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Editorial

What a busy year it has been! So much happening in education and libraries across the country and the world. The swiftly growing focus on 1:1 laptop programs, iPods, iPads, eReaders and other devices in schools and libraries, present many new challenges for us all. At the same time, it is essential for libraries and library staff to stay relevant in this technologically broadening world, and it is vital that we not only continue to move with the changing goalposts of education and our profession, but seek the vision beyond those goalposts.

Having said that, we must also remember that part of our core business is literature and literacy, and find ways to engage our clientele in reading and the benefits associated with a love of books. Fortunately, technology provides more opportunities than ever to assist with this goal, if only we figure out how to access these – finding those with expertise in the area is often a great place to begin.

We must also seek to celebrate our successes and achievements – the WA Teacher Librarian and Library Officer of the Year are two ways we do this (see the article on page 25), as are the reports of wonderful Book Week activities, and professional development such as the Library Officer Day held recently.

It's easy to be caught up in the day-to-day, and forget to enjoy the journey – may you all have a restful and energising holiday break, and come back even more passionate, enthusiastic and excited than ever about working in school libraries!

Tehani Wessely
Editor

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Are you reading YA Lit? You should be...

Gretchen Kolderup

*This article originally appeared on 27 July 2011 at “In The Library With the Lead Pipe”
[<http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2011/are-you-reading-ya-lit-you-should-be/>]*

I’m a young adult librarian, but I didn’t read young adult lit when I was a teen myself. I was a precocious reader and desperate to be treated like a grown-up, so I read books for grown-ups because anything else was just too puerile for someone as obviously mature and sophisticated as I. It wasn’t until I was in my mid-twenties, working on my MLS and realising that I wanted to work with teens, that I discovered there was a huge, glorious world of excellent YA lit that I had completely missed. Now it’s almost all I read.

Outside of YA circles, I sometimes find myself having to justify my tastes to others. Yes, a lot of why I read YA lit is because I work with teens. But even if I were to switch careers, I would continue reading YA lit because it’s good. That’s not to say adult lit isn’t, of course, but YA lit has a freshness that I really enjoy, and it rarely gets bogged down in its own self-importance. YA lit is also mostly free of the melancholy, nostalgia, and yearning for the innocent days of childhood that I find so tedious in adult literary fiction.



Australian YA author Garth Nix gives the “unicorn salute”, spawned by the anthology *Zombies vs Unicorns*

I think the reason some grown-ups look down their noses at YA lit is because they haven’t read any of it recently, so they don’t know how good it’s gotten—or how different it is from what they might imagine it to be. While there are still books that deal with Big Issues, the “problem novel” of the ’70s and ’80s has been eclipsed by more slice-of-life contemporary fiction, romances, fantasies, mysteries, sci-fi stories, and genre-blending tales that defy categorisation. For as much attention as the Twilight series has gotten, it’s certainly not all that’s out there.

YA lit is so much more than a genre...

I think it’s a lack of exposure to contemporary YA lit that makes adults refer to it as a “genre”. Much of the time when people say “the YA lit genre”, what they really mean is category rather than genre, and that’s fine. However, I recently attended a talk by an author who had been writing adult genre fiction and was working on her first YA novel, and she kept referring to the characteristics of the YA genre, as if all YA books were somehow fundamentally the same. When we can hardly even agree on how to define YA lit, how can we so easily reduce it to something as strictly delineated as a genre?

This author characterised YA lit as first-person, coming-of-age stories told in 300 pages or fewer. While it’s true that a lot of YA lit is written in the first person, there’s plenty that isn’t: 54%, according to Koss and Teale². Furthermore, while there certainly are shorter titles being published for teens, every single book in four well known YA and upper middle grade series – **Harry Potter**, **Percy Jackson**, **Twilight**, and the **Hunger Games** – are all longer than 300 pages.

But what about that coming-of-age bit? Koss and Teale find that “[o]verall trends in subject matter included a shift away from coming-of-age stories to a focus on books with themes of fitting in, finding oneself, and dealing with major life changes.” YA lit isn’t so much about that moment when the protagonist becomes an adult (or sees how to do so, or realises why he or she must do so some day), it’s about discovering who we are within the context of our society. That’s much more universal.


