



SCIS

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SCHOOLS CATALOGUE INFORMATION SERVICE

connections

Weeding the Resource Garden

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To weed or not to weed. Is that the question? I think most would agree that it is an essential part of any collection development process. Of more significance are the questions of Who? What? When? and Why? as these aspects of resource management can often create vigorous discussion and sometimes dissension. Consider the following scenario.

A teacher librarian is posted to a country district high school where the resource collection has not been weeded in 20 years. The planning stages for library automation are under way and the shelves are so crammed with books that it is difficult to see what is on them. On close scrutiny, the collection appears to inadequately reflect the current curriculum or clientele. The teacher librarian in her enthusiasm takes one look at the collection and instantly thinks 'weed'. A brief plan is developed with the library officer and principal who agree with the process. The current state of the collection enables the swift removal of a substantial number of resources without difficulty – about 2,000 books weeded from the collection and packed into boxes ready to be sent 'overseas' (another controversial issue that we won't go into now!).

While the teacher librarian and library officer were pleased with the expediency of this process, they were unaware of what was to follow. The fall-out of this act was unbelievable.irate parents knocked at the principal's door, complaining about the

removal of so many precious resources from the library; teachers began to complain bitterly to the library officer that this new 'blow-in' had decimated the library's resource collection and removed books that they had been using in their program for the past 10 years; students complained that their favourite book was no longer available. A special parents and citizens' meeting was called at which the teacher librarian had to justify her actions; a staff meeting was called at which she had to appease teachers who had lost the use of a particular book and the principal had to be reassured that proper procedures had been followed. The teacher librarian spent significant time and effort in damage control, putting out fires and convincing all interested parties that it really was in the best interest of the students to remove resources that, for example, suggested that one day man will walk on the moon.

This scenario sounds a little far-fetched but it did actually happen – I was the teacher librarian it happened to. While I can plead naivety, poor judgement, rashness or any host of failings, the bottom line is that with some forethought and careful planning this could all have been avoided. Weeding is not merely about the removal of resources from the collection.

There are a number of other factors that need to be considered as part of the process, the least of which is the consideration of all stakeholders. While the final outcome is a more functional, relevant and up-to-date

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Designing a School Library Resource Centre

In designing a new school library resource centre there are many aspects to consider and discuss. Having been through this process once and looking forward to being involved in the process again, I feel reasonably well equipped to offer the following guidelines.

I cannot overemphasise these three factors:

- 1 Start planning early.
- 2 Establish a project team.
- 3 Form a shared vision.

I am more confident that things will go along more smoothly if these things are in place from the outset.

As the teacher librarian you should be a key member of the project team and as such you will need to be prepared to attend many meetings, make significant design decisions and perhaps even endure a few sleepless nights throughout the process. All of this occurs as you continue in your daily role as teacher librarian! Nevertheless, the experience and satisfaction gained from being part of such a project is exciting and most rewarding.

Start planning early, establish a project team and form a shared vision

You will usually have plenty of advance warning if any large building project is being considered. This gives you as teacher librarian along with the principal, teaching staff, library and information technology staff, the time to develop a shared vision or brief for this new facility. As it is an educational facility, it is the members of the teaching staff that are best placed to know what features the facility should have to ensure that it will effectively support the school's curriculum and the learning needs of the students.

The project team could be required to prepare the vision as a submission for funding or as a brief to the architects. It therefore needs to be reasonably well documented and able to be referred to throughout the design process to ensure that the educational vision is carried through to the end product.

As the library program is designed to meet the learning needs of the students, so the new library facility will be designed to provide the best learning environment to support this

program. The library of course needs to be warm and welcoming and physically able to support exciting literature programs, resource-based learning and independent research. The facility will need to be both aesthetically pleasing and functional and it is usually in the area of functionality that others in the project team, including the architect, will rely upon the expertise of the teacher librarian.

Once established the project team should consider the following aspects:

- A survey of all staff should be conducted so that staff can have an input into the vision.
- Visit other libraries, talk with library staff, principals, take photos etc.
- Refer to *Learning for the Future: Developing information services in schools*, (Second Edition) 1993, available from Curriculum Corporation.
- The library will need to be able to successfully support a number of concurrent activities including browse and borrow sessions, literature studies, independent or class research, access to computers, and photocopying for example. Much consideration needs to be given to the layout, the placement of shelving, screening, placement of student and staff work areas and the provision of teaching spaces and quiet reading areas. It is important that all users feel that they can work effectively within the library. Consider bi-folds to allow for closing off areas. These can be constructed with glass windows in each panel to allow for visibility. Although it may not be reasonable to expect perfectly quiet areas within one facility, consideration should be given to minimise noise transference during the sessions.
- If information technology resources are to be included in the library resource centre, there are a whole range of specific requirements that need to be met to ensure that the resources contained within it are accessible, that there has been provision for adequate cabling and power points and suitable furniture for the students. If it is to be an instructional area, the layout is critical. Placing computers around the wall may not be the best layout.

Connections Newsletter

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 on helping library professionals keep abreast of the latest in information services and information technology relevant to school libraries.

Connections is distributed free of charge to all schools in Australia and New Zealand. All prices quoted in *Connections* are in Australian dollars.

Connections contributions

SCIS welcome submissions for work or articles to be published in future issues of *Connections*. Of interest are articles that may relate to the management of information or resource management in schools.

Length

Articles may range in length from 500 to 1,500 words; however, work outside these specifications will be considered.

Submissions

Contributions and correspondence are welcome and should be forwarded to scisinfo@curriculum.edu.au. Please include contact details.

Connections online

www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connect/connect.htm

SCISWeb Handy Hints

1 Matched resources lists in SCISWeb

SCIS has recently made an enhancement to the *SCISWeb Results* screen in response to customer feedback from the SCIS Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire conducted in Term 4, 2002. The *Your SCIS order file RESULTS* screen now also displays *SCIS number*, *Title*, *Author and ISBN* for each matched item in a *SCISWeb* order.

Customers are now able to view a detailed list of matched orders created in *SCISWeb*. Log onto *SCISWeb* and click on the *Create Orders* button. Place the cursor into the *Enter Orders Here* box. Type or scan ISBNs and/or SCIS numbers into the box and click on *Process Order* button. Click on the *Results* link from the *ORDERS TABLE* box. The list of matched resources will appear on screen for customers to view or print.

Customers may use the new *Your SCIS order file RESULTS* screen to check resources against the *usmarc.dat* file or the original order. Customers may also print and display the *Your SCIS order file RESULTS* screen to alert school staff to new resources processed by the library. SCIS invites customers to provide feedback on the new screen by emailing scisinfo@curriculum.edu.au.

2 GMD searches in SCIS OPAC

Customers using SCIS OPAC can now search specifically on *GMD* (General Material Designator) the broad class of materials to which an item belongs. Log onto *SCISWeb* and select SCIS OPAC. Select the *Guided Search* tab. Select 75 records per page to ensure maximum number of hits per page are displayed.

In the first *Find* box, type in a subject search term, for example, *Information Technology*. Use the down arrow *In* the *In* box to select *Subject* from the drop-down list.

In the second *Find* box, type in a *GMD* type, for example, *Chart*. Use the down arrow in the

In box to select *GMD* from the drop-down list. Click on the *Search* button to retrieve the catalogue record.

This search will generate a list of catalogue records for charts about information technology. Customers may wish to impose date limits so that they may use this type of list as a selection tool when wishing to purchase recently published charts in a specific subject area.

