

CONNECTIONS

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Unheard Voices: Transforming library spine labels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation



Eli Pietens and Robyn Ellis in the library at Byron Bay High School

The need for change

Robyn Ellis, a dedicated teacher librarian at Byron Bay High School, found herself facing a challenging task. Teachers were turning to her, seeking young adult fiction that aligned with the increased focus on the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the new [K–10 English syllabus](#). As a professional dedicated to fostering an inclusive educational environment, she was eager to help but faced a dilemma.

Her school library had already adopted a symbolic gesture of inclusivity before she had started working there – an Aboriginal Flag sticker placed on the spines of books that covered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content. However, this well-intentioned sticker had its shortcomings. It did little to provide context or advice on how each stickered book's content reflected the perspectives and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This

left teachers unsure of the integrity of the resources they were wanting to incorporate into their teaching.

'It was really a "catch-all" for everything, from author to themes to maybe artwork, and so it was used pretty indiscriminately. It was worrying me that it wasn't really clear what this sticker meant,' Robyn observed.

She resolved to find a more nuanced solution. An idea came when she attended a School Library Association of New South Wales (SLANSW) professional learning online meet-up, focused on the role of libraries to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices into the English curriculum. This virtual session introduced her to a transformative resource – the [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\) guide to evaluating and selecting educational resources](#).

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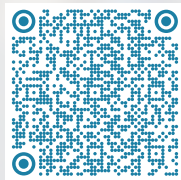
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The AIATSIS guide offers a structured approach to evaluating materials with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, grounded in principles of respect for authorship, perspectives and partnership. It classifies resources into five distinct categories, each providing educators with insights into the level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice and participation.

1. **By mob:** Resources developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2. **With mob:** Developed in respectful partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. **For mob:** Developed on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
4. **About mob:** Resources with no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander input, support or partnerships.
5. **Against mob:** Resources that portray deficit or racist views.

With this guidance and a deeper understanding of the nuances of representation, Robyn returned to her library. Her mission: to overhaul the spine labels, transforming them into something more thoughtful and respectful.

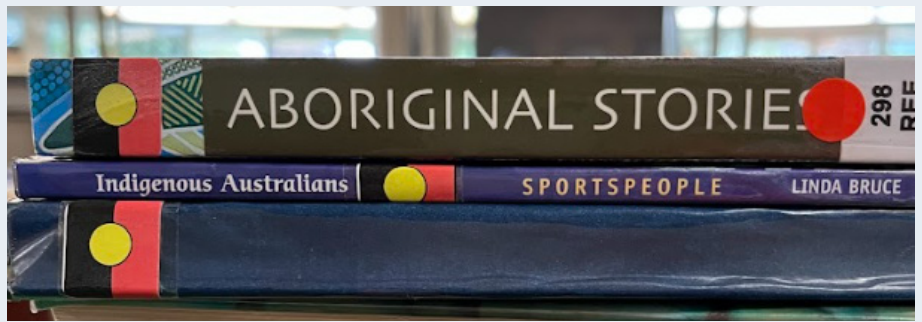
She began by heeding a fundamental lesson she learned at the SLANSW meet-up: engaging with the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community was paramount when finding solutions to such challenges. Although Robyn had few personal connections within the local communities, a valuable resource lay within her own school – a First Nations committee comprised of dedicated teacher-members.

The committee pointed Robyn to Eli Pietens, an English teacher at Byron Bay High School. Eli's passion for literature and his Aboriginal heritage made him an excellent collaborator for the project.

Robyn approached Eli with her vision. As Eli tells it, his response was immediate. 'I love literature and I love my culture, so when this project presented itself, I was all in.'

Working together for greater respect

Over the course of several months, Robyn and Eli embarked on a collaborative journey to transform the library's spine labels. During the course of their work, they cultivated a bond and realised that there was a symbiosis between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the role of library staff in schools.

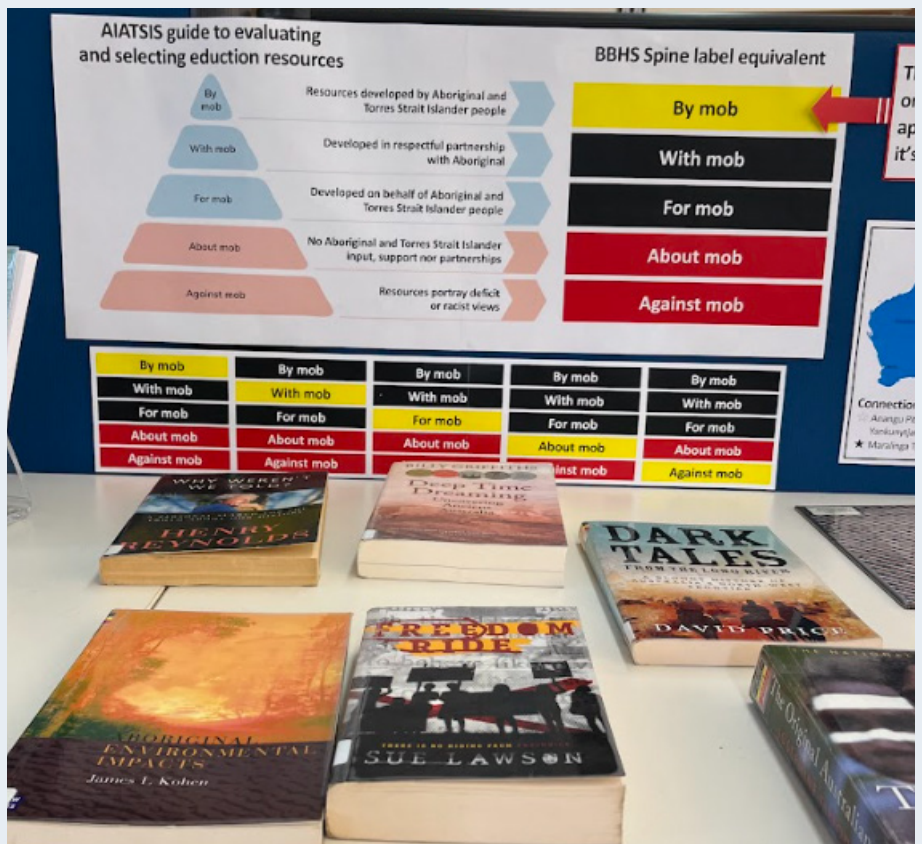


A photo of the spine labels Robyn Ellis inherited at her school library.

