CONNECTiONS

21st-century literacy with graphic novels

Reading is reading

We read books, newspapers, magazines, billboards, signs, notices, bills, websites, blogs, social media posts et cetera. When we read all those things, consciously or unconsciously we're developing and using multiple literacy skills. Thanks to the internet and social media, we're also increasingly relying on visual literacy and multimodal texts.

Comics have long suffered a stigma that is unfortunately frequently reiterated by teachers, parents and librarians. A child is reading a comic or wants to borrow one and a well-meaning grown up says, 'Pick a real book. Do some reading.'

Every time this happens enormous damage is done, with children being turned away from reading the books that pique their interest.

A comic – a graphic novel – is sequential art. But what is the harm in that? Reading is reading and it is a well-known fact that children who read for fun and find pleasure in reading become lifelong readers. So let's fight the stigma and discuss some of the literacy super-powers that can be gained by reading comics.

The power of comics

Comics come in all shapes, forms and genres. It is all too common for people to think of superheroes on hearing the word 'comics'. However, the most popular and best-selling comics for young readers today are Raina Telgemeier's humorous and heart-warming slice-of-life graphic novels, where she shares some of her life struggles, and Dav Pilkey's *Dog Man*. As an English teacher noted, among all the fun and silliness of *Dog Man: Lord of the Fleas*, one page featured the words 'shun', 'redundancy', 'eschew', 'reiteration' and 'recapitulation'.

We know that comics are attractive to children. They appeal to them because of their visuals; however, we also understand that comics are multimodal texts where the reader needs to use multiple literacies

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to make meaning. Think about the *Dog Man* words mentioned earlier. These are very high-level, but the power of comics makes them easier to understand as readers can infer meaning from the images.

It is this perfect blend of the written word and visual narrative – with the added bonus that readers are in complete control of the experience – that makes comics incredibly rich and complex texts. Novels offer no visuals. Movies offer visuals but no words and a viewer has no control over the pace of viewing. With comics, words and visuals complement and enrich each other. Even better, readers are in complete control of what they focus their attention on and how quickly or slowly they decode and read the text.

> " Comics are an excellent resource for educators because they engage struggling readers with a visual allure. "

Multiple-literacy superpowers

Borrowing and adapting the New London Group's multiliteracy model from 1996, five literacies that readers have to use when reading comics are:

- linguistic (written language)
- visual (mood through colours, shading, composition et cetera)
- gestural (body and facial language)
- spatial (panels, layout …)
- symbolic (icons, balloons, visual representations and emanata).

In order to make meaning, the reader has to look at all of these elements, decode and interpret them, and then combine them all to make meaning. It may be argued that by combining all of these elements, the reader is working much harder than when reading a book or watching a movie. Best of all, studies have shown that readers benefit from greater information retention because they have to decode so many different

elements using multiple literacies. This is why graphic novels are increasingly being used in classrooms, including in tertiary education.

Additionally, comics model some excellent literacy practices for readers, such as:

- precise, concise and rich language (Jaffe 2014)
- visuals supporting and strengthening memory recall with higher neural connections (Jaffe 2014)
- a higher incidence of median words and rare words than junior fiction, comparable to adult fiction (Center of Teaching and Learning)
- learning complex non-verbal communication (Kullberg 2018; Jaffe 2014).

Comics demand the writer to be concise. They don't have long paragraphs and the constraints of the page demand that narration and dialogue are kept to a minimum. No word can be wasted, which forces the writer to be incredibly precise with the written word. This models excellent writing and offers rich vocabulary because every word matters.

Comics also offer a rich visual narrative with a multitude of tools for the artist to create meaning, for instance the shape of the panels, the colouring, the lines, the number of panels on the page, the shape of the speech balloons and emanata. They're all elements the reader decodes to infer meaning. This is a complex task because often the visuals act as metaphors or contradict the text, forcing the reader to decode and establish their relationships.

> " Reading is reading and it is a well-known fact that children who read for fun and find pleasure in reading become lifelong readers. "

In summary, comics are an excellent resource for educators because they engage struggling readers with a visual allure. They encourage reading because they don't seem as daunting as a whole book filled with words. Comics help early readers to decode text with visual elements providing clues to support the reader. More importantly, comics extend the reading for advanced readers with the interaction of the written and visual narratives adding complex layers of meaning.

There are some great reasons for reading comics and graphic novels and they're incredibly popular right now. Young readers are devouring Dav Pilkey, Raina Telgemeier and Aaron Blabey's works (among many others). In fact, Pilkey's *Dog Man* was the third best selling book in the US last year, despite coming out in July, and Raina Telgemeier's *Guts* was in the top 15 despite coming out in October. Australian Aaron Blabey's *Bad Guys* books have been in the NYT Best Seller list for more than a year.

Hollywood and TV studios are adapting an enormous number of comics for the screen, but best of all, some of the most amazing, personal, independent and diverse titles being published right now are coming out as graphic novels. School curriculums are placing increasing emphasis on visual literacy and there is no doubt that the old stigma must be cast into the dustbin of history by librarians and teachers. The time to embrace the rich variety and depth that graphic novels have to offer is now!

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Follow Iurgi on Twitter @iurgiurrutia. Learn more about the ALIA Graphic Novels and Comics special interest group at alia.org.au/groups/alia-graphic-novels-and-comics or on Twitter @ALIAGraphic.

