

connections

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Caught in the rip

Sister Betty Brown is an Information and Technology Services Adviser with the NSW CEO. She won the John Hirst Award in 2003 from ASLA in recognition of her contribution to the development of information services in school libraries in NSW. The following is her keynote address to the ASLA (NSW) Conference 2004, highlighting the need for teacher librarians and library support staff to be suitably qualified, and for ongoing support for professional development to keep up with the changing technological environment.

'Caught in the rip' seemed to apply fittingly to the flow of ideas relating to the professional development of school library staff and their support officers in particular. I have had some experience of tides and rips as a child, and my present work is the support and professional development of school library staff.

Consider the analogy:

- Are we aware of the swirling waters of change in society, in our home and work environments and in our beliefs, attitudes and value systems?
- Do we get stranded on the sandbank of complacency and irrelevance because we miss the signs of change and the need to be informed?
- Do we feel powerless, sucked out of our depth in the face of challenge?
- Do we feel pummelled by the shifting sands of client demand?
- Are we sometimes caught in the cross currents of expectations and realities?
- Is there a lifesaver around to warn of dangers and drag us out if we are drowning?

- What can we do ourselves to ensure a happy and fulfilling work environment?
- What can we do to support our colleagues also 'caught in the rip' of change?
- How can we trawl the tributaries together to provide effective service to the students and teachers in our schools?
- What does this all mean for the professional development of school library staff, particularly support officers?

If you feel the stresses of any of these issues, take time to reflect on your present situation and be open to understandings that could effect change. Let us go back in time to know where the journey of school libraries began in Australia. Let us celebrate our success. Let us plan wisely for future action.

Waves of change

Since Sara Innes Fenwick published her report on the quality of library services to children in Australia in the early 1960s, public and school libraries have been caught in the waves of change. Sara found the quality of library services to children in the school and public sectors to be very poor. She made many recommendations for improving those services. Fortunately the 'tide has turned' in the Australian community as it realises the potential of the library and the information services it offers. Governments have contributed significantly to the development of buildings and the purchase of resources. The library is an integral component of every school and local community. Services to children in Australian public and school libraries are now recognised and applauded world wide.

However, societal needs and expectations have changed with the rapid development of technology. We need to be constantly alert to the effects of change in society, in our homes and work places and on us individually. In particular, as the sands on the beach change every day, so we need to plan wisely to avoid any dissipation or erosion of information services if our students



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Caught in the rip (cont.)

and teachers are to have resources that meet the curriculum challenges of the 21st century. Library staff have a key role in that process.

Role of school library staff

Library staff, as managers of information resources and systems, have a critical part to play in making these resources available. They need to be professionally competent to deal with the demands for service in the information age. Library staff in schools will be 'caught in the rip' and sucked under the waves of change unless they are personally strong and professionally competent.

Increasingly, system administrators are recognising the need for library staff to be qualified. In the past, teachers or parent volunteers 'managed' library resources. The quality of materials, library organisation, cataloguing and circulation services left much to be desired. School libraries are now no longer repositories where 'dragons' chase up children to return their books and to be quiet and passive readers. Today school libraries need to be vital learning environments where students have access to a range of resources in different forms of media. They need to be guided in their usage by competent professional and paraprofessional staff.

It is the role of the teacher librarian to work with the principal, school and library staff to plan a library program to meet the needs of the curriculum as it is developed in each school. It is the role of the library support officer to support the teacher librarian in the implementation of the plan. It is imperative that each is suitably qualified to fulfil their roles effectively.

Courses available

While there are many courses available to qualify teacher librarians for their dual role as teacher and librarian, the opportunities for support officers have been limited.

Increasingly, government traineeships, distance education and technology have given library support officers the opportunity to upskill themselves in the areas of working with people, information technology and library management. All school systems should require of school library support officers a minimum of Certificate III in Library and

Information Services. The outcomes expected. and the competencies that accompany them, are essential for the efficient management of the school library in the 21st century. Library support officers must interact professionally with persons at all levels in the school community, use a range of complex technology for information, communication and management, and ensure that school resources are processed and controlled for maximum usage. Furthermore, it is desirable that library support officers, particularly those in secondary and large primary schools, move further to develop their skills through achievement of Certificate IV and Diploma if they are to meet the ongoing demand for sophisticated information services so necessary in education today. It is fair and just that those who proceed further to Certificate IV or diploma be remunerated accordingly.

Course details

Here are a few sites that spell out courses that can be done face to face or through flexible learning online. Check them out.

- TAFE NSW Course 3683 Library and Information Services — Certificate III (AQF) http://www.tafensw.edu.au/cgi-rdb/rdbweb/ handbook/XTP_MODCOMP_ TO?VTRAININGPKG_IND
- Course 3685 Library and Information Services — Diploma (AQF) http://www.tafensw.edu.au/cgi-rdb/ rdbweb/handbook/xtp_modcomp_ to?VTRAINPKG_IND=T
- Capra Ryan http://capraryan.com.au
- BCA National http://www.bcanational.com/Courses.htm

Raising the bar

While these courses teach basic library skills — and the competencies that accompany them are essential components in providing efficient services to clientele — they do not address effectively foundational issues of curriculum, learning and teaching and management of children.

If you are working in a school environment you need to have a basic knowledge of each of these topics. All library staff will have had experience of curriculum and methods of teaching and learning throughout their school years. Most would have experience

of managing their own children. However, the world has changed dramatically in the last twenty years — in the last five years in particular. The rate of change continues to accelerate. We cannot draw on our life experience alone. We need constantly to be updated in our fields of service.

Lifelong learning

- How can a library support officer support the teacher librarian to provide services to meet the needs of the curriculum if he or she does not really understand what curriculum is about?
- How can a library support officer support teachers and students if he or she does not have a basic understanding of teaching methods and the processes of learning?
- How can a library support officer be involved effectively in the library if he or she has not had some guidance in managing children other their own?

These are the most fundamental issues facing educators today. They are obvious. That's why we miss them! Everybody engaged in education uses these words. They are taken for granted, so little is done to articulate exactly what they mean for a particular school community! Our school program hinges on our understanding of the needs of the children in our care, on the design of the curriculum to meet those needs, and on the strategies we use to implement the program.

