

CONNECTIONS

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

Students Need School Libraries (and teacher librarians)



Students Need School Libraries is a volunteer-run campaign with the purpose of enabling and enthusing relevant stakeholders to advocate for higher-quality, well-staffed school libraries in their communities. The committee – which is small in number but mighty in experience – is dedicated to educating parents, principals and other decision-makers about the enormous academic, social and emotional benefits a properly run school library will bring to students.

School libraries are essential for the academic success of students and offer them skills and opportunities to continue learning beyond the classroom. When students are very young, libraries allow them to marvel at the mysteries and secrets that books can reveal. They might be engrossed in the wonders of the natural world in the non-fiction section, or they

might explore imagined worlds through the works of clever picture-book creators. As children learn to read, they need a wide range of books to choose from as they rapidly graduate through reading levels and search more broadly for information and stories that interest them. The more autonomy children have over their reading materials, the more they are motivated to continue reading; browsing time supported by the assistance of knowledgeable library staff is vital in promoting this autonomy. In secondary school, students are expected to start developing research and referencing skills, and it is the school library that leads this development. School library staff collaborate with classroom teachers to give students access to resources that are relevant to their studies and to the age and stage of each student's development.

Supporting classroom learning is a key

responsibility of school libraries and their staff. However, academic needs are not the only information needs students have. School libraries are also a place for students to access accurate, relevant information for other areas of their lives, such as puberty and their bodies, financial literacy, career options, social justice issues, family challenges and other important life skills. Young people are used to unrestricted access to information from the internet – in fact, they are wading through a virtual tsunami of information, misinformation, disinformation and straight out lies. They lack developed skills to refine, critique, distil and interpret all of this. In their school library they can be shown how to swim against the swell of information, or they can access information that has already been curated for their age and abilities.

[continued page 3](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

Students Need School Libraries (and teacher librarians)	1
SCIS is more	4
Reading Australia	6
Transforming school libraries: A conversation with Lee Crockett	8
New and revised SCIS subject headings	10
Diversity audits and catalogue records	12
School library spotlight: Tarneit P-9 College	14
Website & app reviews	16

Connections

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Term 1 Webinars – NOW FREE!

In 2024, SCIS is excited to announce that all webinars focused on the effective use of our products will be free.

This initiative reflects our intention to support the educational community with efficient library management. Whether you're a seasoned user or new to our services, these complimentary sessions are designed to provide valuable insights and practical tips to enhance the benefits of using SCIS products in your library. Don't miss out on this incredible chance to enrich your skills at no cost. Book your place in our free webinars today.

Welcome to SCIS

Tuesday 13 February 3PM (AEDT)

Start your year by getting to know a little about the cataloguing service that saves you time in your library. Join SCIS Catalogue Content Manager Renate Beilharz for this free session as she introduces you to SCIS services and how we can assist you across the school year.



Call numbers, Dewey and SCIS

Tuesday 5 March 2PM (AEDT)

In this 1-hour webinar, SCIS will provide an overview of Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) and book numbers as applied in SCIS records. Useful for school library staff that are not trained in cataloguing or would like a refresher on DDC, this webinar will help you understand the role of a call number in organising your information resources for effective retrieval.



The benefits of Authority Files

Monday 25 March 2PM (AEDT)

In this 1-hour webinar, SCIS will answer the questions, 'What are Authority Files?' and 'How can they benefit your school library?'



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scis Schools Catalogue
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A school library that is well resourced and staffed by library professionals is a central hub for a school that contributes to students' overall wellbeing. It is a safe, welcoming space open outside of class times, often providing a haven from the raucous jungle of the playground. Over the course of their time at school, most students will experience disconnect from their peers as friendships wax and wane. The library is a place to find solace or solidarity with other students in the same boat. School librarians know all this, and they provide activities and clubs for students, ranging from something as simple as chess or mindful colouring-in, through to more elaborate and deliberate activities such as makerspaces, robotics and 3D printing.

Given all the benefits of school libraries, it is a sad fact that too many students in Australia do not have access to one. They might have a room in the school that has a collection of books, and they may even be able to borrow those books, but without professional library staff to continually curate that collection and advise students on how to find the books and resources they need, the opportunity for enrichment is wasted. It would be like going to a restaurant that has all the ingredients for your meal, but no chef to prepare it.

Much as they would like to, the Students Need School Libraries (SNSL) campaign cannot visit every school in Australia to check in on the status of each library. What it can continue to do is advise stakeholders about how they can become advocates for change within their own communities. Using their years of experience, they can answer questions, offer advice and suggest solutions. They also work behind the scenes with other industry bodies such as the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) to collaborate. The abundant resources on their website (studentsneedschoollibraries.org), designed for both parents and school staff, offer suggestions about how to take action that will lead to change. The website has links to resources for download or purchase that can be used to educate and inform stakeholders about the benefits of school libraries.

The SNSL committee members feel reinvigorated in their mission, having undergone a recent change in leadership. After establishing the campaign and spending many years at the helm, Holly Godfree (teacher librarian, writer and presenter) has stepped down as the

campaign leader. Stepping into the role is Melbourne-based Raffaella Grasso, also a teacher librarian, who has a keen interest in e-learning and digital literacy. As well as spreading the good word of school libraries, the campaign will continue to promote and celebrate Australian School Libraries Day (ASLD), which helps school communities recognise the good work done in libraries by staff and students. The campaign also wants to be more visible to principals and parents, as well as those making decisions about where money is being spent.

“Given all the benefits of school libraries, it is a sad fact that too many students in Australia do not have access to one.”