SCIS is more

Our publisher partners and their important role in supporting learning

The SCIS school library community includes over 9000 schools across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom who are using the SCIS database of approximately 1.6 million catalogue records and viewing approximately 4500 records each day.

We aim to provide consistently excellent service and high-quality data via access to a database of accurate, consistent and authoritative catalogue records, created to agreed international standards.

The SCIS database is often used by school library staff as a tool for sourcing new resources in areas of interest, both for the library and to support the wider curriculum needs of their school.

We greatly value our relationships with our publisher partners who support SCIS in ensuring that we provide catalogue records that are up to date and include educationally relevant, leading content for schools.

The benefits of timely access to this data for school library staff cannot be overstated as they seek to make purchasing decisions and have valuable resource metadata available to support curriculum planning in their schools.

Our publishing partners, suppliers and distributors play a pivotal role in ensuring that schools gain efficiency in refined resource searches using our educational subject headings, Dewey classifications and high-quality MARC records. We are very grateful to publishers who supply title metadata to us via ONIX and send us physical items to catalogue.

We also value receiving information from publishers on new and forthcoming publications, and exciting initiatives and author promotions that are relevant to K–12 schools.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that remote learning has increasingly become 'the norm' across our schools. We gratefully acknowledge the agile response of the Australian Publishers Association (APA), the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and the National Copyright Unit (NCU) in their quick thinking and efforts to support teachers and students during periods of learning at home.

The Schools Storytime Arrangement (bookscreate.com.au/books-create-australias-schools-storytime-arrangement), #AustraliaReadsAtHome initiative (australiareads.org.au/australia-reads-at-home) and COVID-19 Educational Publisher Resources (bookscreate.com.au/project/book-industry-covid-19-response/covid-19-educational-publisher-resources) are invaluable initiatives to keeping students engaged with rich, educational resources that are age-appropriate and curriculum-aligned.

We have seen some truly wonderful initiatives that have greatly assisted school library staff when faced with new challenges in relation to providing library support and services without their physical facility. We've heard a lot about the increased emphasis on the development of digital literacy during this time, in addition to digital storytelling growing exponentially. As always, school library staff are swift to find creative and innovative ways to support student learning, and the rapid responses from publishers and authors have been truly wonderful.

We look forward to continuing to develop our publisher partner relationships and welcome new ways of working together in this new educational environment.

Caroline Hartley
SCIS Manager
Education Services Australia

Educational Lending Right

'Being a writer is a precarious life – one which writers embrace voluntarily, of course, but that doesn't make it any easier. The PLR/ELR payments are certainly the only ones I can rely on each year!'

— Ursula Dubosarsky, Australian Children's Laureate 2020–2021

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**.

Education Services Australia

Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
Office for the Arts

FATHERS READING WEEK: A CASE STUDY FOR THE GREAT SCHOOL LIBRARIES CAMPAIGN

By Lucy Chambers, BAHons; DipLib; MSc; MCLIP

BIOGRAPHY

Lucy Chambers, Chartered Librarian, retired in 2018. She managed primary school libraries for over 20 years, latterly for Tower Hamlets Schools Library Services (SLS). She is chair of teacher judges for UKLA's Information Book Award 2021, was a judge for the School Library Association Information Book Award for several years, is a book reviewer for the journal *School Librarian* and a CILIP mentor. She is Children's Events Coordinator for the Chiswick Book Festival, London and a judge for its Young People's Poetry Competition. She was a member of CILIP's Schools Library Group Committee for six years, most recently as joint Vice Chair. She devised their series *Key Issues for School Librarians* and contributes to their *Book Chat Packs*. Lucy is an advocate for school librarians and libraries, children's books, equality of opportunity, life-long learning and the importance of wide reading, nowadays mainly on Twitter (@bookishL) and library and education forums.

Summary

The UK Great School Libraries Campaign[1] invites school librarians to submit case studies, to demonstrate how their library contributes to teaching and learning in the school.

I take you through the process of writing a new case study based on Fathers Reading Week. Note: the word 'Fathers' includes other male role models.

Introduction

The Great School Libraries Campaign (GSL)

'Great School Libraries is a three-year evidence-based campaign to bring back libraries and access to librarians in every school in the UK. Our guiding principle is a firm belief that every child deserves a great school library.'[2]

GSL's survey of primary and secondary school libraries found a mixed picture 'of inequality of access and opportunity and insecure employment'.[3]

Why request case studies?

There is little evaluative research in the UK on the effectiveness of school libraries, so one of GSL's aims was to correct this. The information gathered would be used 'to raise awareness with school managers, educationalists and other library professionals of how librarians can support the strategic goals of the school.'[4]

GSL Case Study template: a closer look

The GSL Case Study template has six boxes to complete, each requiring a detailed response. For example, the 'What?' box asks respondents to describe their project, including intended outcome, ways of achieving it, and any issues. The 'Why?' box asks for demonstrated 'accountable benefits to the school community' and the measure of 'impact on teaching and learning'. The 'Advice' box calls for details that will help and inspire others. GSL prefers a formal writing style but says, 'Case studies are individual journeys … we want to help you record your achievements'.[5]

Case studies examples

Examples of completed case studies come in four categories: 'Reading for Pleasure and Information', 'Wellbeing/Diversity', 'Learning through Inquiry' and 'School Libraries during Lockdown'. They are wide-ranging and inspirational. Topics include running a readathon, oral storytelling, a playground book trolley, library lessons, online support, e-books, reading groups, free writing and many more. These are written by school librarians in both state and independent primary and secondary schools.[6]

A worked example: Fathers Reading Week at a Tower Hamlets primary school

I have anonymised the school. This report is based on notes made during the planning, operation and evaluation of the project. The section headings are taken from the GSL case studies template. I suggest you download the case study template (footnote 4) to read the headers and more detailed guidance.

