



# CONNECTIONS

ISSUE NO. 120 | TERM 1 2022

ISSN 2207-8924

AVAILABLE ON [SCISDATA.COM/CONNECTIONS](https://scisdata.com/connections)



## School libraries then and now – in the digital environment

**Once again I feel very privileged** to have been invited by the *Connections* staff to write an opinion piece. This time it is on how school libraries have changed over the past 30 years and how they might look in the rapidly evolving digital environment. How time flies when you're having fun!

Thirty years ago when *Connections* was created, most schools had at least one trained teacher librarian, and these dedicated staff introduced valuable literature to their students, taught information skills, catalogued their own collections or ordered cards from their state library branches, and had collections that also supported their school curriculums. Computers were starting to weave their way into schools and that movement assisted the move from card catalogues to online access, and *Connections* was available only on paper!

### **Technology, leadership and change**

With the access to computers and the move by SCIS to provide an automated

delivery system, school libraries jumped at the new technology. In many cases, they led in the use of new technology in their schools. Teacher librarians used this new technology to create automated catalogues and find new ways to seek information for their students. This has continued through the 2000s to the present. School libraries still often lead in their use of technology, with their multi-formatted collections and genrefied collections supporting school curriculum outcomes.

### **Accessibility and credibility**

When thinking about school libraries in the digital world of today, school libraries and teacher librarians still have a vital place to play in supporting their school curriculum and student learning with resources both physical and online. The library catalogue in most schools is now an online resource and, as such, controlled access can be provided to students outside of the school and school hours – a great development. Taking this idea further, it is interesting

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### Connections

A quarterly magazine by SCIS  
Schools Catalogue Information Service  
[scisdata.com/connections](http://scisdata.com/connections)



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## CONNECT WITH SCIS



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# Professional learning

## Term 1

### Webinars

#### Introduction to SCIS

Thursday 10 February 2pm (AEDT)

New to the school library? Or simply need a refresher? This one-hour webinar provides an overview of how SCIS can support the provision of a more effective library service to the school community.

#### The Benefits of Authority Files

Thursday 24 March 2pm (AEDT)

In this one-hour webinar, SCIS will answer the questions: What are Authority Files? How can they benefit your school library? Suitable for all school library staff, this webinar will help you understand the role Authority Files play in effective information retrieval.

### In-person workshop

#### Making the most of SCIS

Friday 4 March 9:30am-1pm

Our three-hour workshop provides a live demonstration of how to enhance your search and download experience, use SCIS as a curation tool, develop digital collections, and much more. There will be time for discussion and Q&A, so bring along your questions. Bringing your own device is optional.

Level 5, 44 Collins St, Melbourne. Morning tea provided.

### New SCIS on-demand video tutorial series

- **Genres in SCIS** This tutorial will describe the genre headings used by SCIS, and explain how they are used in catalogue records.
- **Series headings and authorities** This tutorial covers how series authorities can assist with searching, and also the difference between series headings and series statements in SCIS records.
- **Four free digital collections to import into your catalogue** This short tutorial shows how to import free eBooks, websites and apps into your LMS.
- **SCIS doesn't have a record for my resource – what now?** This tutorial presents three ways to place cataloguing requests to SCIS.

Stay tuned for more on-demand videos in the series.

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to see that a number of schools have now employed, or are employing, online media expertise or graphic designers to assist in making their resources attractive and available to school communities using the social media platforms – another way of making access to resources easier for school communities. Undertaken with appropriate controls in place, this is yet another way of making information available in today's digital world.

With the advent of social media and the growth of 'fake news', libraries and teacher librarians also have a role and a duty to provide access to real, credible data and show students how to access, recognise and show evidence of its credibility.

### The library: a supportive environment

While I was researching this article, colleagues pointed me to an interesting paper by Dr Margaret Merga, formerly Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia. In June 2021, her paper 'Libraries as wellbeing supportive spaces in contemporary schools' was published in the *Journal of Library Administration*. In this research, Margaret and colleagues looked at how students used the library and how often it became a safe haven for many students and their wellbeing – especially during this past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. (It did take me back to my early days in school libraries where I often had students volunteering to be library monitors to escape the schoolyard battles of the time.)

Margaret Merga's study centres on students in years 4 to 9 at schools in Western Australia, but its research results are very relevant to other states, territories and education systems. Library managers and students were interviewed and completed a survey on their usage of the library both in class time and at other times. It was felt that library managers 'would be well-situated to comment on the workings of the library, and specifically, the role of the library in fostering student wellbeing'.

Outcomes of the research indicated that the library was a safe space that encouraged belonging, and many students visited it out of class times to read, relax, play quiet games, 'chill out' and feel safe.

The school library encouraged:

- belonging.
- books and reading – still a major reason for visiting the library
- relaxing and recharging

- staff – trained teacher librarians – seen as friendly, caring staff, someone to whom students could talk
- furnishings – creating a safe and caring environment
- decorations – encourages and providing display of student work
- a lively and creative space
- quietude – students still liked to have space within the library for quiet reading and reflection with peers.

The research concludes that the school library has a vital role to play in student wellbeing in today's digital world. I encourage teacher librarians and school leaders to [read this article](#).

### Change and constancy

Thinking over the past 30 years of *Connections*, and reading the many great articles about developments that have progressed the spread of information and supported school curriculum outcomes, it is clear to me that we have come a long way since we encouraged schools to log on to SCICLINK to download their records or use the SCISROM to copy the data.

It is great to see that one important constant, which I hope will still be around in another 30 years, is the trained teacher librarian in many school libraries. The trained teacher librarian who can skilfully curate a multi-format, multi-access and multi-platform collection that supports the curriculum, share their love of reading with students, and create a welcoming, stimulating and caring environment. This person, to me, is still the glue that holds the school library and all its elements together – even more necessary in today's digital environment.

Finally, I'm very proud to again be a part of *Connections* as it enters its 30th year. I am also pleased that the idea of a newsletter targeted to school librarians, which I sold to Dr David Francis (founding director of Curriculum Corporation, now Education Services Australia) was enthusiastically supported and still remains in this digital age.

### Acknowledgements

In writing this article to celebrate 30 years of *Connections*, and now being happily retired, I sought advice from two very experienced colleagues and friends.

The first is Emeritus Professor Dr [Mike Eisenberg](#), formerly of the Information School, University of Washington, Seattle. Now also retired, he has long been a leader in advancing school librarianship in the

USA and beyond. Mike and I have been friends since I invited him to come to Perth in 1993 to deliver the SCIS Oration at the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) Conference. Mike is still active in his retirement, advancing school librarianship with his podcast *Libraries lead in the New Normal*.

The second friend and colleague is [Dr Lyn Hay](#), Vice President of the NSW School Library Association (SLANSW), and formerly a lecturer in the School of Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga. Like Mike, Lyn and I have been long-time friends since I was involved in the School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV), and we did some guest-lecturing about SCIS at Charles Sturt in the 1990s. Lyn is still very active in school librarianship and runs her own consultancy business, Leading Learning Institute, assisting schools and teacher librarians with their programs.

