



scis

SCHOOLS CATALOGUE INFORMATION SERVICE

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connections

In this issue...

Metadata (part 2)	1
Handy Hints	2
CC News	3
Using SCIS Leaves More Time	4
Internetting Corner	5
Reviews	6
Books Aren't Dead	7
What's New	8
The Listserv for Australian Teacher Librarians	8
Online Encyclopedias	9
Venturing Out on the NSW Board of Studies Website	10
Cataloguing News	12

Metadata (part 2): Controlled Vocabulary and Metadata

In the previous issue of Connections we examined metadata and its relationship to MARC and Dublin Core. In this article another aspect of metadata is considered: controlled vocabulary for subject searching.

When catalogue users search for a book or videorecording on a particular subject they are hoping that the computer will match the topic word(s) they have entered with the same word(s) in the description of the item created by the cataloguer. Computer systems usually offer a range of searching approaches. For example, one can search every word in a set of fields of a catalogue record, for example, in the author, title, notes and subject heading fields for the topic word(s) one is seeking. This is often referred to as a *keyword* or *free-text* search. Or one may limit the search to just the title field, or to just the subject heading(s) field.

When we search in the subject heading(s) field we understand that we are trying to create a match on word(s) assigned by a cataloguer who has spent time examining the item being catalogued, deciding what the most useful retrieval concepts(s) might be for the given user group, and then translating these into words or phrases from a list of 'allowed' or authorised words and phrases called a *controlled vocabulary*, *list of subject headings* or *thesaurus*. A particular idea or concept can be expressed in many different ways. 'See' references are thus inserted (or automatically mapped) into the

catalogue to guide the user to relevant resources via a range of alternative words or phrases. Proper names are frequently too numerous to list comprehensively in a thesaurus; thus the cataloguer may be required to supply these, often using special rules to achieve consistency in the choice and form of a particular name.

Controlled vocabulary subject words are often contrasted with 'uncontrolled' or 'natural language' words appearing in the title, contents, or summary note in the catalogue record. Full-text databases store the text of entire documents that can be searched in keyword (or free-text) mode. There is extensive ongoing debate in the library and information science literature about whether controlled vocabulary or natural language systems give the best retrieval performance. The intellectual effort of subject cataloguing with controlled vocabularies is a time consuming and therefore expensive process. The maintenance of the vocabulary itself is labour intensive as it needs to be updated and modified on an ongoing basis. The aim of replacing the human indexer with a computer is ever appealing. Even the task of abstracting or preparing summaries (which usually does not involve consulting a controlled vocabulary) can be undertaken by a software package which scans the contents of large documents and automatically produces abstracts of them.

continued on page 2

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Handy Hints for SCISWeb

Faster Retrieval of WEB OPAC Screens

If you are experiencing delays in retrieving WEB OPAC pages, it may be worth checking the settings in your browser cache. In Netscape Communicator this is found in: Edit/Preferences/Advanced/Cache. In Internet Explorer V5 this is found in: Tools/Internet Options/General/Settings. If the setting 'Everytime' (Netscape) or 'Every visit to the

page' (Internet Explorer) has been chosen, the retrieval of the search buttons such as 'Keyword', 'Heading', 'Search' and 'Limit' (gif files) will be delivered back to your PC each time you use the search screens. However, if you change your cache setting from 'Everytime' or 'Never' to 'Once per session' (Netscape) or 'Everytime you start Internet

Explorer' (Internet Explorer) then the buttons (gif files) are delivered to your PC only once when you initially connect to SCISWeb, with all subsequent appearances for that session retrieved from the temporary PC cache. This reduces the volume of data sent via the Internet connection, hence you will have a speedier response.

Metadata (part 2): Controlled Vocabulary and Metadata (cont.)

However, despite the searching power of present day computer systems there seems to be considerable consensus at this point in time that a combination of both controlled and natural language vocabularies achieves good, reliable searching. The controlled vocabulary might be viewed as a kind of insurance policy ensuring a level of predictability in searching that is reassuring.

As far back as the 1950s library and information professionals began to seek ways of mechanising or automating the subject indexing process. Many experiments have been undertaken with increasingly powerful computer software systems to explore the issue. One of the problems with this kind of research is that the sample databases used in the studies are usually much smaller than those in 'real life'. Beginning in the 1960s Gerald Salton researched and published many articles and books on the subject of machine processing of text. Salton obtained good results using automatic indexing and ranking techniques, but it has taken nearly twenty years for computer hardware and software to develop to the current stage where the methods he pioneered are being widely used in the search engines we know today.

Automatic indexing systems are able, for example, to utilise lists of 'stop' words (common words not useful in retrieval, e.g. 'because', 'and', 'the', etc); to automatically stem words so that 'hous' would be the root or stem of 'housing', 'houses', 'housed' etc; to generate pairs of adjacent stemmed words within a sentence; and to display documents which the system has calculated to be relevant

to a query in a ranked order from most to least relevant to the query. The algorithms on which this ranking is based vary from system to system but usually involve such methods as counting the number of times a search/query word appears in the document, the position of the word in the document, the extent of the match between a range of words in the query against those in the document, etc.

World Wide Web search engines such as AltaVista use computer programs to automatically move through Web addresses, titles/headers and certain numbers of words on Web pages, collecting addresses and words, and placing them in a text index. The search engines then apply one or more algorithms to rank the relevance of sites to a search query.

The retrieval of material published on the Web is viewed by many as a difficult issue. The size and rate of expansion of the Web has highlighted the shortcomings of even these sophisticated indexing and searching approaches. The question now is how do we index the Web in a way that ensures effective, reliable retrieval? How do we narrow down the hundreds of unwanted 'hits' yielded by the average search-engine query on the Web?

