

CONNECTIONS

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Empowering school library staff to navigate the AI frontier

The field of artificial intelligence (AI) has received unprecedented attention throughout the world in the past year, instigated by the launch of ChatGPT in late 2022. While research on how AI might be used in education has been conducted since the 1970s (Bozkurt et al., 2021), there has been a sharp realisation that AI technologies have reached a point in their development where they are influencing many facets of life. This has led to the need for educators to become 'AI ready' – able to teach about and with AI technology (Luckin et al., 2022). This article addresses this realisation by firstly presenting a brief discussion about generative AI technology, before considering what it means for educators (and particularly school library staff) to be AI ready. It concludes with an evaluation of three generative AI tools that may be used in learning and teaching – QuillBot AI, Perplexity AI and ChatGPT. This article will have relevance for all educators but is particularly focused on how team leaders and school library staff might take a leadership role in schools in responding to AI technologies, by developing their own knowledge and building on skills they already possess as educators and information specialists.

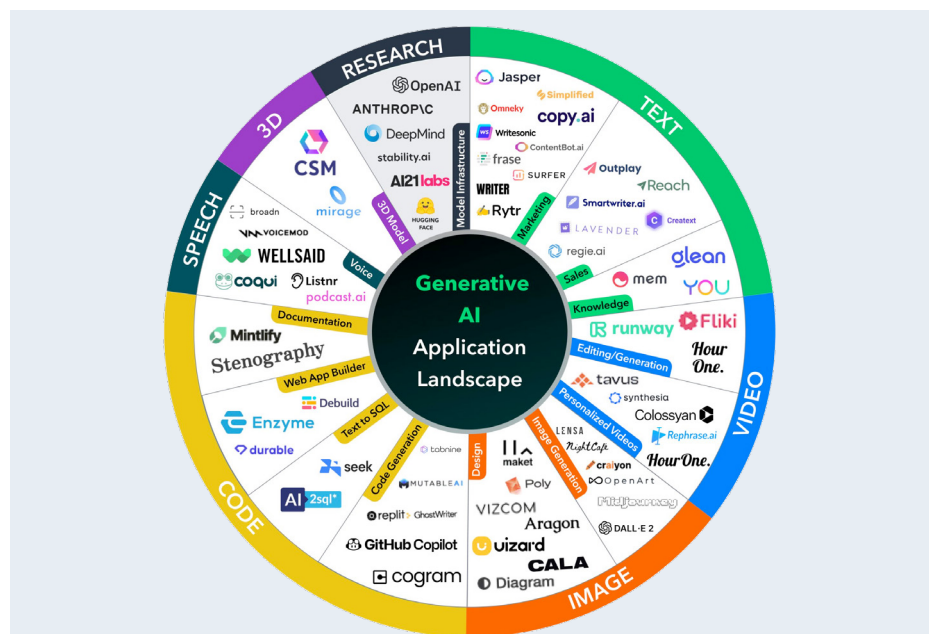


Figure 1: A selection of tools in the GAI landscape

Image used with permission; sourced from <https://www.rapidops.com/blog/generative-ai-tools/>

What is generative AI?

As its name suggests, generative AI (GAI) has the focused task of generating new content, including text, images or music (Forsyth, 2022). This content is created in response to human input in the form of 'prompts' – statements describing the desired output. The most well-known example of GAI, ChatGPT, derives its name from its architecture, which is a generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) – a type of large language model (Larsen & Narayan, 2023). Large language models are trained on vast amounts of text-based data, drawn from freely available internet resources. The most recent version of ChatGPT, GPT4, is also able to respond to visual prompts, such as photos or diagrams. GAI is also present in tools that create content other than text;

well-known image generators include Stable Diffusion and Midjourney, while Synthesia generates video avatars, and AIMI and Jukebox generate original music. Figure 1 indicates just some of the tools in the GAI landscape. Research indicates that the capabilities of these models are limited only by the resources, including data and computing power, that are available to them, and so they are likely to continue to improve for the foreseeable future (Bowman, 2023).

Becoming AI ready

To become AI ready, it is necessary to have a foundational understanding of the AI landscape and the implications of its use (Luckin et al., 2022). This understanding does not require advanced computational

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ESA wishes to acknowledge the Kulin Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which our offices are located, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures and heritage.



CONNECT WITH SCIS



www.scisdata.com

Professional learning

Term 3 Webinars

An introduction to SCIS data

Tuesday 15 August 2:30PM (AEST)

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

Tips and tricks for library nerds

Tuesday 29 August 3PM (AEST)

In this one-hour webinar, you'll learn tips and tricks that will help you use SCIS like a pro. Our expert cataloguers will help you learn the more advanced features of SCIS, and how they build on the basics to create a truly customisable, efficient cataloguing experience.

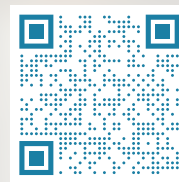
The benefits of Authority Files

Tuesday 19 September 2PM (AEST)

In this 1-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.

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skills and knowledge, but does involve a competent grasp of the underlying concepts and principles along which AI operates, to enable informed analysis of the ethical implications, positive outcomes and potential harms these tools present (Luckin et al., 2022; Southgate et al., 2018). Having this baseline knowledge will allow school library staff to meaningfully contribute to important discussions considering questions such as: 'How might this evolving technology impact not just single lessons or assessment tasks, but teaching and learning in general?'; 'How do we prepare our students (and fellow teachers) to use AI technologies in an informed and balanced way?'; and 'What are our responsibilities as educators to build both students' skills in using AI technologies as well as students' capacities to solve problems and think deeply and critically without AI technologies?'

For team leaders and school library staff, leading learning and teaching *about* AI involves the consideration of the big picture implications of these technologies. This includes the need for an increased focus on developing algorithmic literacy, raising awareness of the ethical implications of AI, and engagement with critical evaluation of the selection and implementation of technologies which draw upon AI capabilities. Although the continued expansion of AI tools appears inevitable, the impact of these tools on the information landscape and beyond demands that team leaders and school library staff play an active role in challenging their wholesale acceptance (Fister & Head, 2023).