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Lance Deveson

Now happily retired, Lance started his working life as a teacher librarian in Melbourne and country schools, then Regional Library Consultant in the Central Highlands- Wimmera Region, before moving to SCIS in the 1990s to manage the SCIS service. After 8 years at SCIS, Lance moved to the Victorian Government to manage the Libraries and Records Management for the Departments of Treasury and Finance, then to CSIRO as Library and National Records Manager, and retired as Library & Information Manager at the Australian Council for Education Research.

After over 40 years in libraries and information management, Lance used his love of motorcycles to teach motorcycle training for six years, but now enjoys riding his own motorcycles, creating and managing five Little Street Libraries in the Knox Council area for his Rotary Club and reading to, and introducing lots of great children's literature, to his four grandsons who are also developing a love of reading.

# SCIS is more

**This issue celebrates** thirty years of *Connections* magazine. Can you believe it? Thirty years ago SCIS decided it needed a way to keep readers abreast of changing school library technologies and informed about developments in SCIS's products and services.

The first issue dealt with dial-up, CD-ROMs, and microfiche. I have been fortunate enough to be involved in work over the past few years to digitise all issues of *Connections*, so you can have a look at [Issue 1](#) for yourself. The inaugural editor was Dianne Lewis, and SCIS Manager at the time was Lance Deveson. One of my favourite *Connections* articles is [a retrospective](#) Lance put together for us five years ago, for the 100th edition of *Connections*.

I have been involved with SCIS for close to ten years, first as a 'Metadata Analyst' and then as SCIS Manager. I am now Director of Research and Information Services at ESA. Caroline Hartley recently bid farewell to SCIS to follow her career in the educational publishing industry, and this puts me back holding the reins again (at least temporarily).

During my time with SCIS the contributions to *Connections* have been really remarkable. If you'll indulge me I would like to mention a whole bunch of people by name. I should start by

acknowledging former *Connections* editor and long-time contributor Nigel Paull, who has written our website reviews (now website & app reviews) since 1999. I have worked with a number of other fabulous *Connections* editors: Thank you to Meelee Soorkia, Laura Armstrong, Nicole Richardson, Carmen Eastman and, most recently, Daniel Czech.

We've had a lot of informative and practical articles contributed by our own cataloguing staff, including Renate Beilharz, Natasha Campbell, Mavis Heffernan, Ceinwen Jones, Julie Styles, and Doreen Sullivan.

We have had contributions from incredible authors, both as feature articles and in support of the [Australian Lending Right Schemes](#). Names that spring to mind include Deborah Abela, Aaron Blabey, Ursula Dubosarsky, Hazel Edwards, Anna Fienberg, Mem Fox, Jackie French, Morris Gleitzman, Leigh Hobbs, Toni Jordan, Andrew Joyner, John Marsden, Tania McCarthy, James Moloney, Sally Rippin, Emily Rodda, Nova Weetman and Nadia Wheatley, amongst many, many others.

Most importantly, *Connections* has been a reliable avenue for school library staff to contribute their voices, exchange ideas, discuss issues, and share concerns.

In my time there have been contributions from a huge number of folk from the school library community from across Australia, New Zealand and the UK, including serial contributors such as Catherine Barnes, Lucy Chambers, Jackie Child, Susan Davenport, Madeleine Galbraith, Martin Gray, Karys McEwan, Kay Oddone, Helen Stower and Chelsea Quake.

*Connections* is a unique publication in the school library space. Given that it continues to be published and distributed in hard-copy form throughout Australia, I think it is also quite special in the periodicals publishing world more generally. We love hearing stories about the joy school library staff feel at receiving our little publication in the post every quarter.

Thank you again to all our contributors over the years, and thanks to those who will do so over many years to come. I feel really proud to be a part of such a consistent and valued institution in the school library landscape. I hope you enjoy this issue!



**Dr Ben Chadwick**

Director, Research and Information Services

## Educational Lending Right school library survey



Many thanks to the hundreds of school library staff members who participated in Educational Lending Right (ELR) 2021-22; the SCIS team is very grateful for your ongoing commitment to the creation of Australian books.

The school library survey is conducted by Education Services Australia (ESA) on behalf of the Australian Government's Office for the Arts. The purpose of the survey is to determine an estimate of the number of copies of books in Australian school libraries. The Office for the Arts then combines the school scores with university and TAFE estimates to determine how much money will

be paid to eligible authors and publishers to provide recompense for revenue lost because their books are available for free in school libraries.

Many readers are ELR veterans who know that the survey software takes only minutes to run. At SCIS, we're delighted at the number of responses we receive from schools just days after invitations have been sent. We're also aware that some library staff defer their participation because their time is limited.

To encourage library staff participation in the survey, we asked creative consultancy Leon Design to prepare a promotional flyer and poster. Leon Design decided to tap into the '... same collective spirit of citizen

scientist campaigns like the "Aussie Backyard Bird Count", and promote the "Great Aussie Book Count". You can find an example of the flyer by scanning the QR code above or obtain an electronic copy of the poster, flyer or bookmark by emailing [elr@esa.edu.au](mailto:elr@esa.edu.au).



**Daniel Hughes**

Project Manager,  
Educational Lending Right

# WHY DO I USE INSTAGRAM TO PROMOTE MY SCHOOL LIBRARY?

Librarian Helen Farch provides compelling insight into how she uses Instagram to promote her school library.

**‘Social media can help you find new ways to interact and connect with your school community to support reading, inquiry, and digital literacy. It can promote interest and curiosity, and show that your library welcomes student involvement.’**

National Library of NZ

## Social media!

Does even the thought of using social media have you reaching for a good book to read instead?

Does the idea of social media have you ready to break out into a cold sweat, not unreasonably, about false news and cyberbullying?

Why, I hear you asking, would I need to use social media for my school library?

Well, I am here to tell you about my experiences with social media and why using Instagram to advocate for my school library has been an overwhelmingly positive experience.

I work at Forest Hill College, a government co-educational secondary school in Melbourne with approximately 650 students. Our school library is staffed with one FTE Library Technician. This is my eighth year working at Forest Hill College, and during that time I have seen the library grow into a vibrant and busy part of our school community.

## Why social media?

As part of my role, I am always looking at new ways to keep the school library relevant to our school community. This is not easy when, like many of you, I feel a degree of isolation from the rest of the school staff as I am always on duty in the library. When other staff members are able to socialise at meetings, recess or lunchtimes, I am in the library supervising students.

So, I needed to get creative in thinking of ways to make sure school leadership, other staff, students and the wider school community are aware of just what we do in the school library and how much we have to offer.

Social media is tailor-made for doing just this.