USMARC provides a standard set of fields with which to label documents. Metadata standards such as Dublin Core provide a similar functionality for documents on the Web. The Dublin core standard and others like it (or based on it) are being hotly debated in research articles and internet discussions. As mentioned in the previous article, librarians use the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules

and various available lists of subject headings and thesauri in the MARC record. Metadata researchers are asking questions such as how should a Web document be defined for indexing purposes; (Web documents, with their many hypertext links, may require indexing at the level of individual objects, e.g. a logo within a letter, an advertising jingle, a single Web page or a vast set of pages); what kinds of fields are relevant to particular kinds of documents; can there be one overarching set of fields for all documents; how prescriptive should the rules be in relation to each field; what controlled vocabularies should be used in relation to given user groups. There are no easy answers, and each information community needs to develop strategies for its own specific needs while keeping open as many options as possible for interacting globally.

Cherryl Schauder, National Coordinator, Cataloguing and Metadata, and Keith Gove, Manager, Information Services, Curriculum Corporation.

1. Survey of SCISWeb

We would appreciate you spending a few moments to complete the survey form, which may be printed up from the 'SCISWeb Message Centre' page. Feedback will ensure that the SCISWeb product meets your needs. Please fax your completed survey to SCIS at (03) 9639 1616 as soon as possible this year. Those customers who respond by 31 August are eligible to win a copy of the new fourth edition *SCIS Subject Headings* book to be released later in 1999.

2. Survey of SCISCD

We would appreciate you spending a few moments to complete the survey sent to schools with issue 3 in June. (The survey form is also on our website) Feedback will ensure that the SCISCD product meets your needs. Please fax your completed survey to SCIS at (03) 9639 1616 as soon as possible. Those customers who responded by 31 July are eligible to win a copy of the new fourth edition *SCIS Subject Headings* book to be released later in 1999.

3. Access to SCISWeb 1999

We intend to upgrade the Voyager System during December this year. This is a complex exercise requiring considerable time, expertise and involves a number of parties to ensure it is successful. Hence, SCISWeb will not be available for the duration of the upgrade. At this stage we are advising customers to finalise all cataloguing for 1999 by the end of November. When the dates for this upgrade are confirmed we will advise you with a message in the next issue of *Connections* and in 'Message of the day' in SCISWeb. We anticipate that SCISWeb will be available again on 17 January 2000.

4. Access to SCISCD 1999

We are hoping to have SCISCD available for use in January but this arrangement is yet to be finalised. At this stage we wish to advise customers that the fifth issue of SCISCD expires on 31 December 1999 and that the first issue will be delivered to schools in the first week of February. It is dependent, however, on feedback from the customer survey and some other technical issues. Notice will be given to customers with delivery of the 5th issue, next issue of *Connections* and on the website.

5. Local Cataloguing

77% of schools are subscribing to SCIS to enable them to have the bulk of their cataloguing done quickly and easily hence saving an enormous amount of time. It is a far more effective use of Teacher Librarian's time to download the SCIS records and make some modifications where necessary than to merely use SCIS as a guide to one's own original cataloguing.

However, there will be times when local cataloguing may have to be done by the Teacher Librarian for a variety of reasons. Sometimes resources that have been produced locally for specific needs will not be on the SCIS database and will need to be catalogued by the Teacher Librarian. In some instances libraries may wish to edit the record to include specific local details such as acquisition details, reviews, further subject headings and notes.

6. CIP - Cataloguing In Print

Some Teacher Librarians consider using the CIP printed in books for cataloguing details. We would like to issue a warning to be careful if copying the details. Sometimes changes are made to the resource after the CIP has been completed hence some details will be incorrect. Obviously when obtaining records for those resources from SCIS, which is a specialised database for schools, you will receive the correct cataloguing details.

7. Subscriptions 2000

Due to requests from Teacher Librarians we are making arrangements for SCIS subscriptions for the year 2000 earlier than in previous years. SCIS Subscription forms will not be sent out to all schools because in many instances their current subscription is a standing order and they will automatically receive the product for the year 2000. Curriculum Corporation is pleased to announce that there will be no increase in the Recommended Retail Price for SCISWeb and SCISCD.

Customers will be able to commence using SCISWeb again on 17 January 2000. Customers will continue to use the same password in the year 2000 as they had for 1999 but the counter for records downloaded will be reset to zero. Contact SCIS to have

password reset if necessary (only if misplaced or unknown).

Email: scisinfo@curriculum.edu.au, Fax: (03) 9639 1616, Tel: (03) 9207 9600 or 1800 337 405.

Below we have identified the categories that all schools fit into to ensure that all Teacher Librarians are informed before the end of the school year. Schools need to identify which of the following SCIS subscription categories they belong to as this will determine what has to be done, if anything, to have SCIS in 2000:

- a) Education Department bulk deal arrangements
- b) National Catholic bulk deal arrangement
- c) Independent Schools bulk deal arrangement
- d) Christian Parent Controlled Schools bulk deal arrangement
- e) Current subscribers to SCIS not involved in the above arrangements
- f) Non subscribers who do not belong to any of the above arrangements.

See below for more specific details. This information will also be on our website at <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/subscrib.htm>.

a) Education Department
Bulk deal arrangements will continue for the year 2000 for schools in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Northern Territory. Negotiations are underway with South Australia.

b) National Catholic bulk deal arrangement
The National Catholic Education Commission will negotiate another bulk deal arrangement for Catholic schools. Their State Catholic Education Office will contact Teacher Librarians asking them to confirm their subscription to SCIS. This will also provide the opportunity for new subscribers to join the National Catholic bulk deal. Schools will be notified when the discount level is finalised so that payment may be forwarded to their local Catholic Education Office.

c) Independent Schools bulk deal arrangement
In 1999 there was a discounted price available for schools in Victoria, Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory. The National

continued on page 4

CC News (cont.)