To apply date limits, click on the *More Limits* icon. Key in the year, for example 1999, in the *Date* field and click on the radio button for > greater than. Note that you must always enter the year immediately prior to the year you require. Click on the *Set Limits* button. Continue with your search for charts in specific subject areas.

3 Foreign language websites

The SCIS database contains over 4,000 quality educational websites and includes many sites that are written in a foreign language or include an option to view in a foreign language.

Library staff looking for websites in a particular language can use the following search strategy in SCIS OPAC. Log onto *SCISWeb* and select SCIS OPAC. Select the *Guided Search* tab. In the first *Find* box, type in a subject search term, for example, *French language*. Use the down arrow in the *In* box to select *Subject* from the drop-down list.

In the second *Find* box, type in website. Use the down arrow in the *In* box to select *GMD* from the drop-down list. Click on the *Search* button to retrieve the catalogue records (subject terms typed into SCIS OPAC are not required to be case sensitive). This search will generate a list of catalogue records for French language websites.

4 Readers on SCIS database

Many readers have been catalogued and their catalogue records are available on the SCIS database for downloading. Log onto *SCISWeb*

and select *Create Orders*. Scan or type the ISBNs into the *Enter Orders Here* box and process the order as normal. Including all the school readers in the library system helps minimise losses, locate titles at any time, and also maintains an inventory of the school's collection.

5 Handy Hints in SCISWeb Manual

All Handy Hints published in *Connections* are added to the *SCISWeb Manual*. Library staff who wish to read the cumulative collection can locate it at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/manuals/handyhints.htm.

6 Searching by ISBN

SCIS has recently included a new search field called *ISBN/ISSN/ISMN* in the SCIS OPAC *Basic Search* screen. This is in response to customer feedback from the *SCIS Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire* conducted in Term 4 2002.

Searching by ISBN is usually only necessary when customers have previously scanned or typed an ISBN into *Create Orders* but have received a record for a resource with a duplicate ISBN.

There are two methods to search by ISBN in SCIS OPAC. Log onto *SCISWeb* and select SCIS OPAC option. On the *Basic Search* screen type or scan an ISBN into the *Find* box. Select *ISBN/ISSN/ISMN* from the *In* box. Click on the *Search* button to retrieve the catalogue record.

Alternatively, log onto *SCISWeb* and select SCIS OPAC option. Select the *Guided Search* tab. On the first line in the *Find* box type or scan in the ISBN. Click on the *Search* button to retrieve the catalogue record. Note that you can also use the pull-down arrow in the *In* box to select *ISBN* or *ISSN* or *ISMN* from the drop-down list; however, this additional step is not necessary.

Island Journeys: A Quest for Inspiration

Joint conference of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) and the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA).

Anticipation is building as planning is finalised for the 2003 joint national conference of the Children's Book Council and the Australian School Library Association. Island Journeys: A Quest for Inspiration, to be held in Hobart from October 2–5, will be a conference experience that will challenge, energise and entertain. The very best offerings from both parent organisations presented with a distinctly

Tasmanian flavour will make this a conference not to be missed.

Keynote speakers

We are excited to have attracted a range of cutting edge keynote speakers:

- Keith Curry Lance (Director, Library Research Service, Denver Colorado) coordinated the definitive Colorado Study, which proves the relationship between student test scores and the presence of a well-staffed, well-stocked, well-supported school library. He is a speaker that no library staff would want to miss. Keith and

Gary Hartzell were keynote speakers at the 2002 White House Summit, which was convened by Laura Bush to discuss how to improve the quality of school libraries and librarianship in the USA.

- Gary Hartzell (Professor, Educational Administration and Supervision University of Nebraska, Omaha) focuses on advocacy. His work explores why library staff still lack influence and what techniques they should use to gain more.
- Christina Doyle (Director of Learning Technologies, KCSOS Learning Center, Kern County California USA) has produced

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Designing a School Library Resource Centre (cont.)

- Before plans are drawn up there needs to be a whole school stocktake of resources. The building of a new facility could be an ideal opportunity to rationalise the resources and plan which should be centrally located and managed. The range of collections that could now be housed could be quite broad and include teacher reference, maths, science equipment and class sets. As the detailing for shelving and storage will be done in the planning process too, the full extent of the resources to be housed in the new facility needs to be known.
- One of the areas that needs much consideration are the offices and work areas. It is much more efficient and manageable when the planning for the teaching and learning program and the administrative and technical activities occur in different spaces. I believe strongly that teacher librarians require separate offices to be able to plan and work effectively. It is essential that there are also adequate and well-planned work areas for the library technician, parent assistants or when processing work is being done by the teacher librarian. Further considerations include good visibility of the library for staff, compactuses for storage and a sink within the work space.
- The library and its resources must be readily accessible to all members of the

school community. Access for the delivery of resources and supplies also needs to be carefully reviewed. If there is any part of the library on a second level, consider the health and safety aspects of carrying books and other resources up and down.

Provision of a ramp and installation of a dumb waiter are worth considering!

- The layout of the new facility could also provide the school with an opportunity to gain a small multipurpose or function area. If a foyer is well designed, it will allow classes to enter and leave the library easily. It does, therefore, need to be a fairly large space. As such it could be a wonderful display area or gallery, and an ideal space for book fairs. With the addition of an adjacent kitchen, it could also serve as a function area for staff and parents.
- Consider traffic flow. The placement of entry and exit doors is critical. Consider allowing for installation of a security system.
- Where there are multiple spaces within the library, ensure that classes will not disrupt others as they go in and through the library.
- Carefully consider the height of shelving, height of display boards, height and plan of charge desk in relation to your clientele. Talk to other teacher librarians and the suppliers as well.
- Natural light creates a wonderful environment but shelving cannot be too

near windows. Skylights can be an effective way of increasing natural light.

- Internal lighting must ensure that there is a pleasant even light and that there are no dark spots. Remember that the shelving and other furniture are moveable, and the next librarian may want to change the layout! Don't restrict the changes in the layout by the poor selection of lighting.
- You may wish to create a staff resource area. As well as teacher reference material, items such as computers, photocopier, laminator, binder and desks or tables and chairs could be provided to allow for team planning sessions – close to the resources and close to the teacher librarian!

This list is not exhaustive but I trust that it gives you some guidelines that could prove useful if you are ever fortunate enough to have the opportunity to develop a new library and resource centre.

Kaye Hunter is the teacher librarian at St Leonard's College in Brighton, Victoria, where the Library Resource Centre will be greatly increased in size and re-designed as part of the redevelopment of the whole Junior School. Kaye was teacher librarian at Geelong Grammar School, Glamorgan Campus during the planning, designing and building of the Library and Multi Media Centre which was completed in 2000.

1 Subscription rates for 2004

The 2004 prices for *SCISWeb* will be located on our website at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/subscrib.htm in July. This information will allow library staff sufficient time to include *SCISWeb* in the library budget for 2004.

2 SCIS at the ASLA conference – Island Journeys: A Quest for Inspiration

SCIS is pleased to be involved in the ASLA conference in Hobart 2–5 October. SCIS staff will be available at the trade stand to answer any questions about SCIS products and services. There will also be an opportunity for delegates to attend the SCIS staff session conducted during the program. Details about the conference are available at www.islandjourneys.com.au.

3 SCIS at the SLANZA conference – Powerful Partnerships

On September 22–25, SCIS will attend the SLANZA conference in Christchurch, New Zealand and will be involved in presenting a session. SCIS staff look forward to meeting library staff from New Zealand schools and to answering any questions about SCIS products and services. Further information is located at www.eenz.com/slanza.htm.

