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A librarian's worst nightmare

Yahoo! Answers – where 120 million users can be wrong

When it does battle on the Web, Google rarely loses. Last year's closure of Google Answers, however, marked a rare setback for the search giant. An even bigger shock is that Yahoo! succeeded where Google failed. Yahoo! Answers – a site where anyone can post a question in plain English, including queries that can't be answered by a traditional search engine – now draws 120 million users worldwide, according to Yahoo!'s internal stats. The site has compiled 400 million answers, all searchable in its archives. According to the Web tracking company Hitwise, Yahoo! Answers is the second-most-visited education/reference site on the Internet after Wikipedia.

The blockbuster success of Yahoo! Answers is all the more surprising once you spend a few days using the site. While Answers is a valuable window into how people look for information online, it looks like a complete disaster as a traditional reference tool. It encourages bad research habits, rewards people who post things that aren't true and frequently labels factual errors as correct information. It's every middle-school teacher's worst nightmare about the Web.

The site's home page, which offers a real-time snapshot of the dozens of questions posted every minute, provides a good sense of users' favorite topics: relationships, computers, homework and pregnancy. These queries reveal why something like Yahoo! Answers might draw so many visitors.

The questions – 'Why does the stomach make funny noises when it's hungry?' and 'How do stoplights sense a car?' for instance – are difficult to answer with a traditional Web search. If you're looking for advice on your new haircut or help on the third question on your precalculus problem set, Yahoo! Answers might be your best option. Most strikingly, Answers draws a large enough crowd that you're likely to get an answer almost instantaneously. Post a semi-coherent question and the responses will come within minutes, if not seconds.

For educators fretting that the Internet is creating a generation of 'intellectual sluggards' the problem isn't just that Yahoo!'s site helps ninth-graders cheat on their homework. It's that a lot of the time, it doesn't help them cheat all that well.

Take a popular question asking about common customs and beliefs among Native Americans. In theory, this is the kind of query Yahoo! Answers is made for. It's more easily asked in the form of a complete sentence rather than in a series of search terms, and it has a factual answer some users might know.

How did Yahoo! Answers do? On the plus side, the question received an impressive 97 different answers, including a few knowledgeable responses and helpful references. But several of the postings were misleading, confused or just plain wrong. If you started off uncertain, it's hard to imagine you would read the responses and feel any more confident. To top it off, the answer eventually chosen as the 'best' was, enigmatically, 'American pie'.

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A librarian's worst nightmare (cont.)

In some academic areas – physics is one I've noticed – the Answers community consistently does an impressive job of providing accurate answers and a clear explanation of how to get them. But in other disciplines, the site's record as an educational tool is, to put it charitably, unreliable. A recent question about dual citizenship attracted 12 answers in just two hours; some of the responses were nearly accurate, many partially true and others entirely false ('Yes, it is true they outlawed dual citizenship in 2001 due to people going to Canada and the UK for free health care while they were not paying taxes in that country'). Another thread on the relationship between Iran, Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden offered a few insightful responses about Sunni-Shiite politics surrounded by enough noise – 'No one really cares except for people like yourself!' – to confuse or annoy anyone who might pose the question earnestly.

Some people might look at this mixed record and think that Yahoo! Answers is just like Wikipedia. But the differences between the two sites say a lot – about why Wikipedia has been such a success, why the Web's leading reference site is so hard to replicate and how Yahoo! Answers has become so popular despite its flaws.

Like Yahoo! Answers, Wikipedia isn't perfect. But for savvy browsers who know how to use it, Wikipedia is an invaluable source of factual information. In the last two years, there's been a heated debate over whether Wikipedia is as trustworthy as *Encyclopedia Britannica*. This obscures a crucial point: Wikipedia is at least reliable enough that such a question can be asked. Take my word for it – no one is going to make any such claims about Yahoo! Answers anytime soon.

Wikipedia's greatest virtue is that it is self-editing and self-correcting. The site's draconian efforts to consolidate pages and remove entries that aren't deemed important have a crucial side effect. They focus users' energy on revision rather than addition. By contrast, Yahoo! Answers is more devoted to quantity than quality. It struggles to prevent repeat questions from appearing over and over again. And unlike Wikipedia, the Yahoo! community expends far less energy trying to hide dubious or just plain incorrect contributions, despite

a community rating system designed to flag them. Often, a correct answer will be hiding somewhere on an Answers page, only to be obscured by a tide of wrong or off-topic material that never gets erased. Wikipedia pages are subject to constant revision. If a vandal screws with an entry, one of the site's busy janitors cleans it up. If new information becomes available or a new user devotes energy to making improvements, then a Wikipedia article will get better even years after it's first posted. Yahoo!, by contrast, 'closes' questions to new answers after a week, although users occasionally post comments afterward. While the site's answers live forever on the Web, each question attracts only seven days' worth of collective wisdom.


The small, almost obsessive community that built Wikipedia created a culture of reliability. For contributors to see their writing on the site, they must submit information that's clear and accurate enough to survive the scrutiny of other users. Yahoo! Answers has created a more formal, yet far less successful, reward structure to identify top users. Every time you post an answer, you earn two points. If you win a 'best answer' distinction, you get 10 points. (The person who asked the question gets the opportunity to select the best answer; if they choose not to, it is selected by community vote.) This system highlights the site's greatest strength and its greatest weakness: Everyone gets credit for answering, but there's not a huge push to make sure the answers are right.

As its devotees would point out, Yahoo! Answers allows you to ask questions Wikipedia would never touch. Many of the site's users are simply looking for advice, local knowledge (like a restaurant recommendation) or an opportunity to start a discussion. But for these questions, too, the quality of the responses varies widely and users can be stuck struggling to separate the good answers from the bad.

Even though Yahoo! Answers is so frequently sloppy and inaccurate, it's still the juggernaut in its field. Despite a rapid proliferation of answer-giving sites – Amazon.com's recently inaugurated Askville just joined a crowded field that includes Answerbag, WikiAnswers, AnswerBank and Ask Metafilter – Yahoo! is still by far the most popular. And in the question-answering game, size matters.

While the others have a few clever features (like Answerbag's efforts to separate 'educational' and 'conversational' questions) or a more specialized community, the sheer magnitude of Yahoo!'s community gives it the upper hand.

After all, while Yahoo! Answers and its peers are classified as reference tools, what they actually provide is social networking. The thrill of Yahoo! Answers comes in the instant interaction: the scores of questions, the immediate back-and-forth discussions, the opportunity to feel like an expert and, eventually, the promise a query will be labeled a 'Resolved Question' no matter how difficult.

For a passive reader, this has the same value as listening to two random guys at a bar talk about what to do if you are driving during a tornado. You may not learn very much by eavesdropping and you certainly shouldn't trust what you hear if disaster strikes – but that isn't really the purpose. The lesson Yahoo! Answers teaches is that, for millions of people on the Web, it's less important to get a good answer than to get someone to listen to your question in the first place. 

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Teens and social networking in libraries

How online social networking facilitates learning in schools and libraries.