Council for Independent Schools Association is hoping to negotiate a national discounted price. Teacher Librarians will be contacted by their state Independent Association asking for an expression of interest to be involved in the arrangement.

d) Christian Parent Controlled Schools bulk deal arrangement

The Association for Christian Parent Controlled Schools arranged a discounted price for their schools in 1999 and this process will be continued.

e) Current subscribers to SCIS not involved in the above arrangements

Your subscription to SCIS in 1999 was a standing order, which means that you will not

be required to subscribe again. You will automatically be given access to the same product in the year 2000 that you subscribed to in 1999. An invoice will be sent to you in October requesting payment for the year 2000 and asking for confirmation of product required.

f) Non subscribers who do not belong to any of the above arrangements

A SCIS subscription form will be sent to schools that do not have a subscription for 1999. This form will be posted to those schools in September and if an order is placed before the end of 1999 the school will have access to the products at the beginning of the year. If subscribing to SCISWeb a letter will be delivered to the school by 17th January, 2000

outlining passwords and how to access the product.

Please note: Customers whose subscriptions to SCISWeb are received at Curriculum Corporation after 1 January 2000 will receive instructions (including new default password) and access to SCISWeb within five to ten working days upon receipt of subscription form.

8. Staff Change

We sadly note that Maxine Campbell has left the SCIS Unit to pursue her career in librarianship elsewhere. Those of you who have dealt with Maxine's calm, professional and helpful manner will share with us in missing Maxine. We wish her well.

Using SCIS Leaves More Time for Student-centred Services

At John Paul College we are finding that the use of SCISWeb and SCISCD in conjunction with our Bibliotech software enables us to save time with cataloguing duties and concentrate our efforts in the teaching domain. Some of our initiatives were outlined recently at a forum on information literacy as part of the 'Leading the Way' Conference held at Methodist Ladies' College. Following is a summary of our input.

- We have been responsible for the management of class sets of notebook computers, which, in effect, bring the virtual library to the point of learning. At John Paul College we have a wireless local area network (Radio Lan) which enables our notebooks to access the network anywhere on campus without cabling or power cords. Managing this process has given us the opportunity to promote the need for research facilities within the classroom using either the Internet, computer program or a networked CD-ROM.
- Our year 11 Information Skills short course is timetabled formally for all beginning VCE students. This course recognises the need for sophisticated skills in senior students and covers the use of electronic databases for newspaper and periodical articles; learning styles; note taking and note

making; authentication, copyright and plagiarism; and guidelines for referencing. Completion of associated work requirements is acknowledged by a Student Research Profile as part of semester reports.

- 'Headstart' is a program devised to help year 10 students at risk of not completing their VCE course. Selected students may volunteer to attend a three day course undertaking an intensive research assignment with detailed support throughout. Headstart is conducted at the end of the year when no other students are on campus. In this way these students become confident users of the Resource Centre empowered by experiencing success in a non-stressful situation.
- Our year 7 Orientation Program has been developed in consultation with LOTE staff. Students have a booklet of activities to complete on either French or Italian culture. These activities incorporate use of electronic databases, newspapers, CD-ROMs, periodicals, websites, vertical files and reference items. It is designed to be busy work – finding, locating and accessing resources to familiarise students with many aspects of our service. This exercise becomes a preparation for the more serious

task of research undertaken in a separate unit of work that emphasises the discerning use of resources for appropriate information.

- *Guidelines for Referencing and Bibliographies* was published specifically to assist our students reference their sources. This guide has been vital in achieving a level of awareness and consistent approach across the curriculum. The contents have now been included in the College diary so as to be readily available at the point of need.
- Our multimedia room (a class size area set up with data show projector) becomes a powerful demonstration point for both staff and students. Departments are encouraged to try new CD-ROMs or explore a website as part of regular meetings. Students are able to present work via PowerPoint, which blends technological expertise into the learning process providing class stimulation and student empowerment.
- Guided use of the Internet is progressing via our home page design and development. With library management and regular staff

continued on page 11

Internetting Corner

These sites can be easily accessed on the Internet via the links found on the Curriculum Corporation's Connections site for Issue No. 30: <<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connect/connect.htm>>.

ARERA Website

<http://www.nexus.edu.au/TeachStud/arera/INDEX.HTM>

The Australian Rural Education Research Association's presence on the Internet covers the group's activities in regard to news, research, upcoming conferences, and associated domestic and international links for rural educators.

Asperger/Autism

<http://amug.org/~a203/page3.html>

With the increasing integration of students with Asperger's Syndrome or Autism into mainstream classes, this is a useful site to assist teachers to understand the particular needs of these children. A variety of pertinent links are available.

Australian Bureau of Statistics World Wide Web Information Service

<http://www.statistics.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/Homepage>

Updated daily, this site contains a comprehensive statistical profile of Australian economic and social conditions. Details of new products and how to access the various services are provided.

AwardWeb: Collections of Literary Award Information

<http://www.dpsinfo.com/awardweb/>

Although the author's main emphasis is on science fiction awards from around the globe, prominence has also been given to national literary awards in other genres from a number of countries.

Beginner's Guide to Aeronautics

<http://www.lerc.nasa.gov/WWW/IFMD/airplane/>

The basic scientific principles of aeronautics and propulsion are outlined on this site hosted by NASA. Developed as background information for secondary teachers of Mathematics and Science, it has been revised to include interactive animated pages suitable for students.

Berit's Best Sites for Children

http://db.cochran.com/li_toc:theoPage.db

Initiated by a Canadian librarian this directory of sites is suitable for primary students. Her selection and ratings policy is clearly stated, and the site is easily navigated. Topics encourage exploration by students and teachers alike.