4 SCIS customer satisfaction survey

Towards the end of 2002, SCIS sent out a questionnaire to school library staff to ascertain their use, attitude and in-depth knowledge of *SCISWeb*. The responses came from over 1000 schools and covered government, Catholic and independent primary, secondary, K–12 and a host of other variations. The responses were from a large variety of school sizes.

Most library staff order SCIS records weekly. About 70% of respondents order between 11 and 40 records each time they use *SCISWeb*. Another 17% order more than 40 records at a time.

Summary

Overall, *SCISWeb* customers were very happy with the service and product. This was shown in the very small number of library staff who needed to contact SCIS for product support. 92% of respondents were happy with the hit rate (the rate at which a school matches its list of resources with items in the SCIS database).

The overall 2002 hit rate for *SCISWeb* was 84.7%. SCIS aims for an 85% or greater hit rate for each educational sector. About 5% of respondents thought the ordering and downloading process needed improvement.

Comments from respondents provided the most value to the SCIS team. Many people stated how fast and easy *SCISWeb* was to use and how it contributed to an efficient library service. A number of dislikes were mentioned too. A few common threads were:

- SCIS OPAC timeout is too short
- inconsistency in records relating to series and publisher data
- request for more subject headings per record
- improve subject headings for fiction, especially junior fiction
- ability to order records directly in SCIS OPAC
- perception that ISBNs cannot be searched for in SCIS OPAC
- unclear as to which items have not been matched in processed *SCISWeb* orders.

It was also clear that many respondents were unfamiliar with either SCIS OPAC or the *SCIS Monthly Lists of Websites*. One reason for this lack of familiarity was insufficient time to explore all facets of *SCISWeb*. Another was a lack of knowledge that these services were even available.

The information collected through the 2002 *SCIS Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire* has clearly identified specific areas for improvements – data consistency, system functionality and communication of value added services.

SCIS wishes to thank all who participated in the questionnaire. The detailed feedback has allowed SCIS to contact library staff who had specific problems. SCIS Support staff are more than happy to help customers with their queries, especially regarding their downloading of websites and how to effectively search SCIS OPAC.

5 Improvements planned for SCIS

SCISWeb Customer profile

SCIS is planning to enhance the *SCISWeb Customer profile* to include email addresses. Check the *What's new* link at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/catalog/webupdat.htm for updates.

Free *SCISWeb* Trial

A free *SCISWeb* trial will give library staff the opportunity to preview the *SCISWeb* product over two days of your choice. As part of this trial, you may download up to 20 catalogue records to import into the library system. You can also view catalogue records on the SCIS database by performing one of the many search options in SCIS OPAC.

This trial opportunity will enable you to experience the time-saving capacity of downloading cataloguing records rather than doing original cataloguing.

To take advantage of this great offer, contact SCIS customer support:

Tel: 1800 337 405 (free call within Australia and outside Melbourne metropolitan area)
+61 3 9207 9600

Fax: 1300 780 545 (within Australia)
+61 3 9639 1616 (international)

Email: scisinfo@curriculum.edu.au

An order form is located at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/handouts/handouts.htm.

Weeding the Resource Garden (cont.)

collection, the process could have been far less painful and traumatic if carefully developed practices and procedures had been put into place. My motto has now become:

‘Those who undertake the act of “weeding” must do so with an objective mindset, be armed with ratified procedures and criteria, have a sound knowledge of the collection, understand the curriculum and the clientele and have the support of all key stakeholders (not just the principal).’

To ensure that you don't experience a similar fate, consider the following answers to the *Why? Who? What? and When?* questions of weeding.

Why?

The *Why?* of weeding a resource collection should be inherent in the rationale for the whole collection development policy. As articulated in *Learning for the Future: Developing information services in schools*, (Second Edition), effective resourcing of the curriculum ensures that:

- every student has access to a variety of quality, relevant and current information resources
- the students' personal growth is supported by resources that meet their developmental needs and interests
- the teachers' effectiveness is enhanced by access to recent curriculum and professional development materials.

The key words here are relevant, dynamic, current and recent curriculum materials, all of which imply a diligent assessment of all existing resources to maximise their effectiveness in supporting the changing curriculum and students' needs and interests.

Who?

In most instances the library staff are left with the task of 'doing the weeding', usually because it is seen as the domain of the library (and because everyone else is too busy). While it wouldn't be argued that the library staff have a better understanding of the collection, the needs and interests of the clients and areas of greatest demand (because they work with the

collection constantly), a sound knowledge of the curriculum is also essential. I would suggest that the teaching staff have the best knowledge of the curriculum to be able to make informed judgements about resources. The value of involving teachers in the weeding process shouldn't stop there. As well as providing 'extra hands' for the job, it also creates an opportunity for the school staff to interrogate the library collection and obtain a better understanding of the resources actually in the school, and to develop a greater sense of ownership.

Impossible, you say? Here is a great strategy that has worked a number of times for me.

- 1 Firstly, seek support from the principal to provide access to a scheduled after-school time slot such as staff meeting time to avoid having to find extra time.
- 2 Secondly, provide the staff with some light refreshments – a few good bottles of wine and some great nibbles usually do the trick.
- 3 While the staff are being 'fed and watered', provide them with a rationale for this essential maintenance task. Provide guidelines and criteria for what they should be looking for and allocate responsibilities and areas of the collection according to expertise and interest.
- 4 Set them to task, making sure that you have plenty of boxes to store the resources.
- 5 Once the task is completed, allow all staff the opportunity to review and rescue any resources they think should be kept in the collection or that they might want to keep for their personal use.

You should be pleasantly surprised, not only by the rate at which the task is completed but also by the level of engagement and conversations about the curriculum among members of staff. The offshoot to this is usually an increased use of the library by the staff because they have discovered some great treasures to use in their curriculum programs. Also, never underestimate the value of the most treasured clients – the students. They are discerning and honest in the evaluation of what is valued and read. Input from these two groups as well as the expertise of all library staff will provide the best balance.

What?

The *What?* to weed is usually the most controversial aspect of weeding. The quote 'one

man's trash is another man's treasure' is very apt in this process as books in particular are value-laden. While we think nothing of deleting files, electronic resources and even websites from computers, the mere suggestion that certain books be removed from the shelves can create an emotionally charged and often tenuous situation for library staff. A book is often considered a sacred script that has been painstakingly written, edited, published, sold, catalogued, processed, shelved, circulated and, hopefully, read with enthusiasm. How can it now be discarded with the mere toss of a hand?

It is essential, therefore, that an objective set of criteria is established to minimise emotional pleas to retain specific items. Discretion of course is always essential, as is compromise in some instances, but on the whole standards should be maintained wherever possible. Before the weeding process begins, the following are what I would consider essential prerequisites:

- an extensive knowledge of the school's curriculum and client borrowing practices
- a comprehensive print-out from your library system listing those resources that haven't been borrowed in the last 12–18 months and conversely the popular items within the collection. These statistics indicate the heaviest and lightest areas of use
- *ratified* weeding criteria. If you do not have a weeding policy, you can develop one based on the criteria of your selection policy.

Weeding criteria

As a basic rule of thumb, the following principles should apply:

- 1 Resources that no longer reflect the curriculum being taught at the school, which contain outdated or inaccurate information or show prejudice or stereotypes, should be removed.
- 2 Items that are damaged or in disrepair should be removed immediately.
- 3 If the items have been 'loved to death', appreciate that you have 'had your money's worth' and replace them with a new copy (if it is still in print).
- 4 Some aspects of the collection become outdated more quickly than others. For example, the science section would become outdated more quickly than the literature section. Areas of the collection where information and knowledge changes rapidly need to be scrutinised more closely.