By mob	By mob	By mob
With mob	With mob	With mob
For mob	For mob	For mob
About mob	About mob	About mob
Against mob	Against mob	Against mob

By mob	By mob
With mob	With mob
For mob	For mob
About mob	About mob
Against mob	Against mob

Examples of the spine labels created by Eli and Robyn (yellow indicates the resource classification).



A book display created using the new spine labels, with advice for the school community covering the meaning of each classification.

continued page 4

Eli, reflecting on the experience, shared his perspective. 'In Indigenous cultures, narratives and stories are central to the way we keep culture. We're about preservation of what was, about exploration of new ideas. There are many overlaps between librarians. I've found it a very easy relationship to find positivity in.'

To bring the labels to fruition, Eli and Robyn enlisted a staff member with a background in graphic design. This collaboration resulted in a final design that was both easy to understand and culturally respectful.

Each label bears the colours of the Aboriginal flag and lists all the AIATSIS classifications, with the chosen classification for each book highlighted in yellow.

“ In Indigenous cultures, narratives and stories are central to the way we keep culture. We're about preservation of what was, about exploration of new ideas. There are many overlaps between librarians. I've found it a very easy relationship to find positivity in. ”

– Eli Pietens

When compared with the previous spine labels, the difference in the quality and usefulness of the information is plain to see.

Together, Robyn and Eli have meticulously categorised a significant number of books, but the work continues as they endeavour to classify even more resources.

As the number of resources with new spine labels has grown, Robyn has found it considerably easier to curate reading lists in her library catalogue and create book displays for her school community. The labels have also boosted her confidence in recommending resources to teachers, helping to address the initial problem she faced when asked for young adult fiction covering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Perhaps the most challenging of all classification tasks still remains: creating a list under the 'against mob' classification. This involves identifying resources that portray deficit or historically racist views, signalling their outdated nature.

Robyn is undeterred by the complexity of this task, and firmly believes it to be an essential component of the project. In her own words, 'I think we have to make an against mob list.'

For her, this seems a vital step in educating her school community about the characteristics of resources falling under this classification and fostering a critical awareness of historical biases.

The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in libraries

The spine label project undertaken by Eli and Robyn serves as a vivid example of how libraries are hubs for cultural change that can help shape and reshape the educational landscape. It also exemplifies how library staff across Australia can play a pivotal role in amplifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices within their educational institutions.

However, while there is great potential for change, many schools remain hesitant to embark on projects like the one Eli and Robyn have championed. Fear of making mistakes can stifle progress. Eli offers a perspective to combat this fear, emphasising that the journey of change is ongoing.

'The best way to combat that feeling or belief is [to acknowledge] that it's an ongoing process,' Eli advises. He encourages embracing feedback of any type as a sign of active engagement with the system, a testament to the work being done.

Eli outlines some practical steps for those looking to initiate similar projects. He suggests starting by quantifying the resources needing attention in the library, and then consulting with the school community to help understand what will be required for the project.

Although projects like these can seem onerous at the outset, breaking them into smaller chunks or activities, such as those suggested by the project team in this article, can help them feel more achievable in the long run.

Additionally, he underscores the importance of reaching out to local groups, such as the [Aboriginal Education Consultative Group \(AECG\)](#), as vital partners in the journey toward a more inclusive and culturally sensitive educational experience. While the AECG is based in New South Wales, there are many similar groups in other states, as well as local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups that can be approached.

Spine labels such as those created by Eli and Robyn are more than just markers – they are symbols of a shift towards a more inclusive and culturally sensitive educational experience for the school community. Eli and Robyn's unwavering determination to press on with this challenging but crucial task underscores their commitment to reshaping the educational landscape, one label at a time.

Thanks to Robyn Ellis and Eli Pietens for their participation in the creation of this article.

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SCIS is more

Welcome to the Term 4 edition of *Connections*.

It feels like only few weeks ago we were saying that 'it's hard to believe that Term 1 is already behind us'. Now there are Christmas decorations up in shopping centres and Christmas carols will be playing within a blink of the eye. As they say, 'time flies when you're having fun'.

First up, I'd like to acknowledge Mavis Heffernan, who SCIS farewelled recently after nearly 50 years in the workforce, making her our longest-serving team member. She spent most of her working life focused on creating catalogue records for resources in school libraries. Mavis started as a cataloguer at Tottenham Technical School (Victoria) in 1973, then joined a team of 15 cataloguers in the Victorian Education Department, Library Branch. In 1983, this team became an agency of the newly formed Australian Schools Catalogue Information Service (ASCIS), the forerunner of what we now know as SCIS. Mavis continued to work with the department for another 20 years. After a series of redundancies, she was the last cataloguer left at the Victorian agency. The Victorian Education Department closed their cataloguing service in 2007. In 2009, she started working part-time for Curriculum Corporation as a SCIS cataloguer – and had been here ever since.

We will miss Mavis's extensive knowledge of all things SCIS cataloguing, her friendly and supportive nature, her ability to efficiently create high-quality catalogue records and, last but not least, her contribution to cataloguing debates on punctuation, spelling, subject headings, Dewey numbers, authorities, and obscure cataloguing rules. We wish her every happiness in her retirement, which will include more travelling and spending time with her family, friends and dog.

Even before Term 3 started, the SCIS team were back on the road, attending the School Library Association of South Australis (SLASA) Conference. It was a wonderful, vibrant and positive day spent talking with wonderful school library staff and learning more about how we can help support their amazing work. We were also lucky to hear some fantastic presentations. I may be biased, but the talk given by



Mavis Heffernan cataloguing for SCIS in the 1980s.