The Busy Educator's Guide to the Web

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

Teacher Librarians, teachers, parents and students are all catered for on this extensive directory. Links include: Internet, software and book reviews; a site specific search engine; and articles and reports for teachers. A subscription to the free monthly email newsletter, which includes new reviews and articles, is available on request.

Elanora Heights Primary School

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~d4199pn1/library.html>

The URL for this site actually connects to this primary school's comprehensive library site. This is a commendable starting point for Teacher Librarians seeking inspiration for starting or modifying their library's home page.

ICONnect: Home Page

<http://www.ala.org/ICONN/index.html>

Developed under the auspices of the American School Library Association this valuable website aims to assist Teacher Librarians, K-12 teachers and students to learn the necessary skills to utilise the Internet. Opportunities for integrating Internet resources into lesson plans are also explored.

Welcome to Go Fly a Kite

<http://www.planemath.com/activities/flykite/kitehome.html>

By using the information and lesson plans available teachers wishing to relate Mathematics and Science to the real world can engage their students in the construction of kites, and the theory and practicalities of flying them.

Mapmaker, Mapmaker, Make Me a Map

<http://www.utenn.edu/uwa/vpps/ur/ut2kids/maps/map.html>

The content of this site is aimed at students who are studying cartography at a basic level. The explanations, maps and diagrams are all clear and concise. Teachers may wish to make use of the mapping crossword puzzles.

NSW Science Teacher Educators Home Page

<http://www.edfac.usyd.edu.au/projects/nswste/>

With input from Science teachers, lecturers, and scientists, this site includes details of contacts, conferences, news, courses and Internet links. Covering many fascinating aspects of Science, these links would reward further investigation by Science teachers or those with an interest in Science.

School Libraries: Empowering Learning

<http://www.dse.nsw.edu.au/stand.cgi/staff/F1.0/F1.8/index.htm>

Developed for Teacher Librarians in NSW state schools by the NSW Department of Education and Training, this site is worth investigating by all Teacher Librarians. Items of interest include a moderated library notice board, databases of resource reviews, and key articles from the journal *Scan*.

Treasures at Sea

<http://www.fi.edu/fellows/fellow8/dec98/>

Although there are many sites that contain material regarding oceans, this one invites teachers and students to explore the oceans via literature. Sections of the site cover related books, writing and art activities, lesson plans, and interactive games and puzzles.

Warner Bros. Animation 101

http://wbanimation.warnerbros.com/cmp/ani_04if.htm

Schools that have units of work covering animation should bookmark this site. All aspects of animation are concisely covered, from the writer's initial thoughts, to the projection on the screen.

Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

The Internet sites abstracted in Internetting Corner are often of a professional nature and should be initially viewed by teachers and Teacher Librarians to determine suitability for students. Remember the links, content and even the address of a site may change quickly.

Reviews



Book



CD



Video



Report

Australian Training Reform – Revised Edition: Implications for Schools

Publisher: Curriculum Corporation, Jack Keating 1998
ISBN: 1 86366 428 9
RRP: \$24.95
SCIS order number: 944782

Designed to provide a broad description of the changes affecting vocational education and training particularly those relating to the new National Training Framework and with the post compulsory schools sector in mind, this is a valuable addition to the literature.

Jack Keating, well known for his extensive contributions particularly in the policy development area of VET, has compiled a highly readable account that will be of immense value to those new to the VET in schools scene, as well as to those wanting a handy, compact overview of the national training reforms.

Australian Training Reform begins by providing a succinct historical overview of vocational education in Australia leading to a more detailed examination of the causes of recent change. Keating's brief analysis of youth unemployment as a particular causative factor is compelling, as is his review of the impact of globalisation as a driving force for demanding a more skilled workforce.

His demystification of the Australian training system is easily one of the best to date, providing an elementary and logically presented summary of major structured elements that usefully link national, State and training provider/user levels in a practical statement.

Likewise, his review of competency as an integral feature of the VET reforms is compelling. In particular, the outline of competency standards as critical elements of the National Training Framework is impressive in its simplicity, as is the treatment of the training market. His overview of the National Training Packages, key components of the NTF, is equally clear and concise.

Keating's work has particular application to the school sector because it consistently attempts, usually successfully, to draw out implications

for school-based VET from the wider discussion of training and training reform. Indeed one section is devoted to schools and training, examining the historical development of and the causative factors for vocational education emerging in senior schooling. In this there is a useful synthesis of major policy initiatives that have shaped the range of emerging models for VET in schools delivery. In addition the treatment of new apprenticeships in schools, both in the description of how they might work as well as in the delineation of emerging issues, like industrial relations and legislative impediments, is thoughtfully handled.

Australian Training Reform is supported by a useful range of statistical data, and a judicious use of summary information of key elements. A valuable list of resources is included, with an equally useful list of current contacts including relevant website addresses.

In all, this is a highly recommended reference for that element of the school sector either moving to establish VET programs or who are involved but feel the need to get a better grasp of the all VET agenda.

Reviewed by Mike Frost, Executive Officer, Vetnet Work, Tasmania
First published in *VETNET Worker*, October Edition, 1998

This product is available from: Curriculum Corporation Tel: (03) 9207 9600
Fax: (03) 9639 1616 Email: sales@curriculum.edu.au.