It has been well established that more and more people are getting their news from social media platforms instead of traditional news sources. This means that if you want to get your news and information out there, social media is a powerful tool. I'm not saying it should be the only way to get your message out, but as part of an overall marketing and communications strategy, social media needs to feature.

As school library staff, advocating for the importance of school libraries and reading must be an important part of our role.

The positive effects of social media include encouraging people to be social, to connect, to communicate, to interact and to have fun. All things that I believe are part of what a

school library also strives to do. Additionally, you can use your employment of social media to model digital literacy (including creative, safe and ethical uses of social media), to support reading and inquiry, and to make contact and interact with your whole school community.

My first foray into social media for the library was with Snapchat, which only had minimal success. A few students followed the library on Snapchat but it didn't really provide any active engagement. So, I did some research and settled on Instagram as the social media platform I thought would best suit my library and my strengths. Why?

Firstly, Instagram is predominantly a visual platform – perfect for showing off our library collection, space and activities. This particularly appeals to me as I love taking photos.

Secondly, Instagram is a social media platform that appeals to a wide range of age groups – perfect for reaching the different audiences that make up the wider school community, which includes students, staff, families, and alumni.

## How do I use Instagram?

As I've already mentioned, I love taking photos, so even before using Instagram I was already in the habit of taking lots of photos around the library. I continue to take photos of displays, books, students doing activities (after seeking their permission first), possums found in circulation desk drawers (yes it did happen), basically anything and everything in and around the library and school.

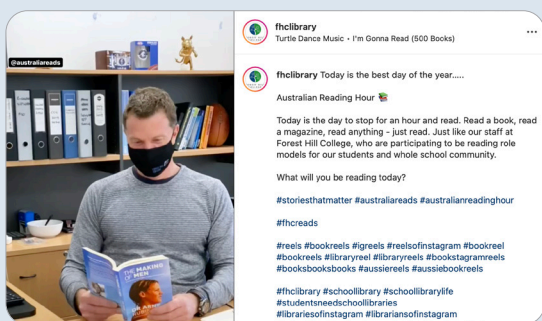


I work on posting to the library's Instagram feed twice a day from Monday to Friday during the school term, and at least once a day on weekends and school holidays. I aim to post one reel and one photo per day. But that is what suits me – you can set a posting schedule that suits you and your situation.

Instagram posts stay on your profile forever, unless you delete them. Instagram Stories disappear after 24 hours. They are a great way to capture moments throughout the day that aren't necessarily planned (like photos you post on your feed), or to share posts from other Instagram accounts. Reels are short



Events such as Australia Reads provide a lot of photo opportunities, and our staff (in this case, our Principal) are always happy to pose for me. I don't even have to bribe them, and our leadership team are always up for a bit of competitive fun to see whose posts get the most 'likes'.



**thelibrary** 🎉 Happy Publication Day 🎉🎉🎉

Happy publication day to the wonderful new [#stoveoya](#) book by Poppy Newson...

Road Tripping with Pearl Nash

School is finally finished for the year and its the Summer before the final year of school.

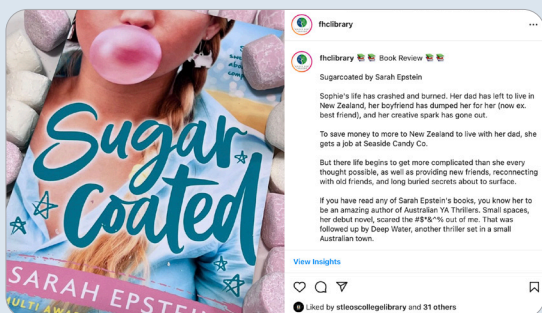
The future is calling.

Pearl Nash is on a road trip - literally, but also, in life.

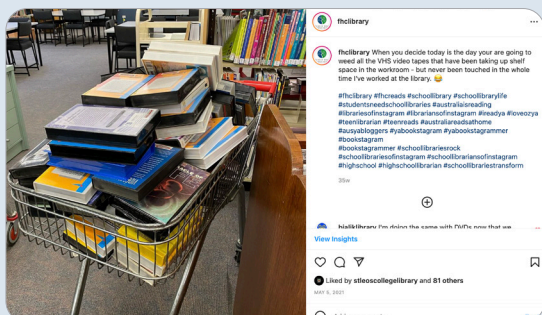
Things are not good with her best friend Daisy but Pearl has a plan to salvage their floundering friendship. She is going on a road trip to remote South Australia to meet up with Daisy at an end-of-year campy located at a remote beach shack. What she didn't plan on was giving a ride to Osh Crocacha - her arch nemesis - when she saw him stranded on the side of the road.

**Poppy Newson**

**3** Likes  
**32** Retweets



I particularly like to support Australian authors.  
I have found that posts about the library's everyday and  
'behind the scenes' activities have been among the most popular.



I have found using Instagram in my school library has had many benefits, both for the library and for me personally and professionally.

It has taken time, but I am finding that the mutual engagement with our student population, staff and wider school community is growing. Our students enjoy featuring in the photos I take for Instagram and are now quite used to me asking them if I can take their picture.

Staff also talk to me about photos I have posted, and request books seen on Instagram. I get other comments from staff and students on posts I make.

I have found that the Instagram account has allowed a greater connection with the wider school community, and parents sometimes message me directly through the Instagram account with questions, requests for assistance with their child or just with feedback.

Instagram has created a positive vibe for the library, and generates positive feedback from school leadership about our efforts to give the library a much higher profile in the school community.

As a professional networking tool, Instagram has allowed me to connect with many other school libraries, both in Australia and overseas. I have found this incredibly beneficial for getting new ideas to use in my library, and it's always interesting to see how other school libraries do things.

Instagram has also allowed me to connect with authors and publishers. I enjoy being able to show support for Australian young adult authors by promoting their books around the world. Making connections with authors and publishers has given me the opportunity to receive advance readers' copies of books to review on the library Instagram account. These books then get added to the school library collection. And as with many school libraries, if you are working with minimal budgets, any extra book is a bonus.

On a personal level, I have found chatting to other 'bookstagrammers' rewarding and fun. It has greatly expanded my own personal reading habits and taken me outside my comfort zone with book selections. And I am already planning for a trip to Ireland to visit a good friend who I met because of Instagram.

### What would I do differently?

As with most things, using Instagram for my school library has been a learning experience and I am always trying (and finding out about) new things. My five main learnings would be these.