SCIS's Catalogue Content Manager, Renate Beilharz, on free school resources available from Education Services Australia was a personal favourite. I didn't know that you could find such cute free maths games for primary school students on Scootle, but now that I do, I'm addicted. Here's a link to Counting beetles. Try to play it just once, for research purposes obviously: <https://www.scootle.edu.au/ec/viewing/L8280/index.html>. Scootle is the national repository of digital learning resources aligned to core areas of the Australian Curriculum. School library staff can access these resources and recommend appropriate resources to enhance teacher and student outcomes. Explore [Scootle](#) for more fantastic free resources for schools – you're bound to find quality teaching resources.

Term 3 has been another busy one for SCIS. Renate also presented at the SLAV Masterclass, *Diverse collections: equity in action*, along with Associate Professor Natalie Kon-yu, author Huda Hayek and Library and Information Services Co-ordinator at Fintona Girls' School, Catherine Hainstock. It was a lively and engaging discussion about how school libraries need to be accessible, reflective and a window for all. Catherine's practical presentation on how Fintona completed their diversity audit in their library was invaluable.

In September, we ran our first in-person workshop in South Australia in many

years, Supercharge your SCIS skills.

It was wonderful to be back in Adelaide and presenting at the Education Development Centre in Hindmarsh. We were thrilled that so many library staff were able to attend and we extend our thanks to the Department of Education for their support facilitating the workshop.

During the break between Term 3 and Term 4, SCIS headed across the ditch to attend the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) conference in Palmerston North, New Zealand. We were very excited to meet with library staff in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and it was a lively and informative conference. We learnt a lot about the challenges that schools and school libraries face in Aotearoa and how SCIS can provide more support.

As this busy year draws to an end, the SCIS team would like to take the opportunity to thank the school library community for your ongoing support throughout 2023. It has been wonderful to be out and about through the year, spending time with – and learning from – such a passionate and committed school library community. We look forward to learning more with you in 2024.



Anthony Shaw
Product Manager, SCIS

DIVERSE TITLES ARE FINDING THEIR HOMES IN LIBRARIES

Author Crystal Corocher writes about her new book, covering Australia's migrant history through the lens of her own family's migrant experience.

It wasn't that long ago that a title like *Giovanni* may not have made it past the gatekeepers of publishing. Even two years ago, when it was signed, there was interest from publishers early, but one questioned whether it was too 'niche' to reach a broader audience.

Yet *Giovanni* unearths a significant moment in Australia's migration history and aligns with the Curriculum Priorities of all Australian schools – what could be *niche* about that?

'Intercultural understanding involves students learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.' Excerpt from V9.0 Australian Curriculum; Intercultural Understanding 8.4.

Now, as we reach the official release date of this title (October 4 2023), the ongoing movement towards more inclusive literature across the publishing industry, libraries and booksellers has been so significant that *Giovanni* has already received many early positive reviews. It's clear that in those preceding two years while the process of shepherding the work to life continued for acquiring publisher, Wombat Books, both buying and reading trends have continued to shift.

What is evident is that *Giovanni* – and books like it – are not merely a conciliatory reflex to pressure an industry that has been predominantly Anglo-centric. Rather, they are being warmly invited into the sphere as necessary, valued and timely.

'By engaging with literature from a wide range of cultures, students explore... perspectives on people and ideas, from the past and present.' Australian Curriculum V9.0 – English.

As an author, I appreciate these changes and the 'cracking open' of sorts that is occurring in the industry at large; this can only mean a richer and fuller future of stories ahead for us all. Though, as a person of migrant ancestry, there is also a validation occurring – an invitation for all to 'belong' in the narrative of Australia's history.

Writing a book like *Giovanni* to add to the list of texts that support cultural understanding is likely something that has been stirring in me for some time. When my father was mistaken for being Irish growing up, he tended not to correct people. At that time there was something shameful about being Italian, being a 'wog'. My grandfather didn't want people to call him by his own name, Fabian, because he would be treated differently; as a 'Mick' he could be well-liked – and he very much was.

As for me, I have a swag of stories about being bullied and teased for my appearance as a young person, and of the many, many times I was told to 'go back to my own country'. But this is my home, just as it is for migrant families of all backgrounds who have come here seeking a better life. This has always felt like fuel to write...*something*... but it took a visit to the [New Italy Museum](#) in NSW and the fresh eyes of one of my dearest friends to know what that would be.

Somewhere in the blurry times between lockdowns, he and I visited the place where we had spent plenty of time with my family over the years, however, this time it was different. I was there with someone who hadn't heard of the failed Marquis de Rays expedition before.

'This should be in a book,' he said. 'Everyone should know about this.'

Later that night, I sat down with a sketch book and the first draft of *Giovanni* was written in just under 30 minutes. In a funny way, it felt like it had been about a decade, plus half an hour, in the making.

When you read *Giovanni*, take special note of the first and last pages. This is something educators and librarians can encourage readers to do too! Applying inferential skills, readers will note the homage to migrants of all backgrounds; the nod to the many things brought and cultivated here in Australia from cultures all around the world.



Cover of *Giovanni* (available now).



A simple but important addition
Giovanni yanks a piece of fruit from a tree in Italy and later plants a single seed from it in Australian soil.

Giovanni is a book for all Australians, because it shares a moment in time that went on to help shape Australia. The Italian migrants who feature in this story landed here after being rescued from a doomed expedition that was led by a corrupt captain who had no intention of keeping them safe. Many lives were lost, but for those who survived, Australia became the start of their new life. The Italians were then rehomed by farming families to work in exchange for housing, until they were eventually permitted freehold land.

This was in 1881.

This fact eludes even most people with Italian heritage who, like most Australians, place the first Italian migrants as being part of the wave of migration that occurred in the early 1900s. It is the descendants of families from that fraught voyage – reimagined here as the historical narrative story, *Giovanni* – who

have held and shared their legacy for generations. As the great-granddaughter of Giovanni himself, I am very proud to share it in print.



