

CONNECTIONS

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Adding to the local evidence base: developing and implementing a study on classroom teacher and teacher librarian collaboration



The importance of evidence-based practice

From the early 2000s onward, Ross Todd promoted the idea to teacher librarians that just embodying good practice is not enough – there is a need to provide evidence about the difference the teacher librarian's practice makes to student learning. Todd noted that evidence-based practice is fundamental to the survival of the role of the teacher librarian into the future: 'evidence-based practice is accountable practice' (Todd, 2002, p. 34). As teacher librarians, we know we are doing amazing things in our practice, but there is an essential need for evidence to demonstrate this to others.

In 2010, Hay and Todd made recommendations about the essential elements for future libraries, including,

for teacher librarians, 'Developing capacity as an evidence-based practitioner' (Hay & Todd, 2010). They argue that to create more credibility for the teacher librarian role, there needs to be evidence and data to support claims regarding impact and improvement in student outcomes that occur when teachers collaborate with a teacher librarian.

Anecdotal observations of effective practice

In 2022, I was a teacher librarian in two small schools. In School A, the model was collaborative teaching with the class teacher with lessons of 60 to 90 minutes each week, while School B had shorter lessons with just me, as teacher librarian, working with the class for approximately

continued page 4

IN THIS ISSUE

Adding to the local evidence base: Developing and implementing a study on classroom teacher and teacher librarian collaboration	1
Website + app reviews	6
School Library Spotlight: Christian College Geelong	8
How to spot a plagiarised work	10
A renewed Scootle	11
Digital subscriptions, your library management system and SCIS	12
Educational Lending Rights: Supporting Australian stories in school libraries	14
SCIS is more	15
SCIS on the road: Where to find us in Term 2	16

Connections

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40 to 45 minutes weekly. Comparing these two different styles, I noticed a vast difference in the depth of content I was able to effectively teach, as well as the time I had available to support students to learn how to select books they might enjoy reading and borrowing. It is important for students to be able to know how to select books and to know what they enjoy reading given that ‘reading for pleasure supports student wellbeing’ (Merga, 2022, p. 96).

“ Within Australia, there have been numerous discussions, but few studies on the outcomes of collaboration between the teacher librarian and classroom teacher. ”

Anecdotally, I found the quality of the teaching more effective when the longer collaborative/team-teaching model was used, and there was time available to support students to select books they would enjoy reading. Within these lessons it was possible to support class teachers by integrating instruction to align with an area of the curriculum that they were teaching in class (Montiel-Overall, 2005). As this observation was anecdotal and purely my own thoughts, I began to explore how I could collect evidence.

Doing my own research

On further examination of the literature about collaborative teaching with the teacher librarian, I found a variety of articles about this topic, indicating this is not a new topic but rather a topic that has been actively in discussion for over 25 years. I read numerous research articles and the content relevance, despite being 20 to 25 years old, was extremely topical in the teacher librarian world today. Montiel-Overall’s 2005 article about collaboration in libraries reads as though it was written today. However, much of the research and articles are international, with little evidence relating to the Australian context. This highlighted the need for research within Australia about the benefits for both teachers and students when collaborating with the teacher

librarian. As Todd (2003) has discussed, local research has a greater impact than research conducted overseas. This reinforced the need to undertake my own research to show evidence of effective practice.

Within Australia, there have been numerous discussions, but few studies on the outcomes of collaboration between the teacher librarian and classroom teacher. In 2005 and again in 2006, Hay wrote about the teacher librarian supporting students to learn by providing access to current resources and technologies as well as working with students to develop information literacy. Research in Queensland by Hughes (2013) provided Australian data about collaborating with the teacher librarian. I realised my project could contribute to filling the gap with local data to support the impact of the teacher librarian.

Getting set up

Initially, to provide data to support my anecdotal observations about the benefits of classroom teacher and teacher librarian cooperative teaching, I explored the idea of a comparative study between my two schools. However, in October 2022, the principal at School B asked me if I was happy to change to a collaborative team-teaching model for library in 2023. I was excited by the prospect of changing to longer lessons alongside the classroom teacher. I then

considered how I could use this change to inform practice and to see what, if anything, resulted from the change.

I created a research proposal that I shared with Carmel Grimmett, Library Coordinator at the NSW Department of Education. I also applied for, and received, the Ross Todd Research Grant from the School Library Association of NSW (SLANSW). The proposal described a structure for my research, which included a mixed methods approach based on questionnaires including both quantitative and qualitative questions.

“Collaborating with the teacher librarian empowers teachers and students by enhancing their knowledge and skill sets.”

School B is a K–6 school of around 135 students within six classes. This school has an ICSEA value of 991, which has been stable for the last 5 years. I chose to start collecting research at School B, given the change to the way we were conducting library sessions. This would allow me the opportunity to assess the effects, both positive and negative, this change in library sessions may have.

To minimise the burden on teaching staff, the questionnaires would be completed at the start of the year, middle of the year, and at the end of the year – preferably during a library lesson. Another benefit of using the questionnaires was that they could be completed at the correct times, but the data analysis could be undertaken later when time was available. Devising a project structure that can be implemented within the constraints of the busy teacher librarian role is one key to successfully engaging in evidence-based practice.

Following through

During 2023, I ran the project at School B as described above and began the first stage of data analysis in 2024. I found that my initial focus about the impact this change in teaching would have on students' learning was only a part of the results. This led to me formulate the following as my Statement of Claim: Collaborating with the teacher librarian empowers teachers and students by enhancing their knowledge and skill sets.