- Document a social media policy so that everyone in your library team is on the same page. My colleagues have been happy to let this be my project, but if you are sharing responsibility for the account, document things to make sure you are all aware of ethical use of the account, what you can (and do) post and how often. My school is happy to support my initiatives with social media, but I know this is not the case for all school libraries, so having a documented policy may help convince school leadership of its value and safety.
- When taking photos where you can see students, I always ask them if they are happy for me to take their photo to be on the library Instagram. It is important they know they can say 'no' and what the photo will be used for. If they agree, I check if they are happy for me to show their face or not. For general photos of the library I usually use an angle where you are not able to see students' faces. If I am taking a photo of a class activity, I always ask the teacher if it is ok.
- Our admin staff have a list of students who have not given permission for their images to be used for school purposes, so it is best to check if such a list exists at your school and who is on it.
- If asking students or staff to provide photos of themselves doing an activity, such as reading, from outside school, check school policies on what is permissible. For instance, for bonus points for a reading challenge we had a challenge for the students to provide a photo of them reading outside school. To adhere to our school policies, these photos could not include any other members of their family or friends from outside our student population.
- You don't have to 'follow back' everyone who follows you. Be selective about who you want to follow, as that will dictate what you see on your Instagram feed and make it easier to have meaningful engagement with accounts similar to yours.
- Spend time looking at what hashtags other library accounts use and use those ones on your posts. Good use of hashtags can help increase your audience.
- Don't get too stressed about the numbers, unless you have a specific goal in relation to engagement or number of followers.
- When I first created the Instagram account for the library, I made it a personal account, but quickly changed this over to a professional account, as this provided access to many more creative tools.
- Find a scheduling tool that works for you. There are a number of free Instagram scheduling tools available. Being able to schedule posts makes managing the account much easier. I use Facebook Creator Studio.

### Final word

My experience using Instagram as a marketing tool for the school library has been a success and a lot of fun. I have found it incredibly rewarding and have enjoyed developing my creative side when thinking up yet another way to photograph books.

I'd say that, if your school allows you to have an Instagram account for your library, if you want to try something new for engagement and marketing, then go for it – and don't forget to follow my account. Search @fhclibrary on Instagram.

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**Helen Farch Library Technician**  
Forest Hill College  
@fhclibrary

# PLAYFUL LEARNING IN THE LIBRARY

Education Consultant Sarah Pavey explores how gamification can be used to create a playful learning environment in school libraries.

**Just before our** imposed months of isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I received a call from Facet Publishing, who are part of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) – the representative body for the library profession in the UK. They say every cloud has a silver lining and in no small way the lockdown offered me a chance to write a book about playful learning specifically for school librarians, unhindered by the distractions of other work and leisure engagements. The result was my book *Playing games in the school library: Developing game-based lessons and using gamification concepts*.

## Embracing internationalism

Having experience of working both with UK school librarians and others from the international community, I am very aware of how the curricula and the role of the school librarian can vary. My idea was to write a book covering many different contexts so it would be of global practical use. I set out to collect case studies from around the world to help frame my chapters and was delighted that over 15 nations responded to my call.

The research resulted in new friendships from librarians working in primary and secondary schools as well as in special education. It was amazing and I am indebted to everyone who told me about their playful approaches to learning from the simple but innovative ‘Toy Night in the Library’ from Lithuania to virtual scavenger hunts for library induction using the Seppo App in Germany.

“It is vital to get the balance right and to focus on learning outcomes. My book explores many types of game but also shows how librarians have adapted games in practice to fit with the constraints in delivery.”

## Why games work ... and why they sometimes don't

There are plenty of ‘how to’ manuals about game play but I wanted to delve into the psychology and relate it to known pedagogical approaches. Why do some games have appeal, being fun to play while delivering learning outcomes that would be hard to achieve in traditional teaching? Why do some games motivate students to learn so effectively? What are the magic ingredients in design?



I wanted this theoretical knowledge to relate to practice and to understand why games sometimes need to be used with care or perhaps not at all for some students. To guide the reader through this maze I introduced eight students, all with the character traits and abilities we might find amongst our own library classes.

For example, we meet Josie who is disengaged with school and finds that no lessons have any relevance to her lifestyle. Her motivation needs to come from within. Games linked with information, media or digital literacy concepts – or quiz-style games where the results determine life choices and pathways – might work well with a student like Josie. They would enable her to understand the relevance of skills beyond the school environment.

## Choosing the right game for the right moment

Taking a game-based learning or gamification approach does involve a degree of boldness and risk. It is much easier to offer didactic teaching of information literacy or a passive reading lesson but is this engaging for us as librarians and for our students? Some may argue that introducing games requires financial outlay and impinges on our precious time, but this is not necessarily true. In my book I explore games that just use oracy or perhaps pen and paper, or if we want to get more technical, the latest apps and phenomenal IT gadgetry. There is something for everyone, however long you want to spend on design and play and however much money you have spare.

It is vital to get the balance right and to focus on learning outcomes. My book explores many types of game but also shows how librarians have adapted games in practice to fit with the constraints in delivery. Would you know how to plan a lesson on internet safety without access to any computers when given a five-minute warning the class was on its way to the library? One librarian from England faced such a challenge.

The students had a last-minute lesson scheduled on internet safety to be led by the librarian. Unfortunately, the internet in the school was not working. A game had to be devised to teach students the importance of keeping their personal information private. There were 25 students in the class. Each student was given a piece of paper with a list of personal characteristics – 25



in total – of the same fictitious person. Each piece of paper only had one part of the total information filled in – such as the person’s first name or their age or their password. The class then had to question each other in pairs and swap information by whispering. The first person to get all 25 pieces of information shouted out ‘SCAMMER’. There was then a discussion about how long the process took and why some pieces of personal information may be more important to keep safe than others.

“Have you ever become so absorbed in a game that time seems to fly past and it is almost as if you are living in an alternative universe?”

### Incentives, motivation and achieving a ‘state of flow’

Have you ever become so absorbed in a game that time seems to fly past and it is almost as if you are living in an alternative universe? Understanding information and assimilating knowledge seems simple. This is known as a ‘state of flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and perhaps is what we strive for our students to experience. The motivation becomes intrinsic and fosters a love of learning for learning’s sake. But this is sometimes not achievable and certainly not for the whole class. So then we start to look at incentives.

The difference between game-based learning (learning through play) and gamification is one of rewards. When we offer points and prizes, we are using gamification techniques to motivate our students. However, there is a dichotomy. Cerasoli, Nicklin and Ford (2014) point out:

- Incentives enhance a performance
- Intrinsic motivation boosts attainment
- Incentives reduce intrinsic motivation

So, there is a delicate balance between rewards being effective or actually reducing engagement. This is why Josie, for example, might struggle with a points-based reading scheme.

### Games for learning and for promoting our libraries to our communities

With our wonderful librarian creativity, the door is wide open for designing learning tools for students, working with subject teachers and working on promotional campaigns. In our roles we often have more autonomy to experiment, and I believe we need to take advantage of this opportunity. Even when launching my book, I considered how I could invite international contributors and still provide something playful, fun and informative and accessible. By holding a virtual launch party on Kumospace, I wanted to give attendees ideas for designing their own library online, incorporating games and an exploratory experience –

perhaps as part of a school training day for staff and students. You too can participate still, the door is open, but be aware that unless you take a friend you will be talking to yourself!