Giovanni Corocher
Survivor of the Marquis de Rays expedition and one of Australia's first Italian migrants.

This book has been brought to life with exquisite illustrations by debut illustrator, Margeaux Davis, and is an accessible read to support lessons on migration and Australian history. It is best suited for Years 3 and up, a fantastic alignment to Year 5/6 curriculum, and can be used as a scaffolding text in secondary schools. *Giovanni* is also a text that can be used in the instruction of visual literacy at any year level.

What does 'seeing yourself on the page' mean?

With literacy rates and reading engagement rates declining, it is essential that all students have the opportunity to connect with a book. We know that when

students have greater borrowing options and available literature covers a broad range of experiences and cultural backgrounds, we open more doors for young people to have a positive experience with reading.

Creative inclusion for EAL/D students

***Giovanni* is a bilingual text with English and Italian included on every page, making it suitable for EAL/D classrooms and language schools.**

English is my native language (my Italian is pretty shaky) and I know I could not be creative in a language other than English, other than 'my own'. I would encourage teachers, when supporting students with creative writing development, to look for opportunities to allow EAL/D students to explore creative expression in their own native language and then use the task of translating their story into English as an additional, layered

exercise that will strengthen their literacy skills. I have worked with many EAL/D students and as a creative writing teacher for many years and I don't believe we allow students an equal playing field to develop *creative expression* if their literacy skills are the sticking point in creating a story. This additional step takes time and may not always be suitable, depending on the student and circumstance. If you do try this exercise, feel free to drop me a line and let me know how it goes!

Ways to use *Giovanni* in your classroom or library session

- Make predictions about the story. What does the cover suggest?
- Align the story to classroom topics. Draw comparisons and make contrasts.
- Visual literacy. What do the images in the story tell us? Are they sharing a story too?

Themes

- **Resilience:** *Giovanni* is a survival story with the theme of **resilience** at its core.
- **Relationships:** The theme of **family** is also important; the relationship between the brothers and the family sticking together is an example of the ways close **relationships** can help in times of adversity.
- **Empathy:** Another key theme of the book is **empathy**; understanding the lengths that many families have gone to in reaching a safe home, the many and varied experiences migrants may have endured to seek change in the first place, and the ongoing challenges of settling into a new culture are all pivotal concepts that can be discussed when reading *Giovanni*.

Further discussion questions

1. Have you ever experienced a big change in your life? For example, have you moved house?
2. Were you born in a country other than Australia? Would you like to write about your journey to find a new home?
3. Do you have a sibling or a special family member or friend that you have been on an adventure with? What was the adventure?

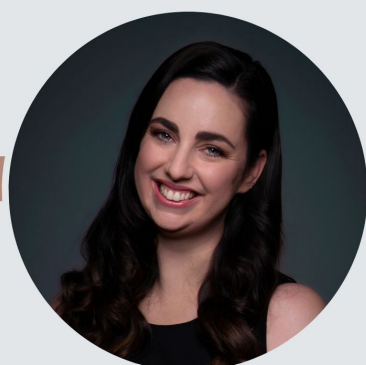
“The stories I want to share are ones that build empathy, foster connection, and celebrate community.”

– Crystal Corocher

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Crystal Corocher
Author



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THE STORY OF STORY STORE

After 35 years in her dream job as a librarian at King's, Joanna Baynes found her next passion project and embraced it whole-heartedly.

I loved my 35 years at King's. Life was always busy and challenging, but in the back of my mind I knew what was looming ... retirement. What would I do then?

Mid-November 2022, the library staff and others from our COVID 'bubble' were having morning tea. The topic of conversation turned to what to do with the latest boxes of book donations. Someone made a random comment: 'Wouldn't it be good if there was somewhere you could take all your excellent condition – but no longer needed – children's books?' This comment was closely followed by: 'OMG, Joanna, I can see your brain ticking over!' And there you have it: the idea of 'Story Store' was born – over a cup of tea.

The concept of collecting appropriate books and then making them available to school libraries that were under-resourced was, on the surface, a simple one. I knew I could do it – I had lots of contacts. Of course I could do it...

But then reality hit when, after some brainstorming, the enormity of all the background work to be done truly registered. I needed books – lots of them and on an ongoing basis – as well as funding, premises, shelving, computer software, cataloguing support, a name, a website, an email address. The list grew.

I was given a new computer as my leaving gift from King's. Sumware Consulting provided the required software. Education Services Australia donated a complimentary SCIS subscription. After much brainstorming, 'Story Store' was settled on as our name and various friends helped with logo design, email and online services. These were all fabulous, but it still left the 'big three': funding, premises and an ongoing book supply.

This is where serendipity came to the fore. A chance encounter with a friend from the past led me to discover EPIT (Education Partnership & Innovation Trust), an organisation whose main goal is to improve access to excellence in education for all children in New Zealand. EPIT approved seed funding of \$5,000 to allow me to test my idea and, as our goals aligned so well, they also provided premises, charging only for ongoing operational costs.

With both funding and premises sorted, I soon organised the installation of some secondhand Lundia shelving and began stocking the shelves with the contents of 17 boxes of books that had already been donated. Since then, I've had to expand and was lucky to be donated a couple of 2-bay mobile shelving units from Rutherford College and bookends from Baradene College.

But how would we find an ongoing supply of books? Let's face it – they were the key to the whole enterprise. This is where networking, word of mouth and social media came to the fore. We organised for donations to Story Store to be delivered, by appointment, to our premises in Onehunga or to any of our reps (just email us to find someone in your area!). We even had a suitcase of books brought over from Tasmania as hand luggage! Schools more affluent than others ran 'book drives' where they asked their student to donate any appropriate books. These drives proved very worthwhile – though some people's



Joanna Baynes –
Story Store

perception of 'excellent condition' and mine might have been widely divergent!