The resulting dataset was quite large and to effectively analyse and present the findings would be a multistage process. Initially, the data showed there was a positive impact on students, as I had hoped for, but there was even more of an impact for the teachers. Even in this first stage of analysis, the data provided me with information on how to support and inform future practice by highlighting what was working well. I have achieved my goal of successfully collecting evidence to inform my practice. And, through this article and a more formal writeup of stage 1 of this project, which I plan to publish later this year, I also hope to achieve a contribution to evidence-based practice in Australian school libraries in the spirit of Dr Ross J. Todd.

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Vicki Bennett

Teacher Librarian
Nowra Hill Public School and
Cambewarra Public School

Vicki Bennett is a qualified teacher librarian who has worked in two small primary schools in the Shoalhaven area since 2018. Prior to that, she spent 6 years as a classroom teacher. She has been a member of SLANSW since 2018 and a member of the SLANSW Management Committee since 2020. Vicki is currently the Treasurer of SLANSW and the president for the Shoalhaven Teacher Librarian Network. She is currently undertaking action research about collaborative teaching with teacher librarians and classroom teachers in schools. Vicki also presents to preservice teachers on the role of the teacher librarian in schools.

WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

With this issue of *Connections*, we mark a quiet but meaningful milestone: the final website and app reviews article by Nigel Paull. No need to worry! SCIS will continue to bring you website and app reviews in future editions.

Nigel first wrote for *Connections* on becoming its editor in 1998, a time when dial-up modems still warbled like a cyborg learning to yodel and the idea of curating educational websites was a somewhat novel proposition. Since then, he has written reviews for countless websites (and later, apps) bringing both discernment and concision to the task of guiding school library staff through an ever-expanding digital landscape.

Across nearly three decades, Nigel has helped SCIS build an immense and trusted collection of catalogue records for high-quality digital resources. His reviews have

consistently balanced clarity with care, and helped educators discover tools that support teaching, engage students and broaden access to information. It's hard to overstate how much his contributions have shaped and added value to SCIS.

From all of us at SCIS, thank you, Nigel, for your insight, your voice and your long-standing commitment to the school library profession. We wish you all the very best.



Use the QR code to download the app or navigate to the website. Use the SCIS number to find the catalogue record.

AUSTRALIAN MIGRATION

www.library.gov.au/learn/digital-classroom/australian-migration

The National Library of Australia has developed a Year 6 module about Australia's migration history, from the first colonies to the present day. The resource is aligned with the Australian curriculum: Humanities and Social Science.

SCIS no: 5530433

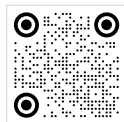


AARON BLABEY

www.aaronblabey.com

Aaron Blabey is the Australian author/illustrator of phenomenally successful books including *Pig the pug*, *Thelma the unicorn* and *The bad guys*. His website offers students an insight into his background and creative processes.

SCIS no: 5530683

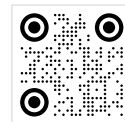


BOUNCY BALLS

www.bouncyballs.org

This innovative website uses animated bouncing balls to monitor classroom noise levels. The balls bounce higher as the noise level increases.

SCIS no: 5530744

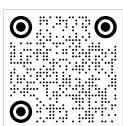


ENGINEERING

www.sciencelearn.org.nz/topics/engineering

Several fields of engineering are investigated in this subsection of the NZ Science Learning Hub. Formats include articles, video and interactive media.

SCIS no: 5530443



DUKE OF ED: #WORLD READY

www.dukeofed.com.au

For more than 60 years, the Duke of Edinburgh Award has offered students a pathway to receive an internationally recognised certificate through participating in exciting and challenging experiences.

SCIS no: 1311687

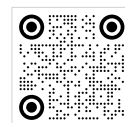


LABXCHANGE

www.labxchange.org

Harvard University, in conjunction with 175 other institutions, has created an immense database of free science content. Searchable by subject, media and year level (from Year 5 to Year 12 and beyond).

SCIS no: 5530675



EARLY LEARNING LANGUAGES AUSTRALIA (ELLA) LANGUAGE APPS

www.ella.edu.au/explore-apps

Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) is a free language learning program for preschoolers that encourages students to learn one of 13 languages via its play-based apps.

SCIS no: 1966403



TOWARDS TRUTH

www.towardstruth.org.au

Secondary teachers of law will find background information regarding 'how laws and policies have impacted the lives of First Nations people since 1788'. The laws and policies are themed around Country, Kinship, People, and Law and Culture.

SCIS no: 5530815

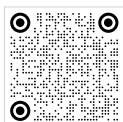


PE-ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS

www.sportaus.gov.au/learning-centre/learners/pe-essential-skills

The Australian Sports Commission and the AIS have designed a free online course to 'help [non-HPE] primary teachers build the skills and confidence to deliver purposeful and engaging PE'. The three-hour course may also contribute to professional accredited learning.

SCIS no: 5484402



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

www.education.gov.au/newsroom/articles/new-resources-available-teachers-australia-wide
<https://www.edresearch.edu.au/topics>

The Australian Government's Department of Education, in conjunction with AERO, have released a set of resources to help teachers enhance their skills in managing students' behaviour and minimising classroom disruptions.

SCIS no: 5530814

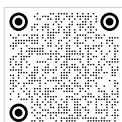


UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF AI

www.abc.net.au/education/students-and-their-teachers-must-understand-the-basics-of-ai/104872924

Teachers play a crucial role in preparing students for an AI-powered future. This ABC resource outlines the challenges students face, the digital divide, and how to foster critical literacy. An important resource for parents, too.