This article is adapted from a toolkit created by the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association, in 2007. You can learn more about YALSA and social networking by visiting <http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsa.cfm>

What are social networking technologies? They are software that enables people to connect, collaborate and form virtual communities via the computer and/or Internet. Social networking websites are those that provide this opportunity to interact. Sites that allow visitors to send emails, post comments, build Web content and/or take part in live chats are all considered to be social networking sites.

Social networking technologies have many positive uses in schools and libraries. They are an ideal environment for teens to share what they are learning or to build something together online. The nature of the medium allows teens to receive feedback from librarians, teachers, peers, parents and others. Social networking technologies create a sense of community (as do the physical library and school) and in this way are already aligned with the services and programs at the library and/or school.

Schools and libraries are working to integrate positive uses of social networking into their classrooms, programs and services. By integrating social networking technologies into educational environments teens have the opportunity to learn from adults how to be safe and smart when participating in online social networks. They also learn a valuable life skill, as these social networking technologies are tools for communication that are widely used in colleges and in the workplace. Here are a few examples of how teens are being introduced to the positive uses of social networking technologies:

- A maths teacher has students serve as scribes on class blogs. Students post notes, visuals, formulas, activities and comments related to each day's lesson. They also post reflections about their learning at least once before each test. Using the technology in this way gives students the chance to process learning and, as a result,

better understand the content. See <http://pc4sw06.blogspot.com/>

- A school uses blogging software to publish its newspaper. The blog format allows for timely publication and the ability to make updates easily. This format also allows for comments from readers and easy navigation to archived stories. Publication costs are minimal (no colour print costs!) and there is no limit to the length of the paper, allowing for more student participation. See <http://www.uni.uiuc.edu/gargoyle/>
- An author creates a blog as a way to reflect on the reading and writing experience. Teens who enjoy the author's work keep up on what the author is writing and thinking through the blog. The author blog is used as a research source and as a way to communicate with the author about books, reading and writing. See <http://www.sparksflyup.com/weblog.php>
- Two biology teachers in different parts of the country are working with students on the topic of water quality and ecology. The teachers create a joint wiki for the unit of study. As students find information on the topic, they post to the water quality wiki findings, observations and useful resources. Together students build an online resource (their own encyclopaedia) on the topic.
- A public library creates a MySpace site as a way to connect with teens in the community. The space includes quick and easy access to the library catalogue and other research tools. It also includes information on programs and services at the library in which teens can take part. Teens who are not traditional library users learn about and use the library through MySpace because they are familiar and comfortable with the technology. Teens make the library one of their MySpace friends and then are reminded of the library whenever they log onto their space. See The Loft@ImaginOn at <http://www.myspace.com/libraryloft> and Hennepin County Library at <http://www.myspace.com/hennepincountylibrary>
- A high school student creates a MySpace site for a British poet she needs to study. As she gathers information, she enters it into the poet's MySpace profile. She uses the blog function to post the poems she analyses. Before long, other MySpace authors and poets (some real, some not)

befriend her poet. They comment on what is written and lead the student to more resources. The student has to adopt the persona of her poet and imagine what the poet's responses might actually be.

- An author creates a MySpace account as a way to keep in touch with teen readers. The author's space includes biographical information, book information and reflections on reading and writing. Teens interested in the author can communicate with him or her via MySpace and are able to perform primary source research via the author's site. See Rachel Cohn at http://www.myspace.com/rachel_cohn

Educating the community about online social networking

In the media there are many examples of how social networking has played a dangerous role in teen lives. However, positive examples of how this technology supports teen literacy skills and developmental growth are not so readily found. For that reason, librarians should play an active role in educating parents, teachers and other members of the community about the positive benefits of social networking in teen lives. The following examples of how you can educate your community provide a starting point. When planning these events, be sure to enlist your Teen Advisory Group (TAG) to help you plan and implement the workshops.

- Create and distribute brochures and post information online about what your library is already doing to ensure that children and teens are safe online. Include information about Internet filters and Internet Acceptable Use Policies that your library has produced.
- Invite parents and educators to a workshop where they can learn about MySpace and other social networking tools. In the workshop, have librarians and teachers discuss how MySpace is being used in the classroom and library. Have law enforcement officials talk about how to help teens stay safe while participating in social networking online. Have teens with well-designed MySpace spaces demonstrate the positive ways they use social networking tools.
- Host Do-It-Yourself Days for adults to learn how to use social networking sites and tools successfully. After an introduction about what social networking is and why

Teens and social networking in libraries (cont.)

it's an important part of a teen's life, teens from your TAG could work with adults on using the tools in a way that enhances their own lives. Teens might show adults how to set up: a blog that showcases a hobby or special interest, a MySpace space to keep in touch with friends, a Flickr account so they can share family photos or an IM account to conduct live chats with family members overseas etc.

- Create an online demo or class that gives adults the chance to test out and discuss social networking technologies at their leisure and in a somewhat anonymous setting. Make the demo available from your library's website. Use your TAG group to help develop the demo.
- Host a community debate about local, state and/or national legislation that seeks to regulate social networking websites. One example of proposed legislation (USA) is the Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA). Invite local experts on both sides of an issue to participate in the debate. Provide handouts and background information for attendees.
- Use social networking technologies as an access point for your library's services. Create a MySpace as a place for adults and teens to learn about programs and materials. Set up a blog where adults and teens read about what's going on in the library and can add comments about programs, materials and so on. Develop a booklist wiki where adults and teens can add titles of books on specific themes.
- Inform community members about how social networking tools allow for schools and libraries to integrate technology in meaningful ways with and for teens at low (or no) cost. Many schools and libraries are cash-strapped or operate without a lot of in-house technical expertise. With free blogging software, a school librarian or teacher can create a website without learning how to code, and can update and maintain that website with no extra training.
- Produce a podcast for teachers, administrators, parents and community members that focus on the positive aspects of social networking technologies. The podcast might be distributed weekly and could include overviews of the technologies, interviews with teens about their use of technology, interviews

with experts in technology and teen development who discuss how the technologies support teen growth and literacy development, and so on.

- Create and distribute an information sheet for adults that provides information about the positive aspects of social networking, and that includes annotated lists of resources. You can also post the information on your library's website, blog, wiki, or MySpace.
- Sponsor a scholarly presentation, or series of presentations, for local educators and concerned adults by experts in the field of developmental assets, teen print literacy in the world of technology, and social networking. Ask speakers to focus directly on how social networking technologies have positive benefits for teens.

Educating teens about online social networking

You can help teens use social networking technologies successfully, and safely, by sponsoring programs and services that focus on these technologies. The following examples are available to help you get started. Show these examples to your TAG and see which one(s) they feel are important to offer in your community. Have your TAG help plan and carry out the event(s).

- Offer a class to teach teens how to use Blogger.com. When teens set up their blog you can facilitate a discussion about how to be safe when blogging, whether or not it's a good idea to have open comments on the blog, etc.
- Host Do-It-Yourself Days for teens where they learn about a variety of social networking technologies. You might have a day for photo-sharing technologies, another day for bookmarking sites, another day for friend building, and so on. During each of the sessions you can talk with teens about how to make decisions about safe use of these technologies.
- Work with teens to produce podcasts on topics of interest. They might review media and books, talk about what's going on in the community, book talk, etc. As a part of the podcast process, have teens write outlines of the content they want to cover and talk with them about who they want to make the podcast available to.