Internet Sites for the Classroom 99

Publisher: Queensland Newspapers Pty Ltd
RRP: \$17.95
ISBN: 0949381373
SCIS order number: 973194

Described as 'a visual snapshot of the best the Internet has to offer in 1999' this book is aimed at P-12 students, parents and teachers using the Internet in an educational context. Poppy Masselos, a Queensland teacher and educational columnist for *The Courier Mail* has compiled it. The websites she has included are not abstracted or reviewed, but grouped together according to subject. Many sites have their front page or graphics included with their address. Besides the sites dealing with key learning areas, useful inclusions for

Teacher Librarians are sites on copyright, citing Internet resources, and searching techniques. The subject areas are clearly set out on the contents page, but an index would have been a most useful addition.

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Lee, M, 'A new global education system' in Access, 13 (2) 1999, pp 15-16

Lee asserts that with the advent of inexpensive computers and home access to the Internet, a phenomenon has emerged during the past five years, that of a global education system. He suggests schools remain locked in the Industrial Age, while this new 'Internet education system' is helping provide the necessary education for students in the Information Age. The similar educational methods and attributes that this increasing number of young people across the globe possess are highlighted, together with some of the implications for governments, schools and Teacher Librarians.


Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Newman, A, 'Technology and the secondary school teacher librarian: A principal's perspective' in Scan, 18 (2), May 1999, pp 36-38

The key role secondary Teacher Librarians will have over the next few years is examined by a secondary principal. He predicts an increasingly important aspect of the role to be the implementation of technology in the school and assisting both staff and students to develop the requisite skills to take advantage of the opportunities technology presents. Issues he highlights that need addressing include equity of access, purchasing policies, making acceptable use of data gathered, currency and validity of information, and setting appropriate assignments.

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Reviews (cont.)

 **Sheahan-Bright, R, 'It's a supermarket: Children's publishing and the mass market' in *Maggies*, 14 (2), May 1999, pp10-13**

Sheahan-Bright analyses the global trends that are impacting on children's publishing. She examines the influences that conglomeratisation, globalisation and electronic forms of publishing are having on the industry and what this means for children's publishing. Other key issues she investigates

include the propensity of publishers to publish 'series' books, marketing and market pressures, merchandising, and risk minimisation.

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Van Os, T, 'A wonderful site' in *Australian Educator*, 23, Autumn 1999, pp 32-33

Many schools that have successfully tapped the Internet as a source of information are

now making use of its potential to disseminate their own information by creating a school home page. Rather than a mere presence on the Internet, Van Os outlines the educational benefits of developing an active, well-structured site for the entire school community. The flow on from this could lead to a change in teaching styles and ultimately how education is delivered.

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Books Aren't Dead!

Is technology in schools just a bandwagon? Does it actually improve student performance? Great teaching and encouraging critical thought are needed.

These are themes proposed by Jamie McKenzie at the conference 'Leading the Way – Forming an Information Literate School Community' hosted at Methodist Ladies' College in Melbourne in May and attended by over 250 teachers, librarians and principals. Jamie McKenzie, from the USA, is recognised as a leading educational thinker and, since 1991, has published and edited *From Now On*, a monthly electronic technology journal (www.fno.org).

McKenzie states three key points when discussing technology, education and the Internet:

- Good teaching is more important than good computers
- Too much focus on hardware and software
- Not enough professional development.

He proposes a new model, which is obviously not recommended by the computer companies. McKenzie suggests slowing spending on computers. It is easy to spend money on computers and networks but often the computers are then diluted across the school so each classroom has a few. Students do not get enough access and the teacher does not have the knowledge to encourage the best use of the research tool. The fewer

computers should be mobile (COWS – computers on wheels) and shared between classes.

'While it may please hardware and software companies to fill classrooms with computers before teachers are prepared or inclined to use them with frequency and good intentions, it is bad policy and worse economics. We have been spending too much money on infrastructure and equipment... too little on readiness.' (Excerpt from 'Strategic Deployment of Hardware to Maximize Readiness, Staff Use and Student Achievement', May 1999 issue of *From Now On*.)

'Every teacher in every school should have 50 to 60 hours of professional development each year,' said McKenzie at the conference. 'This helps them prepare for the role computers and the Internet can play in their teaching. But the biggest mistake is a focus on software training in isolation. Instead, teachers need information literacy skills to enhance research and questioning abilities and to tie it in with the curriculum.'

'There is no credible evidence that networks improve student reading, maths or thinking skills unless they are in service of carefully crafted learning programs which show students how to interpret information and make up their own minds.'

'Schools must teach students to graze and digest the offerings thoughtfully in order to achieve insight. They must also guide young people away from undue reliance

upon the "free Internet". Students will learn that a printed book or a "pay for service" electronic information source will often prove more reliable and efficient than the Internet.

'To be successful with this venture, we must emphasise the development of questioning skills, and we must replace topical research with projects requiring original thought. Questioning may be the most powerful technology we have ever invented and can give to our students.'

The conference 'Leading the Way – Forming an Information Literate School Community' was a collaborative venture by Methodist Ladies' College, School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV), Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the Centre for Information Studies at Charles Sturt University.

Jamie McKenzie's paper is at <http://www.fno.org/sept98/cov98sept.html>.

Written by Staff Methodist Ladies College



What's New?

1. SCIS Subject Headings Book 4th edition

SCIS Subject Headings List is the updated edition of the print publication that includes new subject headings and amendments to existing headings. It is available only from Curriculum Corporation and is in paperback format. This is an essential tool for all Teacher Librarians to ensure consistent and accurate subject headings in the library

catalogue. Further product details are available on our brochure and on the SCIS website.

2. Australians Win IASL Awards

Australian Teacher Librarians can be proud of the 1999 International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) award winners, Queenslanders Jenny Ryan and Steph Capra, and Suzette Boyd (and her colleagues) at

Methodist Ladies' College in Kew. Suzette Boyd, Director of Library Services at MLC has been awarded the progressive School Library Media Award for the implementation of innovative ideas to enhance the lifelong learning skills of students. For more information on IASL, and some great links to sites for Teacher Librarians check the IASL website at: <<http://www.hi.is/~anne/iasl.html>>.

