Nowadays, 'literacy' doesn't just mean proficiency with traditional printed texts such as newspapers and magazines. It incorporates the access, analysis, evaluation and creation of information and messages in a variety of multimedia forms. This book contains practical ideas to help students read and write in the language of printed and electronic communications.

Written both for teachers experienced in using multimedia content and those with less skill and confidence, *Reading for Media Literacy* covers critical literacy, visual literacy and creative thinking skills.

Critical First Steps: Behaviour management in the early years

125 pp
Authors: Bill Rogers and Elizabeth McPherson
RRP: $42.00
SCIS No: 1363649
ISBN: 9781742003085

Critical First Steps addresses behaviour-leadership and discipline at the crucial early years of schooling. The authors guide teachers to develop confidence and strong leadership, and encourage students to be aware of and 'own' their behaviour.

Topics covered include:
• the development of core routines
• challenging child behaviour
• anger and aggression in children
• behaviour recovery practice
• how to work with parents to set up and maintain a whole-class behaviour agreement.

Accessible and practical, *Critical First Steps* is a book for all early years teachers, support staff and school leaders.

Teaching Comprehension

Available in Years K–2, 3–6 and 6–9 packages.

Teaching Comprehension contains a rich array of classroom-tested teaching strategies proven to increase students' reading comprehension.
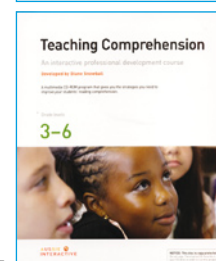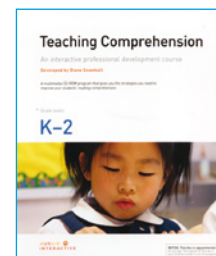
The *Teaching Comprehension* CD-ROM program and accompanying *Professional Development Planning Guide*:
• provide more than 60 hours of professional development activities
• explain the theory of reading comprehension instruction
• offer opportunities for reflection and planning
• support the development of effective classroom practice.

Teaching Comprehension offers an instructional framework for teachers, incorporating the six research-based strategies:
• prediction/prior knowledge
• questions and questioning
• think-aloud
• text structure and features
• visualising
• summarisation.

Explore sample video clips, lesson plans and pricing information at http://www.curriculumpress.edu.au/teachingcomprehension