- 5 Check that the reading level of resources corresponds to that of the students who will be accessing those resources for specific units of work. What is the use of having a range of resources on a particular topic if the students who are examining that topic can't read them?

When?

When you choose to weed is dependent on a number of factors that will relate to your particular context including staffing, size of the collection, legacy policies and procedures that you may have inherited and the current status of the collection. Libraries that are left to 'run down' over the years without proper maintenance processes would require a more intense process than those libraries where staff continually and consistently monitor the collection. It truly is like a garden with weeds. If you do a bit of weeding each week, it is easier to control the weeds and keep the garden in good health. If you neglect the garden, however, it becomes harder and a more timely process to remove all the weeds.

Whenever weeding is carried out it should be as unobtrusive as possible. Shutting the library for a month to weed and stocktake doesn't make many friends and is usually difficult to justify although there are times when these drastic measures may be needed. You need therefore to select a time that is most suitable to your context and is again agreed upon by the library committee or other management group and the stakeholders.

Some suggestions

Some or all of these you may find useful:

- 1 Develop a weeding policy *before* you begin the process.
- 2 Have the policy approved by the library committee, school council or whole staff (this will avoid conflict later if there is a problem with what has been weeded).
- 3 Involve as many people as possible to assist with the weeding process, especially teachers or the library committee. This broadens the ownership of the collection and gives stakeholders a greater appreciation of the value of the resource collection.
- 4 Provide opportunities for teachers to re-examine resources before they are discarded. This will ensure that teachers have the opportunity to retrieve favourite books before they are discarded.
- 5 Ensure that removal of the resources from the school is swift. Don't have them sitting around in boxes (where they may get taken out and put back on the shelf – very annoying if they have gone through the withdrawal process).
- 6 Remove all identifying marks from weeded resources or they will become a boomerang. Many a book has returned from the rubbish tip by a proud parent who thinks he has done you a big favour by bringing it back.
- 7 Try to avoid the need to have a huge weed where the impact is more noticeable than the gradual and ongoing removal of resources that are no longer of value to the collection.
- 8 Removal of resources can sometimes cause controversy no matter what you do. Strategies of selling them, throwing them on the rubbish tip, sending them overseas, putting them in classrooms all have their objectors. Make sure whatever process you select has the approval of key stakeholders.
- 9 Weeding should not be treated in isolation but should be seen within the context of the whole collection development process for the school's resources.
- 10 Update the library database by removing the records of weeded items as soon as possible to ensure patrons are not trying to find phantom resources on the shelves.
- 11 Communicate with stakeholders on a regular basis through the school newsletter, on a noticeboard in the library or on the school's website. Let them know what is happening in the library to avoid any misunderstandings.

Conclusion

The process of weeding a resource collection is challenging but rewarding. There is something satisfying about browsing the shelves of a well-maintained resource collection where resources are current, easy to access and in great condition compared to one where the shelves are crammed and you continually come across resources that you have weeded from your own collection 15 years before. There may be fewer resources

but they are more likely to be used by patrons if they are relevant to their needs and easily accessed. Many schools have limited budgets and this makes it difficult to replace weeded resources thus causing a reluctance to remove them in the first place, but we as educators are accountable for ensuring the provision of the best possible curriculum to our students. This is aptly written in the following quote:

'The achievement of many of the common and agreed goals of schooling is dependent on the school's ability to deliver a curriculum supported by a relevant, dynamic and responsive collection of information resources.'
Learning for the Future: Developing information services in schools, (Second Edition), 1993 p. 25.

We therefore need to tend our gardens as diligently as possible – happy gardening!

Leonie McIlvenny

Leonie has been a teacher librarian at several schools in Western Australia and is currently Curriculum Officer, Library and Information Services Department of Education, Western Australia.

Christchurch City Libraries and the School Community

Although our children's services are primarily focused on the individual customer, we also offer programs specifically for schools. These may be in-house group visits as well as outreach initiatives.

One of the goals of Christchurch City Libraries is to make library use a lifelong experience and, therefore, our core services include programs and activities designed to engender and maintain our customers' enthusiasm for ongoing, frequent library visits.

Nearly all the libraries in our network welcome regular and casual visits by primary and intermediate (Years 1–8) school classes. Most of our libraries are able to offer classes a four-term program promoting recreational reading and developing children's understanding of how their library works, including discovering what resources are to be found there and how they can best be accessed. Use of presentation software enables classes as a whole to gain an understanding of our web-based catalogue and selected Internet sites. Some class visits are linked to curriculum activities and are designed in collaboration with teachers.

Christchurch City Libraries has traditionally had good and positive relationships with the school community. The usual school and public library issues exist of course: having enough resources to support students' homework needs and finding effective and timely ways in which to share information, including planning priorities for the library or school year, but overall our goals are complementary rather than conflicting.

Programs for primary and intermediate schools

The two basic service delivery options for schools are in-house visits and outreach.

In-house visits

Class visits to our libraries are fairly structured, particularly if a class comes frequently. Schools close to one of our community libraries usually want to visit regularly and so the programs on offer look at building, on an incremental basis, students' understanding of the resources and services available. Class visits begin with an overview and move on to more specific topics such as how the materials are arranged; how the catalogue works; what books might interest them

as readers. Interactive games are used to make the process fun.

While class visits are undoubtedly beneficial to the students, especially on a short-term basis, the library has also begun to explore longer term options for getting the library message to the 'gatekeepers', parents and caregivers who have the ability to bring their children to the library even more frequently than is possible via the school visit. Getting parents together is more challenging but may ultimately be as effective, if not more so, than the traditional class visit program.

Outreach

Most of our libraries have qualified children's librarians who are able to visit schools for book weeks or to talk to classes on specific topics. They are also open to any opportunities to speak to teaching staff and to parents. In addition the Centre for the Child, the Central City Library's specialist children's team offers a dynamic program called 'The Travelling Roadshow', an interactive presentation of story reading and storytelling for junior classes (Years 1–3). This program is targeted at schools that, for whatever reason, are unable to visit a community library but want to alert their students to the opportunities for finding great reading and information beyond the school gates.

Resource and curriculum support

Because curriculum support resources are always in demand by individual students and their parents and because print materials tend to be in short supply, especially when several schools are concentrating on the same topic, Christchurch City Libraries has initiated some strategies to meet demand.

Electronic resources

In the past couple of years we have focused on building electronic resources to complement and extend our print materials. Initial work concentrated on local history fact files written in child-friendly language; information on well-known New Zealanders; interviews with New Zealand writers including original short stories by many of those featured. From a recreational reading promotion angle we developed interactive games that lead children to 'personalised' book lists. All of these electronic resources are accessible from the Kids Stuff pages of the library's website and are actively promoted to students during

class visits. (See: <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/KidsStuff.asp>.)

Homework Zones and Homework Zone Club
Although, like all public libraries, we have always helped students work through their homework assignments, during 2002 we decided to refocus walk-in customers' attention on the reference and allied homework resources. Each library in our network to a greater or lesser extent highlighted these resources through more clearly defining the spaces where the resources were kept, hanging a 'Homework Zone' sign above this area, and ensuring that the spaces containing table, chairs, print and electronic resources, were dedicated to children's use only, for a set time after school. In addition we developed an incentive or reward scheme to encourage children to use the Homework Zones. Children can enrol in the Homework Zone Club, get a Club Card which is stamped whenever they use the library for homework, and after four stamps are obtained, earn a simple reward ranging from some free photocopying or printing to entering the draw for a book voucher. (See: <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/Childrens/HomeworkZone.asp>.)