I recently visited a public primary school in Melbourne's leafy eastern suburbs. A deputy principal spoke to me about their library, which was a large space with many shelves of resources. I was told that recently the full-time teacher librarian was replaced by a part-time staff member. As such, the library was now only available to the 600-odd students 3 days per week. This is not enough time for each student to have scheduled library time every week. According to ALIA, this school library would now be considered drastically understaffed. For a school of this size, it is recommended there be two FTE teacher librarians and over 52 hours of support staff every week (*Recommended Minimum Information Services Staffing Levels Table 6 revised*, ALIA, 2020). The deputy principal told me the decision was a financial one, that there wasn't the money to provide that service to the students. Perhaps I'm being overly simplistic, but I would say the money is there, it's just being assigned elsewhere. Failing to prioritise the school library is to the detriment of student reading enjoyment and ability, student wellbeing and student social skills.

Unfortunately, in Australia, schooling has become competitive. As schools struggle to gain market share and be seen as desirable, they want to offer the newest and greatest variety of programs to parents. This makes schools very busy – and it stretches financial resources. They offer width at the expense of depth. Investing in the school library and its staff would prevent many of the problems schools are trying to fix. Ensuring students have time to read recreationally will boost their grammar, vocabulary and writing skills. Reading fiction is also shown to boost empathy, as it gives readers the opportunity to see other people's lives and have a wider perspective of the world. Teaching students how to navigate the online scrum of information empowers them to behave appropriately online. Developing students' research skills allows them to critically evaluate resources and prepares them for greater success at tertiary level studies and life in general.

Yes, students need school libraries that are staffed by teacher librarians and other qualified library staff. For this to happen, students need decision-makers to look far down the road and ensure access to a school library is available now.



Cherie Bell
Freelance Writer and Educator

Cherie Bell is a recently qualified librarian working as a library technician at Siena College, Camberwell, and a reviewer for CBCA Reading Time and Magpies magazine.

SCIS is more

Welcome to the Term 1 edition of *Connections*.

In a blink of the eye, the summer holidays are little more than a memory and Term 1 is underway. The SCIS team wishes everyone a Happy New Year and a wonderful 2024.

Throughout 2023, we really loved getting out and about, hearing from our customers. Something that many of you told us – at conferences and via our customer survey – was that you loved our professional learning but didn't feel that paying for online product training was the best use of your professional learning budgets. We have listened and made our SCIS Data and Authority Files product-based training free for subscribers.

Our free Term 1 professional learning sessions will kick off with **Welcome to SCIS**, a great introduction for new users or a refresher for old hands. This will be followed by **Call numbers, Dewey and SCIS**. The final session for the term is timed to coincide with our next Authority Files release and will be **The benefits of Authority Files**. We sincerely hope that all SCIS customers will be able to attend our professional learning sessions and get even more value for their SCIS subscription. See our website to register for these free training sessions.

“We have ... made our SCIS Data and Authority Files product-based training free for subscribers.”

As you'll recall, during 2023 SCIS incorporated the AustLang Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language codes into our Authority Files, helping users



foster respectful language within the library catalogue. In August 2023, the SCIS Standards Committee approved the addition of **AustLang** codes to SCIS Data for resources in Australian languages. Adding AustLang codes to records allows end-users to find items in specific Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. We have communicated this enhancement to all Library Management System (LMS) vendors. Please be sure to ask your LMS vendor when they plan on making the language codes available in their LMS.

For educators, this enhancement offers a valuable resource, in line with the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0, helping teach the importance of cultural diversity and respect to students. It also encourages teachers to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms into their teaching, embedding a deeper understanding of Australia's diverse culture into all learning areas of the curriculum.

2023 was a busy year for the SCIS team. We visited three states and went to New Zealand for the first time in many years. Now, 2024 is shaping up to be another busy year. We're looking forward to catching

up with SCIS customers at school library conferences. We'll be attending SLANSW in NSW, TLPLC in the ACT, SLAV in Victoria and the national SLANZA conference in New Zealand. There is nothing better than being able to chat in person with our customers, and getting direct feedback on what we do.

Speaking of feedback, we'll again be running a customer survey in the next couple of months. We really love to hear from our customers and use the survey results to improve our services. We'll communicate this closer to when we launch the survey, so keep an eye out for that in March.

Have a great Term 1 and we look forward to catching up with you over the coming months.



Anthony Shaw
Product Manager, SCIS



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- Planning tool detailing topics for each year level with suggested teaching resources, strategies and assessment ideas.
- Teaching resources including background information, lessons, units of work, games, puzzles and classroom activities.
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- Self-paced courses covering all topics from Foundation to Year 10. Maths in Schools also offers theme-based workshops to support you in your maths and numeracy teaching.
- Resources for families and students.

Maths in Schools: Teaching and Learning Resources to Support Mathematics is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and managed by Education Services Australia.



An essential, new tool to assist the busy school library in:

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- articulating vision

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READING AUSTRALIA

Josephine Johnston, CEO of Copyright Agency, announces a partnership with Reading Australia, making Australian writers' books easily searchable on SCIS.

As we start the new year with some new resolutions and the all-important goal to read more books, it is also timely to think of how we can encourage young Australians to read more Australian stories.

We all know the benefits of [reading](#) – it makes us happier, healthier, financially secure and more empathetic, amongst other great benefits – but we need to read *our stories*.

Reading stories about our country, our heritage and our people helps us to better understand ourselves. It helps us to make sense of our place, our history and our future. What better way to do this than by reading books by Australian writers?

Australia has a rich literary history, from Miles Franklin to Tim Winton to Melissa Lucashenko. While many of us have grown up reading books by Australian writers in the classroom, these often compete with books by international authors, many of which were published decades ago. There's nothing wrong with classics such as *Catch-22*, or even more modern titles like *The Hunger Games*, but Australian students should have the choice to read more Australian books.

This is where Reading Australia (readingaustralia.com.au) can help. We're an online portal that provides teachers and school libraries with freely available resources for Australian books. We're delighted to partner with Education Services Australia, the not-for-profit parent company of the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS), to create searchable SCIS records for our resources. We believe that every society needs to tell its own stories. Our goal is to champion Australia's rich literary history and connect teachers and school librarians with thoughtful, stimulating, challenging literary works for Australian students.