So it seems silly to me to call YA lit a genre, to pretend that it’s all somehow the same. But if it isn’t a genre, just some part of the greater world of fiction, what can we say about it? How does it compare to fiction for grown-ups? And what makes it worth reading even if you’re not a teen?



What we talk about when we talk about YA lit...

Before I begin to answer these questions, I should clarify what I mean when I say “YA lit”. As hard as it is to define, I should at least try to specify what I don’t mean. Just as there is no age at which a child instantly becomes an adolescent or an adolescent becomes an adult, the flow from children’s lit to YA lit to adult lit doesn’t divide itself neatly into specific age ranges. ALA’s Newbery Medal is given to books written for readers up to fourteen years old³, but its Michael L. Printz Award goes to books aimed at readers who are twelve to eighteen⁴. While this article will discuss some middle grade titles that have crossover appeal to



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both children and teens, I won’t be addressing the lower end of middle grade fiction.

I also won’t be writing much about stories written for those in their late teens or early adulthood; there seems to be a disappointing gap in fiction aimed at college-aged people, although some are drawing attention to this gap⁵. When I say “YA lit”, I’ll be mostly talking about fiction, and fiction aimed at those in late middle school and high school.

There’s a difference, smaller now than in the past, between what is written for teens and what teens actually read. Historically, what might have been called literature for youth was fiction that was essentially an instruction

manual intended to create well-mannered young people, didactic tales of what happens to disobedient children, and the problem novel of decades past – essentially what adult writers thought teens should be reading⁶. Fortunately, these days libraries and booksellers are classifying what teens want to read as YA fiction. My library has titles in our YA collection that are also in the children’s collection, and our YA lit section also includes books ostensibly for grown-ups that have appealed to teens, such as *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Treasure Island*, as well as more contemporary adult titles with teen appeal.

YA lit is similar to adult lit...

YA lit is a quickly growing field: the market has expanded by 25% in just over a decade², and publishers and authors are clearly aware there’s money to be made here. There’s even a recently published book about writing YA lit in the “...for Dummies” series, attesting to the commercial growth of the YA sector of publishing⁷.

One notable trend is the success of book packagers, such as Alloy Entertainment, that develop ideas for new series and then contract out the writing to authors, who work closely with editors to flesh out the stories, which are then sold to publishers. The books are designed to be commercial successes, and in 2008, eighteen of the twenty-nine titles that Alloy produced made the New York Times Best Seller list for children’s lit. Their series, which include the **Gossip Girl**, **Luxe**, and **Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants** books, are often created with movie and television tie-ins in mind⁸.

Book packagers are not new, nor are they unique to YA lit: they have been around since the Stratemeyer Syndicate churned out **Nancy Drew** and **Hardy Boys** books, and they create coffee-table books and self-help series for grown-ups as well⁹. While the YA titles created by packagers are certainly different beasts creatively than books that are conceived and crafted by individual authors, they sit side-by-side on shelves of libraries and bookstores, expanding the range of what’s available to readers of YA lit.

Like books for grown-ups, YA lit has stories that are written to be bestsellers, such as the **Gossip Girl** series or the **Maximum Ride** books, as well as more literary fiction with sophisticated tones, themes, motifs, and character sketches, such as MT Anderson’s *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation* and Tim Tharp’s *The Spectacular Now*. In some ways, YA lit has become a lot like literature for grown-ups: it is both commercial and creative, it covers a spectrum of critical literary quality, and it has titles across many genres.

YA lit is different from adult lit...

YA lit is also different from fiction for grown-ups. There don't seem to be as many Westerns. The romances are a little different. It's not hard to find more gentle mysteries, though unlike mysteries for grown-ups, YA mysteries are a lot less likely to include recipes for desserts. Less superficially, the tone of YA lit is often different: there's less retrospection, less melancholy and nostalgia. Often, though not always, YA lit is more story-focused. All of this, I think, reflects the differences in the minds and lives of teens compared to adults.

One of the biggest differences in the landscape of YA lit is that there's more genre-blending than in adult literature. It may be because teens' literary tastes are still developing, while adults are more likely to have very particular reading habits, but I think it's also because the newness of YA lit allows for innovation.