Reading and literacy support

An exciting new program aimed directly at schools was launched in 2003. Called 'The Reading Crusade', it sought to encourage children to read by aligning the library with the city's local Super 12 rugby franchise, the Crusaders. Children were asked to read their choice of 12 super titles, and complete an entry form with details of their reading. Local sporting heroes encouraged the children by endorsing the reading message. Children could win rugby and reading related prizes, presented by Crusaders' squad members at the end of the promotion. All children who entered the Reading Crusade received a certificate printed with signatures of the Crusaders Super 12 Team. The Reading Crusade, a powerful partnership between public library and sport, encouraged and developed reading in Christchurch schools and supported their literacy program.

Bill Nagelkerke

*Children's and Young Adult Services
Coordinator*

Christchurch City Libraries

Email: bill.nagelkerke@ccc.govt.nz

Website: <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/>



Internetting Corner

The following websites can be easily accessed on the Internet via the links found on the Curriculum Corporation's Connections website for Issue 45 at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connect/connect.htm.

ANZ economic commentary

www.anz.com.au/business/info_centre/economic_commentary/economic_com.asp
Current economic issues and predicted forecasts form the basis of this authoritative website which is suitable for senior secondary students undertaking economics and business studies.
SCIS 1074884

The Australian and New Zealand Victoria Cross website

<http://members.ozemail.com.au/~vcweb/>
An extensive site which includes the history of the Victoria Cross, details of the recipients from Australia and New Zealand and a selection of accounts of VC winners.
SCIS 1118932

Coolmath4kids

www.coolmath4kids.com/
Primary and secondary students will be engrossed by the mathematics activities available on this website. The coverage of topics is broad and they are presented as interactive games.
SCIS 1118892

Forum Romanum

www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6946/rome.html
The Forum Romanus was the centre of power in the ancient Roman Empire. Features of this website include a virtual tour of Rome, a mythology dictionary, aspects of life and language, an extensive reading list and website links.
SCIS 1048740

Japan reference page

www.japanreference.com/
Students and teachers who need background information and data on most aspects of contemporary Japan will find this a useful starting point.
SCIS 1118925

New Zealand history

www.nzhistory.net.nz/index.html
Created under the auspices of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage this site enables users to search a wealth of material relating to New Zealand's history. A discussion forum is another notable feature.
SCIS 1099610

Peter Rabbit and Friends from Beatrix Potter

www.beatrixpotter.com/
This authorised website contains Beatrix Potter's sketches, letters and some biographical details. Lower primary students will delight in the interactive games and videos.
SCIS 1118920

Plumb Design Visual Thesaurus

www.visualthesaurus.com/index.jsp
Using visualisation software to create spatial maps this amazing thesaurus allows users to easily understand the dynamic interrelationships between words and meanings. A must to bookmark.
SCIS 1101234

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

<http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/wonders/>
Developed by an academic at the University of Southern Florida this website provides the location, history and a description of each of the seven ancient wonders. Links are provided to other notable architectural and natural wonders.
SCIS 1118916

SNZ – Schools' Corner

www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/schools.nsf/htmldocs/Schools%27+corner
New Zealand's official statistical agency, Statistics New Zealand, has created a schools' segment on their overall database. It contains curriculum links, topics and activities for both for secondary and primary students, and 2001 census links.
SCIS 1118951

SOUNZ New Zealand music composers

www.sounz.org.nz/index.php
The principal section of this site is the easily searchable database of over 250 New Zealand composers and their works. Additional features include a current news section, forthcoming events and associated links.
SCIS 1118954

Web Site Hosting by NetNation

www.netnation.com/customer/glossary.cfm
NetNation has provided an easily understood glossary of acronyms, abbreviations and terms allied to computers, technology and the Internet which is suitable for teachers to use in classroom situations.
SCIS 1118954

Welcome to Narnia

www.narnia.com/
Fans of the Narnia chronicles by CS Lewis can access information relating to the forthcoming movie as well as archival material on the books and author.
SCIS 1049039

wickED

www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/
This section of the larger New Zealand Ministry of Education site, Te Kete Ipurangi – The Online Learning Centre, enables students to pursue their interests in mathematics, literacy, technology and science via linked websites and enthralling interactive activities.
SCIS 1102424

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, South Grafton Primary School, paull@turboweb.net.au. The Internet sites abstracted in Internetting Corner 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 sites reviewed may not be permanent.



Resources

Class-ready tasks

resourcebank

click and go...

resourcebank is an online subscription-based resource consisting of class-ready tasks. Subscriptions are available in the key learning areas of Maths, SOSE, English, Science for primary teachers and students and lower, middle, upper secondary teachers and students. Health and Physical Education is available for lower and upper secondary teachers and students only.

This broad collection of tasks can be used within lesson plans or as handy revision material for school or home use. *resourcebank* is available 24 hours a day to teachers and students for use at school or home, using one school-allocated password.

Thinking through the task

The content is offered as a task and accompanied with information to guide students in their approach to and completion of the activity, enhancing higher order thinking skills.

Curriculum content is located through a topic browse function or by keyword search.

resourcebank contains hundreds of tasks, associated information and educational web links.

Features include:

- questions and tasks supported with model answers, as well as tips
- a collection of facts, figures, case studies, worksheets and other useful information to help students complete the task
- explanations of terms, concepts and words, descriptions of people and events noted in the task
- a collection of reviewed, topic-related websites providing further research opportunities
- the News button feature advising teachers of free new content additions to the Curriculum Corporation site including lesson plans, current happenings in education, and URLs to vetted education sites.

Email our sales team to request a brochure or pdf listing of the topics covered in *resourcebank*.

Add subjects to the initial subscription

You and your colleagues may add subjects and year levels to your initial subscription during any stage of your 12-month subscription.

Price

Primary	\$64.95 for each KLA \$199.00 for all KLAs
Secondary	\$64.95 for each lower, middle or upper secondary module \$149.95 for all 3 levels of one KLA \$99.00 for both levels of H&PE

To subscribe

Order forms are available at www.resourcebank.curriculum.edu.au or contact our friendly sales staff for more information on *resourcebank* and how to subscribe.

Tel: +61 3 9207 9600 or free call
1800 337 405 (within Australia outside Melbourne metropolitan area)

Fax: 1300 780 545 (within Australia)
+61 3 9639 1616 (international)

Email: sales@curriculum.edu.au

Remind students of the six-step information process

Information Literacy Planning Posters

Publisher: Capra Ryan Australia
RRP: \$49.98 (set of 6 cards)
SCIS No: 1046670

These posters are designed to provide an overview of the six steps of the information process in a fun format. The illustrations in these colourful A4 cards depict the chameleon using the information process to solve the problem of climbing the mountain. Set of 6 cards \$49.95.

Bookmarks

The quirky illustrations provide a quick summary of the information process.

Pack of 200 \$22.00.

SCIS Subject Headings Fifth Edition

\$120.00 (Includes GST and postage)

SCIS Subject Headings is a continually evolving list that reflects the curriculum needs of the Australasian primary and secondary school sector. A strength of the list is the use of Australasian terminology. Use of the headings ensures relevant results are obtained when searching school library catalogues, metadata repositories and bibliographic databases. Important features are:

- revised and enhanced subject headings specific to New Zealand and the Pacific islands
- a revised headings structure, with more scope and indexing notes
- terms and phrases updated to reflect changes in technology, trends and attitudes
- detailed guidelines on how to add more specific headings
- inclusion of more natural language terms reflecting contemporary searching strategies
- extensive cross referencing from non-allowed to allowed terms and from allowed terms to related terms for inclusion in library catalogues
- an extensive introduction and revised guidelines for cataloguing or indexing.