In 2023, Reading Australia celebrated 10 years of publishing quality teaching resources, marking this milestone at the AATE/ALEA National Conference in Canberra. Now with more than 280 resources, Reading Australia will inspire you to bring Australian stories into your classroom.

We work closely with the [Australian Literacy Educators' Association \(ALEA\)](#) and [Australian Association for the Teaching of English \(AATE\)](#) to create and publish curriculum-mapped, freely available units of work for years F–12.

Reading Australia is managed by the Cultural Fund at the [Copyright Agency](#), which is a not-for-profit organisation with more than 40,000 members – mainly Australian writers, artists, publishers and teachers. We collect licence fees for the reuse of text and images and distribute these as copyright royalty payments to our creator members.

Copyright Agency manages the [Statutory Education Licence](#); the Commonwealth, State and Territory [Government Statutory Licence](#); the [Resale Royalty Scheme](#) for visual artists; and the [special provisions](#) for institutions assisting people with print disabilities – as appointed by the Government or the Copyright Tribunal.

Through our Cultural Fund, we support income-generating opportunities for Australian writers, visual artists and publishers, and fund a range of key organisations (including the AATE/ALEA National Conference) for projects to connect with readers and audiences.

Reading Australia publishes 20 new resources every year. These units include curriculum codes, sample classroom and assessment activities, and links to other relevant online resources – all written by educators with active teaching experience. Reading Australia provides everything you need to comprehensively teach and engage your students across a suggested time frame.

Australian teachers have told us that they are interested in teaching (and reading) books by First Nations and diverse authors, and Reading Australia is publishing more resources for these books every year. There are now more than 75 resources for books by First Nations writers and illustrators, and there is a growing focus on providing resources for books by diverse writers.

Most popular resources in 2023

Every year we look at what books Australian teachers and teacher librarians are using in the classroom and library. The most popular resources on Reading Australia are listed here.

	Title	Author/illustrator	Year level
1	<i>Blueback</i>	Tim Winton	7
2	<i>The rabbits</i>	John Marsden, illus. Shaun Tan	8
3	<i>The hate race</i>	Maxine Beneba Clarke	11/12
4	<i>Black cockatoo</i>	Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler	6
5	<i>Tomorrow, when the war began</i>	John Marsden	10
6	<i>Welcome to Country</i>	Aunty Joy Murphy, illus. Lisa Kennedy	3
7	<i>My place</i>	Nadia Wheatley, illus. Donna Rawlins	3/4
8	<i>The little refugee</i>	Anh Do and Suzanne Do, illus. Bruce Whatley	3
9	<i>Young dark emu</i>	Bruce Pascoe	6
10	<i>Are we there yet?</i>	Alison Lester	3

Most popular resources in 2023



Josephine Johnston, Nicola Evans and Jenny Ryan from Reading Australia.

Career development support for teachers and teacher librarians

The Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund offers an annual Reading Australia Fellowship, valued at \$15,000, for teachers of English and literacy and teacher librarians. Each Fellow undertakes a career-enhancing research project that benefits their own practice in teaching English to Australian students, as well as the broader education sector. The Fellowship was first offered in 2019, and since then it has gone on to support career-enhancing projects for five teachers and teacher librarians.

Bridget Forster, a Victorian teacher with more than 20 years of experience, is the Reading Australia Fellow for 2023. She is the Head of Kerferd Library and a VCE Literature Teacher at Mentone Girls' Grammar.

Bridget's project will focus on using AI-generated texts in the English classroom to interrogate the notion of an Australian literary voice. She will explore how teachers can identify cultural bias and ethical issues in the use of AI in the English classroom; delve into the copyright implications of AI; and ask how students can be taught to be ethical users in this new and evolving context.

More information on next year's Fellowship will be available on the Copyright Agency website in early 2024.

Become a member for FREE

I invite you to join the Copyright Agency – becoming a member is free. Please visit our website for more information on the benefits of membership, eligibility and [how to join](#).



You can also [register for a free Reading Australia account](#). This allows you to bookmark your favourite resources and add your own notes to return to later. You will also receive our regular Reading Australia newsletter featuring brand new resources as well as book- and education-related news.



Josephine Johnston
CEO Copyright Agency

TRANSFORMING SCHOOL LIBRARIES: A CONVERSATION WITH LEE CROCKETT

In a compelling discussion with Lee Crockett – a visionary in global education – we spoke about the role of school libraries, advocating for the role of library staff in the school community, and the evolving landscape of literacy and AI in education.

Lee Crockett's work has taken him from helping impoverished schools in Palestine to advising prestigious institutions in Europe and the Middle East. At the beginning of our interview, he emphasises that his work in education has always been guided by a simple yet powerful ethos: doing what's best for children. He underscores this point by declaring that children, while only 15% of our population, are 100% of our future.

On the role of library staff

Central to our conversation is the role of school library staff. Crockett stresses that the traditional view of library staff as 'curators of books' is limiting for the future of library positions. He observes that during his time in Australia in early 2023, many library staff were voicing concerns that appeared in other parts of the world 10 to 15 years ago; there was a threat on library roles in schools due to budget cuts. School leaders, facing financial pressures, were less concerned about investing in books and reading (and by extension the library) than they were about investing in other parts of the school. He believes that in order to remain relevant, library staff must take a broader view of their role, one that extends beyond curating books.

'As much as we love books,' Crockett says, 'the danger for Australian librarians is that they define themselves as a curator of books. If they're that person, and that person only, that position is going to disappear.'

“How would you connect with learners and improve their lives and improve their learning if there were no books? What would you do?”

