

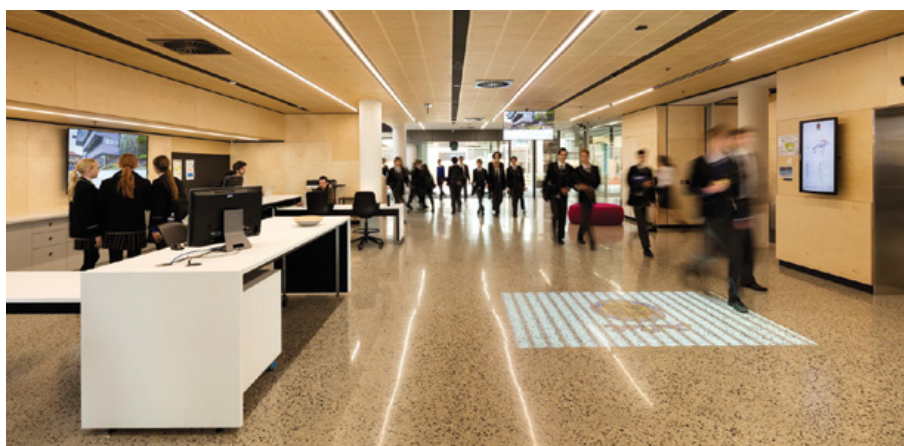
# CONNECTIONS

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## Reimagining the library landscape: an approach to school library design



**Our new library** at Carey Baptist Grammar School, which covers three half-levels at the base of a new Centre for Learning and Innovation, was completed a year ago. Since then, we have arranged our collections to suit the spaces, redesigned our service models, and developed the processes to help our community make best use of our beautiful new library learning spaces. It took about five years of research, design and implementation to reach this stage. This is the story of that journey.

### **Background: Carey Baptist Grammar School**

#### **Community profile**

Carey Baptist Grammar School in Kew, Melbourne, has about 2,400 students from Early Years to Year 12 across two primary schools and a combined middle and senior school.

### **The libraries**

There are two primary school libraries, and a third library is shared by the senior and middle schools. Both VCE and IB are studied at senior levels. All three libraries are regularly refurbished, and their presentations are fresh and inviting. The previous middle–senior library was, however, inadequate for its purpose: a 1970s block design with little room for the flexibility required for evolving ways of teaching and learning. It is this one that has been replaced with our new building.

### **Library mission**

One of Carey's key goals is to nurture the development of our students to become independent, motivated learners, and the library's mission is to provide the spaces, programs and resources to support that goal. We view the school library as having a purpose different to that of public and special libraries: its spaces and collections

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The fireside lounge provides a space for students to converse in small groups.

are teaching and learning resources, and its staff and programs support the curricular and co-curricular learning of the school. Its purpose also includes three particular goals: information literacy education, development of study skills, and wide-reading promotion. From a library design and facilities management point of view, a secondary school library faces a particular user challenge — that of students in middle school who are bundles of energy and require supervision, and senior students who, while rather more lethargic and requiring less supervision, still need help in transitioning from younger teen behaviour to older, more tertiary-oriented individual and group study behaviours.

### Library design process

The school wished to upgrade to an exciting library learning space that would sit with eLearning and ICT support at the heart of a multi-level Centre for Learning and Innovation. Library staff were invited to become design partners with other key stakeholders and the architects. Several years of research were undertaken as the design brief was developed, with *Scoop-It* (Library Learning Spaces 2017) used to curate international and national designs for state, public, special, and education libraries.

Our library team visited many different school, public, and tertiary libraries to gather ideas. We looked at the attitudes required for successful design collaboration with stakeholders holding very different expectations about the programs and functions of new library spaces (Sherwin 2015, Shipp 2015). Note was taken of how new library buildings might support a blend of new and traditional functions (Weir 2015, Vaultier 2015, Anderson 2016, Letting in the light 2015, Cuthbertson 2015, Conyer 2015) and we researched the ways retailers were evolving their space and service models and how product was presented to clientele (Whisen 2016).

We kept the idea of libraries as learning spaces at the front of our thinking, ever asking: how might this space design and furniture/collection configuration assist the particular experiences of learning, either with information (Bruce 2008) or with fiction, that we want to take place? For example, how might the physicality of library spaces support guided inquiry (Sullivan 2015)? We incorporated ideas about iCentres (Hay 2011a, Hay 2011b, Hay 2012) and participatory co-design (Hughes 2015) into our thinking.

Research about our collection arrangement was also pivotal to the design process. We had experimented with ‘collectionising’ our non-fiction and ‘genre-fying’ our fiction in the old library, and with presenting the collection on wall shelves instead of the traditional double-sided stack arrangement. This reflected retail bookshop practice, and was the outcome of (often heated) library team discussions about ways to best present book collections for interaction by users. It was decided that our nonfiction collection arrangements should reflect the way the subjects were taught at the school, and that the fiction collections should reflect our wide-reading program’s genre approach so that students might independently browse in interest areas. Accordingly, we were able to agree with what was also an architectural preference to depart from traditional library collection arrangements.

### The result

We designed the library space to recognise that we are physical and social beings, and that, while we use other means to facilitate the digitally located learning that takes place at our school, we must also provide the best possible physical spaces for the learning with resources that libraries facilitate. David Thornburg’s *Campfires in Cyberspace* (2004) was one of the structures we used for conversations with the architects. It worked as well for describing physical spaces as for digital spaces, and the architects were familiar with the concepts so we had a common language. We said we wanted the following features.

#### ‘Watering holes’

These are the spaces that most people visit at some stage of the day, so they provide for the fast social interactions that enable sharing and networking and access to key resources. These became the ICT Desk; the eLearning Sandpit; and the library’s Lobby Lounge, Café, and Helpzone. These are located together in or at the side of the Information Commons — a traffic concourse linking middle and secondary school learning spaces.

#### ‘Campfires’

Campfires are the smaller, focal spaces for small and large groups to sit around and ‘chew the fat’ (lessons, group work, etc) together. These materialised in the library as: two research classrooms with formal tables and chairs; two wide-reading rooms with low lounge chairs and beanbags; five seminar rooms,

each with central table and chairs; a Harkness room with huge oval table and 18 chairs; a fireside lounge; a variety of tall and low benches and stools; and four- and two-person table and chair formations spread across three levels.