For all the flack they get, the **Twilight** books are a great example of genre-blending. They have vampires, but they're not horror stories. And the paranormal element is only one aspect of the story: much of its appeal is in the romance of forbidden love. There's also an action element, featuring vampires versus werewolves (or good vampires versus evil vampires, or good vampires plus werewolves versus the vampire establishment).

Anna Godbersen's **Luxe** series is set in 1899, but its focus isn't the events of the time so much as the intrigues and romances of the young elite. The first book begins with the funeral of the lovely, beloved Elizabeth Holland and then jumps back a few days so readers can follow how it all happened and discover the secrets she and her peers kept and exposed. Yes, it's historical fiction, but it's really a delicious, scandalous romance.

Libba Bray's **Gemma Doyle** trilogy (which begins with *A Great and Terrible Beauty*) is another genre-blender. Sixteen-year-old Gemma, who has been raised in India, has a vision of her mother's mysterious death before it occurs. Gemma is forced to return to her father in Victorian England, who then ships her off to a boarding school. The girls there initially snub her, but as Gemma begins to discover and develop her powers, she gathers her own clique. Throughout all of this, Gemma is being observed by the beautiful, mysterious Kartik, who has followed her from India. Historical fiction, supernatural powers, a boarding school setting, and a romance all come together in a book that was selected by teens for YALSA's Teens' Top Ten as well as by librarians for YALSA's Best Books for Young Adults.

Even the **Pretty Little Liars** series isn't just about rich girls being catty. There is a lot of that, along with plenty of designer brand name-dropping, but foremost on the protagonists' minds are the messages they have been receiving from a friend of theirs who went missing years ago, and presumably died. Figuring out who it is that knows all of their secrets before those secrets get spilled is the mysterious core around which the boyfriend-stealing and backstabbing swirls.

In a recent blog post, YA author Chris Wooding discusses the freedom he gets from having permission to blend genres, drawing on examples from YA lit and a few middle grade titles¹⁰:

A publisher of young adult books doesn't have to deal with the genre prejudice of the adult market. Children's books are divided on the bookshelves by age, not by subject. Genre works are mixed in with the others where the browsing public can see them. My own YA books – a jumble of SF, fantasy and horror – sit happily next to Jacqueline Wilson's stories for pre-teen girls. In contrast, you'd have to visit the Fantasy/SF section to find my adult-market books, which you wouldn't do if you weren't already a genre fan.

There's a similar lack of boundaries within the YA genre field. There's no high fantasy or hard SF,

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no New Weird or urban fantasy. Genre definitions mean nothing. You want to write a steampunk post-apocalypse adventure full of cities that drive around eating each other? Or a book about a child passing through alternate realities in search of a weak and feeble God? Or a dystopian sci-fi about an underground city that's running out of light? Go for it!

Such ideas would be risky prospects at best in the adult market. Books that don't fit into easily recognisable pigeonholes traditionally struggle in comparison to those that do. Straight-out fantasy and SF are much safer bets than something genre-straddling and unfamiliar. Just look at the big sellers in the field if you need evidence.

Not so the YA market.”

What's currently happening in YA lit...

One characteristic of YA lit that differs from adult lit, and is so fundamental to the field that it drives what gets published, is the quick turnover in trends. Inspired by the success of the **Twilight** saga, lots of other paranormal romance stories have been published in the last few years. More recently, as the **Hunger Games** series has risen to popularity, we've been seeing more dystopian tales, though I think even that wave is starting to crest and we'll soon see a new theme or archetype or proto-genre rise to take its place.

The point is that currency is key. While there will always be fans of paranormal romance, a lot of teen readers tell me they're "so over" vampires, werewolves, and fallen angels. In the same way that youth culture is focused on what's new and trendy, so is YA lit, which means librarians need to remain alert to new publications and weed aggressively. It also helps YA lit create an environment that encourages innovation.



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Perhaps driven by the same desire to be where the money is being made, we're also seeing a lot of new series and trilogies. Series and trilogies certainly aren't new in YA lit, but they're a huge proportion of what my library has on its shelves and what my patrons are reading. As I write this, seven of the top ten titles on the New York Times Best Seller list of children's chapter books are part of a series¹¹ – and the New York Times also has a separate children's series list. Even debut authors often start

out with the first book in a trilogy, as evidenced by Veronica Roth's

Divergent, number eight on the New York Times list of best selling chapter books for children at the time this article was written.