– Lee Crockett

Despite this warning, Crockett remains optimistic for the role of library staff if they harness the expertise they often already possess. 'The biggest power of a librarian,' he argues, 'is to be the one person in the entire school that is the longitudinal master of literacy or the longitudinal instructor of literacy. Learners go from

one year to the next year, but they stay with the librarian. And so, the librarian is the one who can *really* be the literacy coach and the information fluency coach.'

Crockett highlights the story of Natalie Otten, a librarian in Canberra who he mentored. Otten's journey from a traditional librarian to an integral figure in her school's learning community exemplifies his point. He coached Natalie on how to proactively engage with teaching staff, and in doing so, position herself as the resource expert within her school, as distinct from simply the curator of books.

This approach involved enquiring about the learning teaching staff were leading in their classes and offering to curate resources for them ahead of time. In doing this, she built up a knowledge base encompassing everything that was happening across all year levels in her school. This allowed her to start tying learning together more meaningfully through her resource curation across multiple year levels. She now facilitates all the professional learning communities in her school, and her role has been elevated to Director of Future-Focused Learning, sitting as part of her school's executive.

As we canvass the role of library staff, Crockett poses a striking provocation to help library staff to think beyond the confines of their role as purely a curator of books. 'How would you connect with learners and improve their lives and improve their learning if there were no books? What would you do?'

On literacy and generative AI

Discussing literacy in modern education, Crockett emphasises its significance as an outcome, rather than a subject. 'Whenever a school tells me about their "literacy block",' he says, 'it's a term that makes me shudder.'

'When I'm told that there's a literacy block, my first question is: where is your critical thinking block and when is your intercultural understanding block? Because those are also general capabilities.' Crockett goes on to point out that confining our idea of literacy to teaching it as a subject limits our ability to teach effectively. Literacy, in his view, is something that encompasses critical thinking, creative problem-solving and information fluency – capabilities that reach across all subject areas.

Considering literacy as a wider educational outcome, it becomes clear why Crockett views the role of library staff as vital in curating resources that facilitate it across all subjects and year levels. Essentially, library staff possess unique resource expertise and a comprehensive understanding of literacy for different age groups and disciplines, largely unmatched by other teaching staff.

As the subject shifts to generative AI in education, Crockett expresses a cautious optimism about its role in the classroom.



‘Everyone’s very quick to point out all of the potential things that could go wrong,’ he says, ‘and state them as fact as opposed to stating their opinion.’

He believes that AI could serve as a useful prompt to help people reflect more deeply on their writing, rather than a tool that simply writes for them. ‘It cannot replace the culmination of thoughts and experiences that you have,’ he asserts, ‘but it can do a very nice job of tidying up language, of coaching you on your own language and prompting you when you need prompting.’

Crockett poses a compelling analogy that people often learn to write well by osmosis through reading, and that seeing AI tidy up and refine their writing could have a similar effect to this. ‘Even if you are doing the worst thing imaginable with AI and having it write all of your homework for you,’ he says, ‘just by the virtue of seeing what it’s written, you’re kind of absorbing something and you’re getting somewhere.’

He goes on to postulate that the emergence of generative AI simply serves to underscore the importance of asking meaningful and complex questions in a context where education and technology coexist.

‘If we’re asking questions that can be answered with Google or that can be responded to by AI, then we’re not doing a very good job of asking questions. That’s something for us to reflect on. We shouldn’t be asking things that can easily be responded to. We should be looking for deeper thinking and understanding and connection with our learners.’

‘It’s the same argument,’ he continues, ‘that happened a decade ago where people were saying, we can’t allow children to have cell phones and schools, because if they have cell phones in schools, then they’ll look up all the answers. Well, if you ask

questions that you can find an answer for on Google, then you’re not asking the right questions.’

Crockett highlights that asking the right questions comes back to ‘the fundamental question of what literacy is’, touching briefly on his earlier comments about literacy being an outcome and not a subject. He believes that if we pursue teaching literacy meaningfully, AI can be assimilated into education and used as a helpful teaching tool.

As our conversation draws to a close, Crockett shares his vision for the future of education and the place of school libraries within it. He sees a world where education systems are fluid, dynamic and responsive to the needs of students in a rapidly changing world. ‘Libraries, as part of this system, must continually evolve, embracing new roles, technologies and methods to remain relevant and vital,’ he concludes.

Find out more about Lee’s work, masterclasses and mentoring programs on his website: futurefocusedlearning.net.



Lee Crockett
Author, Speaker and Mentor

Author, speaker and mentor Lee Crockett works to help people and organisations connect to their highest purpose and realise their wish for the future.

Visit Lee’s website at: leecrockett.net.

Main image: leecrockett.net/media.

New and revised SCIS subject headings

The following changes to SCIS Subject Headings List were approved by the SCIS Standards Committee November 2022 – October 2023.

KEY:

BT – Broader term

NT – Narrower term

RT – Related term

UF – Used for

SN – Scope note

SEN – Special example note

In – Indexing note

New headings

Cosplay

- SN Use for works about the action or pastime of dressing up as a specific character in costume, especially as a character from anime, manga or video games; performances involving people dressed in this way.
- UF Costume play
- BT Role playing
- BT Popular culture
- RT Characters and characteristics in literature
- RT Characters and characteristics in films

Life change events

- SN Use for works on discrete experiences that disrupt an individual's usual activities, causing substantial change and readjustment, e.g. marriage, divorce, retirement.
- UF Life events
- UF Life changing events
- NT Critical incidents
- BT Developmental psychology
- RT Change (Psychology)
- RT Coming of age
- RT Resilience (Psychology)
- RT Stress (Biology)

Picture dictionaries

- IN See also subdivision Picture dictionaries under other subjects for alphabetically or thematically arranged works, using pictures to illustrate the meaning of words related to a specific subject, e.g. Seasons – Picture dictionaries