### ‘Caves’

Caves, where individuals reflect and create, are integral to the concentration required for embedding knowledge and generating new ideas. These became the 30 single carrels located deep in the quietest place in the library, where silent study is expected and maintained and there is no mobile phone reach.

### ‘Mountain tops’

Mountain tops provide larger presentation spaces for sharing and celebrating new knowledge and creative achievements. These became stepped seating in the two-level library hall, providing 40 places and a large screen; and digital screens that promote and celebrate library programs and student achievement throughout the library and Information Commons.

### The library in use

Most of the spaces in the library have bookshelves wrapped around their walls so that the students are constantly surrounded by the book resources they use, with visual prompts to the catalogue, online databases, and ebooks. All furniture, apart from that in the reading rooms and fireside lounge, consists of tables and chairs for proper use of laptops. Students prefer that — there has to be space for water bottle, laptop, mobile phone and earphones, pens and paper. Chairs and tables say ‘work’ to students; a couch or divan says ‘relax’; and most students like good back support whatever they are doing.

These spaces run over three cantilevered levels, so we have different noise expectations, with a fair bit of loudness on the top two levels, and either total silence or very quiet conversation on the bottom level where the senior study and wide reading occurs. Most popular with students are the silent/quiet areas for seniors and the ‘beanbag’ rooms for middle school students, with the fireside lounge and high bench areas that overlook the oval commonly used by all students. And, of course, the ICT Sandpit with fabulous interactive eLearning technology attracts a particular cohort.

Supervision of these spaces, over three levels, with opening hours 7.30 am to 6.00 pm, presents particular challenges, and we are working this out as we go. The move to self-loan kiosks helps, as does a system in which senior students ‘borrow’ via the library system any seminar rooms they use. These two procedures assist students to take responsibility both for their loans and for the proper use of spaces.

We have achieved our intention. The design of the new building’s library learning spaces guides students’ independent choice of those spaces that best suit their learning purpose.

### References

For a full list of references, please visit the online version of this article.



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## A note from the editor

Welcome to *Connections* 103!

There have been lots of exciting changes at SCIS recently: after several standards changes to help make your life easier, we have just launched our new, modern, innovative and user-friendly platform, SCIS Data. And as part of our promise to bring you a more beautiful and modern SCIS, we welcome you to our new-look issue of *Connections*. We hope you like it.

You can also find *Connections*’ newly revamped home online at [www.scisdata.com/connections](http://www.scisdata.com/connections). We have been busy digitising old issues of *Connections*, which provide an interesting reflection on the significant changes in school library cataloguing practices and trends over the past 25 years.

We are proud of the role *Connections* plays in the school library community, and are grateful to our wonderful contributors who make each issue possible — you are truly superstars. When I was at library school, my lecturer Sue Reynolds, with her infectious and always-present passion for librarianship, said, ‘You’ll find that most librarians are willing to help. If you ever have a question, ask a librarian. They’ll do everything they can to find an answer for you.’ (And I should note, this was in discussion of the fabulous OZTL\_NET community.) My past two years at the *Connections* desk have proven Sue’s statement to be true. Through the generous sharing of stories and ideas in *Connections*, it is clear that school library professionals of all varieties are selfless, passionate people with one shared message: ‘school libraries matter’. What a pleasure it is to be involved in this community.

If you would like to contribute to *Connections*, whether you are an experienced or a first-time writer, we’d love to hear from you. Please write to me at [connections@esa.edu.au](mailto:connections@esa.edu.au) — even if you simply want to say hello, share feedback, or respond to any ideas raised in *Connections*. Our inbox is always open, your feedback always welcome.

Thank you for reading, and we hope you enjoy this issue.



**Nicole Richardson**

SCIS Communications & Projects  
Coordinator  
Education Services Australia



# TURNING THE SCHOOL LIBRARY INTO A THRIVING COMMUNITY HUB

**Anne Devenish explains how engaging with your school's wider community can help your library become a thriving, welcoming space that shares its love of learning and reading.**

**Location, location, location!** How does this position a school library to engage successfully with the wider community? Perhaps the catchcry should be 'Ambience, ambience, ambience'. Of course, there is much more to attracting interest and audiences in the event-rich Melbourne scene, but beautiful surroundings of bookcases, furniture, colour, contemporary interior design, and a sense of space are an excellent start.

At Camberwell Girls Grammar School, the senior and junior libraries are currently in their third successful year of contributing to the school calendar by offering an array of community programs, including Talking Heads, book launches, Storytime, and Meet the Author sessions.

The school's clever use of space allows the library to operate flexibly, with different zones that can expand and retract to suit student needs and different occasions. The book collections are organised in an informal yet targeted way, with lower shelf heights allowing natural light to flow throughout. Meanwhile, contemporary, cozy furniture gives the impression of being in someone's home as opposed to a school. I like to think of the library as the lounge of the school.

The warm and casual atmosphere immediately breaks down barriers, encouraging interaction and quiet listening; a complete contrast to classrooms and other school facilities, such as the halls and various performance spaces. The library gives students and staff a relaxing and attractive refuge within the school, but also provides an event venue into which the school welcomes the wider community, both inside and outside school hours.

The Talking Heads program is a series of conversational interviews with exceptional people and industry leaders. Held on weekday evenings throughout the year, the interviews are all about storytelling. Libraries are full of stories (weighing heavily on our shelves), so to bring them to life in this format encourages our school community to look beyond the academic world and be inspired by authors, illustrators, musicians, politicians, scientists, and industry leaders. Talking Heads is an opportunity to meet amazing people in a lovely environment, enjoy refreshments and informal conversation beforehand, and then sit back, relax, and be part of a unique interaction with the guest.

Book launches are a natural fit for a school library and are a wonderful experience for students. The school's program has included a launch led by Year 4 students, who prepared and then participated in the event. To incorporate a book launch into the school day is an important way a school library can broaden the life experiences of the students, giving them insight into the process and creative journey behind a book, and provide the opportunity to be a part of a significant milestone in the creator's work. It is also an opportunity to provide an enriching event for parents, who are often equally fascinated by the literary world.



Camberwell Girls Grammar School's library hosted a community event with special guest Rob Hirst of Midnight Oil.

This is why we decided to open our Meet the Author program to the wider school community. While school libraries have always provided opportunities for students to meet writers and illustrators, we invite parents, grandparents and guardians to join in the fun, too.