Since our inception, a team of National Library Capability Advisors has visited and now recommend us to schools that could benefit from an injection of books. There are three basic criteria in order to qualify for donations:

1. the school library is under-resourced
2. school management should be intrinsically pro-library
3. that there be appointed to the library a staff member who is passionate about libraries and the difference they can make in children's lives.

Auckland-based schools can visit and select up to 50 excellent-condition books, plus up to an additional 50 that are second-grade, where there is something wrong with the books (for example, they might have inscriptions). They decide whether they're happy with the condition. Schools that are unable to visit in person have the option of looking at our website and selecting up to 50 top-grade books. Only the 'excellent condition' books are loaded onto the computer (thank you SCIS!), so an in-person visit can potentially result in more books.

So far, Story Store has had four schools visit, resulting in the donation of 231 books in 'excellent condition' and a further 105 second-grade books making their way into school libraries.

'Students get excited about what we have on our shelves and realise that there is a place to get books out even though the library is gone. Our school and our students already face a lot of hardships. It is nice to have been helped with this one so quickly.' Kelston Girls' College

At the time of writing, we are busy applying to turn Story Store into a Charitable Trust, with the aim of ensuring a reliable income to allow us to continue our work.

I no longer worry about what to do in my retirement! I'm busy and happy.

Joanna Baynes
Story Store

The Great Aussie Book Count 2023–24

Together with the Australian

Government's Office for the Arts, Education Services Australia (ESA) is currently working with school libraries across Australia to complete the Educational Lending Right (ELR) 2023–24 scheme, also known as the Great Aussie Book Count. Our team may send your school an invitation to participate.

Check your inbox to see if you received an invite to participate.

The invite will have instructions on how to participate. It is as simple as creating an export of data from your library management system, and then emailing that to our team here at ESA.

Once we receive that book count data from school libraries all across Australia, our team will process and collate data to provide the Office for the Arts with calculations of how many specific Aussie book titles are on the shelves across Australian libraries.

Remember the Great Aussie Book Count is just that: a count of how many specific Australian book titles you have in your library.

ESA can't finalise the book count until all participating schools have submitted their results. Please check your invite for submission dates and instructions.

If you require any assistance, please contact our team at elr@esa.edu.au or call our helpdesk on 1300 885 092.



Amanda Shay
Senior Manager,
Subscription Services
Education Services Australia

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

When authors and publishers are compensated for the free use of their content in our school libraries, they are able to produce new content for all.



Educational Lending Right (ELR) Scheme is delivered in Australian school libraries by:



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



Education
Services
Australia

For further details: www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/australian-lending-right-schemes-elrplr

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: THE KING'S SCHOOL SENIOR LIBRARY, PARRAMATTA

The King's School library team takes SCIS inside their school library.

Introduce your school context, school library team and their roles.

The King's School is an independent Anglican day and boarding school for boys, founded in 1831. Our school community is truly multicultural and represents the diverse nature of contemporary Australian society. As a library team, our aim is to meet the distinct needs of our students, applying modern principles to a diverse, energetic and busy library.

Our library is formally titled the Robert Lloyd Memorial Library and is housed in the Centre for Learning and Leadership (CLL), located in the heart of the senior campus. Our team consists of four full-time staff: two teacher librarians, one librarian and one library assistant. The library team is overseen by the Dean of Digital Learning and Innovation, who is responsible for three libraries across the King's Schools' campuses.

In the Senior School, the teacher librarians' role involves teaching wide reading lessons and promoting a healthy school-wide reading culture; readers' advisory; collaborative lessons covering literature, referencing, research strategies, and information and digital literacy; collection development and management to support the curriculum; building assessment guides and digital collections; developing interactive displays; organising literacy-themed special events; managing library spaces; and providing professional development opportunities to staff. The student body visiting the library engage in independent work, while the teacher librarians offer guidance on database searching and navigation, along with strategies for discerning and utilising credible and peer-reviewed articles to meet the students' information needs. The teacher librarians find this instruction equips students with the necessary skills when continuing to tertiary education and provides them with agency for self-management and autonomy.

The King's School librarian plays a vital role in the modern information

landscape, serving as knowledgeable and resourceful guide to access and navigate the vast world of understanding. The librarian's primary responsibility is to curate, organise and manage the library collection, encompassing books, digital resources, journals, periodicals and multimedia materials. Beyond merely cataloguing materials, the librarian strives to create an inclusive and welcoming space for all patrons, fostering a love for learning and promoting intellectual curiosity. The school's librarian also advocates for intellectual freedom, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to information without censorship or discrimination.

The library assistant plays a crucial role in supporting the efficient functioning of a library and ensuring a positive experience for patrons. As an essential member of the library team, their responsibilities encompass a wide range of tasks. They assist with the organisation and maintenance of library materials, including shelving books, checking items in and out, managing the cataloguing system, and managing the booking of library spaces. The library assistant is often the first point of contact for visitors, providing friendly and helpful customer service, answering inquiries and directing patrons to the appropriate resources.

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

For all of us, we are motivated by the desire to provide a quality service for our students. We love supporting their educational and emotional development. We strive to create and provide a comfortable and evolving space that allows them to study, relax, read, play and research.

Introducing books to students in various formats – hard copy, ebooks and audiobooks, either fiction or nonfiction – and engaging with students on an individual basis and assisting them with reading choices is also very fulfilling.

As a team, we help our students by maintaining our successful programs while

also developing new learning projects that excite and energise students. In the future we will be supporting the development of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, as it is implemented in 2025. We are also in the process of transitioning our library management system from Follett Destiny to Softlink Oliver V5. We will also be developing our external footprint via LibGuides, providing our parent, student and staff communities with a truly interactive, personalised experience. Helping our teachers is also critical, and while that can sometimes be in a supportive role, seeing the curriculum enhanced by our work and how we are utilised in the classroom reminds us of the importance of our profession.