Library support staff in schools must have an understanding of what is involved in these matters. Their level of understanding affects the quality of the service they offer. It affects their goals and purpose. If we don't know where we are going will we ever get there? Understanding also affects the level of commitment to purpose. How enthusiastic are we for any task if we can't see its relevance? Being committed to a purpose affects our level of satisfaction with achievements. In turn that affects our feeling of self worth and the image we project to clientele. In turn this affects relationships among staff and students. These are vital issues in the development of community within the school. Library staff need to articulate their goals with a clear understanding of how their goals integrate with the educational purpose of the school. Library staff need to communicate these goals to the

school community if their roles and services are to be recognised and valued within the school community.

Library support officers need to consider these issues and be proactive in designing their path to ongoing professional development. Even if everybody presumes that you know all these things, if they don't understand why you need to know about them you then know that it is important for you to know. You have the right to know. You also have the responsibility to know.

Rights and responsibilities

Where do I find out about rights and responsibilities? Would a person become a vet without some knowledge of animals, their behaviours and care? Should a person be involved with the education of children without adequate knowledge of their behaviours and care?

Child protection education and occupational health and safety education are mandatory for all those dealing with children. Perhaps the government and educational administrators will make knowledge of curriculum, teaching and learning and pedagogy mandatory also. That is what schools are about after all.

Start where you work

Talk to your teacher librarian, your principal. Ask if you can be involved in staff meetings or in-services where these issues are discussed. Know what decisions are being made to enhance the curriculum in the school. Find out about the programs that are being implemented to enhance quality learning and teaching at the school. Maybe you can support some initiative by providing resources that are relevant. Find out how the school is dealing with the children with special needs and be consistent in management when the students come to the library.

Read

The internet is a fount of information on each of these topics. Have a look at:

Australian sources

Board of Studies

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/parents/index.html

There are many items on this website of particular interest to parents. They are sometimes a little difficult to locate as the

number of pages of information here reaches into the thousands. This page is designed to assist you by providing direct links to the most recent and relevant ones.

http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_sc/index.html

Stage 6 (Years 11–12) Syllabuses | K–6 (Primary) Syllabuses

This section gives an overview of all the curriculum syllabuses K–12.

[Ed: Each State has an equivalent Board or Authority with a website providing valuable curriculum information to parents.]

EdNA online

http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/page1.html

EdNA Online is a service that aims to support and promote the benefits of the Internet for learning, education and training in Australia. It is organised around Australian curriculum. Its tools are free to Australian educators. It is funded by the bodies responsible for education provision in Australia — all Australian governments.

As an information service, EdNA online provides two key functions:

- a directory about education and training in Australia
- a database of web-based resources useful for teaching and learning.

Overseas resources

Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting (CEEP)

http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/

CEEP provides publications and information to the worldwide early childhood and parenting communities.

http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics.html

This section provides information about popular topics on early education and parenting.

Early Childhood and Parenting (ECAP) Collaborative

http://ecap.crc.uiuc.edu/ This site is home to more than a dozen projects that focus on educating and raising young children. ECAP hosts research, technical assistance, and service projects.

Develop networks

It is vital that library support officers have interaction with and the support of colleagues. ASLA has recognised the need for such affiliation by opening membership of the association to support officers. All are encouraged to join the association and to benefit from the opportunities it offers — professional support, ongoing professional development, professional reading, and membership of an association that is on the cutting edge of education and school librarianship. See the ASLA website for details. http://www.asla.nsw.edu.au/.

Develop networks within your local area. Speak to your regional support officer about setting up a listserv for library support officers so that they can communicate easily with their peers. It is done within most systems for principals and school executives, ICT personnel and teacher librarians.

Keep an eye for in-services that are available and take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

Personal development

This is another facet of professional development that courses do not deal with in much depth. There is some guidance in coping with conflict and managing difficult people, but it is important that library staff who deal with most persons in the school take responsibility for their own wellbeing. There are many forms of personal development and relaxation therapies that will assist inner strength and wholeness.

Reflections

To conclude, I invite you to reflect on the issues raised in this paper, to discuss them with colleagues and to take some initiative to ensure that we can all trawl the tributaries of learning, navigate the waves of change and avoid being caught in the rip of disappointment as we serve the education of children with purpose and fulfilment.

Sister Betty Brown RSJ Information & Technology Services Adviser Catholic Schools Office Newcastle 2300

School libraries play major role in helping students learn

Nearly 100 per cent of Ohio students who took part in a recent research study indicated that the school library, its services and school librarians have helped them with their learning.

More than 13,000 students from Grades 3–12 throughout the state participated in the study, Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries, which sought to understand how students benefit from school libraries and to quantify the school library's relationship to student learning.

Librarians are dynamic agents

Undertaken from October 2002 through December 2003, the survey was conducted by Dr Ross J Todd and Dr Carol C Kuhlthau of Rutgers University and the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) on behalf of the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA) and the Leadership for School Libraries, a collaboration of OELMA, the Ohio Department of Education, the State Library of Ohio and INFOhio — the state's K—12 information network.

Collectively, the data shows that the effective school library led by a qualified librarian plays a critical role in facilitating learning in general, and information literacy in particular. In Ohio, school librarians have to have two state certifications or credentials — one as a trained teacher and one as a trained school librarian. The data also highlights the importance and impact of school librarians working as information-learning specialists and engaging in information instruction at the individual, group and class levels.

For example, using a scale from 'most helpful' to 'a little helpful,' 96.8 per cent of students said the 'school library has helped me know the different steps in finding and using information'; 93.7 per cent said the school library 'has helped me find different sources of information (such as books, magazines, CDs, websites and videos) for my topics'; 92.4 per cent said 'computers in the school library help me do my school work better'; and 85.7 per cent said 'the school library has helped me be more careful about the information I find on the Internet'.

The data reveals the role of the school librarian as a dynamic agent of student learning and achievement — helping students learn not only how to use technology to access and evaluate information, but also how to use evaluation tools effectively in their school work. These tools include the ability to conduct research effectively; to identify key ideas; to analyse, synthesise and evaluate information; and to develop personal conclusions.