SCIS no: 5530736



STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA RESOURCES FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS

www.slv.vic.gov.au/learn/schools-teachers/secondaryresearch

The State Library of Victoria has developed a range of secondary school topics for teachers, utilising articles, databases, videos, research guides and professional learning material.

SCIS no: 5530689

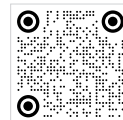


VISUAL ANATOMY LITE

apps.apple.com/au/app/visual-anatomy-lite/id523422151

This human anatomy and physiology app provides biology and PE/health teachers with an encompassing, interactive reference tool. This free version contains video, images, labels and descriptions.

SCIS no: 5530658

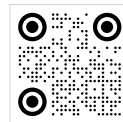


DARE MIGHTY THINGS

www.jpl.nasa.gov

Content on this comprehensive NASA website includes the solar system, life beyond Earth, robotics, and technology for use on Earth. The Education portal offers teachers a variety of related classroom activities.

SCIS no: 5484296



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

Nigel Paull
Teacher Librarian
North Coast, NSW

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: CHRISTIAN COLLEGE GEELONG

SCIS speaks to Kerrie Sirotich, a library technician supporting five campuses, about her role managing cataloguing and library systems, the importance of student engagement, and the evolving nature of school libraries in 2025.

What is your role in your school library?

We have five campuses, and I'm the only library technician across all of them. I work one day a week at each campus, following a set schedule. For instance, today is Wednesday, so I'm at our Junior School in Belmont. I'm the only one here on Wednesdays, and there are no classes in the library. That was a deliberate choice so I could be available if someone needs assistance, but my primary role is technical, as I manage our library management system (LMS).

I also coordinate stocktaking at the end of the year across all campuses, update our borrowers and other facets of our LMS, provide reports and statistics to staff as needed, and catalogue our ebook collection, among other things. There is a lot to manage, and SCIS is very important in that.

How do you manage that across five campuses?

Cataloguing is my priority at each campus, to ensure new resources are available for students and staff as soon as possible, so my role is quite focused. We have five campuses catering to years K–12. Because of this, the resources at each campus are quite different.

There is some overlap, of course, but each campus has its own way of doing things, usually due to the differing ages and needs of students. Having one person oversee the catalogue helps maintain consistency across all campuses while still allowing for those differences.

What are the most rewarding aspects of working in a school library?

I don't know, there's just something about books and kids. They'll walk past while I'm working and ask, 'Oh, can I have that?' and I have to say, 'No, not yet.' Or they'll be at the OPAC [Online Public Access Catalogue] searching for something and ask, 'When are we getting a new one?' and I'll say, 'Well, actually, I've got it in the pile.' 'Oh, can I have it?' 'Not yet.' That excitement, especially in such a digital world, is wonderful.

Kids still love books and magazines, and no matter what I'm doing in the catalogue,



Students reading in one of Christian College Geelong's libraries.

they're engaged. I love that interaction, seeing what they like, handling books, and being part of it all. And I love my colleagues – they're awesome, too. I have 11 of them across the 5 campuses: a combination of teacher librarians, librarians, library assistants and me.

What kind of challenges do you encounter at your school in engaging kids with reading?

I think the way our staff approach reading makes a big difference. We have Reading-for-Pleasure sessions for all students weekly up to Year 10, where they come into the library. Our librarians know the stock, they know the kids, they know what the kids like, and they buy books based on those interests. The kids know this, and they can request books if they'd like something purchased. They get really excited about it.

I mentioned to our principal not long ago that the OPAC is often the first research tool younger kids use. Whether they're searching for a book, an author or a series, just using that tool is great learning for them. They're gaining skills before they even have a book in their hands. Sometimes they're disappointed when a book they want is already checked out, but we show them how to reserve it, so they're constantly learning.

Library staff take the time to talk with kids about what they've read and what they might like next. They make recommendations and that personal touch really helps. And it allows the kids to drive their own reading choices, and watching

their tastes grow from year to year is a wonderful journey to be on.

Every campus is different, too. One of our campuses is down on the Surf Coast, so there's a strong interest in books about water and sports, whereas another campus is closer to farmland, and that can influence students' interests as well. At the senior school, a lot of reading is focused on research for schoolwork, so the way students engage with the library changes as they move through the years.

“Last year, for National Reconciliation Week, which had the theme *Now More Than Ever*, our middle and senior school students led an initiative to make and sell bracelets across all five campuses.”

Do you celebrate national occasions in your libraries? For example, National Reconciliation Week is coming up in Term 2. Is that something you celebrate?

Absolutely. I'm also a member of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working party, where I lead the Community and Events area. National Reconciliation Week is a major focus for us, and we ensure it is a key part of our agenda across all campuses.

Our RAP team includes students, staff, a college board member and parent representatives, and we are very active year-round in truth-telling and fostering reconciliation.

Last year, for National Reconciliation Week, which had the theme *Now More Than Ever*, our middle and senior school students led an initiative to make and sell bracelets across all five campuses. Everyone from kinder students to staff participated, and they were so popular that we realised we needed to do something similar every year, starting earlier and making even more. The proceeds were donated to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. There are activities every day of the week to enhance our students' learning and the ultimate goal of Reconciliation.

We are always highly active in reconciliation initiatives and committed to keeping them front and centre in our school.