- SEN See also subdivision Picture dictionaries under the names of languages, e.g. French language – Picture dictionaries
- SN Use for general works on Picture dictionaries
- UF Pictorial dictionaries
- UF Visual dictionaries
- BT Dictionaries

Sleepovers

- SN Use for works about school-age or younger children sleeping over at another person's home.
- UF Sleep overs
- UF Sleep-overs
- UF Slumber parties
- BT Sleep
- RT Bedtime
- RT Amusements
- RT Children's parties

Social and emotional learning

- SN Use for works about the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work and life success.
- UF Emotional learning
- UF SEL (Social and emotional learning)
- UF Social learning
- BT Learning, Psychology of
- RT Emotional intelligence
- RT Empathy
- RT Life skills
- RT Personal development
- RT Resilience (Psychology)
- RT Self-perception
- RT Social skills

Wellbeing

- UF Personal wellbeing
- UF Well being
- UF Well-being
- RT Happiness
- RT Health
- RT Positive psychology
- RT Quality of life

New 'see' references

- *Afghanistan War, 2001-2021* see *Afghan War, 2001-2021*
- *Analytical phonics* see *Phonics*

- *Analytical phonics* see *Phonics*
- *Authors – Autobiography* see *Authors*
- *Book dealers* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Book sales* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Book shops* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Book stores* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Bookshops* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Bookstores* see *Booksellers and book selling*
- *Costume play* see *Cosplay*
- *Discovery and exploration* see *Exploration*
- *Emotional learning* see *Social and emotional learning*
- *Illustrators – Autobiography* see *Illustrators*
- *Life events* see *Life change events*
- *Life changing events* see *Life change events*
- *Literature – Autobiography* see *Authors*
- *Media literacy* see *Information literacy*
- *Media literacy* see *Mass media*
- *Pictorial dictionaries* see *Picture dictionaries*
- *SEL (Social and emotional learning)* see *Social and emotional learning*
- *Sleep overs* see *Sleepovers*
- *Sleep-overs* see *Sleepovers*
- *Slumber parties* see *Sleepovers*
- *Social learning* see *Social and emotional learning*
- *Synthetic phonics* see *Phonics*
- *Visual dictionaries* see *Picture dictionaries*
- *Well being* see *Wellbeing*
- *Well-being* see *Wellbeing*

Revised subject headings

Afghan War, 2001-2021

- IN May subdiv. Like World War, 1939-1945
- UF Afghanistan War, 2001-2021
- BT Afghanistan – History – 21st century
- BT Military history
- BT War
- RT War on terrorism, 2001-

Critical incidents

- SEN See also specific critical incidents, e.g. Child abuse.
- SN Use for materials dealing with sudden and unexpected life events which have the potential to cause lasting emotional damage to a person, e.g. death, job loss, natural disaster, etc. Include here materials about preparing ways of responding to and managing critical incidents, and materials dealing with physical/emotional reactions to critical incidents.
- UF Crisis intervention
- UF Traumatic incidents
- NT Death
NT Rape
NT Accidents
NT Disasters

Exploration

- SEN See also names of regions, countries* and geographic features* on Earth and in space with the subdivision Exploration, e.g. Australia – Exploration; New Zealand – Exploration;

Everest, Mount – Exploration; Moon – Exploration. See also names of specific expeditions, e.g. Burke and Wills Expedition (1860-1861).

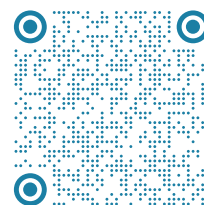
- SN Use for searching and discovery of regions, countries and geographic features on Earth and in space.
- UF Discovery and exploration
- UF Expeditions
- BT History
- NT Explorers
- NT Moon - Exploration
- NT Space – Exploration
- RT Scientific expeditions
- RT Voyages and travels

Shakespeare, William

- EH Example under Authors
- IN The following subdivisions are to be used for works about Shakespeare and about his writings. When applicable, these subdivisions may be used with the names of other voluminous authors.
- SN Use for general and biographical works.

- UF Shakespeare, William – Biography
- UF Shakespeare, William – Autobiography
- UF Shakespeare, William – Miscellany
- BT Authors

The new SCIS subject headings are included in the biannual SCIS Authority Files releases.



Scan to find out more about SCIS subject headings.



Renate Beilharz
SCIS Catalogue Content Manager

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DIVERSITY AUDITS AND CATALOGUE RECORDS

Have you ever wondered how catalogue records can help with diversity audits? In this article, we explore how they might be used as part of this important library management process.

Snapshot

This article explores the value and the challenges of undertaking a diversity audit of a school's collection.

Diversity audits are critical for ensuring that library collections represent a wide range of perspectives and voices. However, traditional school library catalogue data, like SchoolsCatalogue Information Service (SCIS), are not often used in these audits. While these catalogues have some limitations, they can still be valuable for initial collection assessments. As we strive for more diverse libraries, we must consider how these catalogues can be updated and better utilised for the future.

What is a diversity audit?

A diversity audit is an inventory designed to analyse and measure the range of experiences, diverse representations and points of view found within resources in a library collection. Audits provide concrete data to inform strategic collection development, ensuring appropriate representation of minority and equity-seeking groups. Therefore, diversity audits can be used as part of an active program to ensure that school library collections are equitable, diverse and representative of the school community and wider society (Jensen, 2018; Toltz, 2022).

Various diversity audits have been developed for school libraries, each with their own evaluation criteria and processes. One of these is the Canadian School Libraries collection diversity toolkit, a practical tool for evaluating and developing 'collections through an equity lens' (Canadian School Libraries, 2022). During the 2023 SLAV (School Library Association of Victoria) Masterclass 'The Collection Diversity Toolkit, Canada', Rebecca Rubio, a contributor to the toolkit, spoke about the practicalities of undertaking a diversity audit. In one of her slides, she listed several sources of information: Goodreads, publisher websites, author websites, social media, Kirkus reviews, *School Library Journal*, local vetting services and others (SLAV, 2023). But the school libraries' catalogues were not listed or even mentioned in the presentation.