In addition, the data shows that the school library serves both as a *resource agent and a technical agent* – providing access to information resources necessary for students to complete research assignments and projects successfully. Qualitative responses from students emphasise that the school library's strength is not just as a passive information supply and exchange agency, but, more importantly, as a catalyst for engaging students in building their own understanding and knowledge. Nine additional 'help' constructs emerged.

The school library:

- saves me time with doing my school work
- enables me to complete my work on time
- helps me by providing a study environment for me to work
- helps me take stress out of learning
- helps me know my strengths and weaknesses with information use
- helps me think about the world around me
- helps me do work more effectively
- provides me with a safe environment for ideas investigation
- helps me set my goals and plans.

Effective school libraries

The research provides a multi-dimensional perspective of the nature of school library 'helps' with a strong consistency of findings from diverse data sources. Through effective school libraries, students understand what good research is about and how to undertake good research. With effort and hard work this will result in academic success.

According to Dr Todd, 'This is the first statewide research study to examine the multi-dimensional dynamics of learning through effective school libraries from the student's perspective'.

With the increasing focus on standardsbased education, accountability, performance excellence and school improvement, this study is certainly timely for Ohio, because the results provide direction and recommendations for professional practice and educational policy development, tools for school librarians to chart impacts on learning and areas for further research', Todd added.

Students Learning through Ohio School Libraries, one of the largest surveys of its kind in the world, broke new ground in determining how the school library helps students learn. It was chosen as an exemplary project by the State Library of Ohio, and OELMA received an \$80,000 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to conduct the research. The study builds on the considerable research by Dr Keith Curry Lance, Director of Library Research Service, Colorado Department of Education, and others, who established the importance of effective school library programs.

More information about the study can be found on the OELMA website http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp.

Dr Ross J Todd and Dr Carol Kuhlthau

Lyn Hay, Lecturer in Teacher Librarianship, School of Information Studies, Charles Sturt University is currently working on a research project called Student Learning in Australian School Libraries. This project is a replication of the Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries, conducted by Dr Ross Todd and Dr Carol Kuhlthau and is being supported by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. An article on Lyn's research is planned for a forthcoming issue of Connections.

Using LAMS in the classroom: new ways to engage students with curriculum

Learning Activity Management System, or LAMS, is a tool for designing, managing and delivering online collaborative learning activities. The software is being developed at Macquarie University and is currently in testing.

What is LAMS and what do you need to use it?

Those interested in new innovations in online or e-learning for the K-12 sector might like to explore the Learning Activity Management System, or LAMS. LAMS is a tool for designing, managing and delivering online collaborative learning activities. The software is being developed at Macquarie University and is currently in the 'beta' or real world testing phase. It will be released as open source in its first full version (1.1) in 2005 which means there are no licence fees for use of the software, and developers around the globe can contribute to the development of the tools and the system itself. It can be used as a stand-alone learning management system or in conjunction with other learning management systems.

The user requires an Internet connection and a browser to create and monitor activities as a teacher, or to view and complete them online as a learner. A short demonstration of LAMS and a variety of resources can be found at http://www.lamsinternational.com.

What is different about LAMS?

LAMS is quite different from other e-learning courseware, mainly because of the way in which tools that support activities can be combined and sequenced. While other learning management systems provide tools for communication, and for the uploading and delivery of content, they do not provide tools which help to sequence and run activities.

Assisting students to select information from the web and use it effectively, is an area that poses difficulties for teachers. LAMS allows the teacher to superimpose step by step instructions on selected web pages so that the students' learning can be more closely guided. There is also a monitoring system that enables teachers to look at individual student

Figure 1: The LAMS 'drag and drop authoring space' where tools are combined to make a sequence of activities for students. responses to any task and indicates exactly what each student has completed.

It is not always easy for teachers new to e-learning to understand how the tools in learning management systems can be used. LAMS, by its very design, seems to encourage the teacher to think first about what the learner will do, discuss or research, rather than what content is required. Content and resources are certainly a very important part of any learning environment, but how that content is incorporated into the sequence of activities that make up a learner's path through an online course has not really been explored by courseware product manufacturers in the past.

This is where LAMS seems to be able to provide a conceptual link between familiar activities that regularly occur in the traditional classroom and what can be achieved in an online classroom. A sequence can be created and set to 'run' for students within half an hour or less. Tools are dragged and dropped into the authoring space, customised via a form-based interface, and then sequenced or placed in order by drawing transitions between each of the tools. Activities can be presented in a linear format or as optional activities to be taken in any order. Teachers do not have to build a website; instead they create a flow chart of activities that resembles a detailed lesson plan which the software translates into

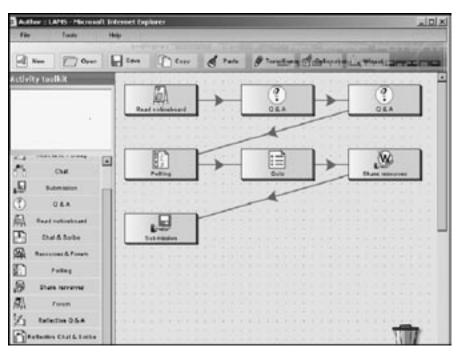
a learning sequence for students. Training and professional development time is not excessive, so there are considerable resource advantages.

Once a sequence has been designed it can be easily shared with colleagues. The files produced are small and can be emailed, adapted and reused with little technical difficulty. It is refreshing for teachers to see that most of their preparation time will be spent on the teaching and learning issues, rather than grappling with the software. Records of each student's work are also readily available and can be stored in individual files to record student progress over time — a useful diagnostic resource.

Pedagogical advantages of using LAMS

A strong feature of the LAMS design is the way it enables collaboration between students. The activity sequences that are constructed require each student to participate. If small group work would be beneficial then the Grouping tool allows the teacher to choose the size of the groups. The Optional tool also allows teachers to offer students choices or to offer them differentiated activities.

Individual learning tools offer particular educational opportunities either in themselves and/or when combined to create a learning activity sequence. Tools such as the Forum (allowing asynchronous discussion) and Chat



(allowing synchronous discussion) are tools with which many students will be familiar. Other tools have been especially designed for LAMS: the Question/Answer tool, for example, enables each student's point of view to be provided anonymously to classmates (though the teacher knows who authored the contribution). Each student is able to read what others have written within seconds of their completing their written answers — a powerful motivating factor and learning tool.