To use Kumospace, please register through the platform: [www.kumospace.com/sp4ilspace](http://www.kumospace.com/sp4ilspace), then you can choose a room and explore. Please be aware that this resource works best when using Google Chrome as your web browser.

### Remember

Game-based learning and gamification methods can be quick, cheap, enhance engagement in boring topics, make complex subjects easy to understand, allow for graceful failure in a safe environment and be designed for all ages and abilities of student.

Go forth, create and play!

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Sarah has written an [online training course on game-based learning](http://www.sla.org.uk/course/game-based-learning). It is available from the School Library Association (UK) and can be completed in your own time. It gives practical experience of concepts in the book. Details are available here: [www.sla.org.uk/course/game-based-learning](http://www.sla.org.uk/course/game-based-learning)



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Sarah Pavey MSc FCLIP FRSA has over 20 years’ experience as a school librarian and is founder of educational training and consultancy SP4IL ([www.sp4il.co.uk](http://www.sp4il.co.uk)). She is an established author and regular speaker at conferences on school library and wider educational issues. Whether run home or abroad, virtual or face-to-face, her training courses on a range of topics including playful learning are practical and acclaimed for being rooted in theory. Contact the author directly via email [sarahjpavey@gmail.com](mailto:sarahjpavey@gmail.com), Twitter @SarahintheLib LinkedIn, [linkedin.com/in/sp4il](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sp4il), Facebook [www.facebook.com/sp4il](https://www.facebook.com/sp4il), Instagram sarahpavey1

You can find Sarah’s book *Playing games in the school library: Developing game-based lessons and using gamification concepts*, for purchase here: [www.bookdepository.com/Playing-Games-School-Library-Sarah-Pavey/9781783305339](https://www.bookdepository.com/Playing-Games-School-Library-Sarah-Pavey/9781783305339)

# DECODABLES – THEY’RE A THING, RIGHT?

**Educator Sarah Handscomb discusses her experience of the transformative power of Systematic Synthetic Phonics instruction**

**Much of my time** working in reading intervention has been supporting students, frequently teaching mainstream education to boys in middle and upper primary years, and teaching disengaged students in special educational settings. Virtually every student had internalised feelings of worthlessness, and regarded themselves as being unintelligent because they couldn’t read. Often they would close the door into the classroom so that others wouldn’t hear their first tentative steps in learning to read.

The other side of this coin is – and here’s the thing – this is all largely preventable. Altogether, three major reviews in the UK, the USA and Australia all concluded in favour of Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) as having the strongest evidence base for early reading instruction. Decodable readers have an important role to play in effective evidence-based instruction for all students. There is not a moment to lose!

Over the years, similar observations from parents have highlighted the transformation that takes place as their children learn to read after getting access to decodable texts that they can read for themselves.

## The science of reading

High-quality Systematic Synthetic Phonics instruction is underpinned by the cognitive science of how children learn to read and spell. The role of the teacher is to explicitly ‘unlock’ the code in a logical and sequential way. Children need lots of practice to apply their developing knowledge and code-breaking skills.

Decodable readers have a critical role to play in supporting children to learn to read from a Science of Reading approach. As Professor Pamela Snow (La Trobe University) describes it:

By contrast, the peer-reviewed, highly regarded, and widely accepted cognitive-science-based Simple View of Reading holds that decoding is a far more specific skill that refers to the reader’s ability to use phonics knowledge to derive phonemes (sounds) from graphemes (letters and letter combinations that represent them). In the case of decodable readers, this skill refers to the early novice period, but decoding is a skill that continues to be important across the lifespan.

*The Snow Report, Friday 2 November, 2018*

## Phonics knowledge

The English alphabetic code is complex, although surprisingly logical. Letters are visual representations of the sounds we hear. Our written English code has evolved with increasing complexity for the 44 phonemes (sounds) in our spoken language. Experts suggest that there are up to 300 spellings of the 44 sounds.

For example, consider the sound /ee/ – there are 10 different spellings, as found in **keep**, **seat**, **me**, **funny**, **key**, **eve**, **chief**, **receive**, **variation**, **people**. There are many words that beginner readers need to be able to read that have the alternative spellings for sounds (complex code) in them. High-quality SSP phonics instruction will explicitly teach code knowledge from simple to complex, and provide students with plenty of exposure to

decodable texts, to enable them to practise their skills at reading and spelling.

## Considerations for selection of decodable readers

To maximise reading instruction, it is essential that decodable readers follow a clearly defined scope and sequence that supports *sequential* reading. Teachers need to be aware that different series of decodable readers may follow a different sequence of instruction. The risk of not following a logical and systematic sequence is that children can become confused and frustrated, which can lead to disengagement from reading. Prevention is better than cure.

Here are some additional considerations:

- Are the letter–sound correspondences clearly and logically mapped to a scope and sequence from simple to complex – for example, starting with short, single-syllable 3-sound consonant, vowel, consonant (CVC) words?
- Do the decodable readers being used in the room and/or sent home for home reading match up with the explicit teaching of code knowledge covered in the classroom?
- What is the amount of text on a page?
- How many alternative spellings of the graphemes are there in the reader?
- Are there a few high-frequency words (words that appear frequently in the language) included for children to learn, but that children have not yet been taught to decode, such as ‘the’, ‘is’ ‘was’?
- Are the take-home readers able to be decoded by students?
- Have parents been fully informed about ways to help their child? These suggestions include encouraging them to read a wide variety of texts *with* their child to develop vocabulary, background knowledge and comprehension skills.

## Decodable texts in the classroom

Knowing where your students are on their reading journey is an important consideration and allows the teacher to match the decodable reader to each student’s current skill level. This will support students to develop automaticity in reading. Decodable texts can be used with:

- choral reading
- speed reading
- sound search
- partner reading
- comprehension tasks
- teaching about concepts of print, grammar
- teaching syntax, to support teaching of comprehension skills
- dictation of sentences
- assessment of spelling
- assessment of comprehension
- assessment of fluency (timed).

There is an increasing range of materials available from publishers to meet the increasing demand for a range of

decodable readers, both fiction and non-fiction. There are also commercial schemes making some materials free to support schools and parents during remote learning.

Learning to read is a complex task, and is not innate – unlike speaking, which we are wired to do. The use of decodable readers is an important aspect of reading instruction for all students, for a short period of time, while they are developing their understanding of how the alphabetic code works and practising their skills at decoding. Similarly to learning any new task, as students develop their knowledge and skills at reading, they require less scaffolding for learning from teachers and are able to manage increasingly complex text. They need to be supported with the appropriate resources at the right time to support them to become fluent and confident readers.