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

It sounds like a cliché to describe libraries as the heart of a school, but it is a common expression for a reason. A good, well-resourced library acts as a conduit for learning and socialising. It is a welcoming space for all students and staff, providing resources and support for learning and development. What this looks like in practice will differ from school to school, but at the core we aim to provide 'just in time' services to all students and staff. At King's, the library is centrally located on campus to fulfil its role as the 'heart of the school'.

We are dedicated to creating an inviting and vibrant learning space that enables users to become collaborative, inquisitive and innovative risk-takers, proficient in both accessing and generating information, while nurturing a genuine appreciation for reading. Our aim is to create and maintain a physical and digital environment that provides opportunities for students to advance their learning, cultivate a sense of social responsibility, and embark on a transformative journey of personal growth.

Therefore, we provide extended operating hours, ensuring accessibility from Monday to Thursday, spanning 7:30 am to 8 pm, and on Fridays from



The Robert Lloyd Memorial Library at The King's School, Parramatta.

7:30 am to 4 pm, during which time teacher librarians support and guide students. Printing, binding, a wide array of physical and digital resources, as well as tutoring sessions with old-boy tutors, are all on offer. Dedicated spaces with flexible comfortable furniture of various configurations allow for quiet reading, group activities, or teaching classes. In addition, we have digital screens for collaborative work; a vast range of magazines and newspapers (physical and digital); Reading Club and Writers' Club; physical chess sets; extensive manga, picture book and graphic novel collections; a genre-fied fiction collection; innovative and contextual displays; promotions such as 'adopt a shelf' and 'read across the genres'; and various school holiday competitions.

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

As with most schools, there is constant pressure on our time and the actual library space. As our school has expanded over the years, the library staff have had to produce clever and equitable ways to manage the physical space available. The emergence of AI (artificial intelligence) has created a new layer of complexity that will challenge us, and we will need to adapt appropriately. Amidst the changes in the library, our endeavours will encompass transitioning to Oliver, preparing for the International Baccalaureate program, and engaging in the design and development of Interactive LibGuide pages. These tasks will undoubtedly keep us fully occupied and committed to enhancing the library experience for all our patrons.

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

Addressing the challenges posed by time constraints and curriculum demands,

ensuring students have access to reading support, becomes paramount. At the King's School, we have introduced the 'Storylines' initiative in English, whereby students from Year 7 to Year 10 regularly visit the library as part of their scheduled timetable. This program serves as a launching point for our concerted efforts to foster a reading culture and encourage book borrowing among our patrons.

To further promote reading and writing interests, we have established two clubs, namely the Reading Club and the Writers' Club, which both meet once a week. Additionally, we actively engage in the Write a Book in a Day competition, with enthusiastic participation from numerous teams spanning all year groups.

These initiatives are backed by studies illustrating the positive impact of proactive reading programs on literacy ultimately leading to enhanced academic outcomes. By intertwining literature into our students' lives, we aspire to nurture a passion for reading, bolster creative expression, and contribute to their overall intellectual growth and development.

As we are aware, literacy encompasses far more than just reading and writing; it embodies the very essence of how we engage with the world and those around us. It encompasses diverse forms of communication, such as speaking, listening, writing, illustrating and creating meaning, facilitating the sharing of experiences. Within our library, we are committed to broadening students' horizons by exposing them to a wide array of narratives, presented in various formats and languages. Our collection spans traditional texts, picture books, graphic novels and beyond, ensuring that everyone – be it student or staff – can find a reflection of themselves on our shelves. By curating extensive and diverse collections, we strive to provide a

global perspective, enriching the learning journey of our entire community.

The library provides a positive welcoming environment for students in a bright, flexible and inclusive space, and thus gives them opportunity to pursue their literary interests as a foundation for a lifelong love of reading and knowledge.

What is your favourite thing about SCIS?

SCIS is used across all three campuses of the King's School, and we would expect each campus uses it differently, according to need. In the Senior Library, we primarily use it for downloading records, via Z.39 protocol, which is mostly very efficient and has a high rate of retrieval. Our librarian, rather than the teacher librarians, has the opportunity to undertake original cataloguing, on those rare occasions when there is an item not catalogued in SCIS. In such situations, SCIS provides ready confirmation and guidance regarding approved subject headings and suggestions for appropriate Dewey numbers. Previously, we sent books without SCIS records to SCIS for cataloguing and return, but generally find now that need has evaporated.

What would you like to see SCIS do more of?

Personally, we would be grateful for retrospective addition of subject headings and summaries to some older but still used titles, especially in the case of classic literature. It would, of course, be a hugely time-consuming process to undertake, but it is disconcerting to access a new edition of a classic text only to find that the SCIS record has no summary and very minimal subject headings. But, regardless, our library depends on SCIS for efficient delivery of our services.

The King's Senior School Library Team

RESPECT FIRST: UNDERSTANDING SCIS SUBJECT HEADINGS FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

SCIS continually works to enhance its data for diversity and respect. This article covers recent updates to SCIS Data that contribute to this project.

Introduction

The significance of using respectful language in cataloguing cannot be overstated. The SCIS (Schools Catalogue Information Service) Subject Headings List (SCISHL) plays a crucial role in shaping the language used to describe catalogue records' content. Given that educators and students access these records, ensuring the language is respectful and culturally sensitive is essential.

To ensure our database is up to date with the evolving language landscape, SCIS welcomes feedback on improvements to the SCIS subject headings. We also provide guidance on respectful cataloguing terms to those subscribers who contact us.

We often receive enquiries about the standard heading SCIS uses to define the First Peoples of Australia, especially as the Australian Curriculum v9 prefers to use the terms 'First Nations Australians' and 'Australian First Nations Peoples' (Australian Curriculum, 2023). Our cataloguing team is continually working to create headings and reference terms that more respectfully relate to First Nations lands, cultures and peoples. To help you understand how headings related to First Nations Australians currently work in SCIS, we've put together a short guide.