As the Catalogue Content Manager at SCIS, the provider of library catalogue records to schools, I was surprised that the toolkit did not consider the catalogues of school libraries as a source, and so I began investigating the usefulness of such records, specifically SCIS records, for diversity audits. My overall conclusion was that the usefulness of cataloguing data for diversity audits depends on the aim, purpose and scope of the audit being undertaken, the processes being used, the range of resources being audited and, most importantly, what criteria or markers are being used to assess the resources for diversity.

Protagonists and creators as criteria

The Collection Diversity Toolkit audit identified five markers for their audit of fiction titles: Indigeneity, Gender identity, Ability (visible and invisible), Sexual orientation and Race/Ethnicity (Canadian School Libraries, 2021). For each fiction resource they recommended asking two questions against these markers:

- Protagonist/main character identifies as ...
- Author/illustrator/creator identifies as ...

However, the usefulness of catalogue records to apply these markers is limited. There are several reasons why this is the case:

- A catalogue record may have data about the protagonist in the form of subject heading, for example: Wurundjeri (Aboriginal people) – Fiction (Indigeneity) or Children with disabilities – Fiction (Ability). However, headings like this indicate that these fiction books deal with those topics, but that does not necessarily imply that the protagonists identify as such.
- The identity of the protagonist will not necessarily be recorded as a subject heading at all if it is not a topical feature of the story – a story about a park ranger who happens to have dark skin will not be given a subject heading identifying their ethnicity because it is not central to the story.
- The SCIS subject headings are not necessarily granular enough for a thorough audit; for example, the SCIS subject heading Homosexuality encompasses both female and male homosexuality.
- Some audits see a value in considering whether the resource features characters of diverse backgrounds 'living, playing, or working together' (Adams, 2019), but this level of detail would not be found in a catalogue record.
- A bibliographic record will not contain background information about the author or creator of the work unless implied in a summary note. In some catalogue cooperatives, such as Libraries Australia, information about the author's background may be found in the authority record for the creator, but this data is not generally available to end-users of the catalogue.
- Some audits, particularly those focussing on non-fiction and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources, ask whether, and how, the author(s) consulted with the peoples they were writing about (AIATSIS, 2022; Narragunnawali, 2022).

A catalogue record may have this information as a subsequent statement of responsibility if prominently recorded on the item itself.

For a thorough analysis of the identity and background of protagonists and creators, catalogue records may be a starting point. In most cases, reviewing the resource itself will be required, along with further research. Therefore, for the purposes of an audit as proposed by the Canadian School Libraries, catalogue records have limited use, as implied by Rubio in her presentation on the Collection Diversity Toolkit.

Subjective and granular criteria

Some diversity checklists include more subjective criteria for evaluating resources (Khokhar, 2022; Learning for Justice, 2016; Lee & Low books, 2017). Audits that focus on decolonising library collections are also more likely to have granular, subjective criteria against which to assess a resource (AIATSIS, 2022; Narragunnawali, 2022). These more subjective and granular criteria include the following questions.

- Are diverse characters only given incidental, insubstantial or silent roles?
- What is the cultural, social and historical context of the story? Is it still relevant?
- Does the resource use appropriate language?
- Are the facts presented accurate?
- Does the resource include culturally sensitive or sacred information inappropriate to share?
- Does the resource perpetuate or rely on stereotypes, generalisations or misrepresentations?
- Does the resource promote inclusion and equity?

Catalogue records traditionally are very objective, that is, cataloguers are required to be non-judgemental about the content of a resource. Therefore, catalogue records would be of limited use for evaluative criteria such as these.

However, libraries are increasingly adding content warning notes to records, such as for resources containing culturally sensitive or sacred information or trigger warnings for resources with content that may cause harmful effects on readers. These notes will come in especially useful for audits like this that require subjective analysis.

Collection overview

When undertaking a thorough diversity audit, catalogue records cannot replace handling, reviewing and researching one resource at a time. In reality, rarely will a school library have the capacity to undertake an audit of a whole collection. This is where catalogue data is very useful in making the task of auditing manageable. A library management system (LMS) can be used to identify resources in a particular collection in preparation for auditing, for example, teenage graphic novels or resources published before a certain date. The classification number can be used to select resources to be audited within a specific topical range, for example, resources starting with DDC 305.8 (Ethnic groups).

Audits that focus on evaluating resources on a particular theme or topic can make use of the subject heading or keyword search to identify resources that require auditing. For example, the first step in a decolonising project could be to undertake a search of all records that contained the keyword starting with *Aborigin** or *Indigen**, to identify the resource that requires more granular evaluation (Capraro, Lawless & Motti, 2022).

Storing the audit data

A diversity audit will provide a library with accurate insight about the collection by gathering data about each individual resource being evaluated. Depending on the markers or criteria used for the audit, there is useful information gathered which can be added to the catalogue record for the resource. Many LMSs have the capacity to add keywords or tags and additional notes to existing records. If that is the case with your LMS, you could use



the 'bulk change' feature in the system to make this efficient and ensure that any additional data added to the records is consistent. Keep a record of the format and terminology used for the tags and notes.

Undertaking this additional step in the audit process, updating catalogue records with data gathered in the audit, has two main benefits. First, it enhances the record for end-users, making it more informative and useful to assist with finding and selecting resources. And, secondly, it will save time when next undertaking an audit of this collection, as the data gathered in a previous audit is still available in the record itself.

Evolving catalogue data

Catalogues are valuable for undertaking an initial overview of a collection and selecting resources for closer analysis. However, the usefulness of catalogue records is limited when it comes to more granular evaluation of individual resources because they cannot replace the handling of one resource at a time.