Another tool that capitalises on the immediacy and currency of information through accessing websites or constructed materials is the Share Resources tool. This enables teachers to send students to a pre-selected resource such as a website, an uploaded document or a learning object, and provide them with step by step instructions about how to work with that resource on the material itself. Teachers can also add new resources while a sequence is running and, if they choose, they can enable students to share samples of resources they have located or developed. A communal area of this kind where a range of materials can be explored, shared, and critiqued creates a lively learning space.

The Voting tool provides opportunities for students to see how their classmates rank ideas, opinions, images, and so on. It is fun for the students to watch the votes being tallied within minutes of their being cast. At a recent LAMS session when primary students were voting for their favourite athlete, there was great involvement as the Cathy Freeman supporters were hoping their tally would outdo Ryan Bayley's count (she was pipped by one vote!). This level of enthusiasm can then be readily harnessed for individual or group exploration of a topic in greater depth.

Planning a learning sequence involves selecting from a suite of learning tools, adding the instructions and content, linking them together in a particular order, and then running the sequence for students. This

makes learning a student-centred, varied, and engaging process – a significant achievement for any classroom.

Trials in Australian schools

LAMS is being trialled with a number of schools and universities in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, and evaluation data from these trials will be consolidated in early 2005. So far, the trials show that teachers find it easy to understand, to adapt and use — particularly teachers in the K–12 sector who have never incorporated online learning in their classrooms before. Other features welcomed by teachers include:

- its flexibility it can be used in a range of subjects in a range of ways. It can be used in conjunction with face-to-face teaching as well as outside the classroom for homework
- its usefulness in scaffolding reading or writing tasks. Teachers note, for example, that in-class written work, completed after an online discussion session is often longer and of greater depth than usual

tasks and so on

 the motivation it provides when students see the full range of their classmates' opinions or answers to a topic something which cannot happen so easily in a regular classroom.

Library staff supporting teachers

Library staff work at the heart of the school's information systems and so are in an ideal position to advise, inform and support teachers about using LAMS for learning. They may want to use it themselves in their own teaching, training or information management activities. As they build their own expertise with the software they will develop useful experience for advising and supporting staff who choose to use LAMS. Learning how and when to choose to use LAMS is an important part of making the most of the pedagogical opportunities that it provides.

As teachers build learning sequences for their classes they will need to locate and develop resources to be accessed online. Collaboration with library staff to find appropriate material for inclusion in these sequences would be a valuable and helpful way to maximise the learning potential of LAMS. Supplying evaluated website links for learning activities would be particularly useful. It would also be useful if links were to be provided to the school's web catalogue or intranet where suitable.

Other ways library staff could support the use of LAMS include:

- preparation of materials for uploading into the system
- suggesting ways LAMS can be linked into other software programs
- advising about incorporating learning objects from repositories into LAMS activities
- modelling good information management practice when using LAMS
- advising about copyright issues
- keeping a library of teaching templates for individual subjects that teachers can adapt for their own purposes.

Robyn Philip and Donna Gibbs Education Research Macquarie E-Learning Centre of Excellence (MELCOE) Macquarie University NSW Australia



The following websites can be easily accessed on the SCIS website at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connections/cnetw05/53internet.htm.

Anne Frank the Writer – An Unfinished Story

http://www1.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/af/htmlsite/

SCIS 1160452

Students may reflect on the life and writing ambitions of Anne Frank after visiting this poignant website. Narration, interviews and original manuscripts enhance the experience.

ArtsConnectEd

http://www.artsconnected.org/ SCIS 1201983

Colour digital images from the art collections, libraries and archives of the Walker Art Center and The Minneapolis Institute of Arts are available for students and teachers to study. Over 80 K–12 art lessons are available to complement the artwork.

Artcyclopedia: The Fine Art Search Engine

http://www.artcyclopedia.com/index.html SCIS 1048798

This fine arts reference site allows users to gather details and images on over 8,000 painters, sculptors and photographers world wide. The search engine allows access by name, title or location.

ComputerUser.com High-Tech Dictionary

http://www.computeruser.com/resources/dictionary/index.html

SCIS 1201986

Compiled by the publishers of ComputerUser magazine, this online dictionary presents clear and concise definitions of terms relating to information technology and communications (ICT). A subsection of the dictionary features recently added terms.

Dr. Alice Christie's iMovie Online Resources

http://www.west.asu.edu/achristie/dmedia/ SCIS 1201990

K–12 schools that are initiating or implementing the production of videos (particularly those using iMovie) can gather a wealth of pertinent material from this site.

Geometry Step by Step from the Land of the Incas

http://agutie.homestead.com/files/Welcome_ B.htm

SCIS 1201999

This intriguing, multi-award winning site is filled with facts, problems, quizzes, links and interactive puzzles relating to the teaching and study of secondary school geometry.

Global Education

http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/globaled/page1.html SCIS 1117641

AusAID supports and maintains this portal 'which aims to raise awareness and understanding among Australian school students of international issues, development and poverty, and to prepare them to live in an increasingly globalised world'. Valuable teaching activities and curriculum links are available.

Global Warming: Cool It!

http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/gwci/ SICS 1202007

Consumers can gather information here on how they can reduce greenhouse gases and energy costs. This website links to the education pages that contain fact sheets, resource guides and activities for students and teachers.

IASL: Today is ...

http://www.iasl-slo.org/today.html SCIS 1202017

Part of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) website, this interesting portal contains a variety of links to events that have occurred on the current day or on another specific date in history.

KidsHQ Entry

http://www.awm.gov.au/kidshq/ SCIS 1181409

The educational staff of the Australian War Memorial have created an appealing and informative site for students studying many aspects of Australia's military history and involvement. Teachers are also catered for with classroom activities, images, stories and links.

Matapihi

http://www.matapihi.org.nz/ SCIS 1202366

Hosted by the National Library of New Zealand, this National Digital Forum website encourages users to access the sounds, pictures and objects that have been collected by several of New Zealand's galleries, archives, libraries and museums.