Recognising First Peoples: SCIS Subject Headings

SCIS employs two authorised headings to define the First Peoples of Australia, specifically the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities:

1. Aboriginal peoples
2. Torres Strait Islanders

These headings are supplemented by various 'used for' references that guide users to the appropriate authorised headings while searching (see the table below). These references encompass a range of terms to encapsulate the rich cultural diversity of Australia's First Nations peoples:

Aboriginal peoples	Torres Strait Islanders
Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Australians • Aborigines • Australia – Aboriginal peoples • Australian Aborigines • First Nations (Australia) • First Peoples (Australia) • Indigenous Australians • Koori (Aboriginal people) • Murri (Aboriginal people) 	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations (Australia) • First Peoples (Australia) • Indigenous Australians

When developing these headings and references, respecting individual preferences for identification has been crucial. However, it is also a complex issue to navigate. Different communities have different ideas and preferences around language. Uncle Allan, a Traditional Owner and Elder of the Yugambah language group of peoples/Bundjalung Nation, expresses how different the various identifiers used by different individuals can be: 'I use black fella ... Aboriginal is offensive to some, First Nations is questionable and [may be] American/Canadian, so what do we use – Maibin – blackfellow man, in my language of Yugambah on the Bundjalung land' (personal communication, July 12, 2023).

Achieving a respectful balance of cataloguing terms is an ongoing process for our team. The ideal would be to call everyone by their preferred denomination. However, national organisations such as SCIS, which aim to serve diverse communities, require generic and encompassing terms. To navigate this, SCIS conducts thorough research to ensure its subject headings are respectful. It has evaluated various terms based on terminology guides and resources from the Australian Government Style Manual, Reconciliation Australia and AIATSIS (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies). Here are some notable findings:

	Term	Source
Best practice	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Australian Government Style Manual Reconciliation Australia Narragunnawali
Accepted alternatives	First Nations First Peoples First Nations Australians Australian First Nations people	Australian Government Style Manual Reconciliation Australia Narragunnawali AIATSIS Australian Curriculum
Questionable	Indigenous	Narragunnawali
Disrespectful	Aborigine(s), ATSI and other abbreviations	Narragunnawali

Aboriginal peoples

Authority Id: 204531

Authority: SCIS

Used For:

Aboriginal peoples Social life and customs Aborigines Australian Aborigines First Nations (Australia) First Peoples (Australia) Koori (Aboriginal people) Murri (Aboriginal people) Aboriginal Australians Indigenous Australians Aboriginal peoples

Narrower terms:

- Adnyamathanha (Aboriginal people)
- Alyawarr (Aboriginal people)
- Anmatyerr (Aboriginal people)
- Antikirinya (Aboriginal people)
- Arabana (Aboriginal people)
- Arakwal (Aboriginal people)
- Arrernte (Aboriginal people)
- Awabakal (Aboriginal people)
- Bangerang (Aboriginal people)
- Bardi (Aboriginal people)
- Bibilmun (Aboriginal people)
- Birrbay (Aboriginal people)
- Bundjalung (Aboriginal people)
- Bungandij (Aboriginal people)
- Bunuba (Aboriginal people)
- Burarra (Aboriginal people)
- Butchulla (Aboriginal people)
- Dharawal (Aboriginal people)
- Dharug (Aboriginal people)
- Djab Wurrung (Aboriginal people)
- Djabugay (Aboriginal people)
- Dyirbal (Aboriginal people)
- Eora (Aboriginal people)
- Gaagudju (Aboriginal people)
- Gamilaraay (Aboriginal people)
- Gangalidda (Aboriginal people)
- Ganhalpuyngu (Aboriginal people)
- Garrwa (Aboriginal people)
- Gija (Aboriginal people)
- Girramay (Aboriginal people)
- Gooniyandi (Aboriginal people)
- Gubbi Gubbi (Aboriginal people)
- Gumbaynggir (Aboriginal people)
- Gunditjmarra (Aboriginal people)

SCIS is actively engaged in ongoing projects that help to refine its language to ensure respectful representation. One such project is AustLang (<https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/search>), a comprehensive thesaurus of languages and peoples from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. By aligning SCIS subject authorities with AustLang's controlled vocabulary, consistent, accurate and respectful terminology is achieved. For example, the names of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and languages have been updated to reflect the authoritative terms as per the AustLang database (above).

Enhancing Authority Files for respect

SCIS releases new Authority Files in March and September each year, incorporating new subject headings, names, and series headings. These continual updates ensure respectful terminology is updated in line with how language evolves over time. For example, recently SCIS removed the phrase 'Discovery and exploration' from its headings, acknowledging that this phrasing implied European 'discovery' of lands and was insensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. With recent updates to Authority Files, the term 'Exploration' now accurately designates resources on land and space exploration.

To foster respect and cultural understanding, SCIS suggests library management system (LMS) vendors embrace the enhanced SCIS authorities. By incorporating these updated authorities, we can collectively champion the cause of respectful language usage throughout the cataloguing process. When applying respectful language, we need to take a multifaceted approach that recognises the different identity preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

SCIS is dedicated to the evolution of language, guided by collaborative efforts, meticulous research, and the help of good resources such as AustLang. Through our dedication to cultivating respect, we allow educators, students and researchers to seamlessly engage with resources that vividly capture the profound histories and cultures of Australia's First Nations peoples.

Sources

ACARA Australian Curriculum <https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-cross-curriculum-priority/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-histories-and-cultures>

AIATSIS. Australia's First Peoples: What is the best term to use? <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/australias-first-peoples#toc-what-term-is-best-to-use->

Australian Government style manual. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples

Narragunnawali Terminology guide www.narragunnawali.org.au/about/terminology-guide

Reconciliation Australia: demonstrating inclusive and respectful language www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/inclusive-and-respectful-language.pdf

Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS)

Moon--Exploration Authority Id: 238651 Authority: SCIS Used For: Lunar exploration Voyages to the moon Narrower terms: Lunar probes Broader terms: Extraterrestrial bases Exploration	Australia--Exploration Authority Id: 208505 Authority: SCIS Used For: Discovery and exploration Broader terms: Exploration Explorers
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Unlock the power of SCIS Authority Files with Accessit LMS: Watch the webinar today!