What sort of other events does your library celebrate throughout the year and how do you do it?

We've recently celebrated Harmony Week at every campus, International Women's Day and Library Lovers' Day, and the library staff at each campus at the moment have done an exceptional job promoting Easter.

We make a point of recognising important events and special occasions throughout the year, particularly ones about diversity. There's always something happening, and we ensure the library is involved in highlighting and supporting these moments. It's an important part of what we do. Of course, these events are often linked into the curriculum, too, and the learning that happens across every subject at every year level.

What are some of the best lessons that you've learned across your career working in school libraries?

Oh, gee. I come from a time before we had computers, so I've learned you have to be patient when technology doesn't work the

way it should. We didn't have that issue back in the day.

One thing that hasn't changed is kids. They're the same now, towards the end of my career, as they were when I first started. Thankfully, books haven't been completely replaced by ebooks. While I love digital platforms and think they have their place, that tactile experience of holding a book is still important to our users and borrowers. Kids still get excited when they see a book they love, and that hasn't changed at all.

What has changed is how students learn. The internet has transformed research, and the way we teach research skills is very different from when I first started. We still teach bibliographies, referencing and all those core skills, but copyright has become a much bigger focus than it used to be. The job is constantly evolving, there's no way it ever gets boring or stuck in one place because things are always changing.

Another big change is how people perceive libraries. They used to be seen as quiet places where everyone had to shush and you couldn't really interact. Now, I think libraries, certainly ours, are much more user-friendly and welcoming. They're places where people come together, share their love of books, and engage in different activities. We have many clubs and programs that bring people in, and there's a real sense of community.

A lot has changed, but one thing remains the same – kids still love reading, and they still love libraries, and that's a wonderful thing.

Why do you think libraries are important in 2025, school libraries in particular?

Oh, look, apart from promoting reading for pleasure, school libraries play a crucial role in student learning. From kindergarten, our four-year-olds come in to borrow books and have a lesson once a week, and that continues all the way through to Year 10, where students spend dedicated time reading in the library each week.

That kind of focus on reading wouldn't necessarily happen elsewhere. Kids are so busy these days, and they're surrounded by technology, so the library offers a chance to slow down, relax, engage with books and see things from a different perspective.

Libraries also provide essential research skills. Our librarians spend a lot of time tailoring research guides specific to units of work in the curriculum at every year level. They work closely with learning leaders, heads of faculty and teachers to

develop resources that don't just leave students sifting through hundreds of Google search results. The research skills we teach through these guides are absolutely irreplaceable in supporting the curriculum and students' learning.

And libraries are just a great place to hang out. Let's face it.

“A lot has changed, but one thing remains the same – kids still love reading, and they still love libraries, and that's a wonderful thing.”

What are your favourite aspects of SCIS?

Favourite aspects of SCIS? Oh, look, I couldn't do without it.

I've been cataloguing since I got here this morning, and it makes my job so much easier. Everything is there for you. If a record is already in the database, I just add what I need. I love that. Of course, I make some changes, every library likes to individualise things for their own needs, but having the subjects, publishing information and descriptors already provided saves so much time. If I had to type all of that out myself, I'd be here forever.

It's also great to have *FYI* [the journal of School Library Association of Victoria] and *Connections* to keep us connected with what other people in the industry are doing. If I ever have a query about something in a MARC record, I can just contact SCIS, and someone always gets back to me very quickly with an answer.

It's a really good collaboration, and I just couldn't do without it. Honestly, who wants to spend hours a day flipping through five volumes of the Dewey system to get call numbers when SCIS just gives them to you? It's awesome.

HOW TO SPOT A PLAGIARISED WORK

SCIS cataloguer Laura Iseman explores the challenges of identifying plagiarised works in the age of self-publishing and Generative AI, offering practical tips for librarians to distinguish genuine titles from deceptive imitations.

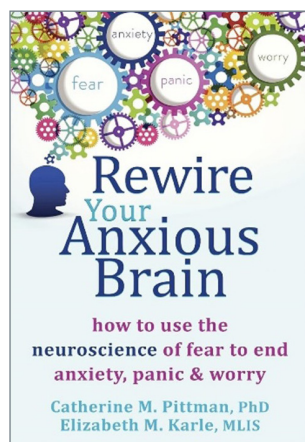
The advent of self-publishing has enabled many aspiring authors to realise their dream of seeing their work in print. Authors writing for niche markets, whose work lacks the popular appeal to attract a large publisher, can find their audience.

Unfortunately, this ease of publication and the related lack of editorial oversight has also led to an extensive traffic in plagiarised works. The development of Generative AI has allowed unscrupulous persons to generate a large volume of low-quality material. Sometimes these bad actors attach the name of respected authors to their works to fool customers. Sometimes they use similar titles and cover art to draw the eye.

It can be difficult to identify these deceptive works, particularly when buying them online.

Here is an example of just such a plagiarism, beside the original, well-respected work.

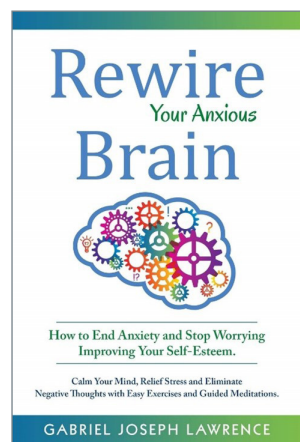
Original



Rewire your anxious brain:
how to use the neuroscience
of fear to end anxiety, panic
and worry.