In addition to teaching *about* AI, there are many opportunities for school library staff to take an active role in teaching *with* AI. While in some cases this may mean developing student learning opportunities directly using AI technologies, teaching *with* AI can also involve using AI as a teaching tool. Many of the skills needed to successfully use GAI are dependent upon foundational information literacy knowledge that school library staff have experience and expertise in teaching. One of the clearest examples of this is the evolution of prompt engineering, or the design of the text inputs required by most GAI to generate content. The crafting of explicit and detailed prompts to achieve an output which aligns to the user's goals requires proficiency in determining the most appropriate key words, inclusion and exclusion parameters, and descriptors that determine the genre, tone and complexity of the output required. Figure 2 depicts the

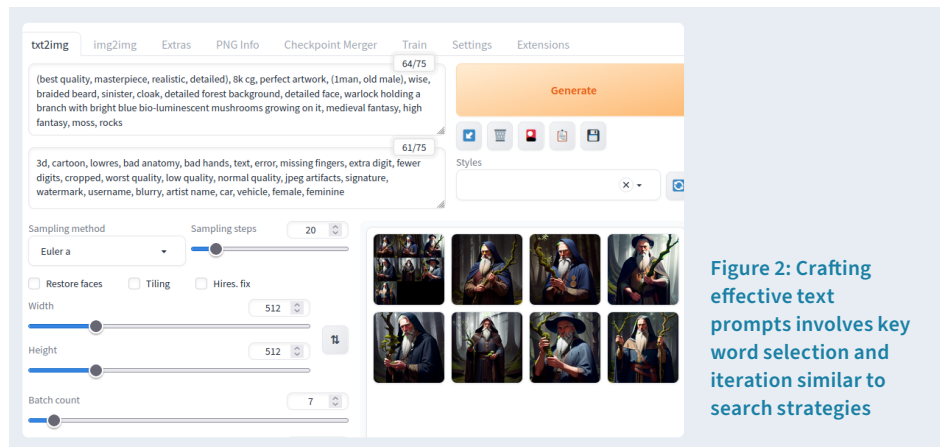


Figure 2: Crafting effective text prompts involves key word selection and iteration similar to search strategies

inclusion and exclusion prompts required by Stable Diffusion to generate a particular image. Designing effective text prompts involves expanding strategies developed for effective searching (Wallbank, 2023) and may be a significant skill that can be taught by school library staff.

Teaching with AI also offers opportunities for school library staff to raise the importance of critical evaluation of online information. As tools such as ChatGPT generate convincing text without providing evidence of its provenance, strategies previously relied upon – such as the 'CRAAP' test – are of less value, as these tools focus on features of the text such as currency and authority, which are not necessarily evident in output text. The fact that the text/image/video output is a novel generation based upon unidentified training data also removes the possibility of understanding the purpose of the content, and incidences of bias within generated content are prevalent (Nayyer & Rodriguez, 2022; Raicu, 2023). Therefore, the information literacy strategy of lateral reading must be understood, so that before using generated content, students know they must compare the veracity of that content with a number of other reliable sources (Kozyreva et al., 2023).

Being AI ready involves understanding that AI technologies, and in particular GAI tools, are already in use in a range of applications beyond ChatGPT. Popular writing and research platform QuillBot uses machine learning and natural language understanding as it summarises, paraphrases, corrects grammar and checks for plagiarism (QuillBot, n.d.). Although QuillBot requires users to input their own text, new content is generated through the suggestions it makes to improve or refine the writing. While QuillBot may not provoke as much attention as ChatGPT, questions regarding privacy of student data, the

ownership of input text and the accuracy of output summaries should be considered prior to use.

Perplexity AI is another tool which uses GAI in its functions as a conversational search engine (Somoye, 2023). Unlike ChatGPT, Perplexity AI generates text responses that include citations, enabling users to identify original sources. While this is a positive inclusion, users must still be critical of the quality of the source material and consider the reasons those particular sources were selected to formulate the response. Wholesale adoption of any AI-generated content must be discouraged regardless of the specific tool, and school library staff are well qualified to promote this message to students and teachers.

The new frontier of GAI is exciting yet challenging. The breakneck speed with which these technologies are evolving has put the world on notice, and it is impossible to predict the incredible transformations and/or the potential dangers they hold. Becoming AI ready ensures school library staff can stand at the forefront of this significant shift, building upon their existing extensive knowledge and expertise to support the school community. All tools may be used for good or for ill, but taking an informed and proactive approach to AI will ensure greater likelihood of positive outcomes for schools and, in fact, the wider community.

References

For a full list of references, please see the online version of this article www.scisdata.com/connections/issue-126/empowering-school-library-staff-to-navigate-the-ai-frontier.



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SCIS is more

Welcome to Term 3, 2023 issue of *Connections*.

For the SCIS team, Term 2, 2023 was a great chance to learn from our subscriber base. In-person workshops, library association conferences, and the 2023 Customer Survey have collectively provided us with helpful feedback that will inform future developments of SCIS.

At the 2023 ASLA Biennial Conference, we were proud to sponsor the Teacher Librarian Award. Congratulations to winner Megan Daley for her outstanding contributions to the library community, which were recognised at the conference. We invite you to delve into Megan's article in this edition of *Connections*, where she shares invaluable insights on her career and promoting reading and literacy amongst learners.

We're thrilled to announce that Oliver, Accessit and Athenaeum users can now import Authority Files to their library management systems automatically. Our thanks to these vendors for implementing this new SCIS functionality, streamlining cataloguing processes for Authority Files for our mutual customers.

If you use one of these library management systems, you can set up automatic imports for the upcoming September update. Support setting up the feature is available through the aforementioned vendors, and via articles on the SCIS blog and help pages.

At SCIS, we value your feedback immensely, and we recently conducted a comprehensive survey to gather insights from our subscriber community. We were overwhelmed by the number of responses and the incredible positivity expressed towards SCIS by our customers.

The survey results have provided us with valuable learnings and shed light on areas where we can enhance our services. One prominent theme that emerged was the need to simplify some website functions to make them easier to use. We are actively working on plans for future developments that will create a more intuitive and user-friendly experience.

Furthermore, the survey highlighted the need to innovate our professional learning resources. We recognise the challenges



SCIS Catalogue Content Manager Renate Beilharz presents Megan Daley with the ASLA Teacher Librarian Award.

of staying up to date with evolving library practices in a world where school library resources are increasingly squeezed. In response, we are developing new materials to provide you with training and guidance more suitable for tricky post-pandemic conditions.

We also received feedback regarding a desire to better understand the benefits of SCIS Authority Files, and how they can be leveraged. To address this, we are finding new and improved ways to inform subscribers about them. Our goal is to ensure that all subscribers have a comprehensive understanding of the powerful impact Authority Files can have on a library catalogue.

We extend our thanks to everyone who participated in the survey and shared their thoughts. Your input is invaluable as we strive to evolve and better serve the needs of the school library community.

As we embark on Term 3 of 2023, we take heart from the positive interactions we've had with the school library community across Australia so far this year. We look

forward to extending those interactions across the Tasman when we head to New Zealand for the SLANZA Regional Conference later this term.

Thank you for being part of the SCIS community, and we hope you enjoy this issue of *Connections*.