The Listserv for Australian Teacher Librarians

OZTL_NET stands for **OZ**(Aus)tralian Teacher Librarians' **NET**-work. This electronic forum is designed to meet the professional information needs of Australian TLs. The conversation on OZTL_NET deals with topics of interest to the Australian TL community, including the latest issues and developments that relate to an impact on school library services, operations and activities including library, school and departmental policies, practices and procedures; location and use of Internet resources; information literacy issues, programs and strategies; reference questions for teachers and students; products and services for school libraries; general discussion of Teacher Librarianship issues; training tips and use of information technologies; and workshop and conference announcements.

Discussion is open to all members of the Australian TL community and any person with a genuine interest in Teacher Librarianship and/or school libraries. While it is important for Australian TLs to broaden their horizons via the Internet and 'go global', local action is essential in developing a strong professional TL movement in Australia. OZTL_NET strives to unite all parties who share a considerable interest in the latest developments, issues and initiatives in Teacher Librarianship and school libraries in Australia.

The most common questions asked about OZTL_NET

Q: What equipment do I need to access OZTL_NET?

A: A computer, a modem, and an email address with an Internet Service Provider.

Q: How much will it cost me to subscribe?

A: Nothing! Subscription is free.

Q: How do I subscribe?

A: To subscribe to OZTL_NET:

1. Post a message to the following listserv address: <OZTL_NET-request@listserv.csu.edu.au>.

2. In the subject line, type the command *subscribe*.

3. Do not include any information in the message field (i.e. LEAVE IT BLANK! and turn off your Internet signature).

Your subscription is automatically processed by the listserv computer and you will receive an OZTL_NET Welcome message. Please read and **save** the OZTL_NET Welcome Message. It contains the procedures for using this listserv as well as some Netiquette Guidelines. New subscribers are encouraged to introduce themselves to OZTL_NET in their **first message** to the listserv.

Enquiries? Please contact Lyn Hay, Tel: (02) 69332808, Email: lhay@csu.edu.au, or Ken Dillon, Tel: (02) 69332545, Email: kdillon@csu.edu.au.

TLs are major stakeholders in the 'Information Age', and as key players must lead Australian schools – teachers, students and their parents – into the 21st Century. OZTL_NET is an electronic initiative that can assist TLs in achieving this vision.

Online Encyclopaedias

The impact of technology on the publishing format of encyclopaedias in the last decade has been immense. Printed sets of encyclopaedias plummeted in popularity, being replaced by CD-ROM versions. The introduction and refinement of online encyclopaedias is now challenging the market for CD-ROMs.

With the advent of the CD-ROM encyclopaedia, users were awed by the graphics, fast searching capabilities, hypertext links to related articles and ease of operation. As prices tumbled CD-ROM encyclopaedias became commonplace in stand-alone computers or school networks and users could afford to update every couple of years.

With widespread use of the Internet major encyclopaedia companies began utilising its benefits to achieve better currency of information. At first, this was limited to monthly downloads. The next step was using the CD-ROM while online and obtaining additional, or more current, information from Internet sites listed at the end of abstracts.

The progression to totally online encyclopaedias has gathered pace in the last year or so, with the major encyclopaedia publishers offering their products online. There are, of course, other online encyclopaedias of a more specialised nature. A quick search of the Internet reveals a range, from *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, to the unauthorised *Online Encyclopaedia of Disney Animated Shorts*.

What we are witnessing in schools is the gradual demise of the CD-ROM encyclopaedia and its replacement with the online encyclopaedia. The major benefit of the online encyclopaedia is that information can be updated frequently, easily and cheaply. Links can be added or subtracted as needed. Two online encyclopaedias were trialed as examples for this article, *World Book Online* and *Grolier Online*. They both offered updates of events that had occurred in the last 24 hours. Each company has designed their online encyclopaedia with school libraries and classrooms in mind.

World Book Online comprises the respected *World Book Encyclopaedia* and features streaming audio and video, the ability to print sections of an article, articles from daily, weekly and monthly publications, study aids, maps, teacher resources and links to Internet sites that have been selected and monitored by their editorial staff.

The innovative *Grolier Online* contains three distinctive encyclopaedias: *New Book of Knowledge Online*, *Grolier Multimedia Online* and *Encyclopaedia Americana Online*, each catering to different reading and interest levels. Subscribers are offered a choice of two or three of these different encyclopaedias. Among the features are links to controlled non-commercial Internet sites selected by their editorial teams, an interactive atlas, multimedia materials, timelines, news features, lesson plans and searching tips.

As the use of online encyclopaedias increases, their websites may have to be added to local library catalogue systems. As with adding other websites, there are implications for SCIS, school libraries and library automation system vendors. SCIS is already planning to trial cataloguing Internet sites.

Schools who are interested in using online encyclopaedias should avail themselves of the free trials being offered by publishers. Before subscribing, it would be expedient to consider the following questions:

- Is the school's computer network capable of simultaneously offering Internet connections to the library and classrooms?
- Is the speed of the school's modem sufficient? Should an ISDN line or satellite link be considered?
- Is the school's Internet Service Provider capable of maintaining adequate service throughout the day?
- Is the subscription cost-effective when combined with online charges? If the school has recently purchased a CD-ROM network licence, it may be prudent to wait a year or two.
- Is the content and scope of the online encyclopaedia adequate for the students? Is the Australian content sufficient?

- Is the online encyclopaedia authoritative with signed major articles and quality Internet links?
- Is navigation and searching easy? Will the students be able to follow the online help, or will too much instruction be necessary?
- Is the multimedia being downloaded quickly enough over your network?