ISBN 9781626251137

Appropriated



Rewire your anxious brain:
how to end anxiety and stop
worrying improving your
self-esteem, calm your mind,
relief stress and eliminate
negative thoughts with
easy exercises and guided
meditations.

ISBN 9798627806785

At first glance, these might look like two editions of the same book. A closer look will reveal that they are by different authors. A request for this title may not have included the author's name, so how does the harried school librarian determine which one is the recommended work? There are some subtle hints that can help with identification.

A first giveaway is the **length of the subtitle** in the Lawrence version. Excessively long titles are something modern editors resist and can be an indication of a self-published work. The **typo** in the subtitle – 'relief' rather than 'relieve' – is another red flag, as well as subtitles (or indeed titles) which make no grammatical sense. Another thing to look for is the **Capitalisation Of Every Word** – especially in subtitles.

It is also telling that the Lawrence version does not include **details of a publisher**, where the Pittman, Karle edition is published by New Harbinger Publications. The **quality of the cover art** can also be a sign, with reputable publishers employing skilled artists to produce covers.

Both titles can be purchased through Amazon, with the Lawrence title being more than 30% **cheaper**, making it even more attractive to the unwary purchaser.

Lastly, the **quality of the content** of the Lawrence work is inferior. A comparison between content extracts shows the difference in quality of accuracy, sentence structure and readability.

Original

'Anxiety is a complex emotional response that's similar to fear. Both arise from similar brain processes and cause similar physiological and behavioural reactions; both originate in portions of the brain designed to help all animals deal with danger. Fear and anxiety differ, however, in that fear is typically associated with a clear, present, and identifiable threat, whereas anxiety occurs in the absence of immediate peril.'

- Takes great care to point out the difference between anxiety and fear
- Uses authoritative yet approachable language

Appropriated

'Anxiety is a natural emotion that emerges as a result of stressful situations. It is that overwhelming experience that is between fear and nervousness that kicks in when we are not sure of what future holds or what is to come in the next few minutes. If you have never experienced a situation that you are about to face, it is just natural that anxiety will kick in.'

- Does not acknowledge the difference between anxiety and fear
- Informal, using second person pronouns
- Awkward sentence structure

The old adage not to judge a book by its cover may still be true in a general sense, but a poor cover can be a hint to take a closer look at the inside, lest you be fooled by a wolf in sheep's clothing. *Caveat emptor!*

Laura Iseman
SCIS Cataloguer
Education Services Australia

A RENEWED SCOOTLE

Scootle has been refreshed with updated, curriculum-aligned resources and improved features to support educators across all sectors. From flexible search tools to customisable learning paths, Scootle is ready to support your planning and classroom practice.

Discover new digital resources

Did you know that Scootle has been refreshed and restocked with ACv9 curriculum-aligned digital resources? These latest additions add to Scootle's vast collection of resources designed to meet the needs of all educators – from teacher librarians to primary classroom teachers and secondary subject specialists.

Remind me how Scootle works

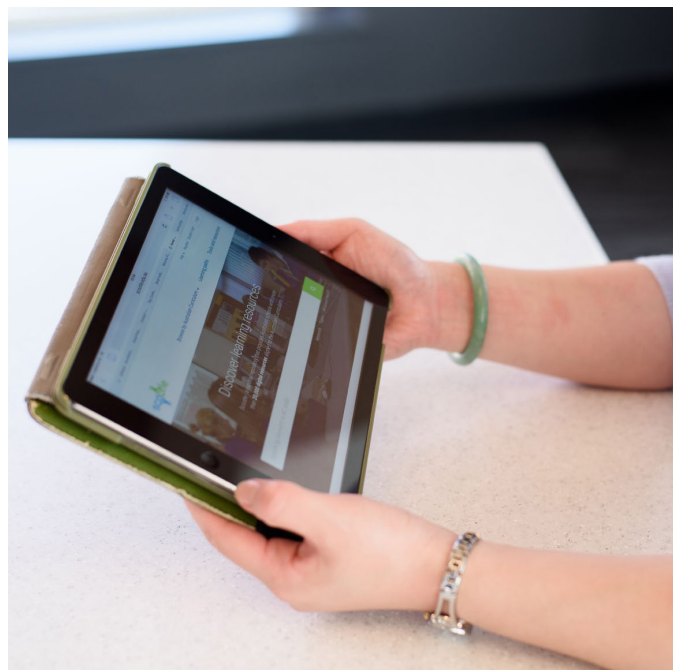
All Australian educators can create a free Scootle account, whether they work in government, Catholic or independent schools, or at universities and TAFEs. Sign up is easy: just select 'register' and add your education email. Once signed in, you have access to more than 13,000 resources, each selected for their curriculum relevance and quality, and immediately available without layers of logins and paywalls. Signing in as a guest user gives access to most resources but without any save and share functions, so make sure you sign in as an educator each time you visit.

Scootle's resources range from standalone videos that slot into lesson plans, to whole units that scaffold learning and offer support to beginning or out-of-field teachers. Use Scootle's search function to find what you need or browse by Australian Curriculum codes. Filter results by learning area, year level or resource type. You can also save your searches and return to them over time. Another handy feature is the 'sort' function, which allows you to jump straight into recently added or updated resources, review popular materials, or see items personalised to your search history.