Anthony Shaw
Product Manager, SCIS

Anthony Shaw has had more than 25 years' experience within the book industry across a wide range of roles; working in bookselling, buying, publishing and supporting libraries. In his most recent role before joining SCIS he was working with collectionHQ as Sales and Account Manager, helping public libraries deliver better collections for their communities across Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. He lives in Melbourne with his wife, 10-year-old daughter and slightly crazy 2-year-old border collie Rudy.

WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

Nigel Paull reviews the latest educational websites and apps you can use in your library. 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 addresses of these sites are subject to change.

ACCESS MARS

<https://accessmars.withgoogle.com>

A joint development between Google and NASA, Access Mars enables users to explore a 3D replica of the planet's surface as recorded by the Curiosity Rover. Key points are regarding the geology of the surface are analysed.

SCIS no: 5453234

AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: STUDENTS

<https://humanrights.gov.au/education/students>

Students are encouraged to explore the concept of human rights, with a particular emphasis on children's rights. Accompanying videos created for primary students delve into human rights relating to refugees, gender and identity, and people with disabilities.

SCIS no: 5453264

GEOGEBRA 3D CALCULATOR

<https://www.geogebra.org/3d?lang=en>

One of a series of graphing, geometry, and calculator apps from GeoGebra, this app is used to graph 3D functions, plot surfaces, and do 3D geometry. Results can be saved and shared. This free app is available to suit most devices.

SCIS no: 5453311

DIGITAL GIZA : THE GIZA PROJECT AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

<http://giza.fas.harvard.edu/>

This absorbing website allows students to explore in 3D many facets of ancient Egypt and the Giza Plateau in particular. The website includes lesson plans, an overview of people and places, a glossary, and the video library.

SCIS no: 5453331

MATH FLUENCY WITH SPORTS: + -

<https://apps.apple.com/au/app/math-fluency-with-sports/id1493033670>

Available for IOS and Android this maths practice app uses a sports theme as the basis for improving addition and subtraction skills. In total the app features eleven levels suitable for students in stages 1-3.

SCIS no: 5453372

MINERALS IN MODERN TECHNOLOGY

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/minerals-in-modern-technology/NwJyXJ5v2kQnLg>

A development between Google Arts & Culture and Geoscience Australia, this authoritative website features information, photos, maps, and diagrams regarding the increasingly important minerals used in new and innovative technologies.

SCIS no: 5453385

THE NEW ZEALAND WARS

<https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/teaching-and-learning-resources/nz-wars>

Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa/The New Zealand Wars is the focus of this comprehensive website published by the National Library of NZ. Learning resources may be filtered and cover campaigns, the long-lasting impacts of the wars on Māori, primary sources, articles, videos, and audio.

SCIS no: 5453437

NGA: FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

<https://nga.gov.au/learn/for-teachers-students/>

Emanating from the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) this resource aims to assist teachers planning either a physical excursion or a digital excursion to the NGA. Details of programs, teacher professional development opportunities, learning resources, publications, and conferences are available.

SCIS no: 5453472

MONEYSMART LESSON PLANS

<https://moneysmart.gov.au/teaching/lesson-plans>

In collaboration with ACARA and aligned to the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0, Moneysmart's lesson plans are engaging activities that bring everyday financial topics into the classroom.

SCIS no: 5453491



Nigel Paull

Teacher Librarian
North Coast, NSW

EXPLORE THE AUSSIE-KIWI RELATIONSHIP USING PRIMARY SOURCES

Check out how you can use primary analysis tools from the National Library of New Zealand to support information literacy.

Primary sources reflect a close friendship

Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have a close relationship and shared history including Anzac traditions, food and sport.

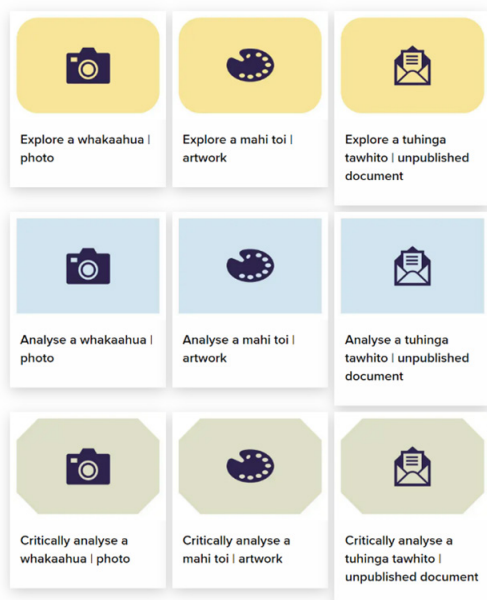
Many primary sources reflect our close ties, such as photos of our Anzac troops serving together at Gallipoli, and our rivalry on the sporting field.

Both nations have a passion for pavlova, Anzac biscuits, and laying claim to Crowded House, Russell Crowe, flat whites and lamingtons.

New analysis tools to spark curiosity

The National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa), Services to Schools, has developed a suite of primary source analysis tools for students at all levels of schooling.

Our tools can help librarians and teachers support Aussie and Kiwi students to develop critical thinking and information literacy skills across humanities and social sciences. Primary source analysis has been identified as a key skill in the [refreshed New Zealand social sciences curriculum](#).



A selection of our primary source analysis tools.
[See all our tools](#) (including accessible versions).

Tools for different skill levels

We have three levels of tools to support students with different skills in primary source analysis.

- Explore — a great first step into primary source analysis to spark curiosity.
- Analyse — introduces key concepts such as authorship and purpose and identifying perspectives.
- Critically analyse — supports critical engagement with primary sources at a deeper level.

The tools have been designed as a progression so students can work on the level appropriate for their skill level. When students are ready, they can progress to the next level of analysis.

Find the tools and read how to use them:

- [Tools for primary source analysis](#)
- [Using our primary source analysis tools in the classroom](#)

Use the tools to analyse an Anzac photo

Although the campaign at Gallipoli was ultimately a failure, our Anzacs' bravery and resilience in the face of adversity became legendary. The Anzac spirit, which emphasised qualities such as courage, loyalty and mateship, became a defining feature of Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand national identity.

Here's a photo of two Anzac soldiers in a dugout, which you can analyse with your students.



Location: Canterbury Slopes, Gallipoli, Turkey. Pictured: Lance Corporals D M Watson and G Davison. Image credit: Two soldiers in a dugout, Gallipoli, Turkey, in 1915. Bryce Publishers: Photographs and sketches of the Gallipoli landing. Ref: PAColl-1661-1-1-1 Alexander Turnbull Library.

At first glance, students may note that they can see two men standing outside a shelter. Using the three-step framework in our photo tools, students can take their observation and critical-thinking skills to the next level.