Storytime programs are traditionally held at public libraries and bookshops. We strongly believe that they also belong in school libraries. The Camberwell Girls Storytime program is offered, without cost, to members of the wider community and families whose children are enrolled to start at the school in the future. As well as showcasing the beautiful library environment and its resources, these lively sessions are an excellent way to engage very young children in the world of reading, and to show them that schools are not scary places to visit. The school's big-book collection is used extensively. Such a collection is often not a resource held in a public library. Storytime contributes to the marketing role the library plays in the school's bigger picture, as families explore the facilities through the library and its programs.

Through proactive event planning, we have the chance to forge a lifelong link in students' minds between the world of literature and the active exploration of ideas. With considered curation of both the library space and the program of events on offer, we can provide outreach to the community while also shaping and enriching the culture of the school — just another way the role of the library is evolving to meet the needs of a changing world.



**Anne Devenish**  
Head of Library Information Services  
Camberwell Girls Grammar School

# ELR, OR THE SUPER FUND YOU HAVE WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A SUPER FUND

After talking to hundreds of groups of students and teachers over some 40 years, I have come to feel that there are really only two questions that people want to ask an author. The first is: 'Where do you get your ideas?' The second is: 'How much money do you earn?' Teachers are too polite to ask the second question but kids regularly come up with it. I always say: 'Less than your teachers'.

My annual Lending Right payment is a crucial part of this income.

While I love PLR (recompense for books held in *public* libraries), I feel a deep personal attachment to ELR, which is the lending right scheme connected with *educational* libraries. This is because I was a member and sometime chair of the committee that successfully lobbied the government to introduce the Educational Lending Right scheme in the mid-1990s. Composed of representatives from the Australian Society of Authors and the Australian Book Publishers Association, this committee was engaged in working out how an ELR scheme could be instituted and managed, as well as campaigning for its introduction. As part of that campaign, I contacted all the national and state organisations of school librarians, plus various teachers' organisations, and explained why ELR was good for libraries and readers, as well as for book creators. As a result of these conversations, I am pleased to say that the leaders of all the organisations signed a letter of support for ELR.

Over the four or five years that all of

this was going on, I was living in the Blue Mountains with an artist partner who earned even less than I did, and I was bringing up two teenagers. I was also writing full time; or trying to. Every time I sat on the train going to and from another ELR Committee meeting in Sydney, I told myself that this was time well spent. And every time I rang a writer colleague to persuade her to devote half an hour to signing a petition or writing a letter on behalf of the campaign, I told her to think of it as the most valuable half hour she might ever spend. How right I was! As I have got older, Lending Right payments have become even more important to me, and to many other book creators as well.

Unlike most Australian workers, authors and illustrators don't get superannuation. Sure, I can join a super fund myself. But I do not have an employer contributing to my fund, to make a nest egg for my old age.

Once upon a time, publishers had wonderful things called backlists. This meant that the kind of books that I write were kept in print for a long time. This in turn meant that an author such as I could be fairly sure of receiving royalty income from new sales of these classic books into her old age. In short, the backlist was like a super fund.

Alas, over the last 20-odd years the backlist has joined the typewriter and the dodo. Try buying any of the CBCA-award-winning books from the 1980s or the 1990s, or even from the first decade of the 21st century. They are not out of date, but they

are nearly all out of print. The only place you can find them, if you are lucky, is a library. And the only payment that their creators can get is Lending Right.

That's why participation in the Educational Lending Right School Library Survey is so important; think of ELR as a little nest egg that will support your favourite author or illustrator so she can produce the next book that you will love.

Now, as to that other question, about 'Where do you get your ideas?' — I haven't got a clue!



**Nadia Wheatley**  
Author

SCIS has commenced inviting 750 Australian schools to participate in this year's ELR survey, which we coordinate on behalf of the Department of Communications and the Arts.

Participants are asked to run an automated survey within their library management system, which extracts a count of their total book holdings, and can be completed in just a few clicks.

The survey creates a national estimate of holdings in Australian school libraries, which is then used to recompense registered book creators for having their work freely accessible in schools.

Participation is highly encouraged.

*'Please, for the sake of every children's book author you admire, for every children's book you love, and for every child who needs inspiration: join the ELR surveys if you are given the chance so that we can keep on writing.'*

— Jackie French

If your school has been invited to participate in the Educational Lending Right School Library Survey, please spare five minutes to support the Australian writing and publishing industry.

For any enquiries, please contact [elr@esa.edu.au](mailto:elr@esa.edu.au).



# TEN WAYS TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR ROLE AS A TEACHER LIBRARIAN

Jenny Kemp suggests ten ways you can show your school why they need their teacher librarian.

**One of the** challenges faced by teacher librarians is that it isn't always easy for the rest of the school to understand why we are important. In my experience, comments like 'Surely everything's online these days?' and 'What?! You went to university to get a library qualification? Isn't it just about covering books and putting them back on the shelves?' are not uncommon.

I'm sure that most librarians did not go into the profession thinking they would need to be salespeople. Often we recognise that we need to tell the school about our physical collection or online resources, but we don't always think about selling ourselves. Sometimes it can feel a bit narcissistic: 'Everyone, look at me!'

But, in fact, teacher librarians always need to sell their skillset. It's an often misunderstood skillset and we don't

want to limit the possibilities of how we can add value to a school community by letting that misunderstanding define our profession. Sometimes the misunderstanding comes because our role is, indeed, very diverse and complex. Highlighting the particular skills that we can offer to support each unique context or person is more effective than barraging people with the full array of options. When I was studying for my Master's degree, I got a little weary of writing about 'user needs', but I actually think it is vital to identify how our skills can meet the needs of each person who uses our library services.

Here are ten ways you can show your school why they need their teacher librarian.

## 1. Increase student literacy skills

You can help improve literacy outcomes for students. You can recommend books, match students with the right book to extend their reading, or help reluctant readers find a book that will get them hooked on reading. Over time you have accumulated much knowledge about the reading habits of students and what can spark — or dampen — an enthusiasm for reading. You can point teaching staff to research that highlights the importance of reading for pleasure in contributing to strong literacy outcomes for students.

## 2. Run a readers' advisory service for staff

You can recommend books to staff. When it comes to school breaks, holiday reading recommendations are always popular, as is promoting new professional reading that comes into your collection. You can deliver books to staff personally so that they can enjoy their library book sooner rather than later. You can encourage staff to share their reading with their students so that they can model the joy that can come from reading experiences.