Support curriculum planning with Scootle's learning paths

Scootle's learning paths make it easy for teacher librarians to curate collections of digital resources. These collections can be targeted to individual classes, year levels, whole schools or wider teacher networks, curated for a range of purposes. Once shared, educators can access the learning paths anywhere and at any time.

To illustrate, you might want to curate and share a collection of Anzac Day resources with teachers at your school. Begin by selecting 'Add to' on a resource entry you want to include. Select 'Create new learning path' and save the path as 'Anzac Day' in a folder named 'Special days'. As you find more resources, add them to the path. Once you have curated your collection, choose a sharing method from the 'Actions' dropdown menu. Select the method that suits you and your teachers – whether it be a list emailed to their inbox, a PDF or spreadsheet they can save, or a shared learning path they can access in Scootle – and with a few clicks, the resources will be at their fingertips.



“Scootle's learning paths make it easy for teacher librarians to curate collections of digital resources.”

Can I use Scootle's learning paths with students?

Learning paths work for students as well. You can connect them to the paths as explained above, or via the PIN that accompanies each path. The learning paths can be as long or short as needed – you might want to set up your students with just one or two resources for a library lesson, for example. You can also edit the resource entries via the 'Actions' menu – perhaps to simplify the description for accessibility purposes or to add a learning task via a comment. These little tweaks enable students to engage with the chosen resources immediately and in meaningful ways.

Whatever your curriculum aim, Scootle can help connect you, your teachers and your students with reliable, quality resources that support and extend learning.

Digital subscriptions, your library management system and SCIS

Does your school or school library

subscribe to ClickView, ePlatform or StoryBox?

Did you know that you can make that content searchable and navigable directly from your library catalogue?

Imagine a student looking for resources about bushfires. A search for this term on your library management system (LMS) will pull up all the books you have on the topic. However, if you download SCIS records for resources, your school can access as a part of its digital subscriptions – such as ClickView, ePlatform, or StoryBox – search results that also include videos, ebooks, audiobooks and picture storybook videos about the topic. That's more resources at the fingertips of your school community when they're searching your catalogue!

Why catalogue digital content?

Richer search experience for everyone

When you add digital content, you're making the search experience better for your library users. Having records for ebooks, audiobooks, websites and apps in your library catalogue means that users can see more varied and wide-ranging resources when they search.

To give you an idea of how including digital content transforms the search experience, our table compares a sample of LMS search results for the term 'bushfire' when there are no records for digital resources, with the expanded results when digital content is part of your catalogue. You can see how digital resources such as videos, ebooks and audiobooks appear alongside traditional print materials.

One place to search, easy access for all

Adding digital content to your library catalogue means everything's in one place for your staff and students. If you have a subscription to a service such as Wheelers ePlatform, rather than sending students to different platforms, you can include records for that content within your library system. This means users can search and find all their teaching and learning materials in one unified catalogue – the way it was always meant to be.



For libraries on a budget

For libraries looking to make the most of their budget, SCIS offers several free digital collections that can be added to your catalogue, without needing subscriptions to external platforms. By downloading these collections from SCIS, you know that when you're cataloguing free web content, you're cataloguing credible, educational content. It's a great way to add to your digital offerings without needing to put in extra effort to curate content yourself.

Here's a quick list of the free collections we offer:

National Library of New Zealand

Topic Explorers and *Many Answers* are authoritative websites created by the National Library of New Zealand for school students. They provide information and links to more than 650 topics considered of high interest to primary and secondary schools. While there is a focus on New Zealand-related topics, many of the websites listed are relevant to schools across the world.

Reading Australia

Reading Australia provides free, quality resources that make it easier for teachers to promote Australian titles. Curriculum-mapped units of work introducing Australian titles are written for teachers, by teachers. These are complemented by the Garret podcasts of author interviews.

Websites and Apps

Each issue of *Connections* includes a segment on new educational apps and websites (see pp 6–7 of this issue), along with a downloadable collection of records available each term.

Ebooks

Collections of Gutenberg titles and interactive fiction available for download make a useful addition to the records in your library system.

Digital Videos

Here you will find records for the ABC Education *Storytime* collections. These are short videos of picture books being read by teachers and authors, including some read in Auslan.

How to download records for digital collections

Getting these digital resources into your library catalogue is simple. Here's how to do it:

1. Log in to SCIS

Head to the SCIS website and log in with your school's credentials.

2. Browse or search for collections

Navigate to the digital collections section. You can search for specific collections such as ClickView, ePlatform or StoryBox, or browse SCIS's extensive database of free and paid digital content.

3. Select the records you want

Once you've found the collection or specific resources you're looking for, select the records you'd like to download. For free collections, you'll see a download link next to each item. Paid subscriptions will offer records based on your subscription type.

4. Download the records

Select the download link for the collection or individual records. The records will be provided in a format compatible with your library management system (LMS).

5. Import into your LMS

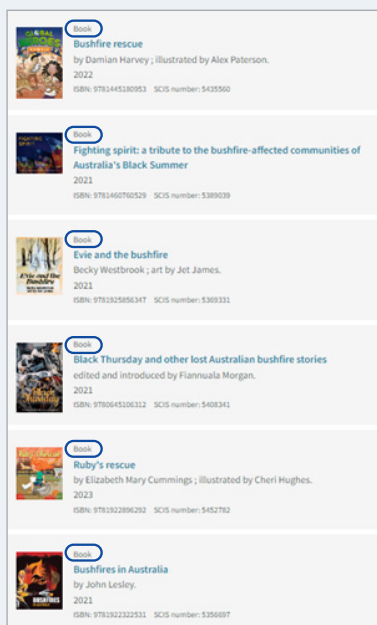
Once the records are downloaded, simply import them into your LMS. This will make them searchable and accessible for your students and staff in the same place they access all your other library resources.