Newseum – The Interactive Museum of News

http://www.newseum.org/ SCIS 1170107

Although many of the newspapers featured are from the USA, students have the opportunity to compare the headlines and front pages of over 300 newspapers each day on one website.

Up the Creek

http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/kids/ SCIS 1202032

This interactive environmental education website highlights New Zealand's native biodiversity, with particular emphasis on waterways. Issues such as interdependence, sustainability and responsibility are discussed. Detailed teachers notes are featured.

EnhanceTV

http://www.enhancetv.com.au/ SCIS 1076688

Information regarding more than 20,000 educational films, TV and radio titles which have screened on free to air television throughout Australia are available on this free website. Teachers can also download relevant readings and study guides.

Reviewed by Nigel Paull, Teacherlibrarian, South Grafton Primary School n.paull@bigpond.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 sites reviewed may not be permanent.

SCISWeb handy hints

1. Access problems to SCISWeb

If your school has had changes to its computer network or new desktops have been installed, you may experience trouble using *SCISWeb*. Here are some possible settings to investigate to gain access.

- · Clear caches.
- Don't access from bookmark or shortcut.
- Use a direct URL http://203.24.26.68.
- From Tools on the toolbar of your web browser
 - Internet options
 - General
 - Temporary internet files
 - Settings

ensure Never is not selected, use Everytime.

2. Saving search results

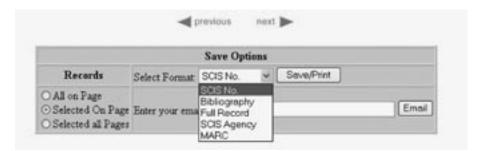
SCIS OPAC has a feature which allows search results from *Basic Search* or *Guided Search* to be saved in five formats. Formats include saving a list of SCIS numbers, bibliography list, or full record.

Once search results are displayed, the *Save Options* are available below the list or bibliographic record. Under *Select Format*

there are five choices to select: SCIS No., Bibliography, Full Record, SCIS Agency and MARC. Then you can choose to Save/Print, which will display on screen first, then will allow you to copy and paste or print. The Save/Print option is an efficient way to capture a printable version of the records without other elements of the screen display such as graphics, navigation buttons etc. Another option is to Email the selected records to a specified address.

 The SCIS No. option allows you to copy and paste the list of selected records from the screen display after choosing the Save/ Print option. This can be pasted into a word document or spreadsheet. You can sort the list, delete the horizontal lines, and save as a text file. The document can then be used as a file in SCISWeb Upload Order file, especially useful for items without ISBNs.

- The Bibliography option gives a list with selected information from the SCIS record.
 The information includes Main Author,
 Title, Publisher and URL (if a website). The results can be copied and pasted into a word document and edited as required.
- The Full Record option is also useful for creating lists of resources related to specific subjects, as the format includes subject headings. As with the Bibliography option, you can copy and paste into a word document and edit as required.





1. Curriculum Corporation support for the 2005 ASLA conference

Curriculum Corporation was delighted to be once again a significant sponsor of the ASLA conference. This bi-annual event is a highlight on the teacher librarian and information studies calendars, and the Corporation sees itself as closely linked to these areas, which have an increasingly important role to play as knowledge management and resource discovery become central to the improvement of education.

The conference keynote presentations have been a major event in previous years, and

the speakers have been major national and international figures in the profession. We were particularly pleased that Jason Clark agreed to deliver the 2005 SCIS Oration.

Jason Clark has staged operas from Covent Garden and La Scala, and conceived and designed multi—million dollar tourist attractions, like the Melbourne Aquarium and the revamped Penguin Reserve at Phillip Island. He has won international awards for his work in the commercial film industry and has been the Creative Director of Australia's largest multi-media company. Today he is one of the most sought after creative thinkers in the

country and the founder of Minds at Work, a commercial collective of professional thinkers working on changing the world. He is currently teaching courses both in logic and creativity as part of the MBA degree at Mt Eliza Business School.

See ASLA: http://www.aslacanberra.org.au

2. SCISWeb subscription rates for 2006

The 2006 prices for *SCISWeb* will be located on our website at http://www.curriculum. edu.au/scis/ in July. This information will give sufficient time for library staff to include *SCISWeb* and products in library budget planning for 2006.

New and revised subject headings

Headings marked with an asterisk are existing allowed headings which have been updated with changes to references or notes. New headings are marked as N. Deleted headings are marked as D.

For full details of these headings, see the SCIS website at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/ productinfo/supplists.htm. A cumulative list of all new and revised subject headings approved since publication of SCIS Subject Headings Fifth Edition is also available at this site.

N Acting – Study and teaching

N Anime

- * Comics
- * Conscience
- * Diaries
- * Emotions
- * Film animation

D Films – History and criticism – 20th century

D Films – History and criticism – 21st century

N Guilt

* Justice

D Literature – History and criticism – 20th

D Literature – History and criticism – 21st century

N Manga

D Music – History and criticism – 20th century

D Music – History and criticism – 21st century

- * Responsibility
- * Short stories
- * Short story

N Stanislavsky method

N Weblogs

* Websites

Connections

Connections is a quarterly newsletter produced by the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS), a business unit of Curriculum Corporation. SCIS is committed to publishing informative and useful material for the benefit of library staff in schools. Our focus is on helping library professionals keep abreast of the latest in information services and information technology relevant to school libraries.

Connections is distributed free of charge to all schools in Australia . All prices quoted in Connections are in Australian dollars.

Connections contributions

SCIS welcomes submissions of articles to be published in future issues of *Connections*. Of interest are articles that may relate to the management of information or resource management in schools.

Length

Articles may range in length from 500 to 1,500 words; however, work outside these specifications will be considered.

Submissions

Contributions and correspondence are welcome and should be forwarded to scisinfo@curriculum.edu.au. Please include contact details.

Connections online

http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connections/latest.htm

Cataloguing for non-cataloguers: authors

(incorporating statements of responsibility, and how authors are sometimes irresponsible)

The question is sometimes asked, why do SCIS records include a 'statement of responsibility', especially when that statement appears merely to repeat the main entry heading?

The short answer is: because SCIS standards follow AACR2, which requires that we do so. However, that response does not really address the underlying question being posed.