What and why?

This is an inner-city school with high levels of social deprivation, mainly English as an additional language (EAL) pupils of Bangladeshi heritage with an above national average of special educational needs.

I worked here one day a week from 2012 to 2015, as part of a team of primary school librarians based at Tower Hamlets SLS.

1 greatschoollibraries.org.uk
2 greatschoollibraries.org.uk/about
3 Nick Poole in Survey of primary and secondary school libraries (2019), retrieved from greatschoollibraries.org.uk/news
4 Case study template found at greatschoollibraries.org.uk/case-studies
5 Case study template found at greatschoollibraries.org.uk/case-studies
6 greatschoollibraries.org.uk/case-studies

Tashi-Delek/iStock.com

Senior staff priorities

- Improve reading in the school. The relevant Ofsted report stated: The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard by the end of Year 6 was below the national average and well below at the higher levels.
- Develop family involvement. Research showed that this improved pupils' uptake of education. (See the Research section below.)
- Encourage participation by fathers/male role models in their children's education.

The Family Support Worker (FSW) and I planned a Fathers Reading Week in June 2014.

We held three meetings and shared tasks: I concentrated on sourcing resources, setting up events, negotiating with the Head, booking and running the author visit and cinema night; the FSW handled the day-to-day school contact, timetabling issues, finding volunteers for the after-school events, speaking about the project at a staff meeting and encouraging families to take part. We offered something for every class, from Nursery to Year 6. We organised the following events:

- Storyteller Pat Ryan: storytelling assembly (whole school), Rhymetime (Reception, Years 1 and 2), writing workshops (Years 3 to 6).
- Fathers shared stories in class (drop-in); children wrote and drew favourite stories (whole school).
- Father–child homework: fathers reading to children and sharing stories about their school days or childhood (whole school).
- Father–child homework: football-based writing and creative activities (ages 6 to 11).
- Timetabled reading opportunities in class: I borrowed 40 books for each class from SLS; football stories and non-fiction, traditional tales, father–child stories.
- Children dressing up as their fathers.
- Family assembly.
- Competition: children drawing portraits of their father.
- Display of father portraits in playground for families.
- Cinema night: Years 3 to 6.
- Cricket match: fathers v. school cricket team.

Our budget was £300, which covered the storyteller and prizes. Everything else was free of cost.

Research

Research from the Fatherhood Institute and the National Literacy Trust (NLT) reflected school issues.

Fathers who are involved in their children's early education have a significant impact on attainment and on future aspiration … Conversely, low interest by fathers in their children's education (particularly boys) has a stronger negative impact on their achievement than contact with the police, poverty, family type, social class, housing tenure and child's personality.[7]

7   Blanden, J. (2006). 'Bucking the trend': What enables those who are disadvantaged in childhood to succeed later in life? Working Paper No 31 Corporate Document Services. London: Department for Work and Pensions
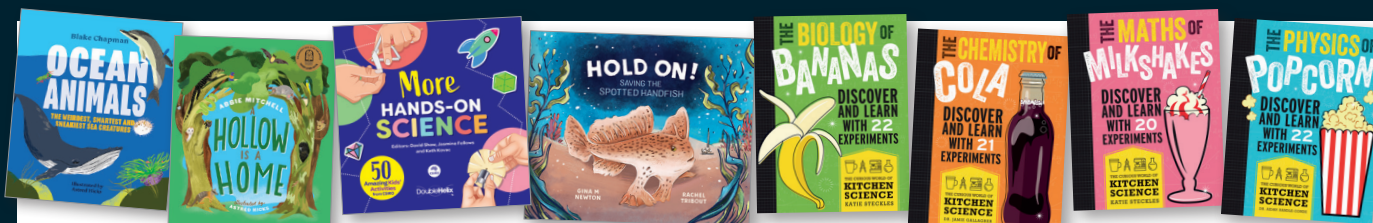
Family Matters: The Importance of Family Support for Young People's Reading (NLT)[8] found that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to get encouragement to read and to see their parents read, particularly their fathers, and that children whose parents encourage them to read and are seen reading themselves achieve higher reading levels at school.

Outcomes

The most popular events were:

- Film night. Seventy children attended.
- Playground display. Around 30 families and many fathers attended.
- Fathers sharing stories. Teachers were very pleased with attendance at the fathers' drop-in storytelling, particularly in EY. Fathers with no spoken English shared stories in their mother tongue and fathers enjoyed listening to other fathers telling stories. Staff said this was a valuable experience and should be expanded to include mothers.
- Storyteller Pat Ryan. Very positive comments from staff about Pat Ryan: 'Excellent, great at communication with all ages' (a teacher); 'all stories based round father–child relationship' (a teacher); 'great to have a male literary role model' (Literacy Coordinator).
- Father–child homework. Children were very enthusiastic about this.
- Cricket match. Dads, brothers and grandparents took part. Very positive reactions.