Using our digital collections is a great way to make the most of ways you can use your SCIS subscription in combination with your LMS to make your digital subscriptions more accessible for your school community and build collections of credible free educational content. If there are websites, apps or subscription resources you'd like us to catalogue, feel free to get in touch with us via help@scisdata.com, or by submitting a cataloguing request through your SCIS account.

Digital resource records vs no digital resource records

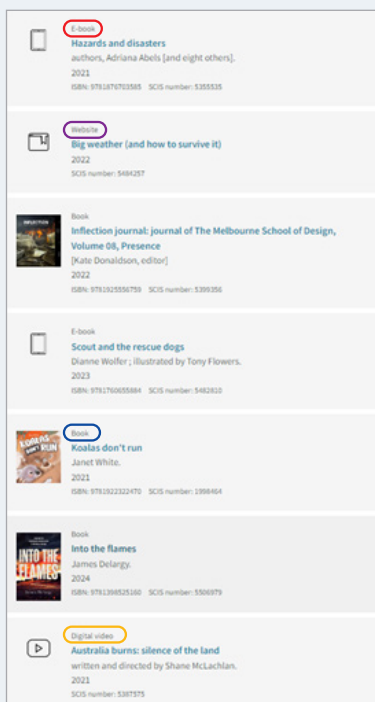
Example 1

A search for 'bushfire' in an LMS which only includes records for physical resources/books.



Example 2

A search for 'bushfire' in an LMS with both physical and digital resources shows results for books, ebooks, websites and digital videos. Users can navigate to the free online resources using the link in the library catalogue record.



Ceinwen Jones

Cataloguing Lead, SCIS

Ceinwen is a qualified teacher librarian and an advocate for literacy and digital literacy. She loves cataloguing books and helping library staff to use SCIS so that information is findable and accessible for their students.

Educational Lending Rights: Supporting Australian stories in school libraries

Each year, the Educational Lending Rights (ELR) School Library Survey helps ensure Australian authors, illustrators and publishers are fairly compensated for their work. Here's how your 5-minute contribution supports future generations of readers.

The Australian Lending Right Schemes compensate Australian creators and publishers for the free use of their books in Australian public and educational lending libraries. The schemes, managed by the Australian Government's Office for the Arts, have two components: Educational Lending Right (ELR), for school, TAFE and university libraries; and Public Lending Right (PLR), for public libraries.

In each edition of *Connections*, you may see articles about ELR. That is because here at Education Services Australia (ESA), our team is responsible for gathering data from school libraries to assist the government with this scheme.

“When Australian content creators are compensated for their work, they can continue to create more amazing books to help shape the minds of future generations.”

Each year, we deliver a survey that collects data on book counts, more specifically we ask how many copies of particular Australian titles your school library holds. The easy part is that to complete the survey all you need to do is export a file from your library management system (LMS).



Instead of surveying the more than 9,700 schools in Australia, we select a random sample of 1,000 schools to participate. In 2024, we only received responses from 200 schools. Fortunately, we work with some LMS providers to centrally extract data. For example, if you are a government school in NSW, you may not have been invited to participate in some years because the NSW Department of Education have given permission to Softlink to export data on your behalf. Therefore, while only 200 schools responded, we ended up with data from more than 4,000 schools. You may wonder 'isn't that enough?' – and technically it is – but what is missing from centrally extracted data is the inclusion of diversity. A remote school in Western Australia may not have access to the same quantity or variety of books as a government school in Sydney.

The importance of ELR is that it benefits your school library. When Australian content creators are compensated for their work, they can continue to create more amazing books to help shape the minds of future generations. Last year, \$13.174 million was paid to 10,904 authors, illustrators and publishers through ELR.

If you are invited to participate in ELR 2025–26, we encourage you to take 5 minutes

to complete the survey. Invitations will be sent to schools before the end of Term 3. For more information, head to [Educational Lending Right School Library Survey | Take 5 to keep books alive!](#) If you are a primary school, check out some of the great resources you could put up in your library, as well as colouring resources for students.

Article by Education Services Australia

SCIS is more

Anthony Shaw reflects on SCIS's evolving role, introduces a new team member, and shares how your feedback is already shaping the future.

Welcome to the Term 2 2025 edition of *Connections*. It would be clichéd to say how quickly Term 1 flew by, so feel free to call me clichéd because it did. Here we are at the start of Term 2, and it only feels like a couple of weeks since you contacted us to check your credentials at the start of the academic year.

I'd like to begin by extending a warm welcome to our new Customer Support and Sales Lead, Emma Rodgers. Emma joined us in February and has quickly got her head around all things SCIS. I'm looking forward to seeing how the different focus she brings positively impacts our customers and how we support them.

Emma is a former primary school teacher from Sheffield in the north of England who, for the past six years, has been working in teacher support at Twinkl Education. She brings a wealth of experience and a deep focus on providing even better support for our customers. I have asked the important question, Sheffield United or Sheffield Wednesday, and got an emphatic response, but I'll leave it to you to work out who she really supports.

2024 gave us a wonderful opportunity to celebrate SCIS's 40th anniversary. We enjoyed looking back on our achievements and the rich history of SCIS. Our event in November was a fantastic opportunity to come together with friends and colleagues, old and new, to commemorate and recognise 40 years of commitment to delivering high-quality catalogue records and support to school libraries.