## 3. Teach research skills

Tell everyone about your research skills. You can share stories of the types of problems students have with online research and bust the digital native myth. You can remind teaching staff that because you are a *teacher* as well as a librarian, you are able to teach students how to improve their research skills in the context of the subject content. You can collaborate with teachers on research units and provide them with the tools to enhance the research process.

## 4. Participate in curriculum planning

You can use your expertise as a teacher to join in with the curriculum planning process. You can listen to the plans being developed for programs and suggest points at which you can support and improve the learning process. You can offer to support the program with physical resources, curated website collections, core text suggestions, research skills that you can teach — the opportunities are endless. Your broad knowledge





of learning across the school can contribute to curriculum mapping, connecting the work of individual subjects to facilitate interdisciplinary teaching opportunities.

### 5. Gain support from leadership

You can find a supporter among the school leadership team who understands your vision to improve student outcomes across the school. You don't need to always do all the advocating yourself; you can ask them to assist you in advocating for the role of the library in the school. Work in partnership with them and support their vision and goals, as well.

### 6. Teach classes

You can teach. Ask to be given a timetabled class in your subject area. Participate in the core business of the school. It helps students and staff recognise that you are a 'proper teacher', and helps you professionally to stay on top of the latest education discussions and trends. If your leadership team is reluctant to allocate you a class, argue that you need to teach to help with your accreditation. You may feel that you are too busy to teach, but the impact that this contribution can have on your perceived value to the core business of the school is not insignificant. If you became a teacher librarian because you don't enjoy teaching, then it is better to be honest and call yourself a librarian.

### 7. Share the library space

You can create a library space that both students and staff feel that they can make their own. It's not your library. The library is a shared space for which you are responsible; you are its caretaker, but it is not yours. Change your language from my library to our library.

Believe that anything is possible with the space you are looking after. Say 'yes' and 'let's try that' frequently. Think of ways to make your space more available to more people. Teachers and students need to see the library as a space that provides options to enhance their teaching and learning experiences.

### 8. Self-promote

You can introduce yourself a lot. Can you walk into a staff meeting and have a pretty good idea of who everyone is and what they do? No? Then aim to be sure that other staff members know who you are. Find out what they teach and consider how you can connect with them. Take up opportunities to connect with other staff through social occasions, sporting events, and extra-curricular activities. You can be a positive and optimistic influence in the school. When people are feeling burdened by the pressures of

their job, you can encourage them and support them in any way you see possible.

### 9. Support the school's vision and goals

You can contribute to the school community beyond the library. When you demonstrate that you value the vision and goals of the

school outside the library walls, it is likely that your place in the school will be more valued. It is easier to connect your agenda for the library with the wider school's agenda if you're involved in it. It also helps you become proactive in looking for opportunities to work alongside other teachers rather than passively waiting for them to approach you.

You can consider other ways your unique skillset can contribute to the school and fill a need that the school is facing. Perhaps you could offer to write a digital citizenship program, set up a makerspace, or help embed technology in classroom practice. With such a broad set of skills, the opportunities that

teacher librarians have are endless — and can sometimes be overwhelming. Make sure that whatever you choose to invest in sits within the school's strategic vision.

### 10. Share your expertise in new technologies

You are good at learning new technologies. You put time into understanding new databases and online systems. And if you don't know the answers, you know where to go for help and will do your best to find new solutions. You are a resource provider and your skills in this area are invaluable to your school community.

### Conclusion

Of course, there are going to be unique ways you can be valued in your particular school context but the challenge is to keep realigning your goals as a teacher librarian with that of the school in which you work. It is not a straightforward challenge; understanding the culture and dynamics of large organisations like schools can be complex. But as teacher librarians we need to be savvy and identify how our unique skills can be valued and understood more fully in our schools.



**Jenny Kemp**  
Teacher librarian  
St Andrew's Cathedral School

# SCIS IS MORE

This is my last 'SCIS is more' as SCIS Manager. By the time you read this, I will be in a new and exciting role at ESA as Manager of Research and Information Services.

We welcome Caroline Ramsden to the role of SCIS Manager. Caroline arrives at SCIS with extensive experience in library information systems, having worked in management and technology roles with OCLC, Stonnington Library & Information Service, and Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation. Welcome, Caroline!

I have enjoyed the past three years, and I'm proud of some of our big achievements during that time. Our new website, [scisdata.com](https://scisdata.com), was in gestation for two years, and I'm honoured to have made a contribution to it. Working with Frankie Yip, Jesse Licot, Deepak Vasa, and the rest of the ESA technology team was a very enjoyable learning curve.

The new site not only looks good, but makes your life easier with improved ordering, searching, customer support, and invoicing. It truly brings SCIS into the 21st century and, more importantly, sets us up to innovate into the next decade.

We have instituted some significant changes in standards and vocabularies, including to series authorities, children's rhyming books, genre headings, diacritics, ongoing RDA implementation, description of resource type, and mapping to key learning areas.

I've enjoyed working with our partners in the library system industry and have learnt a lot in the process. We have a symbiotic relationship, and, when we can work together, the system provider, the data provider, and the customer all stand to benefit.

Very early in my role, circumstance threw myself and Rachel Elliott (ESA's Director of Metadata and Library Services)

into running a three-hour SCIS workshop for the first time, with one hour to prepare. From that point, I realised that I thoroughly enjoyed talking about SCIS with our subscribers, and in those settings I have had many, many lovely conversations with you, our subscribers in Australia and New Zealand. I have also been honoured to represent SCIS — and talk it up — at IASL in Tokyo and Long Beach.

Finally, I have had the privilege of working with the SCIS team — experienced cataloguers, knowledgeable technical staff, talented marketing and content staff, and very professional customer service staff. Caroline can feel very fortunate. I am especially indebted to our director, Rachel, who has been the captain sailing us through these seas and giving me enough rope to keep the sails raised (and risk doing what people tend to do when they are given 'enough rope').

As exciting as the new SCIS website is, it is just an enabler. It will enable SCIS to offer our subscribers improved services and better discovery of resources, and to adapt when facing the challenges to come. Technical changes in the international library world have been glacial but, as with global warming, are beginning to manifest at a surprising rate. My new role will work with Caroline and Rachel to conduct research, explore opportunities, and develop solutions to a range of technical and operational challenges. You, the SCIS subscribers, will be the beneficiaries of that work. Very exciting times, indeed.