- Create a library books and media wiki as a means for recommending resources to library patrons. Train teens on how to update the content of the wiki and talk about how to evaluate the quality of information in wikis and other types of resources.
- Take photos at the library and have teens upload and tag them on Flickr or another photo-sharing and tagging site. As a part of the uploading and tagging process, discuss with teens whether or not the photos should be private or public. As they tag the photos, ask them to consider what the best ways are to describe content in order for friends or the public (if the photos are made public) to find them.
- Have teens create del.icio.us accounts for collecting resources they can use in school research. The teens can network with classmates and peers in del.icio.us in order to learn about resources their peers have uncovered that support learning on a particular topic. Use del.icio.us networking as a jumping off point for a discussion of evaluating information quality.
- Use Flickr as a platform for creative writing exercises with teens. Upload your own, or teens', photos to Flickr and then have teens write their thoughts, ideas, and feelings related to photos that you've uploaded.
- Invite a technology expert in to talk with teens about how social networking tools work.
- Give teens the chance to connect with favourite authors, artists, musicians, and so on via MySpace and personal blogs. Teens can search for the spaces and blogs using common searching tools and then comment on the blogs and MySpace spaces of those they connect with.
- Build a library MySpace with teens. Have teens meet to plan the space, including what it should look like and include. Work with them to build the site, and develop guidelines for blogging, commenting, and making friends on the site. As a part of this project, talk with teens about how to decide whether or not to accept those who want to befriend them on MySpace. Add value to your MySpace presence through links to online safety and library resources. Make it possible for teens to add your catalogue search on their MySpace accounts.

Teens and social networking in libraries (cont.)

Social Networking Sites

del.icio.us

<http://www.del.icio.us>
Combines bookmarking and tagging. Allows users to network with others in order to keep track of what is being bookmarked by those with similar interests.

Flickr

<http://www.flickr.com/>
A photo-sharing site that allows users to tag images.


MySpace

<http://www.myspace.com>
Users build their space on the Web and then invite others to be their friends.

Technorati

<http://www.technorati.com/>
A searchable database of blogs that gives bloggers the ability to tag content for easy access by others.

Wikipedia

<http://www.wikipedia.org/>
A wiki encyclopedia that gives anyone the ability to add to and change entries. 

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Customising Web searching for students

One school's ICT Services Manager, Scott Moller, has created a site to assist students to search a growing database of Australian and international sources, including educational sites and EdNA curriculum resources.

Librarians today are faced with the challenge of assisting students to find appropriate and relevant information in an ever-expanding cyberspace. The free Google custom search engine – *studysearch.com.au* – has been developed in Australia to give results that are tuned for students and educators.



studysearch.com.au home page

How does it work?

The search uses the power of Google combined with a growing database of educational websites. When a search is done, Google refers to our database of sites and emphasises them in the results, pushing 'better' content to the top.

Why was this site developed?

Many schools publish static lists of educational websites on their intranet or public website. These will often have a limited search function that is unable to

index Microsoft Word®, Microsoft Excel® or PDF content. Subscription-based services that index public websites are a useful alternative; however, these come at a cost. By including these static lists, *studysearch.com.au* provides a facility for teachers and librarians to use the power of Google's search but have an influence on the results returned.

What sites are listed?

The *studysearch.com.au* can choose to emphasise an entire website, a page of a website, or to dynamically extract and include all the sites a web page links to. The indexed content comes from a number of sources including Australian and international government and semi-government sites, EdNA curriculum resources, TeacherTube, and reviewed national and international educational sites. Teachers and librarians are encouraged to submit useful websites using a form on the *studysearch.com.au* site. Submitted sites are evaluated and included in the index (as a general rule, commercial sites will not be included unless they provide a suitable level of free educational content).


An added level of protection

Results on *studysearch.com.au* are automatically filtered by Google SafeSearch. This provides a level of protection from adult or sexually explicit content. (SafeSearch is not designed to replace school or home Internet content filters – appropriate Internet safeguards should still be used).

Internet content filtering

Many schools operate within an environment covered by an Internet content filter. This can provide challenges for both students and educators when researching more sensitive topics in secondary school. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that *studysearch.com.au* produces results that are more likely to be 'content filter friendly' under certain topic areas. This is due to the inclusion of many trusted educational Internet sources that content filters will allow.

The future

Through collaboration with teachers and librarians, *studysearch.com.au* will continue to provide a free educational search engine for students and educators. Feedback is essential for the future development of *studysearch.com.au* and users are encouraged to contact the site developer with any questions, comments or site submissions. 

Scott Moller
ICT Services Manager
Cannon Hill Anglican College, Brisbane

2008 *CensusAtSchool* data is now available!



With over 30% of Australian schools participating, *CensusAtSchool* provides teachers and students with a rich source of real, raw data about Australian school students for use in the classroom.

CensusAtSchool makes data engaging for students while improving their understanding about data collection and analysis. Students complete an online questionnaire about themselves, to build an Australia-wide database from which random samples of real data can be generated. The student-centred approach to learning means students are able to pose their own questions about what interests them, utilising the *CensusAtSchool* database as the source of their investigations. Essentially students turn data into information that makes sense, allowing them to build a picture of the world around them.

The project's educational value spans a range of year levels and subject areas. *CensusAtSchool* supports integrated cross-curriculum learning, so that data can be used in several classes. An important strength of *CensusAtSchool* is that the data can be downloaded into spreadsheets, data visualisation software and calculators for analysis, hence facilitating the use of IT in the classroom.

What's new about *CensusAtSchool* in 2008?

CensusAtSchool 2008 includes a range of new information.

- International common questions that enable direct comparison of data between participating countries. Students can see how they compare with their overseas peers regarding physical characteristics, languages spoken, their journey to school, reaction times, sporting interests and opinions on topical environmental and social issues.
- New questions on student income, hours of sleep, use of technology and time spent on various activities enhance the cross-curriculum application of the data.

- Addition of an Indigenous identifier and expanded student opinion questions about topical issues such as water conservation, climate change and access to technology.

Many questions have also been retained from the 2006 questionnaire so that trends over time can be examined, giving a basis for time series analysis.

How to get the data

Questionnaire response data will be returned in three convenient formats, in addition to prepared classroom activities.



- 1 The Random Sampler** facility allows you to select a sample from the questionnaire response data. You can select either 2006 or 2008 data or questions common to both collections. You can also tailor your sample by selecting specific characteristics such as gender, postcode, year level, dominant hand, eye colour and school size. You also have the option of selecting only international common questions. This flexible resource allows you to explore real data to answer a range of open-ended questions. The possibilities are endless.
- 2 Prepared Samples** have already been taken from the Random Sampler and converted into Excel format. Some simplified samples will have frequency tables and charts drawn to assist in analysing the data.
- 3 Information Tables** are ready to use for classroom activities. A range of tables, some with summary information, have been prepared to give teachers the option of a paper version of the *CensusAtSchool* data.

What can be done with the data?