An order form is located at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/handouts/handouts.htm.

How to Become a Successful Writer of Humorous Children's Fiction

SCIS catalogues a variety of materials including the works by well-known and popular author Andy Griffiths. The following edited extracts are from a longer, light-hearted article written by Andy which conveys the difficulties writers may experience in their endeavour to have their work published.

Writing humorous fiction for children is an exacting and demanding challenge, fraught with danger and not for the faint-hearted, but with a little practice anyone can do it. Just follow my simple step-by-step guide!

- 1 Enrol in a Diploma of Education course. Come into contact with a variety of books about how to teach creative writing. Get inspired and start doing some of the suggested activities yourself. Get an exercise book and start recording your favourite memories, jokes, dreams and the tiny moments in your life that make you happy. Or sad. Or whatever. The more you write in this book, the more you will discover there is to write. Buy another exercise book and keep going. Enrol in a course that promises to teach you how to write for publication. Write an article about taxi driving and sell it to the newspaper. Get your diploma, leave the city and get a job teaching English in a country high school. This will provide you with a stable income and a laboratory for developing your fledgling career as a successful writer of humorous children's fiction.
- 2 Test out your writing on your students. Photocopy collections of pieces of your writing and self-publish them. Get in touch with a mail order writer's bookshop (now online at www.writersbookcase.com.au) and read every book ever written on how to write. Go to writers' festivals and teacher conferences and hear as many real live writers talk about writing as possible. You should notice after a while that they all do it differently and that *there is no one right way to do it* . . . Now you're really on the way. Keep practising.
- 3 Place half of your pay each week in a bank account. This will be your writer's grant to yourself. After three years of teaching, take leave without pay, return to Melbourne, enrol in a professional writing course and do nothing but write for two years. During this time you should find an agent, have your work rejected by at least ten publishers and finally get your project accepted by an educational publisher, which wasn't quite what you had in mind. The publisher has the brilliant idea of getting Terry Denton to do the illustrations which wasn't quite what you had in mind either because you didn't know Terry Denton. It turns out to be incredibly fortuitous because he is an established name in the children's literature scene and he encourages you to keep going, and offers to illustrate anything else you do, which suddenly makes you a little more attractive to publishers because with an established name on the cover they are less likely to lose their money. So, four years later, that's how you get your first trade book, *Just Tricking!* off the ground and the rest is history.
- 4 While working on your first book meet a brilliant editor who can take your sad and pathetic attempts at writing humorous stories and help you to polish them into diamonds of comedic brilliance. Marry her if possible.
- 5 Join the Booked Out educational speaker's agency (www.bookedout.com.au) and begin to eke out a modest living as a visiting author. But beware. As a writer of humorous children's literature you will be expected to be funny. You may wish to do a course in stand-up comedy. Go to comedy tryout nights at Melbourne pubs and try out your fledgling stand-up comedy skills. Don't be scared. Sure, it's scary, but don't worry. Although the chances are very high that you will die, you won't actually die. However, at times (when you go on stage in front of a room full of people who are expecting you to make them laugh and you fail to make a single one of those people laugh) you will probably wish that you were actually dead.
- 6 Tim Winton once said that the difficult thing about writing for children is that you're writing in triangles. At one point of the triangle is you, at another point is your audience and at another point are the gatekeepers (adults, reviewers, teachers, parents, library staff etc). The art of successful children's writing is in pleasing, or at least appeasing, all three points: yourself, your audience and your gatekeepers. Not easy, but it is possible!
- 7 To be a successful children's writer you will need to get in touch with your inner child, but don't make the mistake of thinking that inner children are all sweetness and light. They can be argumentative, unreasonable, uncontrollable and highly irritating. You will need to embrace these qualities of your child as well. Oh, and when you're writing a story, get rid of the adults ASAP ... invoke the forces of anarchy, chaos, silliness, danger and magic. Watch truckloads of old comedy films. Take notes. Read JD Salinger, Dr Seuss, Lewis Carroll, Franz Kafka, Grimm's fairy tales and Enid Blyton. Take notes. Remember TS Eliot:

'It is just the literature that we read for "amusement" or purely for "pleasure" that may have the greatest and least suspected influence upon us.'

- 8 Now that you have published your first book, it shouldn't be long before you have your first bad review. Congratulations! Most people don't even make it to publication, and even then many don't even get a review at all. So take heart – you must be doing something right. Be aware that the reviewer is probably going to be revealing more about themselves than about your book. We often have strong reactions to people or objects that display qualities that we have disowned or repressed in ourselves. Books dealing in taboo subjects, for example, the gross and disgusting, often provoke strong responses – generally positive among kids, often negative amongst adults (at least initially). I suspect that this is because adults, in order to become adults (ie at least to fit their idea of what being adult is), feel they need to distance themselves from the qualities of children, one of these qualities being a quite natural fascination and amusement with the gross and disgusting. As a result of disowning their own fascination with the

continued on page 14

National Library – Services and Activities for Schools

You may think that the National Library of Australia, located in Canberra, is an organisation that you visit only on school trips. Increasingly the library is offering services through the web to assist teachers and librarians in schools in their programs and activities. These services complement the online services available through SCIS that provides a wonderful basis for discovering print and online information.

Online resources

PictureAustralia

www.pictureaustralia.org/

Over 600,000 images can be searched at www.pictureaustralia.org/. An extensive range of images are available from over 20 Australian and overseas libraries, galleries, museums and cultural organisations.

You can find:

- artworks include paintings, drawings, prints and posters of abstract art, fine art and portraits
- photographs capturing people, places and events
- objects including sculpture, scrimshaw, bark, costume, weapons
- images in black and white or full colour.

You will find a wide range of images for use in your curriculum. Postcards and promotional materials available by request.

PANDORA: the National Collection of Australian Online Publications

<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/index.html>

Have you ever wanted to use web resources and found that they were no longer available? The National Library has developed an archive of Australian web resources to ensure long-term access to online publications. Resources are selected across a very wide range of subject areas and are collected by the National Library, State Library of Victoria, State Library of South Australia, State Library of Western Australia, ScreenSound Australia, State Library of New South Wales, State Library of Queensland and the Northern Territory Library and Information.

You will find wonderful resources in areas such as state elections, environmental groups and topical issues such as refugee policy.

Online exhibitions

www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/online.html

The National Library houses a vast range of Australian and overseas treasures. We are increasingly making these resources available through exhibitions in the Library and also through online exhibitions where you can see images of material from the collection and also use interpretative text and resources created to assist teachers.

www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/online.html is the starting point for your discovery of the online exhibitions including famous Australians such as the explorer William John Wills, floral painter Ellis Rowan and our first Prime Minister, Edmund Barton.

Education kits

The Library has produced a series of online education kits for teachers. These education kits relate to online exhibitions such as *Bunyips*, *Treasures from the World's Great Libraries*, *Olive Cotton* and *Ellis Rowan*. The education kits are linked to the National Profiles and are aimed at pre-readers through to tertiary students.

More guides and resources

There are many other resources on the website to help you:

- *OzLife: Australian biography and book review index* provides access to the citations of articles, either biographical or book reviews, in major Australian newspapers and journals. www.nla.gov.au/ozlife/
- *Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts (RAAM)* is a free guide to collections of personal papers and non-governmental organisational records held by Australian libraries and archives. www.nla.gov.au/raam/
- *Australian Libraries Gateway (ALG)* is a free web-based directory service which has improved access to information about more than 5,400 Australian libraries, their collections and services. www.nla.gov.au/libraries/
- *Kinetica* is a charged-for service which provides access to a wide range of databases including a database of materials held by Australian libraries containing over 35 million holdings and 13 million bibliographic records. www.nla.gov.au/kinetica/

- Digitised collection material. The Library has for a number of years digitised pictures, maps, manuscripts and printed music. Many thousands of pages are now available on the Internet – see www.nla.gov.au/initiatives/diglibs.html for further information.