Over the past three years SCIS has changed from being the service that provides MARC records to Australian and New Zealand school libraries to being an international provider of gold-standard bibliographic data for the K-12 education sector. Importantly, SCIS is not a faceless corporate entity, but an advocate for the best interests of teachers and learners when it comes to discovering great contemporary content for reading, research, literacy, and learning. I look forward to continuing to contribute to it all.



**Ben Chadwick**

Manager of Research and Information Services  
Education Services Australia

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“The new site brings SCIS into the 21st century and, more importantly, sets us up to innovate into the next decade.”



# CELEBRATING THE SCHOOL LIBRARY OFFICER

Madeleine Galbraith speaks to various library officers in Western Australia about their roles, their libraries, and how they contribute to their school communities.

If you were listening carefully when Leigh Hobbs began his term as the Australian Children's Laureate, you might have heard a collective cheer coming from a westerly direction. It arose when he announced that the aim of his tenure was 'to champion creative opportunities for children, and to highlight the essential role libraries play in nurturing our creative lives' (Hobbs 2016).

In fact, the cheer came from Western Australia's school library officers. These inspiring people can tell amazing stories of running school libraries through their dedication, enthusiasm, resourcefulness, and connectedness. Love of their libraries and students is evident in everything they do.

There are 636 school library officers listed in the Department of Education WA phonebook – many of whom are doing a wonderful job of running their library by themselves. They are the beating heart of their schools. In the spirit of the classic fable 'The town mouse and the country mouse', here are some of their stories.

## Town mouse (new subdivision in Perth): Louise

Louise has been a library officer for 14 years, and she works in a new school in the northern suburbs of Perth that has 230 students and opened in February 2017. After working tirelessly for many months before the official opening, she was overjoyed to see the children arrive and fall in love with their library. It quickly became the hub of the school. Louise is employed full time so that students can come in at any time, be greeted with warmth, and know that they belong in their library.

### What sort of special programs happen in your library?

Makerspace at lunchtimes.

### What do you love about your library and your role?

Creating a space where students feel safe and learn to love reading for pleasure.

### Most popular book of the moment?

*Ratburger* by David Walliams.

### Most memorable library moment?

So many to choose from! I loved it when I ran into an ex-student



who immediately told me what they are reading at that moment.

## Country mouse (WA wheatbelt): Wendy

Wendy was a volunteer at her wheatbelt school library (90 students) before winning the position of library officer 11 years ago. She works two days a week and, on those days, the students come in to return and exchange their books. Teachers are welcome to bring their students in at any time for other activities.

Every year she hosts an event called 'The Library Officers' Big Day Out'. For many regional library officers, the hours of driving are worth it, as it is their only opportunity to network with other regional library officer friends face-to-face. Stories and ideas are shared and the library officers inevitably depart a little heavier (Wendy is a great cook) and with renewed inspiration to provide their students with the best possible school library. Wendy reminds them all that they do make a difference.

### What sort of special programs happen in your library?

I do the Flat Stanley project every other year. I try to get involved in whatever is happening: National Simultaneous Storytime, Read Aloud Day, Roald Dahl Day, plus of course Book Fairs twice a year.

### What do you love about your library and your role?

I love that I'm making memories for the kids; this has always been my aim. I wasn't sure I was succeeding until last year, when the Year 12 students, who were in kindy when I first started volunteering at the school, graduated and surprised me with stories galore about all their memories of time spent with me over the years.

### Most popular book of the moment?

Anything by Ahn Do or Paul Jennings.

### Most memorable library moment?

I am hearing impaired and our students adapt to that very early on, but I saw a teacher reduced to tears some years ago after hearing a Year 2 girl tell a new student that 'Ms Wendy's ears don't work good so you have to look at her and speak clearly but don't shout'. More recently, after the death of Zac, my Lions Hearing Dog, the Year 4–6's shared library session was almost completely taken over by the kids telling stories about Zac, who often accompanied me to school. The conversations led to a discussion

about death, what happens when we die, and their fears about it. It was a tough discussion, but one I feel privileged to have been a part of.

#### **Town mouse (leafy green suburb in Perth): Lynne**

Lynne has worked for 11 years as a library officer at her primary school, where there are 389 students. The library is staffed for four days per week and is open at lunchtime on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students are welcome to come and borrow before and after school. The library hosts annual Book Week activities and is the hub for after-school STEM activities, which are run by an outside provider.

Like all library officers, she knows that one of her most important roles is to connect with the students to help them get hooked on reading. In fact, displays are her super power and she often bundles them up and sends them on to her library officer peers to use in their libraries.

#### **What do you love about your library and your role?**

The variety and the autonomy. When I get sick of one task I can jump to another. I can run the library however I see fit. I love getting kids hooked on reading from my displays. I enjoy buying the books. I also do IT support, purchasing, archives, and project manager for change.

“School libraries will always be the heart of the school, but it is the people who work in these libraries that provide its beat. Library officers are representative of another group of library staff who believe passionately in the vital role of libraries within schools, as places of sanctuary as well as learning.”

#### **Most popular book of the moment?**

*To the Lighthouse* by Cristy Burne (we just had the author visit), the *Tom Gates* series by Liz Pichon, and Zack Zombie's series *Diary of a Minecraft Zombie*. In fact, anything Minecraft.

#### **What is your most memorable library moment?**

Just yesterday I received a gorgeous letter from a Year 2 student saying that the library is her favourite place, and that she loves reading stories and making her own books. She is writing a book about penguins and hopes to write children's books when she is older.

#### **Country mouse (remote WA): Barb**

Barb has been a library officer for 15 years and has worked at her current school in the WA's Pilbara region for 13 years. There are 230 students at her school. The library is staffed and open to students three days per week.

#### **What do you love about your library and your role?**

Its diversity. No two days are the same. I love the mystery, magic and joy that reading brings to everyone. I love the kids' excitement over new books arriving – I get just as excited.

#### **Most popular book of the moment?**

*Diary of a Minecraft Zombie* series.

#### **Most memorable library moment?**

There are so many. Having the town mayor read the National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) book to the whole school for the previous two years, and this year we had four community police officers visit and read the NSS book. The whole school engaged in the story, wearing crowns, hats and masks, and participated in the terrific Q&A afterward.



Louise worked in the library in the months leading up to the school's official opening.