Issues

- Staff: reluctant to change routines or volunteer after school. Lack of staff enthusiasm and marketing in the class meant that take-up of some activities was quite low, e.g. fancy dress.
- More fathers dropped in for storytelling in the younger classes than in the older ones. Some children were in tears if their parent didn't arrive. FSW identified children with no father living at home in advance and discussed the options of inviting another male role model to take part.

If I were to run this event again, I would collate more comments and data via evaluative questionnaires for families, staff and children.

Legacy

- We judged Fathers Reading Week a success to be built on.
- I established one family event per term (in addition to other regular reading-for-pleasure initiatives for pupils, such as clubs, shadowing book awards, entering competitions, displays). October: National Poetry Day (poetry sharing for families and display of staff favourite poems around the school). March: Book Week around World Book Day. June: family after-school reading event, sharing myths and other stories, with resources borrowed from the SLS.
- The FSW worked with families of the children missing fathers or male role models.
- Staff were keen to include mothers in a school literacy event, for example a Mother's Day reading week.
- Staff invited parents to read with children in class regularly.
- The Literacy Coordinator included library events in her annual planning. We worked more closely on involving the whole school and community in reading development events.

Advice: three statements to help others

- Library projects should be included in annual school planning and supported by the senior management team in order to ensure full staff participation.
- Thank everybody who helped you, to encourage willing participation in future.
- It is very useful to work on projects like this with a member of staff who comes at it from a different angle and is full-time, as it helps to integrate the project in the life of the school.

Conclusions

The GSL case study template gives a workable structure to project reports. Citing research gives it gravitas. The guidance ensures that you consider evaluating your project from the start. I recommend using the template to write case studies and to demonstrate the impact of librarian-led projects on improving literacy.

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8   Clark, C and Picton, I. (2012). *Family Matters: The Importance of Family Support for Young People's Reading*. Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual survey 2011. London: National Literacy Trust.

TIKTOK AND LIBRARIES: A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

Kelsey Bogan, Library Media Specialist at Great Valley High School (USA), explains what TikTok is and why it has a place in school libraries.

'Miss Bogan, you're TikTok famous!'

These words greeted me early one morning shortly after I had finally caved in and created a TikTok account for our high school library. I had posted a TikTok video the previous night, you see, and in less than a day, it had more than 300,000 views! Within a week, it climbed to well over 500,000 views. I had gone 'viral' and my students were duly impressed (going viral is, apparently, a great ambition of many of my students). I had secured my spot as 'the cool librarian' forevermore.

The days that followed my first viral TikTok video were very thrilling, as many students came to tell me that my video had shown up on their 'for you' page (essentially their TikTok feed) and to share how excited they were that their friends in other schools kept messaging them to ask if 'that viral library TikTok' was from *their* librarian. Who knew that 'mad TikTok skills' would give them such pride in their library and librarian?

> " Who knew that 'mad TikTok skills' would give them such pride in their library and librarian? "

While I was taken aback that a silly 15-second video of me showing off library resources while a popular sound played in the background would be this well liked, I was even more surprised at how instantly relatable this made me to my students. I knew, based on their excitement and feedback, that there would be no going back for our library. Our TikTok account is here to stay, and the impact it has had on our library program and community has been beyond anything I could have predicted.

What is TikTok?

TikTok is a social media platform with video-based content, similar to the way Instagram (Insta) is photo-based. Users create an account and can be content consumers (watching other people's videos), content creators (make their own videos) or both. The app makes it easy and fun to create videos, which are usually 15 to 60 seconds long and incorporate things like music, special effects, text and stickers. The content is diverse and covers hundreds of things, from the funny, outrageous or lewd to serious issues, social commentary, education, book recommendations, politics and activism. There really is a little something for everyone, and the ways you can use TikTok are limitless.
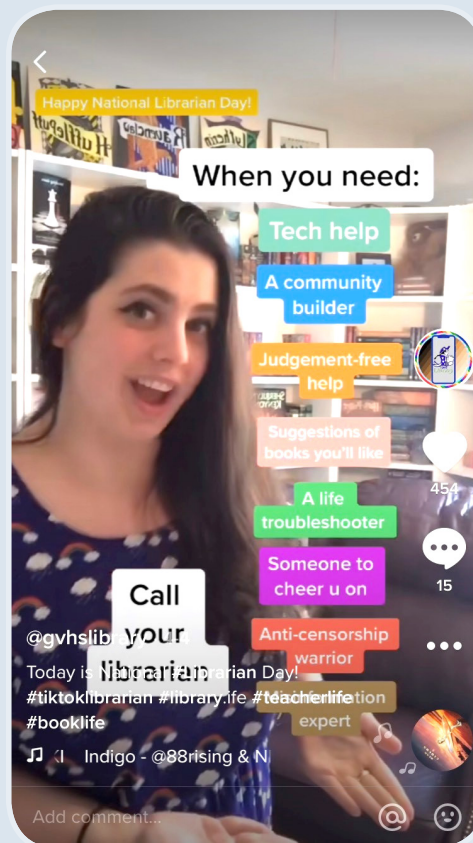
Is TikTok safe?