Let us start, however, by going one step back, to look at the authors themselves, for it helps to understand the problem if we realise how authors are not consistent in how they choose to refer to themselves, and how publishers also are inconsistent in how they choose to label their authors.

Author headings

For example, a study of the National Bibliographic Database reveals that 18 different versions of Leo Tolstoy's name appear on the titlepages of his works listed in that database. Eleven of these are for works in English (if we exclude the inconsistent use of the title 'Count' with three of them).

Tolstoi, L.N. Tolstoi, Leo Tolstoi, Leo N. Tolstoi, Leon Tolstoi, Lyof N. Tolstoy Tolstoy, L.N.

Tolstoy, Leo

Tolstoy, Leo N. Tolstoy, Leon

Tolstoy, Lev

The other seven versions of Leo Tolstoy's name appear on books published in other languages where different transliteration patterns have been employed - Tolstoy's works having been, of course, published originally in the Cyrillic alphabet.

It should be noted that the title 'Count' doesn't count, since AACR2 instructs us to ignore titles and honorifics. This is an advantage, in that it means we do not have to add 'Sir' to our records when a prominent contributor to the database, such as Andrew Lloyd Webber, is knighted.

In order to keep all of Tolstoy's works together in the catalogue, a single preferred version of the author's name has to be chosen, and all his works entered together under that form of the name. Cross-references are then used to direct users from those forms that are not used to the form that is used: this is obviously especially desirable where there are significant differences (as in the surname above).

Statements of responsibility

The statement of responsibility, which appears after the title in a SCIS database record, is the point at which the cataloguer transcribes exactly the name as it appears on the titlepage of a work.

For all the above reasons, the name in a statement of responsibility can often appear in a form slightly different from that used in the author heading.

The statement of responsibility is an exact transcription in the record of what appears on the titlepage of the work itself: the cataloguer doesn't add words like 'by' unless they are in the item itself.

Strictly speaking, the catalogue record proper includes the title field – including any subtitle(s) and the statement of responsibility - as well as publication details, physical description, any series and/or edition statements, and any appropriate notes. In traditional cataloguing practice, the headings – for authors, editors, and any other individuals or organisations contributing to the intellectual content of the work – are added by the cataloguer after creating the record proper, before doing the subject work.

Other problems with authors

The author problem can be further complicated by a number of other factors that can occur.

- Some authors have a compound surname. (This is especially tricky where this is not hyphenated.)
- Some works are transliterated from languages written in other scripts, as in the case of Tolstoy, referred to above. Transliteration standards are inconsistent, or vary from time to time.

- Publishers occasionally misspell the author's name on the title page.
- Fashions change. For example, thirty years ago scholarly authors were more inclined to use their initials on their books, whereas nowadays they are more likely to use their forenames.

Pseudonyms are not a major concern these days, though some older cataloguers may remember the days when they were a major problem. The fact that our readers know 'Piers Anthony' only by that name is all that really matters to us: the fact that this is a pseudonym (these are his forenames, and he never puts his surname on his books) is irrelevant in libraries.

Similarly, readers of Emma Lathen mysteries care little about the names of the two writers who collaborated to write them.

In contrast, as an aid to our readers, we do sometimes include cross-references in our catalogues between different pseudonyms used by the same author since, for example, readers of Jean Plaidy books are likely also to enjoy Victoria Holt and Philippa Carr books. Conversely, the names J.I.M. Stewart and Michael Innes are not linked by references. since the books written under the two names - though by the same author - are distinctively different.

Ray Cotsell SCIS database support

Unbeatable budgets or budget blues?

Which do you have? An unbeatable budget or budget blues? Do you have a budget that you believe your Library Resource Centre deserves or do you make do with what's left after other budget areas have been allocated? Many teacher librarians live their professional lives somewhere between these two extreme positions. We all appreciate the limits of global school budgets and the fact that other areas within the school need financial resourcing. But if you need to improve your Resource Centre budget, read on. This article might give you a few strategies you've not attempted before. including a tried and tested budget formula.

Strategies to use

One prerequisite for a healthy Resource Centre budget is a principal who is supportive of you, your curriculum role in the school and your role in teaching information literacy. This is, in my experience, the one vital component that needs to be addressed. It is a top priority for teacher librarians to ensure that those in leadership positions in a school have a clear and strong understanding of the teacher-librarian's professional role. That includes resource provision and the ability of the teacher librarian to purchase some of the most current materials available.

One strategy I've used successfully to change attitudes is to have a scheduled half hour meeting with the principal every week. Use this time to discuss big picture issues, or success is not guaranteed. Be positive. Have a definite, private agenda for each meeting. If you can't manage or don't need a weekly meeting, arrange for frequent sessions where you still have the opportunity to put your issues on the table. Give reasons for your views. Be a cool cat — calm and thoroughly professional. Feed your principal a diet of professional reading that supports your position.

Be accountable

Make your willingness to be accountable visible in the form of a Resources Management Policy for your school, and especially for your Library Resource Centre. Circulate this to all staff once a year. Ask them to suggest alterations and improvements. Through their reflection on this document, they will develop a much greater understanding of what your role involves and will have no excuse to say they don't know what you do. This annual review process is a valuable tool that, once established, involves a little time but raises your profile and enhances your standing in the school community. This policy document should clearly set out:

- selection principles
- statement of responsibility
- selection criteria
- acquisitions policy
- stocktaking policy
- collection evaluation
- disposal of materials policy
- gifts and donations
- · challenged resources policy.

Be proactive

Make sure other all staff in the school understand your role. Become involved in curriculum matters. Cooperatively plan units of work with teachers and use that time to inform them about your role, about Resource Based Learning, information literacy and the need for a strong budget to support their curriculum needs. Once all that leg work is done, develop a very professional-looking budget. In my experience this in itself works miracles. To do it effectively you need to collect statistics about your stock, the number of items you weed out or discard from your collection each year, and the average amount you spend per fiction and non-fiction resource. Your computer system should give you statistics about your collection and stock numbers. To determine the average book cost, simply find the average cost of the last 25 or so fiction and non-fiction books you purchased. List the number of items you weeded or discarded in the last year and work out what percentage that represents of your total collection. Quantitative standards regarding the number of items that should be available per student in a school Resource Centre are provided in Learning for the Future.