TALES OF FRIENDSHIP: JACK'S BEST DAY EVER

Author Gabrielle Bassett speaks to SCIS about creating a touching story of neurodiverse friendship that was inspired by her son.

***Jack's best day ever* is a really heartwarming tale about neurodivergent friendship, with some gorgeous illustrations. Tell us a little bit about the story of the book and what made you want to write it.**

I had always dreamed of writing a children's book. However, lockdown was the catalyst to kickstart that dream. At the time, I was finishing a large project at work around disability inclusion, yet at home my neurodiverse son was having huge challenges around reading, remote learning and social interactions. I knew that I had to do something. I also realised during this time that there was no diversity on our own bookshelf at home.

At first, I could not stop writing. The book was far too long for a children's picture book so, with the help of the editor, we pared it right back. I had to really think about what I was trying to achieve with the book and who was the intended audience.

I wanted to show the main character, Jack, as the loving, friendly and helpful boy that he is. Yes, he thinks about the world differently; however, that is also his superpower. He is extremely creative and passionate about certain things.

[continued page 8](#)



Gabrielle with her son, Jack.

Observe

The first step is to observe. As students imagine themselves standing in the photo, they may smell smoke and hear soldiers talking, punctuated with the sounds of war.

Following the prompt to read the image's title for clues, students can discover the photo was taken at Canterbury Slopes, Gallipoli, Turkey, and also the name of the soldiers, 'Lance Corporals D M Watson and G Davison'.

Respond

Our tools support students to generate a personal response, such as how they feel about the photo or their impressions of it. Students are prompted to think about what happened just before or after the photo was taken, such as the soldiers' involvement in combat.

Reflect

This step encourages students to ask critical questions about authorship and purpose, and identify perspectives. Students may suggest this photo was taken by a war photographer or another soldier and consider reasons why. Students may want to discuss perspectives of war, daily life on the battlefield, or whether they participate in Anzac remembrance events with their families.

There are also prompts to think about relationships depicted in the photo, such as whether the soldiers are friends and if they kept in touch after the war. Students may also be curious to find out about the Māori and Aboriginal contingents, and the [discriminatory policies](#) and practices that imperial and colonial governments implemented to prevent them from participating.

The critical analysis tools (Critically analyse) have an additional step to support students to understand usage guidelines, cultural considerations and how to acknowledge the source.

Use our tools to explore further

The Anzac spirit has endured well beyond the conflicts, highlighting the importance of looking out for each other and working together to overcome obstacles. It has become an important part of the national identity of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

You can encourage your students to look for more primary sources from the following collections:

- [Gallipoli: The scale of our war](#) exhibition at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington
- [Cenotaph stories](#): Auckland War Memorial Museum
- Students could also connect with their local war memorial

[Use our tools](#) to explore more primary sources about Anzacs and Aussie–Kiwi camaraderie, to support engagement with your library's digital collections.



Yasheeka Bertram

Senior Specialist, Online Teaching and Learning Resources

Rene Burton

National Manager Online

Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa

National Library of Aotearoa New Zealand Services

to Schools

The book is strongly themed around friendship. Relationships have often been the focus of works of literature covering neurodiversity. Why do you think this is so central to conversations about neurodiverse people?

In our experience, friendships – and social interactions more broadly – are the main areas that Jack is constantly navigating his way through. He sometimes doesn't understand the social nuances when it comes to interacting with others, and they don't understand where he is coming from either. My intention when writing this book was to try to help bridge that gap slightly and help educate on why a neurodiverse person might do certain things.

At the end of the day, no matter where we come from, or how differently everyone operates, we all belong. Some people just require a little more help than others.

The illustrations have been created in a friendly, watercolour pencil style by Annabelle Hale. What led you to working with Annabelle and how did you decide on the style in which the book would be illustrated?

The publisher, Woodslane Press, engaged Annabelle directly as they were already working with her on another book project. I reached out to her to introduce myself, so that she could get a sense of Jack and his sisters. However, we didn't collaborate with each other until after the book was finished. It's important to trust in the process and give the illustrator space to do what they do best – to create.

Annabelle did such a wonderful job bringing Jack's story to life in a fun, colourful and inclusive way. The page where Jack bravely saves the day from the lions is my favourite, but kids have told me they love many of the pages. The giraffes, the lions, the birthday party – all winners in their view.

It turns out that Annabelle and I live only a few blocks from each other, so we have since been able to visit kinders, go to conferences, and have a book launch together, which has been very special.



Gabrielle at the launch of *Jack's Best Day Ever* in April.

On your Instagram you've written, 'Diversity in books has the opportunity to generate rich, meaningful conversations at home and school for everyone.'

What sort of rich conversations are you hoping your book will create in homes and schools?

Even in our home this book has generated the most beautiful 'aha' moments. For years, Jack's younger sibling has known there is a difference between her and her brother, but has not understood why. Largely because we treat everyone the same at home.

The moment she finished reading the book, it created a platform for her to be able to ask us questions and better understand why her brother does certain things.

The book has been written in a way that doesn't say what disabilities the two main characters have. Instead, it shows the type of things that Jack does and why (for example, flapping his hands and covering his ears). That way readers can just enjoy it as a fun story, or they can choose to ask why Jack is doing certain things.

What role do you think school libraries play in making school a safer place for neurodiverse children?

School libraries are the heart of any school. They often provide a safe, quiet and welcoming space for all members of the school community to come and relax. Whether that be quiet reading, group time, or Lego club. It's a place for everyone to feel welcome and supported to be themselves.

School libraries are often a bit of a haven for neurodiverse children. The playground can be extremely noisy and is a difficult space to navigate socially. It is so important for them to have somewhere for some quiet downtime where they are able to regulate themselves.

Libraries can offer a wide range of books that are representative of the entire diverse community. When all children see versions of themselves in books it can make them feel seen, loved and accepted.

Are there any ways you've seen library staff make a difference in a neurodiverse child's life?

The librarian at Jack's specialist school has been extremely supportive of this book. Jack was so proud when he came home one day and said that she loved it so much that she was ordering ten copies! One for each of their classrooms plus the library.

Jack attends two schools and both principals have also been incredible advocates for the book.

St Paul's principal, Timothy Hemphill, describes the book as 'a beautiful tribute to Jack'.

'Jack is one of the real characters at St Paul's; a born conversationalist. Interacting with Jack is always a joy for me and for everyone around him. St Paul's is fully committed to celebrating diversity and differences with respect, kindness and fun and Gabrielle's book joyfully does the same. I have no doubt that many children and families will fall in love with this story.'