#### **Country mouse (remote WA): Deb**

Deb has been a library officer for 19 years. She is currently at a School of the Air in the Murchison region of WA. Before that she was a library officer in the remote town of Pannawonica for 12 years, so she understands the differences between mainstream schooling and a School of the Air education.

There are about 43 students at her current school, ranging from Kindy to Year 7. The library is open to students approximately 14 hours per week.

#### **What do you love about your library and your role?**

I love everything about our school library and my role as a library officer. I really enjoy the colourful, welcoming atmosphere of the library and I'm very lucky to have had a role to play in the furnishings and layout as it was a newly built school when I started. I enjoy selecting the library resources each year and love getting to know each student and their reading preferences. Every time I pick up a book, I can match it to a particular student. I think it is wonderful that teaching staff feel comfortable in the library and we work as a team to fulfil the needs of the school and the students. It's a great feeling to be able to help the staff and offer advice. My most favourite time is Book Fair, when I can go crazy with creating.



Deb dressed up as 'Mrs Lab Rat' for Book Fair in her School of the Air library.

### Most popular book of the moment?

There's not one particular book I can choose that is the most popular at the moment, but graphic novels are being taken from the shelves like hotcakes.

### Most memorable library moment?

My most memorable moment was the very first Book Fair I did for the School of the Air. It was themed 'Lights, Camera, Action'. I borrowed two mannequins from our local Good Sammy's store, dressed them as Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie in full red-carpet attire and attached life-sized printouts of their faces. On the red carpet, I made and attached large stars with each child's name on them, so to enter the library everyone had to walk the red carpet. The students loved having their photo taken with Brad and Angelina, and the bright green boa that Angelina wore was a success with all the girls. Logie statues featuring staff names were displayed in recognition of everyone's hard work. For such a small school, we raised a record amount in sales and it was the first time the families had experienced the transformation of the library.

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School libraries will always be the heart of the school, but it is the people who work in these libraries that provide its beat. Library officers are representative of another group of library staff who believe passionately in the vital role of libraries within schools, as places of sanctuary as well as learning. They work tirelessly to keep these libraries engaging, relevant and open to our children, and are doing so with great courage and commitment. All library officers would prefer to share their library with a teacher librarian, but do remarkably well on their own, thanks to the support they give each other and the support they receive from others.

School libraries, like all libraries, are about community and belonging. These are the foundation stones of a healthy mind from which lifelong learners can grow. It is logical, therefore, that every child deserves a school library every day.

### Reference

Australian Children's Laureate 2016, 'Leigh Hobbs is the new Australian Children's Laureate', <http://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/2016/02/leigh-hobbs-is-the-new-australian-childrens-laureate>



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## The School Magazine

In 1916, in the middle of World War I, the New South Wales Department of Education, in a bold move, published the first edition of a free literary magazine for public school children: *The School Magazine*.

To put this into context: when the first edition of *The School Magazine* made its way to schools, it was no doubt delivered in some parts by horse and cart; Australian troops, having just been withdrawn from Gallipoli, were fighting on the Western Front and elsewhere; Australia's population was under five million and the prime minister was Billy Hughes; Model T Ford cars were rolling off the world's first automated production lines.

*The School Magazine* has been published continuously for 102 years — through two world wars, the Depression, the Moon landings and 22 Olympic Games. The stories, poems and plays published throughout these events reflect the times, making *The School Magazine* a unique documentation of Australia's history.

It has nurtured the careers of significant Australian writers and illustrators of children's literature, including May Gibbs, Pamela Allen, Kim Gamble, Robin Klein, Sophie Masson, Tohby Riddle and Anna Fienberg. And the magazine continues to foster the careers of aspiring writers and artists, while publishing the work of well-established contributors.

Today *The School Magazine* continues to showcase high-quality children's literature and promote reading for pleasure. It does more than instil a love of reading in children.

Teachers appreciate the tailor-made texts that can form the basis of language, literacy and literature lessons.

In 2016, *The School Magazine's* status as an iconic Australian institution was recognised during Education Week, when the NSW Governor, the NSW Minister for Education, and the Secretary of the NSW Department of Education launched the anthology *For Keeps: A Treasury of Stories, Poems and Plays, Celebrating 100 Years of The School Magazine* at a special centenary event in the Royal Botanical Gardens Sydney.

*The School Magazine* remains today, as it was back in 1916, a magazine aimed squarely at children. It has fostered a lifelong love of reading in successive generations of students and it continues to make a significant contribution to Australia's educational and cultural landscape.

**The School Magazine team**  
NSW Department of Education



# THE CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Implementing change is a process that requires time, empathy, and a shared vision between school library staff and school management teams. Angela Platt shares her experiences.

**During my spare** time in my school library, I was recently perusing various blogs, Pinterest, Twitter, etc – looking for any new library-related ideas, examples of best practice and developments which I should know about. One such blog that piqued my interest on this occasion was ‘Day in the Life’ ([heartoftheschool.edublogs.org/day-in-the-life-of](http://heartoftheschool.edublogs.org/day-in-the-life-of)) by Caroline Roche – the section of her blog that allows various school library professionals to ruminate about what a day’s work is like for them. It was intriguing for me to note such variety in the days of each of these individuals. Some days were jam-packed with teaching and instruction, while others were dominated by organisational and admin activities. Some mentioned library assistants, helpers, and senior management providing all-day assistance, while others made clear the challenges of being the sole librarian in a school.

I have found this variety of experience to be the subject of many conversations I have been privy to, both online and while attending Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events with other school librarians. Over my meagre four years as a school librarian, this has been on my mind a lot. I can vividly recall attending a couple of CPD events in my first year in this position in 2013. I remember feeling overwhelmed, and somewhat of a failure, when comparing what I was doing in my library with how much these other librarians were doing.

Just to elucidate — my school library was purpose-built in 2011 (before I arrived there). It is a secondary school library attached to the senior school of an independent school. This

small but elegant library comprises two floors, over 15,000 books, and custom-made shelves reaching from the floor to just inches below the ceiling. (Indeed, the former Bursar told me that when he ordered these shelves, he had a moment of panic when it occurred to him that they might not actually fit into the new library that was being built at the time. They did fit, but only by inches.)

This school library, fitted with open-seating for around 40 pupils, and 13 soft brown chairs for reading, was created to provide an aura of academic rigour and quiet reading. When I arrived, the only computers in this library were the one at the librarian’s desk, and two iPads used by pupils to peruse the library catalogue. Classes were not permitted to come into the library, since there was no special area designed for classes, and, indeed, it was impractical to host them and try to maintain a silent atmosphere for the numerous sixth formers (years 12–13 students) who utilised this space throughout the day. Silence was key, and this was (and still is) strictly enforced all day.