A tried and tested budget formula

Armed with all that data, you are now in a position to apply the following formula: Discard rate x replacement cost = maintenance funding.

I use a fairly low discard rate of five per cent which has been a realistic figure to date in my current situation and takes into account all the items lost, damaged or withdrawn for other reasons.

Now is the time to be realistic. Once you've arrived at this point, you may have to prune your budget submission a little or quite severely depending on your school's financial situation. However, in four of the five schools where I've used this budget formula, I have increased the Library Resource Centre budget between 50 per cent and 500 per cent. Believe me it works! In the fifth school, which had a student population of 60 and a full-time staff of four, the leadership support was missing and so was the financial wherewithal.

Good luck and happy budgeting.

Dr Jan Schmidt-Loeliger

Information Services Manager at Horsham West Primary School

The article with bibliography appears in the online version of *Connections 53* at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/connections/latest.htm.

Protecting your library's digital sources

A review of a book, *Protecting* your library's digital sources: the essential guide to planning and preservation, by Miriam B. Kahn, Published by American Library Association, 2004, ISBN 083890873X.

Everyone has stories of computer problems that resulted in loss of files and everyone loves to tell them. Remember when you lost everything stored on your PC when it died and you did not have a back up! Well, those were the days when you only had to worry about your own personal data: nowadays we are all connected to networks and are online, and consequently the amount of data that we interact with every day is huge. So too is the amount of planning and thinking that has to go into the management of that data.

Miriam Kahn, a specialist in disaster planning and response, has produced a manual for protecting digital sources for your organisation. While the title indicates that this book is about libraries, the planning and thinking behind preserving digital sources is a management issue for anyone wanting to protect digital sources.

The three sections of this book cover disaster planning and loss prevention, protecting data for the future, and providing checklists for practitioners to guide them in the development

of appropriate disaster plans and forward decision planning. Fairly extensive appendices of contact points for further discussion and lists of organisations that either protect or help to cope with loss of digital materials are supplied, together with a bibliography of articles, websites and books available in the area. Most of these contacts are based in the US, so have little use in Australia, although there are some international contact points mentioned.

Kahn is interested in how libraries and organisations go about the systematic process of prevention of loss of digital sources, including how to protect against all manner of disaster. This includes loss due to virus attack, to telecommunications failure, to physical damage of all kinds. Her answer to all these scenarios is to plan and to back up.

If you are sure that you have backed up everything, then you don't need this book. But if you are like the rest of us, then the kind of details that Kahn offers are invaluable. She explains all the back up strategies and processes in plain language which can be applicable to small- or large-scale enterprises.

Kahn is also interested in the preservation of digital sources for the future. Questions here revolve around the idea that, while you may have all your digital sources backed up and off site etc, the issue for the future will be about accessing this data for the longer term. For

example, any data stored on floppy disks is at risk in the future as there may not be machines with floppy disk drives in general use. This kind of long term thinking for future access is the basis of her argument for planning the management of digital sources. In fact, although Kahn has placed this book in the 'disaster recovery and preservation' literature, the basic underlying propositions are about proper management of all sources, both digital and other.

The checklists that are offered provide a practical way of designing and assessing the data protection available at your site, organising a disaster response plan, and devising rational and continual back up strategies for all your digital data.

A must read for anybody thinking about disaster planning, the very practical and thoughtful information contained in this book is invaluable for all levels of management in libraries and similar organisations.

Reviewed by Bernadette Welch Lecturer, RMIT School of Business Information Technology

Standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians

Schools will shortly receive a copy of *Standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians*.

The development of the document was strongly influenced by moves in other professional associations for educators which were committed to developing standards for subject teachers — the Australian College of Education, Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, Australian Science Teachers Association and Australian Association of English Teachers. The *Standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians* was further influenced by outcomes of a National Meeting of Professional Educators, held in Canberra in April 2002 and attended by ALIA, which encouraged continuing work on the development of standards as a means to achieve a national consensus on teaching excellence, enhanced student learning outcomes and generally as a method for promoting and enhancing teacher professionalism.

Trial of The Le@rning Federation's online content for Mathematics and Numeracy

The Le@rning Federation's (TLF) online curriculum content for **Mathematics and Numeracy** covering addition, subtraction, fractions, decimals, percentages and measurement was the focus of trials in 20 classrooms with more than 400 Grade 3-6 students in six Victorian Catholic schools during term 3 in 2004. The six schools involved were the Archdiocese of Melbourne's LaTTiCE (Learning and Teaching with Technology in Catholic education) schools whose professional learning teams collaborate to research, plan, implement and disseminate leading practice in the integration of ICT.

The purpose of the trial (one of several being conducted around Australia and New Zealand) was to contribute to informed decision making by education sectors in both countries about the use of online curriculum content for teaching and learning.

Teachers and students accessed the online content from the repository of digital material stored in *myclasses*, the Archdiocese of Melbourne's system-wide learning management system for their schools.

The learning objects were selected from the *Counting to Quantifying* project — the first release of TLF Mathematics and Numeracy content.

Several key messages emerge from this study:

- 1. Students highly appreciate the opportunity to learn Mathematics with these digital resources. Not only do they find the materials engaging, but more importantly, they recognise the learning design principles embedded in them (interactivity, cognitive supports, ability to repeat activities, immediate feedback, ability to work at their own pace) as helpful to their learning. Nevertheless, they want the learning objects they use aligned to their age and cognitive abilities.
- Most teachers too recognise The Le@rning Federation's online curriculum content as helpful for teaching and learning Mathematics. However, (and as is the case with most curriculum innovation), for effective integration of these new online curriculum materials into pedagogical practice, classroom teachers – and school and system support personnel – need time together to:
 - explore, understand and reflect on the benefits the new online curriculum materials have for teaching and learning
 - select and align learning objects to system curriculum requirements and to the appropriate cognitive abilities and skills of their students

- plan, prepare and evaluate learning activities which take advantage of and support the teaching and learning opportunities offered by the online content.
- These schools, with their robust and reliable infrastructure, easy classroom access to the online materials, and curriculum and technical support for teachers, exemplify how pedagogy, rather than technology, can be the focus as schools seek to embed ICT into their curriculums.