Mathematics: Students can investigate continuous and discrete data sets; sort numerical data using mean and median functions; use the Microsoft Excel[®] functions to create tables and graphs for categorical data; and use the database for conducting univariate and bivariate analysis. Students can also explore correlation and regression via the application of technology.

SOSE/HSIE: Students can examine cultural diversity based on birthplace and languages spoken at home, analyse different perspectives on environmental and geographical issues, investigate background and heritage of Australian students, and research and analyse leisure activities and time use.

ICT: An important strength of *CensusAtSchool* is that the data can be downloaded into spreadsheets, data visualisation software and calculators for analysis. The project develops ICT skills by using Microsoft Excel[®] as a tool for investigation and data display. Students can learn to simplify a random sample, sort data and use functions, create frequency tables and draw graphs.

Health & PE: Students can investigate eating habits; time spent on different leisure activities such as playing computer games compared to outdoor sports; observe favourite sporting activities of students across the globe; look at sleeping patterns of Australian students. **Q**

For more information, visit the *CensusAtSchool* website at <http://www.abs.gov.au/censusatschool> or phone 1800 623 273.

Internetting corner

Australian War Memorial Online Encyclopedia

<http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/index.htm>

Using the content from their own databases and websites, as well as links to external sources, the Australian War Memorial has developed an encyclopedia featuring Australia's military history and information on the Memorial itself.

SCIS No: 1358800

Bullying. No Way!

<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/default.shtml>

An initiative of all Australian education authorities, this site provides research, extensive resources, strategies and information about how to address bullying. The material is relevant for primary and secondary students, parents, staff and community members.

SCIS No: 1096974

Climate Change Resources for Teachers and Students – What You Can Do

<http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/education/tips/school.html>

Crammed with a variety of information, this Australian Government site is invaluable for studying the impact of climate change. Highlights include a thirty-year visual record of landscape and vegetation change in Australia, a guide to green vehicles and programs for school communities.

SCIS No: 1358805

Digital Camera Tips and Reviews

<http://www.photonhead.com/>

One of *Time Magazine's* top 50 websites for 2007, this encompassing resource offers beginners to digital photography a range of tutorials, tips and graphics to explore the techniques, software and hardware needed to obtain quality results.

SCIS No: 1358817

Digital Learning Objects

<http://www.nzmaths.co.nz/LearningObjects/>

Explore the large number of new resources now available in the Digital Learning Objects section of *nzmaths*. Although school registration is required to access these resources, NZ teachers will uncover valuable teaching activities, interesting curriculum links and some engaging websites.

SCIS No: 1358835

Film Australia Digital Learning – Digital Resource Finder

<http://dl.filmaust.com.au/>

Winner of the Secondary Educational Website category in the 2007 Australian Awards for Excellence in Educational Publishing, this resource features free video clips from Film Australia's extensive collection. Integral to the site are the search engine and resource sheets that partner the clips.

SCIS No: 1358881

The Going to Uni Homepage

<http://www.goingtouni.gov.au/>

This Australian Government site caters for students in Year 12 contemplating university in 2009. Students and parents will find a range of essential information regarding courses, fees, entrance requirements and government assistance.

SCIS No: 1031553

Nobel Prize Internet Archive

<http://www.almaz.com/nobel/>

Current and past Nobel Prize winners in the categories of literature, physics, chemistry, economics, peace, physiology and medicine are listed. Quizzes, news bytes, interviews and randomly selected Nobel links will engage students.

SCIS No: 1074296

Poetry Foundation: The Online Home of the Poetry Foundation

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>

Hosting an impressive array of poetry, this searchable archive is published by an independent US literary organisation. Aiming to promote the best poetry to the widest audience, The Poetry Foundation's website also features podcasts, news, blogs, a children's section and access to *Poetry* magazine.

SCIS No: 1358504

Reading Rockets: Video Interviews

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews>

Part of a larger USA multimedia project focusing on how students learn to read, this section features video interviews with 50 children's authors and illustrators. The interviews highlight early breaks, favourite books and insights into writing and illustrating.

SCIS No: 1358547

Science by Email

<http://www.csiro.au/services/ScienceBYEmailMain.html>

This innovative online science newsletter is produced by the CSIRO primarily for teachers and members of the Double Helix Science Club. Content includes: science news, experiments, quizzes, top science websites, competitions and SCOPE TV previews.

SCIS No: 1358675

Sea and Sky

<http://seasky.org/index.html>

Vital aspects of the world's oceans are investigated, with particular emphasis on the environment, commerce and recreation. A variety of technology and photography is used to promote the many facets and importance of the global ocean.

SCIS No: 1358684

Shaun Tan

<http://www.shauntan.net/>

Shaun Tan's superb illustrations and art works are the feature of this website. Other sections comprise biographical data, the background to the 'picture books for older readers' he has written and illustrated, and information regarding other projects he is involved with.

SCIS No: 1302618

Vue de Monde: French Restaurant Melbourne

<http://www.vuedemonde.com.au/>

The visual feast of this beautifully presented website is matched by the menus and recipes on offer at the restaurant, bistro and café. Secondary students studying French, web design, graphic art and food technology will be intrigued by this imaginative site.

SCIS No: 1358690

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Teacher librarian, South Grafton Primary School Email: npaull@telstra.com

The Internet sites abstracted in Internetting Corner 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 may not be permanent.

SCIS handy hint

Command search in SCIS OPAC

In SCIS OPAC a *Command* search can be a quick way to locate records related to specific topics by combining terms and truncating.

A *Command* search provides the most direct method of advanced searching. It is a powerful search that allows you to combine words and/or phrases, wildcards and the Boolean operators: *and*, *or* and *not*. Boolean operators can be entered in upper or lower case. Phrases must be enclosed in quotation marks. The question mark (?) is used as a wildcard. Parentheses are used to group parts of your query for more complex searches.

Command search using Boolean operators

By using *and*, *or* and *not*, the search will combine the search terms. For example if *Antarctica and website* is entered in the *Find* box and *Command* selected from the *In* box, the result will be records that have both of the terms 'Antarctica' and 'website'.

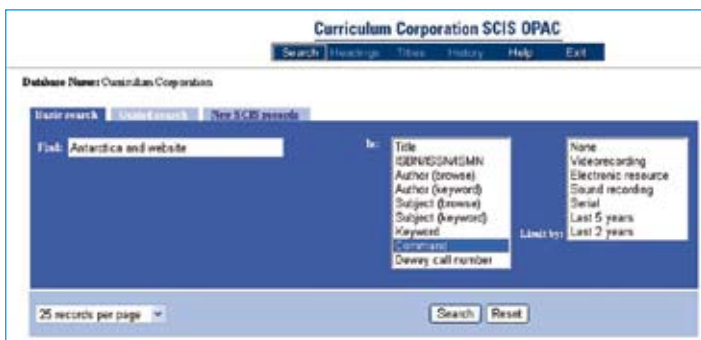


Figure 1: Using *and* as the operator in Command search

Command search using wildcard

The wildcard character (?) may be used to substitute one or more characters in a search term. Truncating a search term using the question mark (?) will result in a search for the word and any characters that follow. For example, *explor?* would give results with explore, explored, explorer, explorers, exploring and exploration.