By trialing several of the online encyclopaedias available, Teacher Librarians will be able to determine suitability for their own school's needs. However, it is probably only a matter of time before most networked schools succumb to the benefits of having access to an online encyclopaedia.

Nigel Paull, Editor, Connections

Further information

Grolier Online, Tel: (02) 94274922, Email: salescare@grolier.com.au
World Book Online, Tel: 1800 505 007 ext 220, Email: ggate@learningjourney.com.au



Venturing Out on the NSW Board of Studies Website

www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

The Board of Studies

The Board of Studies is responsible for curriculum development in NSW. Like many organisations, it uses the Internet to meet its own and its clients' needs. Much that has been placed on the Internet to date are documents which also exist in printed form. The Internet provides immediate access to syllabuses, papers and reports, and is proving a very popular service for teachers and librarians.

However, what is being developed at present is a departure from the placement of documents on the website. Publishing of new materials specifically designed for the Internet takes advantage of some of its most attractive functions. As it is a cost efficient source of disseminating information and resources, the potential to communicate widely and to provide a network to share information, as well as the capacity to update information easily, opens up a new area of support for teachers.

The learning area

Since 1996 a framework, writing brief and draft syllabus have been developed and consulted on in Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) K-6, one of the six key learning areas in the NSW primary curriculum. A shift to more explicit content has been well received by teachers. The final syllabus and the twenty-eight units of work, which accompany the syllabus, were released at the beginning of 1999.

A resounding request from teachers and Teacher Librarians during the syllabus development and consultation process was the need for subject specific information to support the content of the syllabus. The second most popular request was for reliable and authoritative resources.

Many teachers expressed the need for additional background knowledge to help in delivering content to students in areas such as Aboriginal history, world religions and the development of Australian democracy.

The support

However, when people think of resources today it isn't a question of 'is there enough?',

or even 'where can I find them?', more resoundingly, it is 'which resources will be useful to me?'.

While for many people the Internet offers yet another opportunity to overdose on information, the 'HSIE K-6 resource file' utilises two of the Internet's strengths, namely the ability to update information simply and the capacity to disseminate information to large networks of people. Rather than sifting through a myriad of resources or simply giving up and using what is already handy, being able to rely on a credible list prepared for a particular purpose seemed what was needed.

As well as teachers accessing the list, publishers can review what is currently available, assess where gaps exist and plan for future resources accordingly. The updateable nature of the Internet ensures the currency of resources, enabling resources to be added as they come onto the market and allowing deletions as material goes out of print. This obviously holds advantages over a traditional printed catalogue and the citation of reference lists in documents.

When the *English K-6* syllabus was released in NSW difficulties arose when recommended texts went out of print shortly after the document was released. It was due to this experience that Phil Lambert, Inspector Primary Education at the Board of Studies, suggested that the Internet could host a resource list more effectively.

The list

The 'HSIE K-6 resource file' format is a humble offering in terms of Internet technology, being simply a Word document translated into HTML. Potentially, the information could be entered into a database enabling search functions by title, author, theme or unit. However, at present the list is organised under the unit headings, which is sufficient to find the titles that link to the syllabus. Other sections of the resource list include general teaching resources, organisations, publishers, museum sources and exhibitions. The potential to add to and improve this tool is exciting.

Another feature of the list is the interaction possible between viewer and compiler.

The list does not purport to be definitive, but it does invite people to comment on and add to it through an email link within the document. The interactive nature of this medium offers ongoing consultation as one of its features.

Properly maintained it can also provide a central point for teachers and Teacher Librarians to find additional sites. Other organisations such as Curriculum Corporation, historical societies, publishers and distributors, museums and exhibitors are already listed with available Internet addresses and email contacts. These are hotlinked to provide immediate access. Most museums are posting their current and upcoming exhibitions and events on their own website. These links can assist teachers in accessing this information quickly to find exhibitions relevant to their HSIE K-6 programs.

The references

Initially, one or two publishers contacted me in my role of Senior Curriculum Officer at the Board of Studies to review particular texts in light of how they connected to the new HSIE K-6 syllabus. With these as a starting point, writers and Teacher Librarians were also invited to add resources to the list. This included relevant Internet sites, videos and CD-ROMs. A work in progress list was placed on the Web to promote its forthcoming existence. More publishers offered catalogues and reviews of their latest and most pertinent material.

Another source, which seemed important to include, was the existing resources available in school libraries and storerooms around the state. With the absence of a syllabus for many years decisions concerned with resourcing HSIE K-6 have been somewhat ad hoc. Many good resources have also been under utilised. For example, the NSW Department of Education in 1977 developed a full colour slide set based around early Australian exploration. It includes slides of original paintings and maps. When cited, resources such as these have been denoted as ER (existing resource).

As the Web is often a daunting prospect for those who are unfamiliar it, another motivation for developing material to place on the website was to provide an opportunity to familiarise teachers with accessing resources through the Internet. Because the file is a straightforward, it demonstrates some of the features of the Internet in an uncomplicated way.

The other resources

The resource list is not the only new venture embarked on for this area. Again in response to teachers' expressed need for specific subject information, a set of background information sheets and visual texts have been designed to give easy access to historical information relevant to the content of the syllabus and the units of work. In placing information on the Internet, the need to maintain integrity and credibility, consistent with printed material was paramount. Thorough checking of copyright on original material as well as the validity of information was rigorously applied.

While the Internet offers a cost efficient way of communicating information, and can include high quality colour images and added features as well as text, the need to provide an example of good practice in publishing in this form was a consideration.

In developing primary curriculum and syllabus material that meets the needs of teachers, the challenge has been to maintain a simple structure, such as the units of work, in order to assist teachers in programming and teaching the syllabus effectively. The Internet has proved a very useful tool in enabling additional support to be provided without cluttering this programming tool.