For SCIS and Accessit customers, we have an exciting opportunity to delve into learning about SCIS Authority Files within Accessit Library Management System (LMS). We recently conducted a webinar for customers comprehensively covering this subject and the recording is now available to stream. Whether you're a seasoned library professional or just getting started with these powerful resources, this webinar is a must-watch event that promises to elevate your library management skills to new heights.

What are Authority Files?

SCIS Authority Files make the catalogue easier for your school community to search. In addition to retrieving resources that match the search term entered by a user, they expand results to include resources that might be related to the search term.

In search results, you'll see 'see' and 'see

also' suggestions. For instance, if a student types 'bugs', they're actually looking for information about insects, which is the correct term. Authority Files connect the search term to the right term and fetch resources about the subject the student is interested in. This makes searching more intuitive for students and teachers, especially when they don't know the exact term used to classify the resources they need.

Webinar content

- 1. Controlled vocabularies:** Explore the concept of controlled vocabularies and understand why they are crucial for efficient cataloguing and information retrieval.
- 2. References:** Learn how references play a pivotal role in ensuring users can find the materials they need, even when using different terms or synonyms.

- 3. Controlled vocabularies and references in Accessit:** Discover how Accessit LMS integrates controlled vocabularies and references into its platform, simplifying your cataloguing process.
- 4. Downloading SCIS authorities into Accessit:** Explore options for importing SCIS Authority Files into your Accessit LMS, ensuring your library's collection is aligned with the latest standards. This will include advice on setting up the new automatic Authority Files imports within Accessit.
- 5. Administration of authorities:** Master the art of managing authorities within Accessit. Keep your authorities clean, remove errors, spelling mistakes and duplicates.

To access the webinar, scan the QR code below and follow the instructions.

Unlock the power of SCIS Authority Files in Accessit

This recently recorded *webinar* is available for Accessit customers to **stream now**.

Join Karen and Renate as they guide you through using SCIS Authority Files within the Accessit Library Management System!

Hosted by...

Karen
Accessit
Library



Renate
SCIS



Scan here to
watch now!



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.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES

<https://www.abc.net.au/education/topic-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-histories-cultures/13651178>

ABC Education has collected a plethora of resources pertinent to most aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. Content includes art, weapons, technology, agriculture, the 1967 referendum, stories, connection to Country, and bush lore.

SCIS no: 5464486



ANDY WARHOL

<https://waaarhol.com/>

Andy Warhol was an American artist, producer, film director and leading exponent of pop art. This visually appealing website explores his early life, influences, major works and the impact of pop art.

SCIS no: 5464491



PLAY SCHOOL PLAY TIME

<https://apps.apple.com/au/app/play-school-play-time/id689871248>

Early Stage 1 students will encounter a variety of open-ended learning activities about clocks and the passage of time. Activities centre around the birthday of the Play School character, Humpty.

SCIS no: 5464628



EXPLORE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/explore-world-heritage/cities>

Google Arts & Culture and UNESCO have developed an inspiring visual resource of World Heritage Sites, including iconic buildings, temples, cities, breathtaking landscapes, relics reimagined in 3D, and artworks. Suitable for primary and secondary students.

SCIS no: 5464601



NAA LEARNING RESOURCES

<https://www.naa.gov.au/students-and-teachers/learning-resources>

The National Archives of Australia (NAA) learning resources collection contains millions of primary source materials relating to significant events and decisions in Australian history. Themed learning programs are aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

SCIS no: 5464611



SNOWY HYDRO: NEXT GEN

<https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/education/nextgen/>

The focus of this education hub is on geography, STEM, history and social science in relation to the Snowy Hydro Scheme. Resources are aligned to the Australian Curriculum and can be searched by stage and topic.

SCIS no: 5464615



DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT COMPASS

<https://www.digitaldevelopmentcompass.org/>

Jointly created with the United Nations Development Programme, the Digital Development Compass uses publicly available data to analyse the digital development of more than 180 countries. Teachers can examine each of the seven indicators used to determine the rankings.

SCIS no: 5464515



SALTWATER SCHOOLS

<https://www.msc.org/en-au/for-teachers/ocean-literacy/australian-education-curriculum>

The focus of this website is to increase awareness and understanding of the ocean environment in students in Year 5 to Year 10. Resources are aligned to the Australian Curriculum and cover marine ecosystems, coastal communities, fish biology, marine habitats and food webs.

SCIS no: 5464630



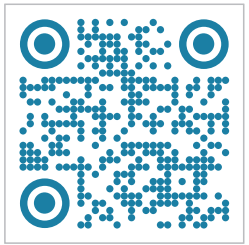
The websites and apps selected for review are often of a professional nature and should be initially viewed by teachers and library staff to determine suitability for students. The links, content and address of these sites are subject to change.



Nigel Paull

Teacher Librarian
North Coast, NSW

Did you know that SCiS sells barcode scanners?



\$550.00

**Nexa Bundle Deal –
1600 and 2951**
Scanner bundle



\$649.00

Cipherlab 1560P
Portable scanner



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Nexa BL-8060
Hands-free scanner



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Cipherlab 1500P
Corded scanner



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MST – XL1
Portable bluetooth scanner



\$369.00

Cipherlab 1663
Portable pocket-sized bluetooth scanner



\$229.00

Quickscan QD2131
Corded scanner



\$169.00

Nexa ZED 1600
Laser barcode scanner



\$399.00

Nexa ZED 2951
Cordless 2D barcode scanner

Our plug and play barcode scanners are perfectly tailored for your school library. Barcode scanners purchased from SCiS are:

- Shipped ready to use, with a USB cable and full user instructions
- Supported by free technical support from All Barcodes Australia (our partners and quality local barcode scanner supplier since 1995)
- Pre-configured to read ISBNs and a wide variety of universal barcodes.