Tours

Many tours are offered at the National Library. The tours described below are formal tours that are run to bookings. Tours can be developed on request.

Formal tours

Crooks, Chooks and Books is the most popular education tour currently being offered at the Library. While on a physical tour of the library, participants are told some of the history of the National Library and introduced to the collection policy. Participants are introduced to exciting objects in our collection through the use of photographs. This information is provided in an entertaining and informative way.

A Thirst for Knowledge, Introduction to Research at the National Library is an introduction to research at the National Library. Participants are expected to arrive at the National Library with a topic already selected that they would like to research.

Students are given an orientation tour of the library incorporating the main reading rooms and practical information such as where the photocopy machines are and where books appear when they arrive from stacks. They are then given an introductory workshop on how to access the catalogue and search engines of the National Library website. Time is allowed for the students to practise the skills they have learned using the computers in the Main Reading Room.

Exhibition tours

Specialty tours are offered for current exhibitions. These tours give an insight to the exhibition by providing a level of information not accessible by captions and exhibition text alone.

Who works at the National Library?

This program looks at the range of jobs that take place at the National Library. The participants meet a librarian, a curator, a security guard, someone who works at the

front desk, a cleaner and a variety of other people who work at the National Library. In association with a physical tour of the library, the students develop a rudimentary understanding about the role of the National Library and how it works.

After the tour, students will complete an art activity at the National Library where they draw a member of staff and identify the job they do. These art works will be turned into a collage or wall display at school celebrating the range of jobs at the National Library.

Audience for tours

The National Library provides tailored educational tours for a wide range of the community. The audiences are:

Primary school students

- Crooks, Chooks and Books
- Exhibition tours

Secondary school and tertiary students

- Crooks, Chooks and Books
- Exhibition tours
- A Thirst for Knowledge

Adults

- Behind the scenes
- Exhibition tours

Children with disabilities (physical or intellectual)

- Who works at the National Library?
- Crooks, Chooks and Books

For bookings contact: Heidi Pritchard, Education Manager Events and Education Section, National Library of Australia, Tel: +61 2 6262 1207, Fax: +61 2 6273 4493, or Email: hpritchard@nla.gov.au

*Roxanne Missingham
Assistant Director-General,
Resource Sharing Division
National Library of Australia*

SCIS Standards for Cataloguing and Data Entry

SCIS is pleased to advise that *SCIS Standards for Cataloguing and Data Entry 2002 Edition* is now available on our website. This is the most current version and each chapter is available in pdf format at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/handouts/handouts.htm.

Island Journeys: A Quest for Inspiration (cont.)

a definition of information literacy that is recognised as definitive. Her focus is information literacy and the use and implications of technology in the teaching of information literacy skills.

- Lisa Forrest will be our opening speaker. Lisa brings multiple skills to this role. She has been an Olympic athlete, a TV reporter, the first woman to host a national TV sports show, a TV soapie actor and is now a successful author of children's fiction.
- Anthony Horowitz is another inspiring author. He has written horror and comedy for children, and television and film scripts including the recent *Foyles War*, which screened on the ABC.
- Tamora Pierce's fantasy writing and her interest and exploration of strong female characters make her a firm favourite.

Leading and managing, Literacy, Technology, and Teaching and Literature

A comprehensive range of workshop presentations will illustrate the four main program trails: Leading and managing, Literacy, Technology, and Teaching and Literature.

Over 30 authors and illustrators will participate in the program including favourites such as Bob Graham, Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, Isobelle Carmody, Gary Crew, Nick Earls, William Taylor, Melina Marchetta, Andrew Daddo, Matt Ottley, Ian Bone, Bruce Whatley, Marcus Zuzak, Catherine Bateson, Irini Savvides and Terry Denton.

Literature will be the focus of a special Saturday@Salamanca, where authors will present sessions amidst the colour and vitality of our famous market. Breakfast with the Stars will provide the opportunity for all participants to share a breakfast table with an author or illustrator. The conference dinner will be a Taste of Tasmania experience featuring the gourmet food and wine for which our state has developed such a fine reputation.

Tasmania is possibly at its most beautiful in the spring, with our spectacular scenery enhanced by lush greenery, blossom and tulip festivals. If you've been intending to visit the state, why not combine the conference with a tour of Tasmania in your school holidays? Perhaps you'd like to join the pre-conference

program tours to Flinders Island, Port Arthur and the Tasman Peninsula, many of which will be led by authors and illustrators.

Registration for Island Journeys is now open, with information and online registration available on our website at www.islandjourneys.com.au. Further details about the conference program and accommodation options can also be accessed from this site.

Please join us – plan your Island Journeys and share your quest for inspiration with us all in Hobart in October!

*Jane Hofto
Member of Publicity and Publishing
Sub-committee
Island Journeys conference, Hobart, Tasmania,
2–5 October 2003.*



ISLAND JOURNEYS
A Quest for Inspiration
www.islandjourneys.com.au

Dampier Primary School

Dampier Primary School was nominated as a Technology Focus School by the Federation Department of Western Australia in 1996 and awarded Apple Distinguished School status by Apple Computers in 1999. This school is the only Western Australian government school to receive this award. To receive this recognition the school had to demonstrate best practice and develop learning technology plans that would help other schools. Dampier Primary School was the forerunner of many innovative projects in the area and continues to display excellence. Our website can be viewed at www.dampier.wa.edu.au.

Dampier could be regarded as a remote and isolated community, as it is located 1,600 km north of Perth in the Pilbara region of Western Australia.

The location for the school would have to be one of the best in the state as it overlooks beautiful Hampton Bay. The attractions of the area and the work opportunities offered for spouse and partners mean that Dampier has no difficulty attracting experienced staff. Including limited access to an on-site technology expert who teaches and provides advice, information and troubleshooting expertise. This support has been accessed through the school's local merit selection process.

The school is a 70s style two-storey building with all but three classrooms located upstairs

in two wings. The school has a stable population of approximately 200 students ranging in age from 4–12 years, grouped into eight classrooms. High school students travel to Karratha by bus each day, a distance of 20 km.

Dampier is predominantly an Apple Macintosh school with a curriculum network of 40 iMac work stations. Seventeen of these work stations are organised into a learning technology centre along with printers, scanners, a data projector and various other peripheral devices. The Learning Technology Centre is used as a teaching room where Years 1–7 students spend 50–100 minutes per week learning a variety of skills such as iMovie production, Hyperstudio, and PowerPoint presentations. The Centre is also available for use by three senior classrooms when classes are not in progress. This year, Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) classes have been operating at Dampier Primary School two mornings a week. PEAC classes are offered to seven schools in the area following rigorous testing where students are selected to participate. Our Learning Technology Centre is made available to these students. In addition to this learning centre, a minilab with eight work stations is located on the other wing which is readily accessed by mainly early childhood students, but is not limited to them. The other work stations are divided between classrooms. In addition to these iMacs, kindergarten and pre-primary students have access to three PCs in their centre. All iMacs are networked so students can log on anywhere in the school

and all students and teachers have an individual log on. The library server runs ALICE, which can be accessed throughout the school and is a valuable tool when attempting to locate resources for research purposes etc.