Recently there has been discourse in the media seeming to indicate that TikTok is 'more dangerous' than other apps. I have researched and reviewed reports from security experts and my opinion is that TikTok is about as safe and secure (or unsafe and unsecure, depending on how you feel about social media) as any other social media app. One of the biggest concerns often referred to is that TikTok collects data from its users. While this is true, this is actually something that is very common for all social media platforms. Facebook and Twitter also collect user data, so TikTok is no different, and I have not yet found any credible evidence to make me feel that TikTok is in any way 'more dangerous' than other social media apps. I would, however, always encourage everyone to do their due diligence and thoroughly research and review any new app before choosing whether to use it themselves.

What is the benefit for libraries?

It is my opinion that libraries benefit from a robust and engaging social media presence. Our library's social media presence has been one of the most influential aspects of our library program,

especially in terms of generating support and engagement from our community. Here are a few reasons TikTok (in conjunction with our Insta) benefits our library program:

- **Community building** – Our Insta and TikTok help us establish a virtual 'common room' environment of connectivity that extends beyond the physical school or library walls. It allows us to continue to be a positive and helpful presence in our students' lives, even after the regular school day concludes.
- **Advocacy efforts** – As librarians, we know how critical advocacy is to the success of a library program. It is more important than ever that we – librarians – are able to successfully tell our stories, and communicate our value to our stakeholders. TikTok has been the single most effective tool in my personal advocacy toolbox. I've created TikToks that clarify common misunderstandings about libraries and librarians (like how libraries are not just quiet book warehouses), TikToks that stress the need for diverse books, and even TikToks that celebrate and announce grants I've secured. Our school's parents and administrators have responded overwhelmingly positively to my advocacy TikToks, and their popularity with our community has had a wonderful impact on our library program. TikTok is a great and fun way of showing our stakeholders exactly how much value we bring to our schools.
- **Readers advisory and collection development** – TikTok has a fantastic sub-community known as #booktok, which is a great resource to tap into for readers advisory and collection development help. I use the information gathered here to learn about books to add to our collection, but I also use it as a fun and easy way to share book recommendations with my students. When I see a great book-recommendation TikTok, I simply share the video directly to our Instagram Stories so my students can enjoy it. It's a priceless resource!
- **Professional learning community** – When I first started using TikTok there were very few librarians using the app, but recently our numbers have swelled! You can now find many wonderful librarians on TikTok, and we have a blast learning from and connecting with each other. If you search hashtags like #tokstarlibrarians, #tiktoklibrarian, and #librariansoftiktok, you'll be able to connect with librarians from all over the world.

The best way to start on TikTok is to create an account and start following and watching other educators and librarians. Here are a few excellent accounts to follow on TikTok:

Excellent librarian TikTok accounts to follow
@gvhslibrary (This one is mine!)
@mrspopeslibrary
@tokstarlibrarians
@teachinatardis
@chsbookmasters
@akbusybee
@libraryunicorn
@thenextgenlibrarian

Excellent #booktok accounts to follow
@thebookishmuslim
@a.very.queer.book.blog
@penguin_teen
@24hourlibrary
@epic_reads
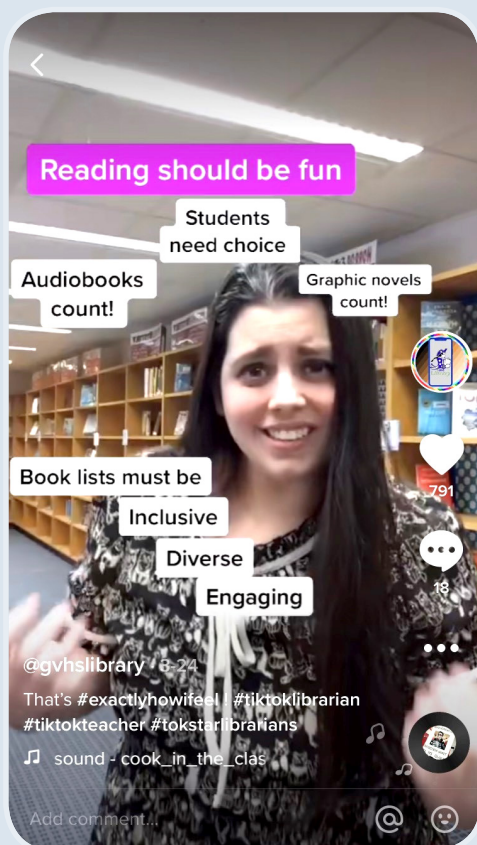
I can say without hesitation that our library program would not be as successful, supported or engaging were it not for our robust social media presence. To serve our students, we need to speak their language and we need to live where they live. And right now, a lot of our students are speaking and living TikTok. And so should we.