### Further reading and viewing suggestions

- The Literacy Hub: an Australian resource for school leaders, teachers and families [literacyhub.edu.au](http://literacyhub.edu.au)
- Five from Five [fivefromfive.com.au](http://fivefromfive.com.au)
- Five from Five: decodable readers ([fivefromfive.com.au/decodable-readers](http://fivefromfive.com.au/decodable-readers))
- This page also contains a useful video on the use of decodable, predictable and authentic texts in early reading instruction: *Decodables, predictables and authentic texts: a presentation*, by Dr Tanya Serry, La Trobe University Science of Learning and Reading (SOLAR) Lab

- James Lyra 'Decodable readers, systematicity and practice', guest post in *The Literacy Blog* (March 2018), John Walker ([theliteracyblog.com/2018/03/25/decodable-readers-systematicity-and-practice](http://theliteracyblog.com/2018/03/25/decodable-readers-systematicity-and-practice))

### Decodable reader (phonic readers/books) suggestions

- SPELD SA - Phonic readers: These 'support the teaching of reading by using a structured synthetic phonics approach' ([www.spelsa.org.au/SPELD-SA-Phonic-Readers-New-Series](http://www.spelsa.org.au/SPELD-SA-Phonic-Readers-New-Series))
- Phonic Books UK (<https://www.phonicbooks.co.uk>)
- NSW Department of Education: Decodable texts Information, videos, and actual texts available with NSW DOE login only ([education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/teaching-and-learning-resources/literacy/effective-reading-in-the-early-years-of-school/decodable-texts](http://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/teaching-and-learning-resources/literacy/effective-reading-in-the-early-years-of-school/decodable-texts))



**Sarah Handscomb**  
Educator and Literacy Coach

Sarah is an experienced educator, within mainstream and special education settings. She is passionate about supporting teachers with evidence-informed literacy approaches, such as Systematic Synthetic Phonics and aligning these to classroom practice, to enable students to develop command of their language.



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# EMBRACING CHANGE

In 2020, Queenwood school for girls in Sydney implemented a sustained silent reading (SSR) program. This article is a follow-up to their initial article on this program (*Connections* Issue 117), where we check in on the benefits that this program has had for the school. Scan the QR code to read the original article!



## The unexpected benefits of 'being on the bus'

In January 2020, Queenwood implemented 'Just Read', a daily sustained silent reading program for all K-12 students and staff. The aims of the program were to increase student motivation to read and to improve student literacy outcomes. While investigating these changes, we also measured staff attitudinal changes to Just Read. This article focuses on the unexpected benefits for our staff after 2 years of the program.

As part of this project, all Queenwood staff were invited to respond anonymously to Just Read pre-introduction and post-introduction surveys to collect data on a number of aspects relating to the program.

## Teachers' changing attitudes to Just Read

Teacher modelling is a crucial component for the success of a silent sustained reading program for students. Due to the immense time pressures in an already crowded curriculum, we anticipated that not all teachers at the start of the Just Read program would recognise its benefits. This was proven to be correct.

### Pre-program and post-program teacher surveys

**Pre-program question:** If I had the choice, I would rather use class time for learning opportunities other than silent reading.

Of teachers who responded to the pre-program survey, 31.6% Agreed or Somewhat Agreed to this statement.

In the post-program survey held after a year of implementation of Just Read, this figure was reduced to only 19.4%. These data show that the majority of teachers initially had a positive attitude to introducing Just Read. Of the teachers who did have early reservations about the program, a number changed their viewpoint after observing the benefits for their students.

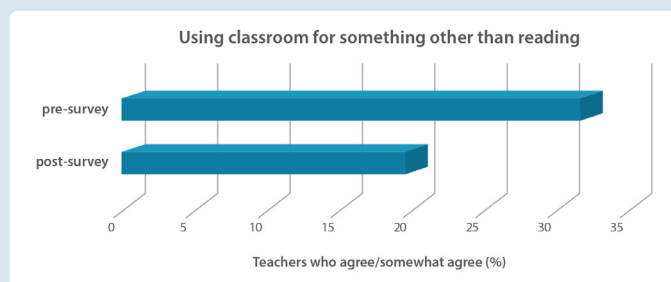


Figure 1. Question 1 pre-and post-program teacher survey results

## Teacher-identified problems before the program's introduction

'Reading as a habit should be instilled in the Junior School, forcing teenagers to read may put them off.'

'Silent Reading could be done at home with modelling by parents.'

## Teacher-identified benefits after the program's introduction

'It gives the girls a clear understanding of the importance of reading.'

'Class learning should be a priority and then the silent reading, a close second.'

## Just Read as a classroom practice

The majority of our teachers have previously experienced sustained silent reading programs, as these are common in many educational settings. Such programs often take the form of DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) or an English-based Wide Reading program. The Just Read program has become embedded at Queenwood as classroom practice. It differs from other reading programs as it is a whole-school initiative, is timetabled to fall across a full range of subjects, involves daily practice, and uses only works of fiction that are self-selected. Another key point of difference is the inclusion of student-led book talks to promote peer discussion, a critical component of developing a reading culture in our school.

## Teacher survey questions and responses

This section documents teacher understanding of the practice one year after program implementation.

**Question:** Has your understanding of silent reading as a classroom practice changed since the beginning of the project?

After one year of the program, 30% of staff respondents said Yes, and for a wide range of reasons, as shown below.

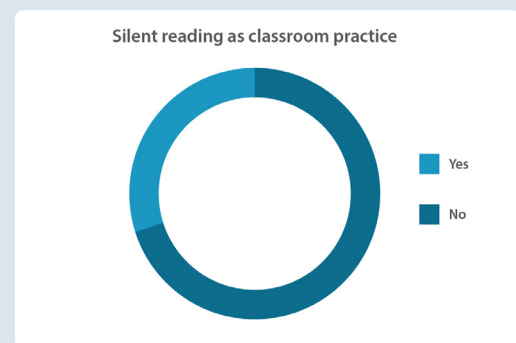


Figure 2. Answers to whether teacher's attitudes to silent reading as a classroom practice had shifted since the beginning of the project.

'My understanding and awareness of the importance of modelling sustained silent reading to the students has increased.'

'The role of story for enjoyment and connection.'

'I see greater value in it.'

'I was unsure how it would work with our younger students, who are not yet reading independently, but it has worked well.'

'I have seen more interest in books from my students.'

'My students are instantly calmer and display a relaxed and positive mindset.'

'We all look forward to our Just Read time in the mornings.'



### Just Read (a snapshot)

- Daily practice (15 min at Junior School and 20 min at Senior School)
- Fiction books
- Physical book, in English
- Total freedom over fiction book choices (for staff and students)
- Weekly book talks to increase peer discussions and recommendations
- Ongoing resources and visual displays to support the program
- All staff take part

'I really enjoy the chance to read and I think the girls like to see us teachers reading for pleasure as there is a snowball effect.'

'I did not anticipate the high level of engagement.'

'There is a culture of reading at the school that did not exist before.'

'It is a good way for the students to unwind and get focused and it has been wonderful to see their new passion for reading.'