New and revised subject headings

Headings marked with an asterisk in the following list are existing allowed headings which have been updated with changes to references or notes. New headings are marked as N. Previously allowed headings which have become USE references are marked as U. Deleted headings are marked as D.

For full details of these headings, see the SCIS website at <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/productinfo/suppliers.htm>.

* Ballets

N Ballets - Plots, storylines, etc.

D Ballets - Plots, themes, etc.

* Characters and characteristics in literature

N Church history - 20th century

N Church history - 21st century

* Documentary films

* Drama

N Drama - Plots, storylines, etc.

D Europe - History - 1945-

N Europe - History - 1945-2000

N Europe - History - 2000-

* Fiction

* Film adaptations

N Films - Plots, storylines, etc.

D Films - Plots, themes, etc.

* Food industry

D Japan - History - 1945-

N Japan - History - 1945-2000

N Japan - History - 2000-

* Literature

N Music - Plots, storylines, etc.

N Operas - Plots, storylines, etc.

D Operas - Plots, themes, etc.

U Plot (Drama, fiction, etc.)

N Plots, storylines, etc.

N Shakespeare, William -

Plots, storylines, etc.

D Shakespeare, William - Plots, themes, etc.

* Television documentaries

* World politics - 1945-1965

D World politics - 1965-

N World politics - 1965-1989

N World politics - 1989-

* Writing (Authorship) 



Figure 2: Using the wildcard ? in Command search

Searches may also be constructed with more terms. For example, you may wish to find out what websites (includes records with links to websites) are available in relation to endangered frogs. You can use *endangered and frog? and website*. The question mark (?) will search for the singular or plural of the term.

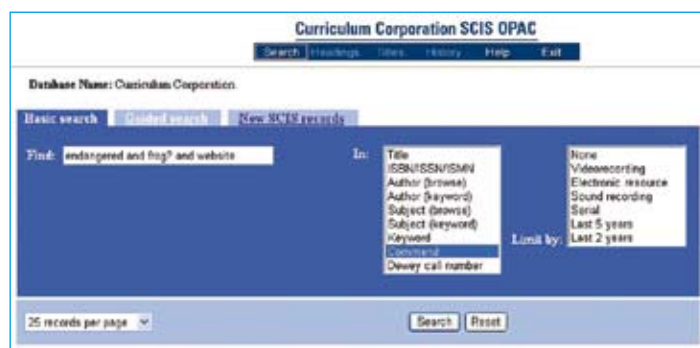



Figure 3: Complex Command search query

Limit by

Searches can also be refined by selecting from the *Limit by* list. *Videorecording* will include both VHS and DVD. *Electronic resource* will include disk, CD-ROM, website and learning object. 

SCIS news

10 years of SCISWeb!

Schools commenced downloading catalogue records from the Internet using *SCISWeb* 10 years ago. The online process was a great improvement on the previous delivery methods for catalogue records that schools had been using from 1977 until 1997. Rather than wait for the delivery of catalogue records in the post, library staff could log onto *SCISWeb* to download the catalogue records they required.

Over the 10 years the number of catalogue records on the SCIS database has almost doubled. At the beginning of 1998 schools had access to 595,595 catalogue records. By the beginning of 2008 they had access to 1,020,441 catalogue records including over 10,000 websites.

Enhancements have been made to *SCISWeb* to improve the service over the years. The number of users has increased significantly – from 7,307 at the beginning of 1998 to 11,124 at the beginning of 2008. The

majority of subscribers are based in schools in Australia and New Zealand, with some schools from 23 other countries also using *SCISWeb*.

2 SCIS subscriptions 2009

The cost of a subscription to *SCISWeb*, *SCIS Subject Headings Online* and *SCIS Authority Files* will not increase in 2009. In October 2008, invoices will be despatched to schools not involved in a bulk subscription. Look on our website for payment information, <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/productinfo/payment.htm#payment>

AskNow.gov.au



AskNow website

AskNow is a virtual reference service staffed by librarians in Australia and New Zealand. It aims to provide high quality information to users, with the convenience of immediate, online communication. Using purpose-built software, it allows librarians and users to interact in real time.

How the service works

By completing a Web form users can submit a question and chat to a librarian who will help find high quality information. The *AskNow* software allows librarians to provide more than just an answer; the chat session is an opportunity for users to learn how to find information for themselves. During a session, the librarian can 'push' websites and other information directly to the user's computer while chatting. Librarians can also initiate a co-browse session with a user, which allows both parties to see the same screen.

At the close of the session, users who have supplied an email address will receive a transcript of the session, including links to any Web pages sent by the librarian.

Who we are

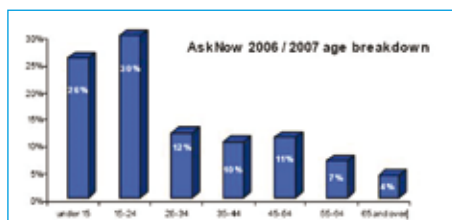
AskNow is a collaborative service offered by National and State Libraries of Australasia (NSLA), a consortium of Australasian national, state and public libraries. Over 100 librarians, working three at a time, provide information and research help, Monday to Friday, between 9 am and 7 pm AEST.

For students

AskNow is happy to help you get started with your assignment or project. They will suggest some useful searches or websites to explore, but will not provide THE answer. *AskNow* can only provide information and suggestions.

More information available from <http://www.asknow.gov.au/for-students.html#we>

Client profile



Age breakdown

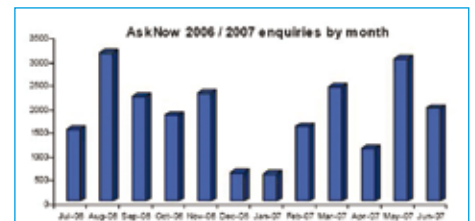
In the 2006 / 2007 financial year:

- 61% of enquiries were for research or study
- 23% of enquiries were for personal interest or family history
- 11% of enquiries were for work or business
- 5% of enquiries were for other reasons.

Statistics


Over 108,000 sessions have been conducted since 2004; an average of 31,127 per year.

87% of clients in the 2006 / 2007 financial year rated the service as good, very good or excellent. In the period June to Sept 2007 36.25% of requests were for school assignments compared with 41.75% in 2006.



Enquiries by month

del.icio.us

AskNow has set up a *del.icio.us* account to help with our queries. The *AskNow del.icio.us* website – <http://del.icio.us/usefulresources> – helps librarians find relevant websites and online resources quickly, while also satisfying user expectations and matching their information needs. When a question is received, the librarian can search within *del.icio.us/usefulresources* for an appropriate website. It's a good alternative to general search engines, as searching is facilitated by the use of *del.icio.us* descriptive tags which assign categories and descriptive words to websites. Websites are further sorted into primary, secondary and tertiary levels so that they can be matched to the experience or learning level of the user. 