Kelsey Bogan
Library Media Specialist
Great Valley High School, Malvern, PA, USA

Author Bio: Kelsey Bogan has been the librarian at Great Valley High School (PA, USA) since 2016. When, at the age of 25, she finally figured out what she was good at (research and training people) she decided to pursue the MSLIS degree with the intention of becoming a law librarian. She somehow stumbled into the world of school librarianship instead, a role she promptly fell in love with! In addition to the importance of quality media-literacy instruction and diversifying our book collections, Kelsey believes strongly in the connective power of social media, and that libraries can leverage that power to enhance their advocacy and relationship-building with their communities. She hopes to connect with you on Twitter @kelseybogan, Instagram & TikTok @gvhslibrary, and on her blog at dontyoushushme.com.

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT:
ONE ARM POINT REMOTE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SCIS speaks to Mel Rowsell, Library Officer at One Arm Point Remote Community School, about what is happening in her school library.

What is your job title, and what does your role entail?

I am Mel, Library Officer at One Arm Point Remote Community School (OAP RCS). This small school of around 130 students is on the tip of the Dampier Peninsula in WA. When I first started working at the school, the library consisted of a few half-assembled shelves and a lot of uncared-for books. Initially my job was to organise the space; find and acquire a cataloguing system; select, deselect and acquire resources for the collection; and catalogue, label and shelve the collection in the newly formed space.

These days, while the collection management and circulation are still key to my role, I also get to interact with every student as they come in for their class library times, and watch as they excitedly grow into avid readers and information gatherers.

What is the most rewarding aspect of working in a school library, and why?

Seeing students engaging happily in the library space, which to some is still a very new concept. Being able to watch as confidence levels grow in each student is rewarding in itself, but it's also the knowledge that we are creating a nurturing space that can help foster confident, capable, lifelong learners.

What do you see as the most important part of the library's role in the school community?

The library in the school community should be a safe and neutral space for all. The library is an area where everyone can be comfortable simply reading for pleasure, and where students and staff can be confident that the information they find is current, unbiased and accurate. School libraries have the opportunity to connect both staff and students to a wider world of information. In a small remote community, I hope to see our school library become an information hub where all in the community can find the help, information and reading material they need.

Are there any current issues or challenges facing your library? How are you working to overcome these?

As a librarian in a remote Aboriginal community I have a number of concerns as to the inherent structures of DDC and its representation of Indigenous peoples and their beliefs, and am constantly attempting to find better methods of cataloguing and representing these subjects in our library. This concern also stretches to the accuracy of Australian history books and as such I am actively updating the library collection to more accurately represent our country's history, aiming to better represent Indigenous peoples both historically and in the present day.

How do you promote reading and literacy in your school? Are there any challenges in doing so?

Students are always so excited to come into the library, and my goal is to foster that excitement and channel it into a joy of reading. In every class, we read together as a group before other activities, or independent reading, take place. I attempt to provide reading material for everyone, tailoring the collection to the specific wants, needs, likes and dislikes of the community.

I also organise the Scholastic Book Club magazines that go out to every class twice a term, encouraging students to create their own home libraries.

How do you encourage students to make use of the library?

I want students to view the library as a fun and joyful space. Aiming to lead by example, I try to read as many of the books in the library as possible in the hope of being able to prompt discussions of books

Library time at One Arm Point Remote Community School, Ardyaloon (One Arm Point) community.

or, at the very least, being able to suggest titles to students.

The doors to the library are always open, and students are encouraged to come in, read books or comics, play games or just hang out in the air conditioning. Students are encouraged to interact with each other and with the resources in the library; nobody gets shushed. Our rule is to use happy voices in the library and a little noise is OK as long as we're all enjoying ourselves.

> "Students are encouraged to interact with each other and with the resources in the library; nobody gets shushed."

What is your favourite thing about SCIS?

SCIS does not catalogue the Dreaming in 398 with mythology and folklore – instead SCIS uses the unassigned 298 to class the religion, spirituality and creation stories of the Australian Aboriginal peoples.

The ease of copy cataloguing that SCIS provides is an asset I make use of all the time but tend to take for granted. I cringe to think of the cataloguing time I would need to squeeze into my days if I didn't have access to an amazing resource like SCIS.

Mel Rowsell
Library Officer
One Arm Point RCS

School Libraries Transform

School libraries across New Zealand are supporting a nationwide campaign to ensure that every child has access to a well-resourced library with a specialist librarian who can help them develop a lifelong love of reading. Many children in schools in Aotearoa do not have that right. SLANZA (School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa), which is leading this campaign, wants that to change.

Here are the SLANZA campaign's three core aims.

- Every child should have access to a school library that has a specialist librarian. This should be ring-fenced, funded by the Ministry of Education.

- They have heard of many stories of libraries in hallway cupboards, libraries where the space has been taken by a classroom, budgets that are frozen and while they understand the difficult situation Board of Trustees are in, they feel these stories need to change.

- The impact that a school library has on students' learning, academic outcomes and their hauora must be highlighted, as reflected in the campaign's title: School Libraries Transform.

SLANZA needs support for this campaign, so invites us all to visit its website to find out the practical things we can do as whanau, friends and supporters.

schoollibrariestransform.org.nz

#schoollibrariestransform

Supporting Australian book creators

Best-selling author Sally Rippin talks to SCIS about ELR and library love.

When I was growing up, our family moved around a lot. We lived in England, Brunei and Hong Kong, as well as Darwin, Perth and Adelaide, moving every couple of years because of my father's job as an engineer. By the time I arrived in Melbourne, ready to start Year 8, I had already been to seven different schools and lived in as many cities.