Gabrielle Bassett
Author

ELR: big win for Aussie authors

Have you ever thought about how lucky

Australian schoolchildren are to have access to Australian-made content in their school libraries?

One copy of an Australian-made book may have been purchased for your school library and can now be borrowed hundreds of times. Yet, the author was only paid once.

The Australian Government's Educational Lending Right (ELR) scheme ensures Australian creators and publishers receive compensation for the free use of their books in Australian libraries. Education Services Australia has been responsible for managing this scheme in school libraries since 2000. Each year, we work with a sample of school libraries across the country to gather a count of specific Australian book titles, collating the results, and providing the Australian Government with a calculation of how many copies of those specific titles there are in Australian schools.

Although school libraries have had a wide array of digital resources available for years, our counts have only considered physical books. For the past few years, groups such as the Australian Society of Authors and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) have been lobbying the government to make a change. In January, their hard work came to fruition, with an announcement that the scheme would be expanded to include ebooks and audiobooks, increasing the budget for the scheme by a further \$12.9 million over the next four years.

We interviewed Trish Hepworth, ALIA's Director of Policy & Education, about the significance of Educational Lending Rights and its impact on Australian authors: *Librarians and library staff, authors and publishers all worked together to secure this important extension to lending rights. Most people don't realise that when school libraries are choosing Australian books, then Australian authors and publishers receive a payment from the Australian Government. This payment recognises the huge value there is for Australian students when they can read Australian stories or immerse themselves in Australian non-fiction. For many authors the regular payments from lending rights are the difference between being able to afford to write and not being able to. Or if you look at*



it another way, when school library staff are adding Australian books, in physical, ebook and audiobook formats, to their collection, they are supporting the next lot of Australian books to be produced and published.

Many school libraries have had ebook and audiobook content available to students for many years, and certainly those formats saw a substantial increase during Covid. This extension looks to the reality of this, and also the reality of being an author at the moment – very few of whom can survive on income just from their writing. Lending rights is one way the Australian community can financially support authors. It's also a way that authors know that the community loves their work, every year when a lending rights payment is made, and author knows that people are reading their books.

During term 3, we will be inviting a sample selection of schools across Australia to participate in ELR's *Great Aussie Book Count*. If you receive an invitation to participate, please take the time to read and discuss with your school principal. For most schools, the process is simple: just export the library data from your library management system (LMS) and send the results to our team via email.

The *Great Aussie Book Count* resources, including a fun colouring page for students, can be found on the [ESA website](#). The [Australian Lending Right Schemes](#) website provides details on how the ELR supports book creators.

If your school is selected to participate in the 2023 *Great Aussie Book Count*, we hope you'll take part and help us support Australian book creators so they can continue to do what they do best: make great books!



Amanda Shay
Senior Manager,
Subscription Services
Education Services Australia

Education Services Australia has been delivering the Educational Lending Right to school libraries since 2000. The Subscription Services support team are here to assist LMS vendors and school library staff throughout terms 3 and 4 to collect book count data for ELR. If you have questions or need assistance, the team are just an email away elr@esa.edu.au.

SCIS INTERVIEWS TEACHER LIBRARIAN AWARD WINNER MEGAN DALEY

SCIS talks to Megan Daley about her career in libraries, her bestselling book *Raising Readers*, and her popular website and podcast.

Congratulations on winning the ASLA Teacher Librarian Award. Can you talk to us a little about what it is that drew you to becoming a teacher librarian?

I was originally an early childhood teacher, so my first degree was a Bachelor of Education in early childhood. I did that always with the knowledge that I wanted to become a teacher librarian. My mother is a teacher librarian, and I spent a lot of my teenage years watching her do her teacher librarian degree, and then doing kind of unofficial work experience or volunteering as a child in her school libraries. When I was at uni, I would do her Book Week displays with her and I would download SCIS records for her – SCIS has actually always been a part of my life. But I guess it was my mother who inspired me to be a teacher librarian and showed me that there was that pathway.

So, after completing my early childhood degree, I dove straight into pursuing a graduate diploma to become a teacher librarian. Here's the thing though – at that time, you weren't usually allowed to do it without five years of teaching experience under your belt. To prove that I was capable, I had to write a special academic essay. They put me on a billboard at the university as the youngest teacher librarian ever, which was hilarious because now I'm one of the older teacher librarians.

On your website you say, 'the worth of a teacher librarian is not easily quantifiable'. Can you tell us a bit more about what you mean by that?

It's very difficult to collect data on the value of what a teacher librarian does, in terms of inspiring a love of recreational reading and supporting classroom teachers to teach information fluency.

Much of what we do as teacher librarians is not necessarily seen by parents or by school administrators and the wider community. Those of us who work in the industry intimately understand the value and the importance of the work of school library staff. But for those outside of our circles, I think we do need to collect data – as much as numbers and data aren't my thing.

I think it's very important that we have evidence and data to show and talk loudly about our worth. There are a few academics in that space, like Margaret Merga and Dr Mel Green. Mel Green recently wrote a PhD collecting evidence around the importance of imbuing a love of recreational reading in young children. It followed myself and other librarians, documenting the way we did that. I think collecting evidence like that, which supports our impact, is really important. Teacher librarians don't exist in NAPLAN data explicitly, but we are actually there in a different way. We are in a lot of the NAPLAN data, but you don't necessarily see the teacher librarian as being the one that has improved the NAPLAN data. I would argue, anecdotally and through the work I've done with people like Dr Mel Green, that the teacher librarian



is very much in that NAPLAN data. I want to see other people unpacking and recognising what we've added to that space.

Your book *Raising readers* has become a bestseller. What do you think it was about the book that struck a chord with parents and educators?

I actually did an event last night at an independent bookstore in Brisbane and they were interviewing me about *Raising readers*. I was really interested that this bookshop owner's copy was just covered in post-it notes, and he'd highlighted parts in it. That was really gratifying to see how much he thought of it. He spoke really warmly about the book and said it was so easy to read and easy to access.

I had this hope that I could distill my knowledge and experience as a teacher librarian into a book that parents and educators could read, almost as effortlessly as flipping through a magazine. I didn't want it to be heavy in tone. I didn't want to do a PhD. I had thought about doing a PhD myself, looking at early

reading development, but I wanted it to be very accessible.

I think that it's struck a chord because it's written in a way that's accessible. It's chatty, and it touches on a number of pain points. For parents asking how they can support their child in their reading development, there's not a lot of books out there that are written by people in the actual field of cultivating young readers. The fact that it's written by a teacher librarian and is accessible is what I think made it a success.

You run a prolific website and podcast for parents and educators, which serves as a wonderful resource on children's literature. Can you tell us a bit about what's driven the development of these resources?