More information is available at <http://www.asknow.gov.au>

**AskNow – Chat Reference
National Library of Australia
Canberra ACT 2600**

Challenges for teacher librarianship in the 21st century: Part 1 – Technology

What are our challenges? Before seeking solutions and strategies to the challenges that face teacher librarians in a changed information environment, it is important to identify clearly what these are so we know exactly what we are dealing with, before seeking out solutions and strategies. Attached to these challenges are personal and professional issues that may be confronting and uncomfortable, and require us to re-evaluate ourselves and our performance.

Our challenges are:

- 1 technology
- 2 time and workload
- 3 status and role.

These challenges will be discussed in three parts over three issues of *Connections*.

1 Technology and the changing nature of information

The information environment has changed radically during the last twenty years and technology is now a significant factor in how we work, play and learn. For young people especially, technology is an integral part of their everyday landscape. Many young people have never known a world without instantaneous access to vast quantities of information using a multitude of formats, text types, graphics and multimedia. They are the ultimate consumers and for them, technology is a transparent part of their social, economic and educational landscape. They have no fear of technology. Adults observe and marvel at their seemingly effortless and sometimes simultaneous use of a wide range of technologies, often without referring to instruction manuals.

Understand your role within a changing context

So our first challenge as teacher librarians is to come to terms with this changing information landscape. Our second challenge is to assist others to make sense of this sea of information, which is growing exponentially. For many of us, these are fundamental challenges to overcome. We are members of a greying profession. Many librarians and teacher librarians consider they have already had their major flirtation with technology in the form of automated

catalogues, the introduction of (Web) OPACs and the convergence of information telecommunications technologies (ICTs) – changes that were a feature of libraries in the 1990s.

In many schools, the integrated automated library system is the only example of a fully functioning database that has intranet and Internet facilities and that is available for students to learn how to access information electronically in a relatively safe environment. Even a stand-alone automated catalogue requires students to use the same skills to be able to find information electronically as those used to search the Web – a salient fact rarely advertised by the teacher librarian and acknowledged by administration, teachers or students. Many teacher librarians are reluctant to move out of their comfort zones again and accept the new challenges that continuing advancements in technology pose for educational environments and school libraries.

In many cases teacher librarians have become library managers, rather than teachers. While the day-to-day management of the library's systems is essential for the smooth running of the facility, it is one that can be left in the capable hands of a trained library technician (or a competent library officer, depending on your staffing). The teacher librarian should be acting as a manager in this role, rather than a hands-on technician. The first step towards taking up the challenges posed by technology is to accept that your role is not the day-to-day management of the library – it is so much more.

Update technology skills

The second step is to get serious about gaining and updating your technology skills. This can be daunting, exhilarating and incredibly satisfying once you get started. It re-connects you to what is happening in the world of information, acts as intellectual stimulation when you re-engage with your peers and leads to lifelong learning – something educators, schools and teachers often preach about, but rarely model in actual practice. You can access formal short courses or self-initiated Web tutorials in how to use wordprocessing, slide show and desktop publishing programs or you can learn how

to create Web pages and use collaborative tools such as Moodle[®] and chat. You can access tertiary certificates to upgrade your qualifications, or complete a Masters degree on evidence-based practice in your school.

The completion of formal courses is a commitment to personal professional development that goes beyond attending conferences and sharing best practice, although these are very important as well. Of course Rome wasn't built in a day and updating yourself will take time. You also want to avoid becoming the network technician – this is not your role either. If schools are serious about the provision of technology and the educational benefits that it can provide for students, then they will fund the appointment of a network technician. You do not want to suddenly become manager of the network as well, where you spend your days troubleshooting broken equipment, disciplining students/staff for inappropriate use or documenting missing mice, malfunctioning screens and broken connections.

Develop strategies to manage the new information context

In your role as information specialist, you do want to have a say in policy development, the implementation of learning technologies and how they are integrated in curriculum programs in the school and how the network is used for access to information, resource-based learning and curriculum development. To do this successfully you have to have some knowledge of what is happening in the world of information outside the school.

Strategy 1 – learn to prioritise

Determine what you need to do to update yourself and set in motion a realistic timeline. You need to enjoy yourself, otherwise your learning will become as tedious as some of the programs we inflict on our students.

Strategy 2 – be realistic

Partners, family obligations and real life surprises need to be accommodated. We are not superwomen/men. If you are not realistic about what you can do, there is a real possibility of burn-out, non-completion and a real feeling of failure.

When this happens, it is even harder to accept the challenge and begin again.

Strategy 3 – become a strategic planner

We plan our teaching programs; daily, weekly and annual school calendars; and for technology upgrades, but we rarely strategically plan for ourselves. Use those skills you already have to write down a personal strategic plan. Include all aspects of your life, personal and professional. Revisit the plan every six months to reflect on and evaluate your progress. While you may not reach your goals every time, at least you know what your goals are and sometimes you will be successful.

Strategy 4 – learn to delegate and collaborate

Learn to delegate those things that someone else can do, so you can get on with your real job as teacher librarian. Resist the urge to check their work. Delegation means handing over responsibility, empowering others and managing their work. If your library technician or officer has the skills to put up displays, produce brochures and signage, download catalogue records or put things onto the website, then let them do it. You develop the annual operational plan and the content, decide the timelines and performance manage staff.

If you don't have the technological skills you require to complete a task, such as developing a website for a piece of online curriculum or a WebQuest, then collaborate with someone in your school such as the Digital Media or Computer teacher who does have the knowledge and skills. You can even collaborate with students! Use your local expertise rather than trying to re-invent the wheel yourself. You will not only save time and your sanity, but may be surprised at how little you know about your colleagues and their areas of expertise. Extend your collaborative partnerships outside your school. Attend local conferences and become an active member of your professional association. These events and bodies provide opportunities to forge new

partnerships and discuss programs at a practical level. The Internet also provides opportunities for you to create virtual networks, participate in collaborative partnerships and share best practice.


Strategy 5 – don't make assumptions

If you are going to assist students and staff to make sense of this new information environment, don't make assumptions about their skill levels. Research shows that while young people are fearless users of technology, they use it at a superficial level. They flick, bounce and surf the Web; they do not know where they are in virtual space; and they trust any information they find via electronic means implicitly (Combes, 2006). They are not effective or efficient users of technology and they don't actually understand issues such as copyright and intellectual property in an environment that uses terms such as open source, free Web, creative commons, freeware, shareware and public domain. It is little wonder that we are now witnessing a 'cut and paste' generation, where plagiarism and breaches of copyright are rife (Combes, 2005). I suspect that many staff members also fall into this category of the superficial user.

Strategy 6 – staff professional development

Professional development for all your staff is essential if you are going to create a dynamic, multi-dimensional library and information centre that is the focus for teaching and learning in your school. All members of your staff need to have ongoing professional development in updating technology skills and sharing best practice with others. You need to include these opportunities in your operational plan and the budget. All professional staff should also be encouraged to pursue further professional development in their own time and at their own expense as part of their commitment to the profession. This should be included in your staff performance management.