At SCIS we are constantly collecting ideas for how we can improve our catalogue records to make them more useful to schools and the end-users of SCIS Data. This is why we are considering automated methods of enhancing SCIS Data using information from other sources, such as adding author biographies, audience levels and content advice.

Cataloguers are required to be objective, using the data they have about the resource in hand, and not make value judgements. Is it time to move beyond traditional cataloguing practices? There are challenges with this approach that must be carefully considered, especially as most SCIS cataloguers are not educators. Nonetheless, catalogue data must continue to evolve to meet the needs of libraries and their end-users, supporting the need for diverse, inclusive and representative collections. Cataloguing practice at SCIS is continually being reviewed and improved, to ensure we stay relevant to school libraries and their communities. *This article was first published in Synergy (October 2023) by the School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV).*

References

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



Renate Beilharz
SCIS Catalogue Content Manager

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: TARNEIT P-9 COLLEGE

SCIS interviews Susan Grieve about her library's role in fostering literacy and inclusivity in a highly multicultural school.

Job title and role

As the college librarian for a school that caters for Foundation through to year 9 with more than 2,387 students, Susan Grieve manages two libraries within a single campus. She oversees a broad range of resources catering to diverse age groups, from picture storybooks for younger students to advanced materials in the senior collection.

Most rewarding aspects of working in a school library

For Susan, the library's ability to profoundly impact students' lives stands out as the most rewarding aspect. 'It's about changing lives, one book at a time,' she says. She recalls instances where students who initially struggled with reading or had little interest in books became avid readers, thanks to the library's nurturing environment.

She finds great joy in nurturing a love for reading among students, especially those from diverse backgrounds. She shares a story of a student who arrived at the school with minimal English skills and found comfort and growth in the library.

‘Seeing her confidence bloom as her language skills improved was incredibly rewarding,’ Susan recalls.

The library serves as a safe and inclusive space for all students, something she is particularly proud of. She recounts the experience of a neurodiverse student who found a haven in the library. ‘He told me the library was his sanctuary. That’s when I knew the impact we were making,’ she reflects.

Role of the library in the school community

Susan views the library as a central hub for both cultural and academic activities. 'Our library is more than just books; it's a vibrant community space where learning, culture and social interaction intersect,' she explains.

The library, according to Susan, plays a critical role in promoting collaborative learning among students. 'It's a place where students come together to work on projects, share ideas and learn from each other,' she says. This collaborative environment fosters a sense of community and teamwork, integral to the educational experience.

She emphasises the library's role in

catering to the diverse educational needs of the student body. With students from various linguistic, cultural and academic backgrounds, the library provides a range of resources and programs tailored to meet these diverse needs. 'We're constantly evolving our collection and services to ensure every student feels included and supported,' she adds.

The library also serves as a support system for teachers. Susan collaborates closely with teachers to provide curriculum appropriate resources that complement classroom learning. 'Our goal is to be an extension of the classroom, providing materials and resources that enhance the curriculum and teaching strategies,' she states.

Central to the library's role is promoting literacy and a love for lifelong learning. Susan is passionate about creating programs and initiatives that engage students with reading and learning. 'Whether it's through reading competitions, author visits or interactive workshops, we're always looking for ways to ignite a love for reading and learning in our students,' she shares.

She actively fosters community engagement and partnerships to enrich the library's offerings and connect students with broader cultural and educational experiences. She collaborates with local libraries, sharing resources and co-hosting events such as author talks and reading challenges, which extend students' learning beyond the school environment. Additionally, the library partners with community organisations for cultural events, such as celebrating International Mother Language Day with cultural performances, and educational seminars on topics like internet safety with local experts. These initiatives enrich the library's resources and foster a sense of social responsibility and cultural awareness among the students.

Challenges and multicultural considerations

One of the most significant challenges Susan's library faces is catering to a student



Book display at Tarneit P-9 library.

body where language backgrounds other than English are 83%, with more than 50 different languages represented. ‘Our diversity is our strength, but it also presents unique challenges in ensuring equitable access to resources,’ she explains. The library addresses this by offering books in various languages, as well as bilingual editions. This helps make its resources more accessible to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the student community.

Susan emphasises the importance of cultural sensitivity in building the library’s collection. ‘We need to make sure that our books not only include various languages but also represent the diverse cultures of our students,’ she says. This involves careful selection of materials that reflect the stories, histories and experiences of the school’s multicultural population.

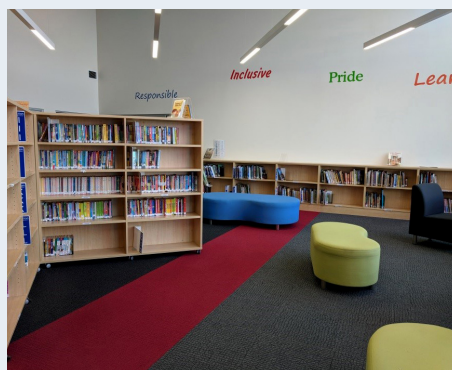
Susan’s library also leverages technology to aid language learning and comprehension. Digital platforms like ‘Wheeler eBooks’ offer translations, enabling students to access literature in their native languages alongside English. Susan stresses the importance of such tools, ‘In a digital age, it’s crucial we provide technological solutions that support our students’ language acquisition and literacy development.’

Another challenge is the transient nature of the student population, with culturally diverse students often moving in and out of the school, sometimes spending extended periods overseas. Maintaining continuity in their reading and learning journey is a challenge we constantly work to address,’ she notes. The library adapts by offering flexible lending policies and digital resources that students can access remotely.