It's sort of developed organically to meet the way people consume multimedia these days. I think [my website](https://childrensbooksdaily.com/your-kids-next-read) (https://childrensbooksdaily.com/your-kids-next-read) is there as a static resource for people who want to find reviews and teachers notes and lists of books. [The podcast](https://childrensbooksdaily.com/podcast) (https://childrensbooksdaily.com/podcast) is an audio version of a lot of what happens on my website, but it's also more of a conversation. It's an exchange of ideas between myself and Allison Tait.

“ I think it's very important that we have evidence and data to show and talk loudly about our worth. ”

We talk about things, we debate things, and so it's more you are invited into our space and we're having a conversation with our listeners. The podcast has gone really well because people have really resonated with hearing us just talking.

I guess my social media is sort of similar. It's like it's a conversation and it's a window into my life and how I run it and all of the chaos and business of my life. People seem to enjoy that sense of personal connection as a way of getting information.

The idea of literacy seems to be broadening to include all types of digital media, as well as information fluency. How do you think this might affect the way teacher librarians need to teach going forward?

Qualified teacher librarians and really good school library staff have always taught information fluency and information literacy.

I feel like we haven't explained as clearly as we could how we go about achieving that and why it's so important. Information fluency is all about a young person's ability to engage with information across various platforms and then to really think critically and make effective use of that information. That is essentially what teacher librarians have always taught.

I know there's an information fluency framework for libraries

in NSW. Having an Australia-wide information fluency framework would certainly help teacher librarians to better articulate how they can work alongside teachers and the Australian Curriculum to support information fluency and students of all ages.

How do you see the role of the school library changing over the next decade?

So long as we can remain loud and articulate what we do, and so long as policy change happens, then I think it will be a case of teacher librarians continuing to share their positive and curious attitude towards lifelong learning with young people.

I think what teacher librarians have done – and will do in the future – is be collectors of knowledge and hubs of school communities and sharers of resources. They're that place in a school that can be part of the wellbeing and also part of the academic side.

To me they are the very heart of a positive and thriving school community, and will continue to be in the future so long as our role is recognised and valued, and money continues to be put aside for the role of the school library.

What advice can you offer library staff around the country who are struggling with stagnating or diminishing resources with which to run their libraries? How can they work to ensure the library remains an integral part of their school?

I think that we have to market ourselves to our school community and our wider community. We need to stand up and tell our school communities what we are doing through newsletters, through actively being a part of school social media, through getting out there and being involved in school.

I've seen great results when you get parents on side. When you go to your parents' association at your school and say, 'we would really like to be able to buy 2,000 decodable readers because I want to achieve these outcomes', there are very few parents who will argue.

I had a very good friend who worked with the school's parents' association and ended up getting a full-time teacher librarian in a school that didn't previously have one. Parents have a lot more of a voice these days in schools. When you involve the parent voice in the debates and when a parent can see the value and the worth of a school library, I think that you can start to see some really significant monetary changes happen.

It's also about dealing with your school management and not just being angry. I could be angry about the fact that I've been justifying my job for 20 years, but I choose not to be. I choose to look at it as though I've had to advocate for my job for my entire career. But what a privilege it is to be able to advocate for such an amazing job. And I feel very passionately that it's worth it. It's about being a loud and proud advocate for what you do in your school library.

Megan Daley

Teacher Librarian and Author
Queensland

THE TEACHER LIBRARIAN AND CHATGPT

Stephanie Strachan explores how librarians can act as information literacy experts in the world of ChatGPT.

At the end of last term, an exasperated member of staff pleaded with me: how can we stop students cheating in assessments using ChatGPT and similar AI tools?

Sadly, I was not able to offer any quick fix. In fact, from what I can gather, these new technologies have turned the world of academic writing on its head and companies like Microsoft and Google are busily working on making AI text generation more and more pervasive. After the invention of the internet itself, this is the next biggest tech development of our time and the implications for educators are huge. In short, we need to equip both students and teachers with the 'skills that will be needed in an AI-dominated landscape' (Allen & West, 2018).

Universities all over the globe are currently struggling with how to cope. A major concern is that ChatGPT is a threat to traditional methods of assessment – namely the essay (Rudolph, Tan & Tan, 2023). Educational institutions are being asked to 're-imagine' how to assess, and to think of ways to incorporate these technologies into a 're-engineered' curriculum (*Learning Innovation: The Teaching and Learning Podcast*, 2023). One thing that they do agree upon, however, is that there is no way of detecting plagiarism with these AI text generators and

that banning AI use is futile. Even if there was a way to identify plagiarism, the amount of time required for educators to cross-check individual student responses would be prohibitive.

So, what can we do right now in our secondary school context as these technologies continue to develop at lightning speed?

Enter your friendly teacher librarian!

As the information literacy experts and critical thinking skill builders in our schools, we will be required to play a significant role in building student skillsets and supporting teachers in adapting to these new technologies. Our staff will be looking to us for guidance in an education landscape where AI is ubiquitous.

Citing ChatGPT

Let's start with the basics. Whether we approve or not, students will be using this technology. As a matter of academic integrity, it is in everyone's best interests to encourage students to 'make ethical decisions in real-life contexts when undertaking research, working collaboratively and using digital technologies' (*Learning across the Curriculum*, 2023). When students do use AI-generated text in their work (and they will), we need to remove any judgement and explicitly instruct them on how to present and cite this material.



Stephanie Strachan's school library in Newcastle.

According to Timothy McAdoo of the American Psychological Association (APA), the parameters and guidelines around how to reference AI text are still being debated and yet to be finalised. In the meantime, he argues that it is best to encourage students to be honest and add their AI-produced text in full as an appendix to their assignment (*How to Cite ChatGPT*, 2023). It's important for students to attach the exact text that was generated because no two responses in ChatGPT are the same (even if the exact same prompt is replicated).

As with any other source, the AI-produced text will also need to be correctly referenced. When creating an in-text quotation, APA recommends crediting the **algorithm** with the reference because there are no human authors involved, for example: (OpenAI, 2023).

A bibliographic reference requires more detail and would look like this:

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Apr 20 version) [Large language model]. <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

Supporting staff

Some would argue that anything that pushes us to re-examine our own pedagogical practice is a good thing. But given the current level of teacher shortages, fatigue, burnout and low morale, how can classroom teachers be expected to dramatically change the way they assess to keep up with the AI revolution?

Teachers will always need our support and now is the perfect time for teacher librarians to step up in our role as expert leaders within the school. We need to be advocating on behalf of our colleagues for quality professional development in this area. Teachers need planning time to ensure the effective integration of information literacy skills that incorporate AI technologies. We also need to keep up to date and share current research on AI tools and their impact on teaching and learning.