The full report of the study Learning by design: TLF Mathematics and Numeracy learning objects in classroom contexts in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, The Le@rning Federation, 2004 can be found on The Le@rning Federation's website at http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au/tlf2/sitefiles/images/brochures/Pedagogical_trial_report_ACT.pdf.

Margery Hornibrook
Manager, Communications
The Le@rning Federation
Email: info@thelearningfederation.edu.au

EQ Australia is a quarterly magazine published by Curriculum Corporation. EQ offers informed discussion about current education issues, in-depth exploration of specific topics, practical help with classroom challenges, interesting articles from policy-makers, up-to-the-minute data about assessment and evaluation, and occasionally reports on overseas trends in education.

Themes for 2005 include leadership, assessment, online curriculum and environmental sustainability.

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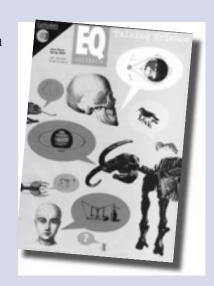
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For a directory of current and past editions of *EQ* visit http://www.curriculum.edu.au.





Studies of Asia

Australia Kaleidoscope

Upper primary teacher and student resource, 64 pp

Authors: Julie Hamston with Kath Murdoch

RRP: \$35.95 SCIS No: 1180082 ISBN: 1 86366 584 6

Australia Kaleidoscope presents a wealth of teaching strategies and activities for use in the SOSE/HSIE classroom, and provides a variety of written, spoken and visual texts and contexts for studies of citizenship and values education. Focusing on six diverse and colourful case studies, students will explore stories, people and places that demonstrate the influences of Asian traditions, beliefs and people on Australian culture. Students can:

- see how some of the most popular Australian circuses have drawn on the Chinese skills of acrobatics, tumbling and balance to create thrilling performances
- imagine life in 1930s Broome, Western Australia, where pearl divers from Japan, Malaysia and the Philippines sought their fortunes in the pearl industry
- spend a day with a Vietnamese Buddhist monk in the western suburbs of Melbourne,
- interview a practitioner of Chinese medicine who uses traditional remedies based on vin-yang philosophy
- meet warrior girl Li Ji, the creation of artist Kate Beynon, who confronts racism and discrimination as an Asian Australian
- join Aisha's campaign for peace and harmony as a young Australian Muslim woman.

Snapshots of Asia

Lower to middle primary teacher and student resource, six big books and teacher guide Authors: Sue Ledger and Richard Ledger

RRP: \$196.15 SCIS No: 954653 ISBN: 1 86366 413 0

Individual big books \$43.95 each

Snapshots of Asia: China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Thailand and Vietnam

An excellent way to introduce knowledge and appreciation of our Asian neighbours to the classroom. These big books offers an excellent way to develop literacy while introducing Asian content to the lower to middle primary classroom. Appealing full-colour photographs, fact files, board games and stories of daily life capture the distinctive physical and cultural aspects of life. The accompanying teacher guide contains additional information. classroom activities designed to develop reading, writing and listening skills, and blackline masters.

NEW Snapshots of Asia: India, Malaysia, the Philippines

Lower to middle primary student and teacher resource, three big books with individual teacher guides

RRP: \$99.00 SCIS No: 1199497 ISBN: 1 86366 579 X

The integrated curriculum

Meet Me in the Middle: Becoming an accomplished middle-level teacher

Middle years teacher resource, 264 pp

Author: Rick Wormeli RRP: \$49.95 SCIS No: 1191962 ISBN: 1 57110 328 7

Drawing on the wisdom of educators, researchers, and twenty years of personal experience in the middle school classroom. Rick Wormeli lays out a clear vision of what responsive middle-level teaching can be. Both a 'how-to' book and a thoughtful narrative on important topics, this resource gives you successful strategies for addressing key middle-level teaching challenges, including:

- differentiating instruction
- motivating early adolescents
- teaming
- teaching in block-length classes
- using authentic and alternative assessment effectively
- writing in all subjects
- holding students and teachers accountable
- involving parents
- mentoring teachers
- using games in the classroom
- applying the latest in brain research
- the National Board Certification process
- understanding the young adolescent.

Teacher educators and staff developers will find this a wonderful handbook of best practices and insights to share with new teachers, including second-career individuals coming from other professions.

Mentoring Across Boundaries: Helping beginning teachers succeed in challenging situations

Teacher resource, 224 pp

Authors: Jean Boreen and Donna Niday with

Mary K Johnson RRP: \$49.95 SCIS No: 1199496 ISBN: 1 57110 377 5

Designed for mentors, administrators, and teacher educators, *Mentoring Across Boundaries* builds on the foundations of the authors' previous book, *Mentoring Beginning Teachers*, to explore many of the specific issues that impact the mentoring relationship.

Among the issues the authors explore are:

- age, gender, and culture in the mentoring relationship
- new teachers in urban or rural school environments
- veteran teachers moving across buildings or into a new school
- teachers working with at-risk students
- mentoring 'burned-out' teachers
- self-mentoring
- working with struggling teachers
- mentoring through technology.

Mentoring has proven one of the most effective ways to keep teachers in the field. With *Mentoring Across Boundaries* in hand, mentors and administrators will find the guidance they need to navigate many of the rough spots that have the potential to derail successful mentoring.

Educational Lending Right School Library Survey

Educational Lending Right (ELR) is an Australian cultural program that supports the production of Australian children's literature and educational books.

ELR commenced in 2000–01 and is funded for a further four years from 2004-05.

In 2004–05, Curriculum Corporation once again conducted the ELR school library survey on behalf of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. As in previous years, the methodology used for the 2004–05 survey involved a rigorous statistical survey. The survey once again produced an excellent participation rate from schools and all target response rates were met. An independent statistician's report states that the survey results are sufficiently accurate to be used as the basis for ELR payments in 2005.

Curriculum Corporation would like to thank all schools that participated in the 2004–05 Educational Lending Right School Library Survey. Your support for the growth and development of Australian writing and publishing is gratefully acknowledged.

For a summary report of the 2004–05 survey and the list of the top scoring books from the survey, visit the ELR website at http://www.curriculum.edu.au/scis/partnerships/elr.htm.



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