No matter where we were living, our mother – a teacher – always ensured we had a constant supply of reading material. Some of these books we would lug about with us from place to place, but books are heavy, and we had to make tough choices, so most of the time they were packed away in storage or wistfully handed down to a family friend.

Sometimes we lived in countries where public libraries stocked few books in English or we knew we wouldn't be there long enough to bother getting library cards. This is where I would rely on school libraries to keep me in a steady supply of books. Some of my fondest memories come from spending lunchtimes in a cosy corner of a school library, lost in the imaginative worlds of Narnia, Dollhouses or Faraway Trees, reassuringly familiar when everything else around me was so new and strange.

No matter where we were, how often we moved, or whatever I was struggling with, books were always my happy place: reading, writing or illustrating them. Even if I was missing old friends or nervous at the prospect of making new ones, books were my anchor in the ever-moving sea of my childhood and helped me feel less alone.

Fast-forward almost 40 years and making books has become my job. Every day I write stories, draw pictures and make books that help kids learn to read, see themselves reflected and feel less alone. I continue to travel the world, meeting thousands of kids each year, hoping to inspire them to pick up a book or even write and illustrate their own stories. I couldn't imagine a lovelier way to make a living.

But it certainly wasn't always this way. As a young writer, struggling to make ends meet, I came to rely on libraries more than ever. Public libraries were no longer just a place for borrowing books, they were somewhere warm I could hang out with my toddler during the day, or somewhere quiet I could write when my kids were at school.

Casual teaching and school talks supplemented my royalties for the first half of my career. Before writing the *Billie B Brown* series, even though I'd published over 40 books, I still wasn't able to make a liveable income from writing. Unfortunately, as Australia's reading population is so small, it makes it very difficult for most writers to earn a living from their royalties, unless you are lucky enough to write a bestseller.
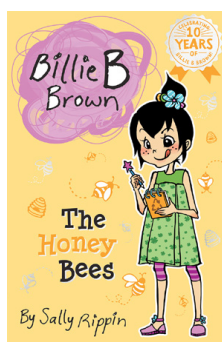
Sally Rippin has written more than 50 books for children and young adults.

So much work goes into every book published, but many of them disappear from bookstores – and therefore the public eye – sometimes only weeks after publication, as a newer book takes its place. In the 25 years since I was first published, this has only become more competitive, as children's authors are now up against comedians and other celebrities who naturally attract a lot of attention and therefore sell more books.

This is why Public Lending Right (PLR) and Educational Lending Right (ELR) (arts. gov.au/funding-and-support/lending-rights) payments are so important, compensating creators for royalties lost when their books are borrowed from libraries rather than sold in stores. For me, not only were these payments a vital financial injection into my bank account once a year, they were also a reminder that even if my books were no longer in bookstores, they were still being borrowed again and again from libraries all across the country.

> " No matter where we were, how often we moved, or whatever I was struggling with, books were always my happy place: reading, writing or illustrating them. "

The thought of all those children, curled up on the cushions of a public library, or stuffing their schoolbags with my books to read at home was often what kept me going when times were hard, and I'd felt close to giving up on my dream of becoming a full-time writer. These kids weren't only reading new books or best sellers, but books from all kinds of writers from all across the world and hand-picked themselves.

I know how lucky I was to grow up surrounded by books. But the more I travel, the more it becomes evident that this isn't the case for all children. This is why we are so fortunate to have such a vibrant public library service in Australia and why we must always champion the importance of teacher librarians in schools. School and public libraries ensure *all* kids can get access to *all* kinds of books, and ELR and PLR payments ensure that Australian authors can afford to keep writing them.

Image credits
Images supplied by Sally Rippin

Sally Rippin
Author and illustrator
sallyrippin.com

THE MAGIC OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Belinda Cameron, Teacher Librarian at Maclean High School, embarks on an adventure in literacy, creativity, collaboration, and magic.

As we seek to establish and maintain vital connections with our students, staff, teachers and families, special events within our library spaces are central to the work of connected communities. Stories are central to the work of teacher librarians. The story of Harry Potter is so engaging that at Maclean High School (maclean-h.schools.nsw.gov.au), it has become a catalyst for an annual connection, involving our school community in a night of literacy, creativity, collaboration, technology and entertainment.

> " Teacher librarians must continue to seek out ways to connect with our school communities. "

In the story of Harry Potter, 'Accio!' is a charm that summons an object towards the spell caster. Personal Harry Potter collections are summoned and shared by participants, and they adorn team tables set up ready for judging. In the days prior, science teachers collaboratively share their skeletons and jars of creepy specimens, creative and performing arts props are delivered, recipes for Butterbeer shared, and Harry Potter inspired treats donated. Over a 48-hour period, every corner of our library is transformed into spaces including The Great Dining Hall, Hagrid's Hut and Professor Sprout's Herbarium.

These props later become the backdrop for team-based competitions, such as Harry Potter Trivia, STEM activities, and greenscreen photography challenges. Literacy smoothly integrated

with technology ensures collaboration is captured creatively, appearing like magic, in real time!