Assessment and learning

Because of AI, the days of assigning take-home summative extended response assessments are limited. We need to collaborate with staff to design authentic assessments that reflect on experiential learning opportunities and growth in student critical thinking skills. Faculties need to avoid assessments that are so formulaic that it would be difficult to ascertain if a person or chatbot wrote the text. We also need to give students opportunities to demonstrate their learning in class and in other ways – verbally or by means of creative presentations.

As staff become more familiar with these technologies and realise that they are here to stay, they might be encouraged to incorporate tools like ChatGPT into their lesson plans and assessments. For example, students could be asked to supply a 'first draft' using AI. They might then be asked to improve upon that answer manually, identifying what the AI overlooked or misrepresented. AI could also be used as a scaffolding tool. Students might be instructed on how to use appropriate prompts to create a rough outline for an extended response which could be completed in class.

Tools like ChatGPT might also be used by students to identify key ideas in lengthy articles. By way of analysis, students might

use different AI services to see if there are any differences in what the AI tools generate as the most salient points of the article. They could then try to reconcile and justify why the tools came up with different answers.

In other words, we need our students to see that AI is merely a tool to assist them in their learning. AI will never be a substitute for real learning.

A powerful tool for teachers

AI offers educators astounding opportunities, and anything that could potentially reduce teacher workload is worth experimenting with. Indeed, many teachers are already using AI tools, Grammarly being a good example. A growing number of teachers are also embracing AI as a means of reducing their workload. AI is being used more and more by educators to assist them in their day-to-day practice. They are generating programmes, lesson plans and assessment tasks, rubrics and analogies.

ChatGPT can also be used by teachers to level the playing field for students from non-English speaking backgrounds and can even be used to design student individual education plans (IEPs). Teachers are using it to analyse trends, set professional goals and help their students overcome writer's block.

ChatGPT provides teacher librarians with a fresh opportunity to highlight our role as information specialists and curriculum leaders. We realise that digital and information literacy is of critical importance. We are therefore perfectly positioned to help guide and support our school communities as they adapt to this new wave of technology and the challenges and opportunities that arise.

References

For a full list of references, please see the online version of this article scisdata.com/connections.

Stephanie Strachan

Teacher librarian
St Pius X High School, Newcastle

As an educator with over 20 years of experience as a teacher librarian, I enjoy empowering students to engage critically with the information landscape. I firmly believe that powerful libraries make powerful learners.

INTRODUCING THE DANZ CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD

Author Kate Foster writes about a new children's book award celebrating diversity.

Understanding the value of inviting and listening to a variety of voices is considered the ultimate path to true acceptance. Slowly but surely, more books are being published which shine a light on diverse characters and communities. Furthermore, educators are recognising the importance of adding these books to their collections. It is not a privilege, but a right for children to see themselves and others reflected in the literature they consume.

Are we recommending the right diverse books?

This isn't a new question, but one we continue to hear time and again. No-one can deny the power of a book read at the right time, nor the science behind how reading builds empathy. Therefore, the responsibility of everyone involved in creating books is huge and shouldn't be underestimated. With that said, there are books labelled 'diverse' on recommended reading lists that haven't necessarily been written sensitively nor even accurately.

There are wonderful books by authors who've researched in detail and written sensitively about characters and settings outside of their own personal 'lived experience'. Yet there are many more which haven't. This can result in books with outdated depictions of marginalised people, inaccurate and offensive stereotypes, harmful tropes, and tokenised minorities, resulting in stories told – and lives observed – from the outside looking in.

Does this matter? Does anyone have the right to police what others write? That's an ongoing, worldwide, and often heated debate, prompting a range of opinions.

“ DANZ invites children's books... which push boundaries, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate diverse and marginalised people and communities. ”

How do we assess the representation on offer?

Educators are being encouraged to build booklists for their students that represent all areas of diversity. We need only refer to *Connections* issues 122 and 125 to find guidelines on how to assess what makes a good diverse book, and the red flags to look out for. Undoubtedly, these are helpful resources. However, when assessing books with diverse characters whose identities we don't share, can we really know if the representation is accurate?

The best people to tell diverse stories are those who have direct, personal experience of living that life. If more bookshelf space was filled with diverse stories by diverse people, perhaps

this entire conversation wouldn't need to be had. Maybe those diverse characters could embark on exciting adventures rather than always teaching others about their trauma, struggles and history.

Book awards

To get started on this diverse booklist curation, many educators turn to books on recommended and award lists. In other words, books that have already been handed a seal of approval. Can these books be trusted to offer fair representation? Often, but not always, and through no fault of anyone involved.

Across the ocean, there are several established awards that recognise and celebrate diversity: The Jhalak Prize, The Diverse Book Awards, The Adrienne Prize and The Little Rebel Children's Book Awards in the UK; and The Walter Awards in the US. With Australia and New Zealand being so diverse, it's surprising that a similar award recognising diversity hasn't already existed here – until now.

Diversity in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand Children's Book Award (DANZ)

The DANZ aims to be an active solution. Its goal is to fill this void in an inclusive and positive way. It will recognise and celebrate diverse fiction, where the diversity portrayed is relevant and important to the story and character.

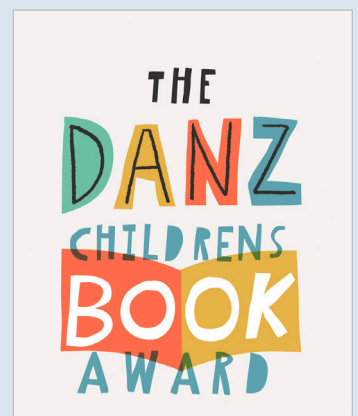
Open for nominations in the second half of 2023, the DANZ award invites children's books published in Australia or New Zealand in 2022 and 2023 – specifically, books which push boundaries, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate diverse and marginalised people and communities. Diversity can include disability, culture, class, LGBTQI+, race and religion.

The criteria are open to interpretation, but the work entered must be sensitively and authentically written. It must be free from offensive, inaccurate and harmful tropes and representation. The judging process will be thorough and critical in this regard. Above all, the award will look for works that are fresh and inclusive, and celebrate minority voices.

More than an award

Martha Itzcovitz, President of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA), says: 'ASLA is thrilled to be a supporting partner of the DANZ Awards. We're particularly excited as this will not only be an award but also a resource for school libraries to choose books with positive representation.'

The judging process aims to highlight books offering the very best and most accurate representation of marginalised and



minority people. Younger judges will also seek out entertaining and appealing stories.