### Reading for enjoyment

**Statement:** I enjoy reading my own books during silent reading time at school.

After a year of the Just Read program, over 89% of staff said that they strongly agree or agreed.

**Question:** Has your personal level of enjoyment of independent reading of books changed since the beginning of the project?

After a year of the program, 97% of staff respondents stated that there had been no change or a positive change. There were four key identifiers that indicated increased personal level of enjoyment or motivation to read:

- greater continuity and motivation to read due to reading more regularly (45%)
- reading more outside the classroom (37%)
- improved wellbeing (9%)
- greater connections with students (7%).

I have never read for pleasure. Now I do.

I create more time to read fiction outside of school hours.

I have read more books this year than in the last three years ahead together.

It has helped to remind me how much I enjoy reading.

Helps me in the middle of the day.

Regular reading helps with continuity.

I have read more books in the last 6 months than in my entire adult life.

We discuss what we are reading.

Image 1. Teachers thoughts on the silent reading program.

### Further benefits for teaching staff

While the benefits for students undertaking a sustained silent reading program have been clearly evident, a number of staff benefits have also become apparent, a fantastic but unexpected outcome. Teaching is an incredibly busy, high-pressure environment with a seemingly limitless workload. The introduction of a daily silent reading program was seen as a gift by the vast majority of teachers, as it allowed a pause on formal teaching and learning while they immersed themselves in a book of their own choosing. A significant number of our staff have reignited their passion for reading. Others have read fiction books for the first time ever and have maintained this habit. Staff have identified reading as assisting with their wellbeing or in making connections with students. It is now very common in our school to overhear staff passionately sharing their latest read with their peers.

Support from our librarians has been integral to developing this strong culture of reading, as our teacher librarians continue to offer an endless reader advisory service, matching staff and students to their next great read.

In a project of this magnitude there have been both expected and unexpected challenges along the way, not least a worldwide pandemic. There has been reluctance among some staff, one of the many roadblocks that we have had to overcome. But the evidence clearly indicates our success in developing a reading culture in our school, for both staff and students. It confirms our vision for the program.

If you would like any more information about this project, please contact Gabrielle Mace at [gabrielle.mace@queenwood.nsw.edu.au](mailto:gabrielle.mace@queenwood.nsw.edu.au).



#### Gabrielle Mace

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Science Teacher.  
QLiteracy Committee Member, Queenwood School for Girls

# SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: ST STEPHEN'S SCHOOL

Lise Legg, St Stephen's School, Perth, Western Australia

## 1. What is your job title and what does your role entail?

My job title is Head of Libraries at St Stephen's School, which is an independent, co-educational Uniting Church school from Pre-kindergarten to Year 12. The school was established at the Duncraig Campus in 1984 and the Carramar Campus in 2001. In 2011, an Early Learning Centre for pre-kindergarten to Year 2 was built. The school has four libraries, three of them based on our Duncraig campus (K-2, 3-6, 7-12) and one (K-12) at our Carramar campus. I was tasked to bring together all four libraries digitally to ensure all resources could be shared across these libraries. This has been a challenge, but the result is a very unified system with similar but different focuses in our libraries.

“We do not shush the students – we like to have a reasonable level of noise and always tell the students it is ‘their’ library to enjoy and use.”

I am responsible for leading and managing the teams in the libraries. I have an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and experienced team of four teacher librarians, one library technician and four library officers – most working on a part-time basis. I am responsible for budgets, staffing, acquisitions including digital, and I also take a few digital literacy, information literacy and reading classes on one campus. Our very able team of teacher librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure teaching programs are supported in all four libraries.

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

Working with young people out of the confines of a classroom environment so

one can support learning in a friendly and helpful way. I love the more unstructured environment of a library, and every day brings something different. We encourage students to use the libraries in many ways and as a result our libraries are in high demand and are a popular hub of our schools.

We provide a vibrant, social place for our students and offer various activities at lunchtimes to ensure students can form friendships and have fun. Our lunchtime clubs include chess club, French club, book clubs, craft club, drawing clubs and a very popular online gaming club.

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

Students are at the centre of everything we do and plan. We are blessed to have a supportive principal who respects and values the role of our libraries. I think literacy and instilling a lifelong love of reading is a very important part of our role in libraries. By providing regular reading lessons we have developed a strong reading culture within our schools.

Schools are increasingly concerned with the promotion of student wellbeing, and this is also an important part of our role in the library. We encourage our students to use the different spaces in ways which best suit their needs. During exams it is wonderful to see our secondary students congregating in the library, studying, providing each other with emotional support and being able to meet in a stress-free environment.

We host many events and are fortunate to have large spaces to do this effectively. Many meetings – like devotions, smaller staff meetings and parent evenings – are held in our libraries.

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

By working closely with our English teachers and primary teachers we have ensured that all classes from pre-primary to Year 9 have set reading times in our libraries. We provide wide reading programs to suit the ages and reading abilities of our students. These are

run by our teacher librarians, but the focus of the lesson – after a short introduction – is quiet reading.

The library plays an important part in supporting literacy by providing engaging books for our students to read. We ensure that we have a modern, current and relevant collection including a large collection of audio and ebooks. Our creative library team make beautiful, themed displays to encourage interest in the latest books. Our students are proactive in suggesting new books for the library, and they are always the first ones to read the book they suggested. We have book clubs and hold annual bookfairs, run many events during Book Week and support [National Simultaneous Storytime](#). We organise an outing to a bookshop during the year so that a select group of students can choose books for the library. This is always a successful event.

Challenges are those students who really don't like reading. We try to cater for them by having a wide range of magazines, graphic novels, and short, easy reads which are age appropriate. Another challenge is ensuring the seniors have recreational reading time. They have such jam-packed schedules and high workloads, making it is difficult to find time to read. I think the reading foundations we have built in their earlier years will allow students to rediscover a love of reading once they leave school.

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

We have a café with a vending machine in our secondary areas where students are welcome to eat their lunch at lunchbreak. We have varied zones in the library for quiet study, reading, group work – and class areas. We have separate reading lounges with beanbags, comfortable seating and cushions in our K-12 and secondary libraries. We do not shush the students – we like to have a reasonable level of noise and always tell the students it is ‘their’ library to enjoy and use.

Students are timetabled in the library for digital literacy lessons, which the teacher librarians run. In addition, we alternate with HASS and science lessons to develop



information literacy skills in the context of the current subject matter. In these lessons we teach them to research effectively and reference correctly.

We develop LibGuides for different subject areas as we know our students need guidance in accessing reliable, relevant resources. One of our teacher librarians is responsible for the digital curation of our resources so they can be shared by

our libraries. We have created a library website using the LibGuides platform. This provides access to our digital platforms and our Library Management System (Follett Destiny), which is an excellent teaching and curating tool.

## 6. What is your favourite thing about SCIS?

SCIS is very useful to import catalogue records which are correct and consistent

in format. It is helpful to be able to request SCIS records for items that are not on SCIS. I also really love the *Connections* articles as I find them so practical and relevant.