Promoting reading and literacy

Susan highlights the importance of offering a wide range of reading materials to cater to different interests and reading levels. ‘We make sure our shelves are stocked with a variety of genres, from graphic novels to biographies, ensuring there’s something for every student,’ she says. This diversity in the collection encourages students to explore different types of literature and find what resonates with them.

The library works closely with teachers to integrate reading into the broader curriculum. ‘We collaborate with teachers to provide reading lists that complement their lesson plans and organise thematic book displays related to current classroom topics,’ Susan explains. This integration ensures that reading is not seen as a



Tarneit P-9 College library.

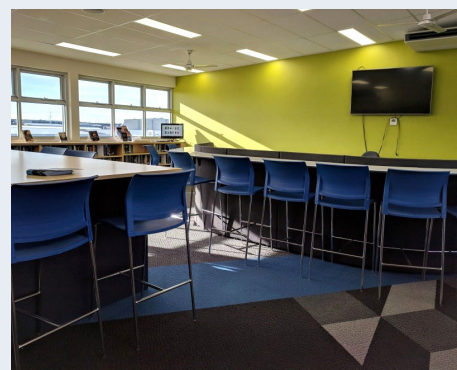
standalone activity but as an integral part of the educational process.

The library hosts various literacy events throughout the year, such as book fairs, poetry readings and author visits. ‘Having authors come in and discuss their work brings books to life for the students,’ Susan shares. These events provide an interactive platform for students to engage with books and authors, fostering a deeper appreciation for reading.

“We take the time to understand each student’s interests and reading level, and suggest books that might appeal to them.”

Recognising the importance of digital literacy, Susan includes digital resources in her literacy promotion strategies. ‘We provide access to e-books and audiobooks, and teach students how to use these digital platforms,’ she states. This approach not only supports traditional reading habits but also prepares students for the digital world.

To further personalise the reading experience, the library offers customised reading recommendations for students. ‘We take the time to understand each student’s interests and reading level, and suggest books that might appeal to them,’ Susan adds. This tailored approach helps students discover books they are likely to enjoy and engage with reading more deeply.



Encouraging library use

Susan views tailoring the library to the interests and needs of the students as vital to encouraging engagement. ‘We constantly ask for their input on what they want to read and what they want to see in the library. This feedback directly influences our acquisitions,’ she explains. By actively involving students in decision-making, the library becomes a reflection of their preferences, encouraging them to utilise its resources more frequently.

One of Susan’s library’s most effective strategies is the Library Apprenticeship Program. ‘It’s about giving them a sense of ownership and responsibility,’ Susan notes. In this program, students volunteer in the library, performing tasks such as shelving books, managing check-outs and helping in the organisation of library events. This hands-on experience not only fosters a deeper connection with the library but also builds valuable skills among the students.

Favourite aspect of SCIS

Susan appreciates the integration of SCIS with her library management system, noting its simplicity and efficiency in cataloging and managing resources. ‘SCIS is a lifesaver. It syncs perfectly with Oliver, our library management system, saving us so much time,’ she says.

Future aspirations for SCIS

Susan hopes SCIS will offer more advanced, interactive professional learning sessions. She suggests these sessions could provide step-by-step guidance on integrating various educational and library resources, particularly benefiting those less confident with technology.



Susan Grieve
College Librarian

WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

Nigel Paull reviews the latest educational websites and apps you can use in your library.
Use the QR code to download the app or navigate to the website. Use the SCIS number to find the catalogue record.

ALWAYS QUESTION, ALWAYS WONDER, EXPLORE WITH US

education.riaus.org.au/

The RiAUS STEM education platform is supported by SA Dept for Education and targets both primary and secondary students. Resources include videos, articles, podcasts and professional learning, all mapped to the Australian Curriculum.

SCIS no: 5468916



AEC FOR SCHOOLS: TEACHER RESOURCES

education.aec.gov.au

This Australian Electoral Commission website aims to enhance the practical skills teachers need to teach electoral education as part of Civics and Citizenship within the Australian Curriculum. The professional learning suite provides one hour of professional learning, with an official certificate upon completion.

SCIS no: 1966370



INTERACTIVE: PAUL KELLY ON POETRY

abc.net.au/education/interactive-paul-kelly-on-poetry/102063924

Australian songwriter Paul Kelly has published an anthology of eight poems written by William Shakespeare, Maxine Beneba Clarke, Gwen Harwood, Warsan Shire, Walt Whitman, Eavan Boland, Dylan Thomas and Gerard Manley Hopkins. This interactive resource, for students in years 7–10, includes learning outcomes developed by the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English.

SCIS no: 5469070



AUSTRALIAN SPACE DISCOVERY CENTRE

industry.gov.au/australian-space-discovery-centre

The ASDC aims 'to inspire the next generation of the space workforce with stories of innovation, curiosity and technology'. Details of excursions, holiday programs, online sessions and the Schools in Space program are available.

SCIS no: 5468948



SBS LEARN

sbs.com.au/learn/

SBS has produced a wide range of K–12 resources, all aligned to the Australian Curriculum and covering most subject areas. Content has an emphasis on diversity, connectedness and inclusion.

SCIS no: 1748247



PICTURE BOOKS WITH MATHEMATICAL CONTENT

<https://nzmaths.co.nz/picture-books-mathematical-content>

This subsection of the nzmaths website focuses on picture books and related mathematical activities. Specific books can be selected from a table covering four levels and the five strands of number, algebra, geometry, measurement and statistics.

SCIS no: 5469080



BUTTERFLY

butterfly.org.au

Negative body image, low self-esteem and eating disorders impact on many students. This registered charity provides primary and secondary teachers with a variety of associated resources mapped to the Australian Curriculum.

SCIS no: 5469045



SLIDESAI

slidesai.io

Teachers wishing to investigate using AI may find this tool a useful starting point. Based on text input, the tool will create visual presentations almost instantly. A basic user package is free, with upgrades available for set fees.

SCIS no: 5469522



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