Strategy 7 – Promotion and advertising

Always promote yourself and your library. This may take the form of publicising your successes in the parent newsletter, giving your Principal a copy of your latest conference/journal paper, providing your Principal with a report of staff professional development that includes an evaluation of how this will benefit student learning outcomes or offering to share your knowledge in the form of professional development sessions for school staff. Take every opportunity to remind your school community that the library is the centre of curriculum in the school and you are the information specialist and support teacher. Always self-promote. This may be subtle and include simple things as including a library logo and your copyright information on every template, FAQ sheet or teaching aid/document that you produce to assist teachers and students. Always include a direction back to the library and yourself for further information and/or assistance. 

Barbara Combes
Lecturer
Edith Cowan University

See the next issue of *Connections for Challenges for teacher librarianship in the 21st century: Part 2 – time and workload*.

This article is based on the keynote address presented at the Libraries Linking Learning and Literacies, South Africa, 8–11 August 2006.

The article with bibliography appears in the online version of *Connections* 66 at <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connections/latest.htm>

Educational Lending Right

Australian lending rights in the international context

All lending right programs around the globe are based on the premise that creators of books should be compensated for the potential loss of income they incur because their books are circulated through libraries instead of purchased. Creators of books may include authors, illustrators, editors, compilers, translators and publishers. In Australia we have two such programs: Public Lending Right (PLR) and Educational Lending Right (ELR).

International context

Twenty-three countries currently have a national Public Lending Rights system. Denmark was the first country to establish a PLR system in 1946, followed by Norway in 1947 and Sweden in 1954. Australia set up its Public Lending Right scheme in 1974 and its Educational Lending Right scheme in 2000.

In 1995 the PLR International Network was set up to promote international awareness of PLR and inform the PLR community of events, developments and news from around the world. This network provides the most up-to-date information on the implementation of PLR across the globe.

Internationally, lending rights are based on three different rationales. In some countries, such as Germany, Austria and The Netherlands, Public Lending Right is part of the copyright legislation. In these countries, lending is seen as a type of copyright exploitation of authors' works and payments are made to authors who have books in libraries. In Germany these payments are made by the State. In The Netherlands, it is the libraries themselves that make the payments to authors through specific agencies created for this purpose.

Other countries, like the United Kingdom, have passed specific PLR legislation on the premise that authors have a legal right to receive payment from the government for the lending out of their books by public libraries. While this legislation gives authors a right to payment, they may not prohibit the lending of their books.

The third category of lending right schemes are those based on the concept of State support for its country's culture. By providing payments only to writers who create in a particular language or to citizens, the State ensures that PLR

payments encourage the growth of the writing and publishing industry within that particular country. For example, the Finnish Government provides payments to any authors or translators who live or have permanently lived in Finland and whose works enhance the Finnish Culture. Denmark provides payments to authors of books written in the Danish language.

Australian lending right schemes

Australia's lending right schemes are based on these last two categories. Australia's PLR is run under the *Public Lending Right Act 1985*.

The objects of this Act are:

- (a) to make payments to Australian creators of books, and to publishers of books in Australia, in recognition of their loss of income from their books being available for loan from, or for use in, public lending libraries in Australia; and*
- (b) to support the enrichment of Australian culture by encouraging Australian persons to create books and by encouraging publishers to publish books in Australia.*

Both PLR and ELR in Australia have no connection to any copyright legislation at all, although they do operate under a legislative framework.

Eligibility criteria

Criteria for eligibility for the Australian PLR or ELR payments are that the creators must be citizens or permanent residents of Australia. This ensures that all lending right funds are used to exclusively develop Australian culture, as is the case in Finland and Denmark. In The Netherlands and Germany, where lending right is linked to copyright law, payments are made to creators of any nationality.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) represents library and information services and their users. They have expressed concern over the growing number of PLR schemes and their impact on the free delivery of library and information services. In a paper titled *The IFLA Position on Public Lending Right* (April 2005), they state that IFLA does not support any lending right schemes that are linked to copyright and that may impede free access to information: 'If a PLR system is introduced, it should be either a cultural support scheme or a remuneration right with its own enabling legislation outside the

copyright legislative regime.'

Australia's two lending right schemes, PLR and ELR, fit within the IFLA guidelines.

Payment


The IFLA's position on the funding of any lending right scheme is very clear. In the position paper they write:

Access to public libraries, whether to use the works they contain for reference purposes or in order to borrow them, must remain free at the point of use ... the funds for establishing and maintaining PLR systems and remunerating rights holders must not come from library budgets but should be separately funded by the State.

In most countries funding for the PLR scheme comes from the national government, except in The Netherlands, where the libraries themselves are responsible for the funding the PLR scheme. All funding for the Australian ELR and PLR schemes are allocated by the Minister responsible for the Public Lending Right Act. No money is diverted from governmental funding allocations to libraries (public or educational) to run the Australian lending right schemes.

Each country's PLR scheme specifies what material is eligible for payments. Most focus on printed material, although some cover audiovisual as well as electronic material, especially those whose PLR schemes are linked to copyright. In Australia any book that has an ISBN, is offered for sale and has no more than five creators is eligible for the scheme.

There are varying methods of calculation of payments. Finland's PLR schemes work on providing grants and subsidies to authors, illustrators and translators. Most other countries calculate payments on the basis of how often an item is loaned. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Greenland and New Zealand base payments on the number of copies of the book estimated to be held in libraries.

Australia's authors, illustrators, publishers, translators, compilers and editors play an essential role in enriching Australian culture. The Australian government's PLR and ELR schemes are designed to support them in their work. Australian libraries benefit from the scheme, as it ensures that quality Australian material is available for libraries to circulate to their clients, both students and the wider public. 

Renate Beilharz
ELR Project Officer

The Le@rning Federation

Simplifying your task as teacher librarians

Over 6,000 items of digital content, organised by subject categories, have been published as published catalogues on TLF website. Descriptions of all learning objects released to date are available in these catalogues. The catalogues list samples from our digital resources and collections ranges. Some of the content is relevant to more than one area and so may appear in more than one catalogue.

Browsing through available digital content is easy – pick your subject area catalogue and then select the year levels or a particular strand within that subject that you want.

The learning objects are generally published in series and some learning objects within a series are aggregated into single learning objects. Aggregated learning objects are identified with the symbol:



Some catalogues also include Collection items. These are drawn from the total pool of digital content. Teachers can combine learning objects and/or digital resource items to build rich and diverse learning tasks. Collections are marked by the symbol:



Subject catalogues.



The Arts and design set of learning objects focuses on creative skills, critical and aesthetic appreciation of artistic techniques and technologies in media, music and visual arts. It includes the popular *Directional Design* series learning object that can also be used as an ESL learning object.



The Australian history catalogue includes learning objects for the P–10 years, thousands of digital resources and collections of content built around themes and topics in Australian history. With thousands of single digital resources relevant to Australian history, teachers are advised to use keywords and topics in the search tools on their access systems to TLF digital content.



In this catalogue, learning objects pertinent to Years P–10 are included. They help students to engage in learning experiences that enhance their capacities and skills to be innovative, creative and entrepreneurial. Students are immersed in environments that provide opportunities to undertake and enact entrepreneurial roles.



This catalogue includes content from Studies of Australia and English and Literacy curriculum strands. It also includes a list of relevant digital resources and collection items. Opportunities for creating integrated themes and multidisciplinary units to engage and enthuse students in Civics and citizenship are available.