Having paused to reflect in 2024, 2025 presents SCIS with the opportunity to look to the future and plan how we continue delivering what school libraries need. Staying relevant over the next 5 to 10 years is essential if we want to be celebrating SCIS in another 40 years, even if that celebration is dominated by futuristic AI bots that just a few years ago were the stuff of 809.3936.

Early in Term 2, we'll again be reaching out to users to complete our SCIS customer survey. You may recall that in 2024 we requested feedback and more than 10% of you responded. One clear message was that

the survey was too long, so we've shortened the 2025 version. We appreciate that school library staff are time poor and would rather spend their time supporting students and teachers than completing surveys.



The 2025 SCIS customer survey will directly feed into our evaluation or 'discovery' process, which aims to help us better understand our customers and how we can provide more relevant cataloguing services. The survey will be open from 7 to 24 May, and we encourage all users to participate and help shape the future of SCIS.

You might be wondering how we use the responses from the survey. Your feedback helps shape our development priorities and informs what our technology team focuses on. For example, we heard clearly that the catalogue request system could be more intuitive, so we've started making improvements. One change we're particularly excited about is a new feature in the request process: we now check the ISBN

at the beginning of the process to ensure we haven't already got a record for it, rather than after you've entered all the data. It's a small shift, but one that will save you time and reduce frustration.

Returning to the previously mentioned discovery process, we'll also be reaching out to customers in the coming months for more in-depth insights into how you use SCIS today – and how you'd like to use it in the future. This process is designed to give us the information we need to ensure SCIS continues to evolve in line with the changing needs of educators, students and schools.

We'll welcome your input through focus groups, Q&A sessions, and at school library conferences around the country. If you don't get the opportunity to provide feedback but would like to, please contact us at help@scisdata.com – we'd be happy to organise a feedback session with our research team.

As this edition of *Connections* goes to press, we will have just returned from the NSW SLA Conference in Parramatta and School Librarian Day in Perth. We're now preparing for upcoming SLASA and SLAV conferences. These opportunities to connect with you – to listen, chat and learn – are so valuable to us. We welcome all feedback and encourage you to attend our sessions or drop by our stands to say hello.

A final thought, in these worrying times where truth can be hidden by those in power: from a SCIS perspective, it's the Gulf of Mexico and Mount Denali. SCIS will continue to refer to these by their correct names, even if the Library of Congress and their masters call them something else. Don't be afraid to wear your school library superhero cape – keep up the good fight for truth, justice and the school library way.



Anthony Shaw
Product Manager, SCIS

SCIS on the road: Where to find us in Term 2

This term, SCIS is heading to more conferences and events than we ever have in a single term before – and we couldn't be more excited! We're looking forward to connecting with library staff across Australia and the UK to listen, learn and share what's next for SCIS.

At each conference, you'll find us available to support current subscribers, answer questions and chat with those looking to explore what SCIS can offer their school.

Teacher Librarian Professional Learning Community (TLPLC) 2025 – Canberra, ACT

16 May | Shine Dome, Canberra

trybooking.com/events/landing/1323866

SCIS Cataloguing Team Lead, Ceinwen Jones, will be at the 2025 TLPLC Conference. Ceinwen will give a short presentation on our non-fiction digital collections, extending on the article she wrote in this term's *Connections* (pp 12–13). If you enjoyed the article, don't miss the chance to hear more and ask questions in person.

ASLA 2025 Conference – Geelong, Victoria

30–31 May | GMHBA Stadium, Geelong

asla.org.au/2025-Conference

We'll be attending the ASLA 2025 Biennial Conference. This year's theme is *Energise | Empower | Explore*, which focuses on celebrating school libraries and invigorating them to lead education, empower learning communities, and explore new literacy and information management pathways. We're proud to be sponsoring the ASLA Teacher Librarian Award and will announce the winner during the conference. We'll also run a short workshop nearby, inviting library staff to help shape the next version of SCIS by sharing their insights, challenges and ideas.

SLA Weekend Course 2025 – Northampton, UK

6–7 June | Northampton, England

sla.org.uk – event details

We're thrilled to be returning to the UK for the first time since the pandemic, attending

the School Library Association's weekend course: *Breaking Barriers: Freedom to Learn*. We'll be there with our UK partner, Accessit Library, to support schools already using SCIS and to talk with those looking for improved library solutions.

SLASA 2025 Conference – Adelaide, SA

21 June | Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh

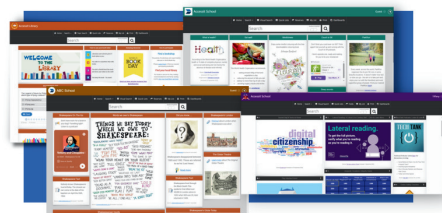
slasa.asn.au – SLASA 2025 event

Join us in Adelaide at the SLASA 2025 Annual Conference – which this year explores the theme 'School libraries: Choose your own adventure' – and participate in a workshop focused on the future of SCIS. Use the opportunity to share your ideas, challenges and insights directly with our team as we explore how SCIS can continue to evolve in ways that better support school libraries and respond to your changing needs.

You support your school, we'll support you.



Real librarians on call to help when you need it.



Save time with 120+ pre-made topic and event dashboards!



Access to training and professional development webinars.



Learn and connect with fellow librarians at our annual Roadshows.

Do your best with our best-in-class support.

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