When I compared this environment with the environments in the libraries of my library colleagues in other schools, I felt that I was failing miserably. Other librarians described having classes coming in nearly all day long, holding library lessons in the library, teaching literacy skills on a fortnightly basis, pupils coming into the library to play games and socialise around books, and sometimes even hosting fun activities in their libraries, such as scavenger hunts and role-playing games. At my library, on the other hand, these things were strictly prohibited, an imperative



set by management. This was stressed to me before I even took the job. The library was to maintain its aura as a silent academic and reading safe-haven at all times. While this strict tone did discourage me in the beginning, especially when I compared myself with other librarians, I came to terms with it. In fact, I even began to appreciate and empathise with this position. Furthermore, I found ways to institute various initiatives that allowed things to change ... bit by bit.

A few years ago, if another school librarian had asked me how I felt about the punctilious system at my library, I would have hung my head and admitted it was unchangeable, and that I yearned for a library more like theirs. Now, however, I admit candidly that if I were in school management I might do things differently, but I find myself more able to defend and empathise with the position of those 'in charge'. I think this is in part from my Chartership work, which has compelled me to investigate the school's aims and vision, and to evaluate how my school library meets these.

It is also, in part, from coming to realise a few key things. I thought I would share three of these, as I am certain that I am not the only school librarian who has had this struggle!

### School management teams have preconceptions too

While we as school librarians come to the table with our preconceptions of how a school library should be run, what should be prioritised, and what best practices are, we need to understand that a school management team also comes with its own preconceptions — some of which its members also understand to be best practice, learned from their own CPD sessions, colleagues, and formal training. Indeed, I have realised that the management team members' ideas about how the library should be run stems largely from their whole-school vision.

### Understand their position

I'm not saying in the first point that we give up if our views conflict — far from it. Instead, we need to learn first to understand and empathise with their position. Identify why the management team has operated the way it has in the past, and how it now feels about that. What does it feel has been successful and why? After all, as leaders of a school (especially an independent school), it has the prerogative to decide what message about the school it wants to send and advertise — including, indeed, through its school library.

In my case, I began to understand that my school wanted to send a message emphasising academic excellence and the pre-eminence of the book in learning — both things I also hold dear. I, therefore, began to empathise with the various rules that management wished to continue to implement in the library.

### Change takes time

And this is the key: change takes time. One thing I have learned above all else is that, even though I may have ideas that would be brilliant — changes that would be life-altering for my library — change often needs to be offered piecemeal, not in huge helpings. This may not be the case for every librarian; some very privileged librarians may arrive in their school with a school management team that simply hands them the directive to 'make the library great at whatever cost'. This is a brilliant, wonderful, and dream-worthy situation — but not the norm, I expect. Instead, we are likely to arrive in libraries, as noted above, which already have

“This is the key: change takes time. One thing I have learned above all else is that, even though I may have ideas that would be brilliant — changes that would be life-altering for my library — change often needs to be offered piecemeal, not in huge helpings.”

a system, preconceived notions, and a vision for their library service. If you come into this situation with ideas on how things can change, then definitely do bring them to the table — but first, gauge the atmosphere. Is the management team likely to be open to the change you wish to present? If not, is there a way you can bring in this change in smaller doses over time?

I have found this understanding to be pivotal in the changes to my library that I am proud to have been able to effect. I began to generate initiatives which respected the library's general rules but were still engaging, fun, and promoted enthusiasm for the library. I thought of ways in which we could initiate small changes without causing disruption to the overall atmosphere — such as allowing classes to come in briefly to select books; holding competitions and events which could be completed without noise or chaos; and holding briefings on information literacy within classrooms or computer rooms adjacent to the library. I also began a pupil committee that assisted me with choosing books. It met in the library once per term.

So please do not be discouraged if you find yourself unable to create your ideal library in a heartbeat. It takes time, patience, and understanding. After all, change is often a drizzle, not a hurricane.



**Angela Platt**

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This article was originally published by the School Libraries Group committee of the UK's Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), and has been republished here with permission. To view Angela's original article, please visit <http://bit.ly/2wrniob>.

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: TEACHING DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

School librarians are often seen as leaders in digital citizenship. Susan Marshall looks at some of the rights and responsibilities that we inherit, and must teach, in the digital world.

**None of us** could imagine a world without the internet. It has become an ever-increasing element of our daily life — and it is often the school library staff's role to support students and classroom staff to maximise the benefits of engaging with the online world for learning, creating, playing and connecting with others.

It's worth reminding ourselves that there are rights and responsibilities that go with being a citizen of this digital world.

So, what is 'digital citizenship' and why is it so important? How can librarians network with parents and the wider community on issues related to digital citizenship? How can students be supported to become good digital citizens aware of both their rights and their responsibilities in this increasingly ubiquitous online world?

Digital citizenship refers to positive engagement with digital technology. A digital citizen is a person with the skills and knowledge to participate in society, communicate with others and create and consume digital content.

The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner lists three core principles that responsible digital citizens should practise: engage positively, know your online world, and choose consciously.

You can read more about these principles and watch videos about digital citizenship on the Office's website ([www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)).

## Protecting digital reputation

A person's digital reputation is defined by how they behave online and the kind of content posted about themselves and others. These posts — tagged photos, blog posts, and social networking interactions — shape how a person is perceived online and offline, and will be perceived in the future. Teaching students the skills to protect their digital reputation helps them keep safe online and helps to build positive, respectful relationships.

One of the great benefits of the internet is the ability to share information in an instant, but it is important for users to remember that everything they say and do online can have an impact on a digital reputation. It is essential that your students, and staff, know how to ensure that their reputation stays intact. Social media, search engines, blogs, and other websites collect user data and have an easily accessed profile of anyone's digital reputation.



## Maintaining respectful online relationships

The key to any good relationship is respect and this involves acceptance and recognition of the rights of others to such things as privacy, beliefs, and interests.

Creating and maintaining respectful relationships online is key to developing safe and supportive communities. Educators have a key role to play in teaching students the skills to enable them to reject aggressive or unwanted behaviours, discrimination, and stereotyping, and to develop positive and respectful relationships.