While this equipment sounds wonderful, it serves no purpose unless the teachers have the skills, motivation and time to use and integrate it into the normal school program. Teachers have varying levels of skills; however, they all regularly use the school's technology to access emails and carry out Internet and library searches. Teachers actively encourage their students to use the available technology.

We don't use our computers merely as typewriters, but as a valuable teaching tool. Some examples of the kind of work being done include:

- Year 7 iMovie presentation of their camp
- PowerPoint presentations at a recent reporting to parents' day, where the students took each of their caregivers on a journey through their learning
- Year 4/5 and Year 1 buddy class multimedia presentation on the Golden Orb spider
- specialist programs for students at educational risk to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

*Christine Morton
Assistant Principal
Dampier Primary School
Western Australia*

How to Become a Successful Writer of Humorous Children's Fiction (cont.)

gross and disgusting, they can't stand to see other people being fascinated and amused by the gross and disgusting and they tend to come down very hard. Of course, on the other hand, your bad review could be due to the fact that your book sucks. You have to be prepared to be brutally honest with yourself. Write another book and make it better.

- 9 Set aside 10 to 15 years to get from where you are now to being a successful writer of humorous children's fiction.

10 Whatever you do, don't read articles about how to be a successful writer of humorous children's fiction written by successful writers of humorous children's fiction because they could be trying to put out misleading advice in order to eliminate competition. And even if they aren't, what's true for one person might not necessarily hold true for another. You'll have to invent your own way, find your own style, discover your own voice and pretty much invent your own market.

Good luck. Despite what many people will tell you, it is possible and you *can* do it!

Andy Griffiths is widely regarded as a successful author of humorous children's fiction. His collections of short stories include Just Tricking!, Just Annoying!, Just Stupid!, Just Crazy!, Just Disgusting! and a novel, The Day My Bum Went Psycho. Teacher notes for all his books are available on his website at www.andygriffiths.com.au/resdex.htm.

Metatags

Recently I developed a Victorian secondary college library home page that was to be placed on the school's Intranet with the view and eventuality of the home page being placed on the Internet or Extranet. When developing the home page, I took care to ensure teachers and students had maximum exposure to the library resources. This included links to the library's webpac catalogue, subscriber online databases, subject pathfinders developed for student assignments as well as providing information on the library services, hours, and staff contacts.

While an elaborate campaign was undertaken to ensure that both teachers and students were made aware of this new valuable library resource, care was also taken in developing metadata. When the library's home page is published onto the web, it is hoped that many people will be able to access the content or information provided. However, as we know, while it is now very easy to publish information on the web, it is becoming more difficult to find relevant information.

Metadata is the essential link between the information creator, the information seeker and the information user.

What is metadata?

Metadata is about data. In the most general of terms, metadata is information pertaining to a document. In creating web pages, the information we put on the page is content. Metadata is information used to describe or define that content. It is very similar to cataloguing physical resources, an activity that takes place in all libraries, in that it involves assigning subject headings and providing a brief description in the notes field.

As metadata is not content, it therefore does not appear on the Internet user's screen. Instead, metadata sits quietly in the 'HEAD' tag of an HTML document and adds annotation to the page for anyone or anything (web crawler, search engine or spider) that cares to look.

What are the benefits for adding metadata to your web pages?

Regardless of the advanced searching syntax employed, searching the web is largely a

matter of matching query words with words in the text of articles. Metadata aims to make the matching process easier.

Search engines, spiders and web crawlers index information on your web page (many then assign 'weightings of relevance') thereby enabling them to return a number of hits per search by an information searcher. Description and keywords are the two primary metatags often used by these search engines when matching a search request. The main benefit in using the description and keywords metatags, is that your web page is more likely to be located, indexed and ranked by a search engine. Consequently, when a visitor searches for a particular topic there's an improved chance they will find your page.

How do I use metatags?

Metatags are easy to incorporate into your web pages. They look just like regular HTML tags, but they follow a few rules:

- All begin with the word META, the element name.
- All are located within the HEAD element.
- No closing tag is used; the META element is an empty element.

When you use a metatag, you define attribute and value sets. For each attribute, you assign a value. An example of a metatag structure would be:

For the library's front page

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE> Secondary College Library Home
page
</TITLE>
<META NAME="author" CONTENT="Joyce
Tabone">
<META
NAME="keywords"CONTENT="secondary
college, secondary college library, library
catalogue, online databases, subject
pathfinders">
<META name="description"
content="Secondary College Library Home
page, providing access to the library
catalogue, online databases and subject
pathfinders.">
```

For a web page within the library's home page

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
```

```
<TITLE> Resources for Senior Students - Year
10 Science - Chemistry: Elements </TITLE>
<META NAME=>"author"CONTENT="Joyce
Tabone">
<META NAME="keywords"
CONTENT="secondary college library,
subject pathfinder chemistry, chemistry,
elements">
<META name="description"
content="Secondary College Library -
Subject Pathfinder for Year 10 Science
students on Chemistry-Elements. Includes
links to useful websites, online databases,
library catalogue, etc.">
```

All of these tags provide different information about the page. None of them contribute to how the content is formatted or looks; however, the main benefit is that you are helping visitors find your page. Metatags are one of the most useful pieces of code you can write. Consideration should be given to adding meta description and keywords to your web pages.

Joyce Tabone, Librarian

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SCIS Authority Files

SCIS catalogue records provide subject headings without references. *SCIS Authority Files* links subject headings with their references to enhance access to your library resources.

SCIS Authority Files:

- capitalises on the value already invested in the library collections
- enhances subject searching by students and staff
- improves retrieval rates of the most appropriate resources
- increases borrowing of all resources
- offers a cost effective library solution.

An order form is located at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/handouts/handouts.htm



Cataloguing and Database News

New and revised subject headings to the SCIS Subject Headings Fifth Edition
 In addition to the amended headings published in each issue of *Connections* we also publish a cumulative list of heading changes which is located on our website at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/database/changes.htm.

New, amended and replaced subject headings
 The following list of new and revised headings to the fifth edition arise from recent ISSC meetings. Schools who have purchased the *SCIS Subject Headings Fifth Edition* should amend their copy with the new and amended subject headings outlined below.

- Biological terrorism
- USE Bioterrorism
- Biological warfare**
- Add RT Bioterrorism
- Bio-terrorism
- USE Bioterrorism
- Bioterrorism**
- UF Bio-terrorism
- Biological terrorism
- BT Terrorism
- RT Biological warfare

- Carers
- USE Family day care
- Home care services
- Family day care**
- Add UF Carers
- Helpers
- USE Voluntary work
- Home care services**
- Add UF Carers
- Terrorism**
- Add NT Bioterrorism
- Voluntary work**
- Add UF Helpers

Barcode Scanners

Curriculum Corporation offers a range of fixed and portable barcode scanners for purchase.

These scanners can be used in conjunction with *SCISWeb* and will enable customer to scan ISBNs (rather than entering ISBNs manually). The scanners are also configured to read the barcodes for circulation when using an automated library system. The portable scanner is great for stocktakes.

	Australian Price Price includes GST	NZ and other countries
Datalogic DLC6165 Fixed scanner (5 year warranty)	\$218.00	\$198.00
Cipherlab 1000 USB scanner – iMac compatible (1 year warranty)	\$275.00	\$250.00
Cipherlab 1067M Portable scanner (3-year warranty)	\$658.90	\$599.00
Datalogic cordless Gryphon DLL100 Scanner (2-year warranty)	\$1389.00	\$1262.00
Barcode scanner stand	\$49.50	\$45.00

Prices are in Australian dollars
 An order form is located at www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/handouts/handouts.htm.