Wizards, witches and muggles enter via a foyer filled with a bubbling cauldron, their individual Hogwarts acceptance letter in hand. Staff members in costume are met with surprise and delight by students and their families. 'Is that Miss …? She looks just like Professor Sprout!' The energy and talent behind handmade props such as baby mandrakes made by a learning support staff member are on display. They delight even the most avid Harry Potter fans.

With COVID-19 momentarily halting the usual community events in school libraries all over the world, we have had to cancel our Harry Potter Evening. However, as Dumbledore reminds us, 'Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light'. Just like Ron, Harry and Hermione facing the challenges of Hogwarts, teacher librarians must continue to seek out ways to connect with our school communities. We are presently challenged to consider alternative approaches for community connection. Like all wizards living in the Muggle world, we will rely on collaboration, the sharing of individual strengths and resources, plus a dash of magic for good measure.

Magic always happens in our library spaces.

Image credits
Images supplied by Belinda Cameron

Belinda Cameron
Teacher librarian
Maclean High School

Belinda Cameron, Teacher Librarian at Maclean High School, is a Connected Learning educator who enjoys working with whole school communities. You can find Belinda at miraclesandmadness.weebly.com.

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textpublishing.com.au

WALKER BOOKS

wheelers

wild dog

WORLD BOOK

WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

NZ PARLIAMENT: EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

parliament.nz/en/visit-and-learn/educators-and-students

The New Zealand Parliament's education staff have produced a thorough and contemporary resource relating to the workings of parliament. Features include a virtual reality tour, outreach programs, videos, a role-play and an interactive timeline.

SCIS no: 1981836

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY: DIGITAL EXCURSIONS

moadoph.gov.au

The Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House is a living museum of social and political history, located in a nationally listed heritage building in Parkes, Canberra. It helps people to understand Australia's social and political history by interpreting the past and present and exploring the future. This website includes free digital excursions to allow students to interact with MoAD's educators in real time. K–12 students can participate in activities including role-plays, discussions and quizzes related to the Australian Curriculum.

SCIS no: 1982042

BE DEADLY ONLINE

esafety.gov.au/educators/classroom-resources/be-deadly-online

Developed under the auspices of the eSafety Commissioner, this website delves into aspects of cyberbullying and digital reputation. Created by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, this resource provides secondary teachers with videos, lesson plans, and student-directed learning and web content.

SCIS no: 1981859

ART EDUCATION VICTORIA

aev.vic.edu.au

Art Education Victoria is a non-profit organisation that supports and represents art teachers in Victoria. This encompassing website provides access to a variety of primary and secondary teaching resources, professional development opportunities, exhibition details, posters and links.

SCIS no: 1981869

AUGMENTED REALITY IN EDUCATION

apple.com/au/education/k12/docs/ar-in-edu-lesson-ideas-AU.pdf

Apple has produced an informative guide to the use of augmented reality in the classroom, using iPads. The PDF document offers creative lesson ideas on a variety of topics, complete with embedded hot links. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the learning opportunities that AR offers into their existing lessons.

SCIS no: 1981877

AUTISM CRC

autismcrc.com.au

The Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism (Autism CRC) focuses on a whole-of-life approach to autism. The website provides resources, publications, research and news for the autism community of educators, clinicians and service providers. Of particular relevance to teachers is the section on enhancing teaching and learning.

SCIS no: 1982050

INCLUSIONED

inclusioned.edu.au

A learning community for educators, inclusionED provides 'evidence-based and researched-informed teaching practices and tools to support diverse learners in inclusive classrooms'. Research partners include several state education departments, independent education bodies and four universities.

SCIS no: 1982053

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION: RESOURCE LIBRARY

nationalgeographic.org/education/resource-library

Thousands of extensive, authoritative resources are available on this K–12 website. The site is searchable by topic and can be filtered by subject area, content type and year level.

SCIS no: 1982054

QUT YOUNG ACCELERATORS

qut.edu.au/study/career-advisers-and-teachers/young-accelerators

This is an award-winning program run by QUT for secondary STEM students, chiefly based in Queensland and northern New South Wales. The aim is to support future leaders in the STEM field by offering workshops, a STEM camp, internships and resources.

SCIS no: 1982103

REEF TRACKS: MARINE LIFE TRACKER

citizensgbr.org/explore/reef-tracks

Reef Tracks is an inspirational website focused on increasing awareness of the marine environment of the Great Barrier Reef. Using data from authoritative sources such as James Cook University and backed by partners including Microsoft, users are encouraged to increase their knowledge about the Reef and connect with conservation projects. Younger students can link to Junior Citizens of the Reef.

SCIS no: 1982114

SAVE WHALES

save-whales.com

This intriguing website aims to assist in the preservation of whales. The visuals and audio showcase several species of whales and are accompanied by a variety of easily grasped facts and comparative data. Specifics on ways to help save whales are included.

SCIS no: 1982133

SCIENCE BY DOING

sciencebydoing.edu.au

Supported by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, this comprehensive website is for science students in years 7–10. Content is linked to the Australian Curriculum and covers biological science, Earth and space science, chemical science and physical science. Particular attention is paid to assisting remote learning in response to COVID-19.

SCIS no: 1681000

Nigel Paull
Teacher Librarian
North Coast, NSW

The websites and apps selected for review are often of a professional nature and should be initially viewed by teachers and library staff to determine suitability for students. The links, content and address of these sites are subject to change.

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