## Protecting privacy online

Our sense of who we are has had a major shift with the advent of the internet. Most of us who use the internet regularly have multiple digital identities; we manage between five and 50 login and password combinations to go about our daily online activities.

Online privacy refers to the management of personal information online. Young people need to learn how to manage their own images and messages, as well as the images and messages of other people. Privacy settings ensure young people's safety online, ensuring that only people they know and trust have access to personal information.

As part of our teaching of digital literacy skills, educators need to be up to date with information about transactional, social, and professional identities and the tools required to safely protect each one. Students' personal digital footprints are recorded each time they access the internet. The data they allow others to access can have wide-ranging consequences for their digital identity.

Becoming a good digital citizen is the key to safe, positive, and enriching online experiences. You can find a wealth of resources to build knowledge and skills around digital citizenship on the Student Wellbeing Hub ([www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au](http://www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au)).



**Susan Marshall**  
Content Manager  
Student Wellbeing Hub  
Education Services Australia



# WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

## AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND THE MEDIA

[childrenandmedia.org.au](http://childrenandmedia.org.au)

ACCM is a national community body 'committed to promoting better choices and providing stronger voices in children's media'. The website provides: specifics of the organisation; searchable reviews of child-centred apps and movies; and details of advocacy, conferences and associated research.

SCIS no. 1831768

## BENEATH THE WAVES

[museum.wa.gov.au/btw](http://museum.wa.gov.au/btw)

Focusing on the Kimberley coast of WA, this award-winning website features stunning underwater video footage and interviews with marine biologists. The Western Australian Museum has been studying this remote area for over six years and has encountered thousands of marine varieties and many new species.

SCIS no. 1831797

## CLIMATE CHANGE

[www.environment.gov.au/climate-change](http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change)

Published by the Australian Government's Department of Environment and Energy, this website contains information on aspects of climate change. Material includes: adapting to climate change, renewable energy, climate science, going carbon neutral, and various international undertakings.

SCIS no. 1831813

## CREST

[www.csiro.au/en/Education/Programs/CREST](http://www.csiro.au/en/Education/Programs/CREST)

Creativity in Research, Engineering, Science and Technology (CREST) is hosted by CSIRO and is a non-competitive, school-based awards program. The program supports aspects of science and technology within the Australian Curriculum for both primary and secondary students.

SCIS no. 1831904

## HOPSCOTCH

[itunes.apple.com/au/app/hopscotch-make-your-own-games-/id617098629?mt=8](https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/hopscotch-make-your-own-games-/id617098629?mt=8)

Designed for both iPads and iPhones, this free app allows primary students to undertake coding by using blocks. Students may then progress to develop their own drawings and video games. In-app top ups are also available.

SCIS no. 1733802

## INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN: ART GALLERY OF NSW

[itunes.apple.com/au/app/indigenous-australian-art-gallery-of-new-south-wales/id732418119?mt=8](https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/indigenous-australian-art-gallery-of-new-south-wales/id732418119?mt=8)

The Art Gallery of NSW has provided a selection of images of artworks from their collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art for students to study. The images are complemented by stories regarding the artists and their works, and interviews. Explanation of art terms used is an additional feature.

SCIS no. 1664551

## KIDREX: A KID-SAFE SEARCH ENGINE

[www.kidrex.org](http://www.kidrex.org)

This child-centred search engine harnesses Google Custom Search and uses the technology from Google SafeSearch to filter out explicit sexual content. The developers note that 'no filter is 100 per cent accurate, but SafeSearch™ should eliminate most inappropriate material'.

SCIS no. 1498681

## PIXABAY

[pixabay.com](http://pixabay.com)

Available as a free app from Google Play and the App Store, Pixabay allows users to search and access over 1 million photos, videos, vector graphics, and illustrations free of copyright under Creative Commons CC0.

SCIS no. 1831909

## PRIMEZONE

[www.primezone.edu.au](http://www.primezone.edu.au)

An initiative of the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia, this database contains numerous resources

about primary industries. Each topic contains a précis, subject area, suggested year level, and format (mainly video or website).

SCIS no. 1756786

## SPACE FOR EDUCATORS

[www.esa.int/Education](http://www.esa.int/Education)

The European Space Agency offers a wealth of space-related material on this website for teachers and students. Reflecting its multinational heritage, content is available in several languages. Specific references and material regarding both Australia and New Zealand are also present.

SCIS no. 1831939

## SUPPORTING TEACHING AND LEARNING

[royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/supporting-teaching-and-learning](http://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/supporting-teaching-and-learning)

The Royal Society of New Zealand helps foster science and technology education in NZ schools by highlighting a range of programs linking both teachers and students with appropriate science and technology education providers.

SCIS no. 1831948

## TEACHERKIT

[teacherkit.net](http://teacherkit.net)

This app is used by teachers around the world to manage routine tasks such as logging attendance, recording students' grades, managing behaviour notes, creating reports, and sharing data. Available from the App Store, Windows Store and Google Play in specific countries.

SCIS no. 1761923



**Nigel Paull**  
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*The internet sites selected for review are often of a professional nature and should be viewed by teachers and library staff to determine suitability for students. The content and URLs of these sites are subject to change.*

### Connections

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# The School Magazine

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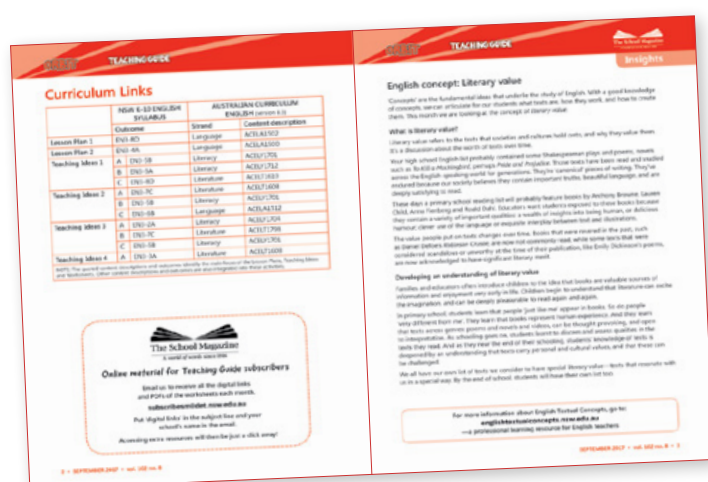
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