The winning creators will, of course, be awarded, but in the process the DANZ will also provide a valuable aid for every librarian, teacher, bookseller and carer, through the production and distribution of a brochure showcasing each long-listed title. In 2024, picture books, chapter books and middle-grade titles, all of which will have gone through rigorous judging, will be highlighted. Each listing will include content and theme tags, back cover copy, cover image, ISBNs, plus a judge's quote. This brochure will be key in spreading the word about the many wonderful – and often overlooked – books we should be reading.

President of the School Library Association of New Zealand and Aotearoa (SLANZA), Sasha Eastwood, states: 'School libraries are safe spaces, where our collections should build empathy and understanding. As a resource, DANZ will be so important for libraries to ensure we're reflecting the diverse needs of our communities.'

Looking to the future

The DANZ doesn't look to replace or compete with other awards. It is simply born to complement them, to be a celebration of and a way to lift marginalised voices. It aims to encourage new creatives from underrepresented backgrounds to tell their stories in the way they want to. From its foundations up, the DANZ believes in approaching all it does respectfully, and will utilise sensitivity readers, a Book Nomination Panel, and a Children's Judging Panel made up of a diverse group of young readers.

The DANZ has been given a wonderful kickstart, with support and funding from ASLA and SLANZA. It is driven by a small committee of passionate and dedicated people. Though many essential goals have already been met, the award is currently seeking more funding, more sponsorship and more support. With many more hands on-deck, a greater number of voices will be heard – and experiences shared. Diversity is more than just a label.

If you would like to learn more about the DANZ, how to be involved, or find out about sponsorship, visit the website at www.thedanzchildrensbookaward.com or email Kate at thedanzchildrensbookaward@gmail.com.



Kate Foster
Author

Kate Foster is an autistic children's author living in Queensland with her family and secondhand dogs. She is the creator of Author Pen Pals, a new initiative connecting Australian authors with children in rural, remote and disadvantaged schools. She is passionate about teaching a wider understanding of autism via a positive approach. She can be found at www.kfosterbooks.com and on Twitter/Instagram @kfosterauthor.

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: NORTHCOTE HIGH SCHOOL

**SCIS speaks to Richard Smallcombe
about his library at Northcote High School,
which is currently being rebuilt.**

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

I'm the library coordinator at Northcote High School. It is structured in two parts. There's helping students find books, checking books out, general day-to-day, and then there's also looking after the library budget, collection development, liaising with staff about what we have in the collection and what other services we can provide to them and any programme support that we have here in the library. We have a team of three here, me and two library technicians. Because it's a small team, everybody does a bit of everything.

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

I think the most rewarding for me is building connections with the students. We run a library assist programme where students can learn to work within the library space. We teach them how to use our library management system and they work behind the desk. They loan books out to students, they learn how to use the catalogue so they can find books, they learn how to use the photocopiers and print, which they then show other students.

Normally, at the start of the year, we do a call out for the library assist programme. We get a lot of Year 7s come in and they join the programme because they're new to the school. They don't know a lot of people so it's a way for them to connect with the library staff and connect with other students within that space as well. By the end of the year a lot of them become more confident at school and make friends, which is rewarding to watch. They get a certificate at the end of the year with all the all the tasks and skills that they've learnt, which they can put on the resume.

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

There are two areas that answer this. The first is providing up-to-date and accurate resources for students and staff just for their study needs. We provide books and databases, but we also create library guides, which point the students towards resources in our catalogue that support their learning, so they're not just searching the internet for resources.

We also make sure that we can provide a safe and inviting space for students. We're open and welcoming to all students so they can feel that they can come in and just use the place as a hangout. We provide board games and activities like that

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during lunchtime and recess. At lunchtime, our library is usually full of students playing games.

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

Our biggest challenge at the moment is our non-fiction collection – it’s quite old. Earlier in the year I put a presentation to the executive team at the school about getting some extra funding to improve our collection. Luckily, that was provided. So now we’ve extra funding to make sure that we can update our non-fiction collection. The average age of a book was 20 years old, which means we’re not providing up-to-date information for students. So we’re in the process of updating our collection and we have to do quite a heavy weeding of the collection.

It takes a lot of time, but because we’re in a temporary location for two years I thought it was a perfect opportunity to do all this work. Then, when we move into the new location, we’ve got a new up-to-date collection that will fit within the new space as well.

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

Students do a wider reading lesson every two weeks here in the library. So that’s basically a period where they come in and the expectation is they sit down and find a book and read. We’ve also just finished genrefying our fiction collection from A–Z, which has helped to make the collection a bit more accessible.

I understand why some library staff are a bit reluctant to genrefy. Librarians are trained to make sure things are catalogued in a certain way. But that’s not actually how a lot of students are going to be thinking about accessing the books. So we have to find ways to make searching the library more relevant to them. Sometimes you have to move away from the traditional library expectations to do that.

How do you promote an interest in STEM/STEAM areas in your school? Are there any challenges in doing so?

This comes back to also making sure that we have an up-to-date collection. I’m working closely with the different faculties to make sure that they’ve provided us with lists of titles that they think will be relevant



The library at Northcote High School.

for certain subjects. In the new library we’re going to have resources that are relevant for subjects, as well as resources around those subjects to support wider reading. We think broadening resources to support deeper learning brings more value to students.

When we have our new building, it’s going to include two floors of science labs, which will bring a more modern feel to the library space and make it easier to create more engagement.

How do you encourage students to make use of the library when you’re in a temporary space?

We’re lucky here – the hall we’re currently in is quite a decent space. We’ve actually set it up so it feels like a normal library space. There’s a little less seating space, but it’s fully carpeted and our collection fits in quite well. It feels a bit like a permanent space so we’re pretty lucky that way.

I think the biggest thing about making sure that students want to use the library is making sure we’re providing a welcoming space for students. It does get a little bit noisy within the temporary library space, so there’s always that challenge of balancing wanting kids to be in here using the space, using the board games versus the students that want to come in and do a bit of study or sit down to read. That’s the biggest challenge we have now because we are in a smaller space, getting out of each other’s way because it’s a bit more crowded.

What is your favourite thing about SCIS?

I think the best thing about SCIS is that it’s so easy to get the records. We’ve integrated our library management system with SCIS, so it makes it so simple to catalogue everything. In my previous roles, I hadn’t done much cataloguing at all, but using SCIS made it very easy.

What would you like to see SCIS do more of?

A couple of the SCIS team came to the school a few weeks ago and showed us a little more about what SCIS can do for us, which was really helpful! I’ve also done a few different webinars and training sessions, which are also great.



Richard Smallcombe
Library Coordinator
Northcote High School

Richard Smallcombe has worked in a school library for the last two years, before joining Northcote High School he worked for Darebin Libraries for twenty years in a range of customer service roles, the last 15 as a Customer Service Team Leader.