This is a relatively new project area for TLF with the first release of new learning objects for this area in March 2008. The content described is designed to support teaching and learning in the early years of schooling (K/P, 1 and 2 years – the first three years of compulsory schooling). This catalogue includes learning objects for the other curriculum areas.



This catalogue provides details about the digital content for English and literacy in the 5–9 years. TLF content includes a wide range of multimodal texts including print, visual, audio and interactive formats that enable teachers to design curriculum tasks within a contemporary multiliteracies framework. The learning objects are divided into various strands – Literacy production, Literacy reception, Literacy critical multiliteracies and English as a second language.



Examples of secondary English-teacher developed units of work are also available on *TLF website > For Teachers > What's new > Secondary English teaching ideas*



The learning objects selected for this catalogue are drawn from Studies of Australia (Shaping the Future and Australia in the World), Science, English and Literacy, and Arts and design.

This catalogue includes a sample of digital content that has an Indigenous perspective or contains Indigenous content. It is not a comprehensive catalogue and is intended to illustrate the range of material produced and made available by TLF.



Languages include Chinese, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese. Individual catalogues for these languages are available. Content has either been created by TLF or licensed from other sources and made available by TLF. A highlight is the Chinese and Japanese character catalogue, available at <http://charactercatalogue.thelearningfederation.edu.au>



The Mathematics and numeracy and Science subject areas have the maximum number of learning objects. To simplify the task of downloading a single large catalogue, we've split the catalogue according to strands within the subject. Mathematics and numeracy now has individual catalogues.

These catalogues are also made available via the access system in your state or territory. Please visit *TLF website > For Teachers > Access Information* page to find out how you can get free access to TLF's range of digital content.

To download or browse TLF catalogues visit *TLF website > For Teachers > Catalogues*. You can also sample some of the learning objects and digital resources on *TLF website > For Teachers > Sample learning materials*.

TLF website: <http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au>

For any TLF specific enquiries, email info@thelearningfederation.edu.au

Rohini Mehta
Communications Officer
The Le@rning Federation

Resources

Learning for Themselves: Pathways to independence in the classroom

128 pp + CD-ROM

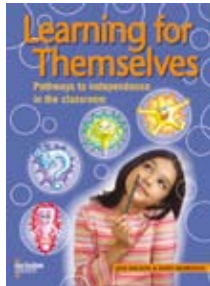
Authors: Dr Jeni Wilson and Kath Murdoch

RRP: \$45.00

SCIS No: 1334087

ISBN: 9781863666657

Professional resource



In a world of rapidly changing knowledge requiring new and transferable skills, classrooms are increasingly being viewed as places where students learn how to learn. Central to this objective is developing students' capacity to work independently and manage themselves as learners.

Learning for Themselves offers teachers a repertoire of effective strategies and frameworks to nurture independent learning. The learning tasks draw from commonly addressed topics in primary school curriculums and are designed to be adapted by students and teachers to suit particular interests and a range of teaching and learning goals.

The accompanying CD-ROM provides all learning tasks as well as a further 28 proformas to assist teachers and students in planning, managing, monitoring and keeping records associated with independent learning tasks.

Smart Thinking: Developing reflection and metacognition

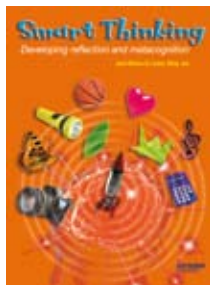
128 pp

Authors: Dr Jeni Wilson and Lesley Wing Jan

RRP: \$42.00

SCIS No: 1334089

ISBN: 9781863666787



This comprehensive resource aims to develop powerful and purposeful thinking and learning in everyday primary classrooms. **Reflection** occurs whenever a learner engages in active, persistent and careful consideration of a topic or idea to form a broader and more reasoned

understanding. **Metacognition** describes students' awareness, consideration and control of their own cognitive processes and approaches.

Building students' proficiency in reflection and metacognition supports them to become effective, strategic and independent learners. These skills can be applied in a myriad of contexts to enable students to more fully comprehend the world and their place in it. This book supports teachers in planning and implementing the teaching of these two skills, developing students' abilities to:

- question and self-question
- make connections between prior and new learning and thinking
- self-assess their work and development
- set meaningful and strategic goals.

Quality Comprehension: A strategic model of reading instruction using read-along guides, grades 3-6

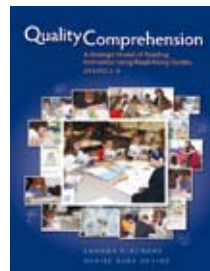
Authors: Sandra K Athans and Denise Ashe Devine

RRP: \$59.95

SCIS No: 1359473

ISBN: 9780872074644

International Reading Association



Improve the comprehension of your middle years students with the Quality Comprehension Model, a four-part approach to reading comprehension instruction that synthesises and refines best practices. You'll discover how to develop unique solutions to meet your students' individual needs through small-group instruction in key comprehension strategies, independent activities, assessments and the innovative Read-Along Guide.

The Read-Along Guide reinforces direct instruction of comprehension strategies and helps monitor and evaluate student reading of both fiction and nonfiction texts. Using this tool, your students will be able to demonstrate in writing their use and understanding of the strategies. A wealth of hands-on material, such as reproducible Read-Along Guides and planning and assessment charts, will help you implement the approach in your classroom.

Using Metacognitive Assessments to Create Individualized Reading Instruction

152 pp

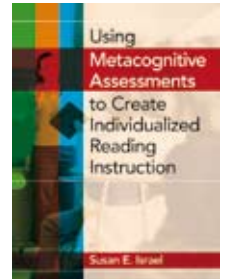
Author: Susan E Israel

RRP: \$49.95

SCIS No: 1359502

ISBN: 9780872076211

International Reading Association



Learn to use metacognitive assessments as teaching strategies to help your primary students become independent readers with better comprehension. This practical, teacher-friendly guide explains how metacognitive assessments can provide a better understanding of how your learners think about the reading process and their reading abilities. It also shows you how to use this information to adapt literacy instruction to students' individual needs.

You'll learn about all aspects of metacognitive reading instruction and how to use interviews, surveys and inventories of assessment tools. Additional teaching tools include chapter goals, classroom scenarios and resources to enrich your understanding.

Informational Text in K-3 Classrooms: Helping children read and write

168 pp

Authors: Sharon Bengé Kletzien and Mariam Jean Dreher

RRP: \$45.00

SCIS No: 1166109

ISBN: 9780872075375

International Reading Association



This book proves that informational texts are as effective as narrative texts in early reading instruction. Learn how you can build classroom libraries with quality texts appropriate for all children and find examples of how informational texts are used in different classroom settings.

Small-group Reading Instruction: A differentiated teaching model for intermediate readers, grades 3–8

296 pp

Authors: Beverly Tyner
and Sharon E Green

RRP: \$54.00

SCIS No: 1241689

ISBN: 9780872075740

*International Reading
Association*



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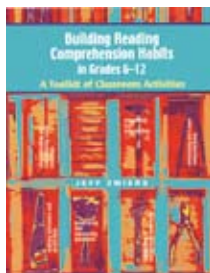
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