Another example is the set of pro-formas for teachers for use in programming, assessing and reporting. The advantages of publishing them in an electronic form are that teachers may download them onto their own computers, cut and paste, add or delete headings, columns or rows and tailor them to their own needs.

Of interest to Teacher Librarians will be the mapping of the HSIE K-6 outcomes and indicators against the information skills. This will be done through the 'Linkages project' in the 'K-6 Document section' of the Board's website. This project is concerned with integration across the primary curriculum. At present, it can be found on the website but it will be published on a CD-ROM in its final form at the end of 1999.

The 'K-6 Documents section', and in particular the 'Human Society and Its Environment K-6' section on the Board's website can offer teachers a variety of support in new and exciting formats. It has been very exciting working towards fulfilling teachers' needs via the new technologies available and I hope that what is being put in place now will continue to support teachers in the years to come.

Louise Bidenko

At the time of writing this article, Louise Bidenko was a Senior Curriculum Officer at the NSW Board of Studies. She currently resides overseas.

Using SCIS Leaves More Time for Student-centred Services (cont.)

input this electronic collection is inviting, user friendly, and specific to our curriculum. We aim to have users searching rather than surfing.

- Staff professional development is essential for progress and we have been encouraged to undertake a *Certificate in Learning Technologies for Teachers* – an online, self-paced course paid for by the College. All library staff are participating in order to become better at troubleshooting the myriad technical hitches which continually occur when working with networks and computers.
- Networking has become a strategic part of our work. Through liaison with public, special and school librarians, library technicians and student librarians, ALIA, SLAV and Nepean Network, we keep in touch with all aspects of library and information development. This liaison

helps to keep us professionally informed at all times.

In each of these ways library staff at John Paul College are endeavouring to aspire to their mission statement that the Resource Centre exists to provide a positive learning environment, enabling students to become effective learners with access to the latest technology.

Nola Smolders, Head of Library Services, John Paul College, Frankston, Victoria, Email: smon@jpc.vic.edu.au.



Cataloguing News

1. Subject Headings Book

There is no list of amendments, additions and deletions to the SCIS Subject Headings List as over the past few months the cataloguing team under the direction of Cherryl Schauder, the SCIS National Cataloguing Manager, have been busily working on the 4th Edition. We are pleased to announce that we have almost completed the process in readiness to be sent to the printer. An order form is being sent to all schools with this issue of *Connections* outlining details about the cost and delivery. A copy of the information will be available on our website and orders may be placed at any time. However, by placing an order immediately you will be guaranteed of receiving a copy from the first print run.

Customers placing early orders will be able to take advantage of a discounted price. (See SCIS website for details.)

2. Table of Contents

Background

When the appropriate subject heading for a resource is a broad general term, like Science, it can be difficult for a student to know which aspects of the subject are covered in that resource. In these cases, one way of indicating the content of the resource is to include the titles of the chapters or sections from the Table of Contents. The words in the Table of Contents note are accessible by a 'keyword anywhere' search. These keywords are in 'natural language' and complement the SCIS headings.

Project for enriching SCIS records

The SCIS agencies and Curriculum Corporation are trialing a project to add the titles from the Table of Contents to selected bibliographic records, as a note. The resources that will have the additional information, at present, will be those resources classified by a broad subject heading that does not sufficiently disclose the contents of the resource. In this trial only the titles will be included, not the names of authors of sections because the project is intended to enhance keyword access to subject content. An evaluation of the project will be made after a few months to determine

whether the project will be incorporated into the general cataloguing process.

Written by Anne Dowling, Cataloguing Coordinator SCIS, New South Wales

3. Subject Headings for Aboriginal Peoples

When the Stolen Generations report was catalogued, the subject headings available in the SCIS subject headings list were found to be inadequate. A major revision of the headings for Aboriginal peoples began. The first step was to consult the Aboriginal Education Officers in the Curriculum Support Directorate, NSW Department of Education and Training, in order to devise the best method for constructing a list that included terms acceptable to the Aboriginal community and the school education sector in Australia.

The Education Officers and the NSW Cataloguing Agency collaborated on a list to be presented for comment to the Aboriginal community. Unacceptable or inappropriate headings were revised. Appropriate headings for areas like Aboriginal resistance, Reconciliation and Self-determination not covered by the list were created.

An excellent resource, *The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Thesaurus*, compiled by Heather Moorcroft and Alana Garwood and published by the National Library of Australia, was consulted in making changes to the headings. The Aboriginal Liaison Officers in the State Library of NSW, who were also involved in the construction of *The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Thesaurus*, commented on the proposed headings. *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia* and many websites containing information on Aboriginal peoples were examined for appropriate terminology. All the feedback was considered and the list adjusted.

A draft list of headings was presented to the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, at a Conference in Coffs Harbour, for their comment. Their participation in creating a list of headings acceptable to the Aboriginal and Education communities was sought and gained. The list was adjusted further to incorporate their feedback.

The list was sent to Curriculum Corporation and each State cataloguing agency for comment. Both the agency and the Aboriginal Education officers in each State examined the proposed list of headings. The feedback was considered by the NSW Education Officers, the Aboriginal Liaison Officers and members of the NSW AECG. A final list was compiled, incorporating all the feedback from each stage of the consultation process.

Because of the wide consultation with the Aboriginal community, Teacher Librarians from the North Coast of New South Wales, the State agencies and the Aboriginal Education officers, the list is now in a vocabulary that reflects the language of the Aboriginal Studies curriculum of each state and is acceptable to the Aboriginal peoples.

Written by Anne Dowling, Cataloguing Coordinator SCIS, New South Wales