**Lise Legg**

Head of Libraries  
St Stephen's School

## New and revised subject headings

### New headings

#### **Biomimicry**

Use for works on the imitation of nature in manufacture and design.

#### **Cryptocurrencies**

Use for works on currencies that use cryptography to secure and verify transactions and to control the creation of new currency units.

#### **Computational thinking**

Use for works on problem-solving methods that involve various techniques and strategies, e.g. Computer programming, Lateral thinking.

#### **Family secrets**

(No scope note)

#### **Food allergy**

Use for works on immune responses to specific foods. Works on difficulties digesting certain foods, which lead to physical symptoms, are entered under food intolerance. Works on the toxic effects of food containing naturally poisonous substances or toxic chemical residues are entered under Food - Toxicology.

#### **Food science**

Use for works about the application of science in the improvement of food products, their processing and handling for the consuming public. For works on the processing of food in general and on the marketing of processed food products use Food industry.

Use for textbooks about Food science as a subject.

#### **Positive psychology**

Use for works about developing positive attitudes and outlooks on life.

### New 'see' references

- *Bio-inspired engineering* see Biomimicry
- *Biomimetics* see Biomimicry
- *Bitcoin* see Cryptocurrencies
- *Cryptocurrency* see Cryptocurrencies
- *Food technology* see Food science
- *First Nations (Australia)* see Aboriginal Peoples
- *First Nations (Australia)* see Torres Strait Islanders
- *First Nations (Canada)* see Canadian Indians
- *First Nations (North America)* see American Indians
- *First Peoples (Australia)* see Aboriginal Peoples
- *First Peoples (Australia)* see Torres Strait Islanders
- *Positivity* see Positive psychology
- *Secrets, Family* see Family secrets

### Revised subject headings

- Aboriginal peoples
- Agricultural workers
- Allergy
- Attitude (Psychology)
- Canadian Indians
- Cooking
- Ecommerce
- Family relations
- Farm life
- Farmers
- Food
- Food handling
- Food industry
- Food preservation
- Food supply
- Home economics
- Money

Don't know what Subject Headings are? Scan the QR code to read our blog article on them!



- North American Indians
- Nutrition
- Problem solving
- Programming (Computers)
- Psychology
- Resilience (Psychology)
- Secrecy
- Thought and thinking
- Torres Strait Islanders
- War on Terrorism 2001 –

NOTE for War on Terrorism (2001):  
Use for works on the military operations, diplomatic activities and other counter-terrorist measures undertaken by the United States and allied countries in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

The full reference structure for SCIS subject headings can be found in [www.scisdata.com/media/1738/scis-standards-for-cataloguing-and-data-entry.pdf](http://www.scisdata.com/media/1738/scis-standards-for-cataloguing-and-data-entry.pdf).



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Renate has worked for SCIS since 2018. A qualified teacher librarian, Renate worked in secondary school libraries for 20 years before teaching library and information services at Box Hill TAFE. She is passionate about ensuring that schools receive the quality data needed to empower information discovery for students.

# WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

## **ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MATHEMATICS ALLIANCE** [atsima.com](https://atsima.com)

ATSIMA is an Indigenous-led charity that seeks to develop innovative techniques and resources to enhance the teaching of mathematics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Content includes professional learning, resources, events and news.

SCIS no: 5389501

## **AUSTRALIA OVER TIME** [australian.museum/learn/australia-over-time](https://australian.museum/learn/australia-over-time)

This website developed by the Australian Museum offers a comprehensive range of information and resources regarding the evolving Australian landscape, megafauna and other extinct animals, and palaeontology. It also promotes links to the museum's palaeontology and minerology collections.

SCIS no: 5389565

## **BULLYING FREE NZ** [www.bullyingfree.nz](https://www.bullyingfree.nz)

All members of the school community will find pertinent information about bullying prevention on this NZ Government website. Units deal with what bullying is, types of bullying, preventing bullying, responding to bullying and available resources.

SCIS no: 5389576

## **DISCOVER STEM LEARNING RESOURCES** [education.australiascience.tv](https://education.australiascience.tv)

The Royal Institution of Australia is 'dedicated to connecting people with the world of science'. The content of its website focuses on making available quality, free STEM resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum for Foundation–12 teachers and students.

SCIS no: 5389735

## **ESAFETY COMMISSIONER** [australian.museum/learn/first-nations](https://australian.museum/learn/first-nations)

Revised and updated, this valuable resource offers students, parents and teachers important information about the ever-changing topic of online safety. Matters covered include information on staying safe online during COVID-19, technology trends, protecting those most at risk, and toolkits for schools.

SCIS no: 1829638

## **GUIDE TO DEMOCRACY** [guidetodemocracy.ecq.qld.gov.au](https://guidetodemocracy.ecq.qld.gov.au)

*Guide to democracy* was developed to encourage students' critical thinking skills, enhance their knowledge of the key institutions of Australia's democratic government, and to assist them in becoming better-informed and active citizens. Explicit teaching modules are a feature.

SCIS no: 5389697

## **JACKIE FRENCH** [www.jackiefrench.com](https://www.jackiefrench.com)

Billing herself as an 'Australian author, ecologist, historian, dyslexic, honorary wombat', Jackie French's website contains a myriad of material. Students and teachers can rummage through random facts about Jackie, tips for reading and writing, her published works, teachers' notes and a blog. There are links about wombats, her garden and recipes.

SCIS no: 5389613

## **OLOGY** [www.amnh.org/explore/ology](https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology)

This authoritative American Museum of Natural History website gives students the opportunity to delve into a diverse range of interesting science topics. From anthropology to zoology, each 'ology' offers games, videos, stories and hands-on activities for primary school students.

SCIS no: 5389628

## **PUPPET PALS 2** [apps.apple.com/au/app/puppet-pals-2/id589141096](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/puppet-pals-2/id589141096)

Students using this app can develop their own puppet theatre. The app allows students to manipulate characters, devise settings, record plays, add voices and share with others. The app can also be used to enhance language skills, and to present instructional videos or reports. (Note: includes in-app purchases.)

SCIS no: 5389505

## **SCIENCEWORKS AT HOME** [museums.victoria.com.au/scienceworks/at-home](https://museums.victoria.com.au/scienceworks/at-home)

Students unable to visit Museum Victoria's Scienceworks can use this website to embark on virtual tours of exhibitions, listen to museum experts and undertake a variety of science-related activities. The curriculum-aligned resources are graded according to year levels.

SCIS no: 5389641

## **TUNE IN** [www.tso.com.au/tune-in](https://www.tso.com.au/tune-in)

There are 48 standalone activities on this website that encourage student exploration of orchestral works from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods. Music written for children by living Australian composers is also featured. Each activity includes audio, video, background information and a quiz.

SCIS no: 5389685



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*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 and content of these sites are subject to change.*