This prevalence of series is a double-edged sword: if you like the first book, you know what to read next, but some of my teen patrons are starting to express a desire for a book that "just ends" rather than leaving unanswered questions for the next installment. Although it's not as much a problem as it is with manga series, which may have several dozen volumes, if you're trying to start a YA collection at your library, it's hard to decide if you should get all thirteen books in the Gossip Girl series plus the four additional novels in the spin-off series, or buy seventeen other titles.

Other recent trends in YA fiction include books told from multiple viewpoints (*Will Grayson, Will Grayson*; *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist*; *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*; *Confession of the Sullivan Sisters*); novels written in verse (books by Ellen Hopkins, Sonya Sones, Sharon Creech, Virginia Euwer Wolff, and Lisa Schroeder); and retold, twisted, and fractured fairytales (*Beastly*, *Princess of the Midnight Ball*, *The Iron King*, and *Into the Wild*, as well as stories by Shannon Hale, Donna Jo Napoli, and Robin McKinley).

Historical fiction seems to be getting a make-over, too: I've been seeing a lot of historical fiction that isn't focused so much on the events of that time period (you know, the kind of historical fiction you read in school because your teachers knew it was a stealth history lesson) but is instead a romance or a fantasy that just happens to be set in another time period (*The Luxe*, *A Great and Terrible Beauty*, *The Season*, *The Vespertine*, and *Wrapped*) I've also recently noticed a number of historical fiction titles that involve

time-travel to blend in characters with more modern sensibilities (*Revolution*, *The Time-Traveling Fashionista*, *Steel*, and *Timeless*).

One trend that's received a lot of media attention recently is the perceived "darkness" in today's young adult literature. It started with "Darkness Too Visible", an article in the Wall Street Journal by Meghan Cox Gurdon about her concern over the mature content that can be found in today's YA lit¹². Her article sparked a flurry of blog posts and counter-arguments¹³, a follow-up post from Gurdon¹⁴, and the separate appearances of YA authors Maureen Johnson and Lauren Myracle on public radio to discuss YA lit with Gurdon^{15 16}. I think this "darkness" really attests to the reality of teens' lives today and our growing trust in them to be able to handle reflections of that reality (or the "increasing sophistication and emotional maturity of teenagers," as David Levithan put it)¹⁷. That's not meant to imply that all YA books are dark: there are certainly gentler titles. YA lit is big enough that there are stories for every reader, just as there are with titles intended for grown-ups.

Adults reading YA lit...

In short, you should read YA lit because it's good. It's fresh and exciting and there are interesting new things to find. It's so good, in fact, you may not realise you're reading YA lit: a non-librarian friend had enjoyed Paolo Bacigalupi's Nebula and Hugo award-winning *The Windup Girl*, so he read *Ship Breaker* (which won the Printz Award and was a National Book Award and Andre Norton Award nominee) when it came out. He was astonished to learn that this book, with its dark themes and tone, was a YA title.

Another recent trend in YA lit is adult authors making their youth lit debuts. Candice Bushnell, Carl Hiaasen, Kelley Armstrong, Kathy Reichs, Clive Barker, Terry Pratchett, John Grisham, and James Patterson have written YA or middle grade books. Adults who are curious about YA lit might follow a favourite author and see where it takes them.

You certainly won't be the only adult reading YA lit. In addition to those of us who work with young people, "regular" grown-ups are joining in. A Los Angeles Times article from early 2010 featured some of these adult readers of YA lit¹⁸. Five months later, the New York Times explored some of the reasons for that interest. Surveys showed then that, "the percentage of female YA fans between the ages of 25 and 44 has nearly doubled in the past four years," and, "today, nearly one in five 35- to 44-year olds say they most frequently buy YA books. For themselves."¹⁹

Despite this growing acceptance of YA lit among grown-ups, and despite the fact that YA lit can be analysed as literature²⁰, it's still met with resistance or prejudice, especially in classroom use²¹. Even within the literary world, YA lit is often looked down upon. In her essay "I'm Y.A., and I'm O.K.", Margo Rabb writes that she was surprised to hear that her novel *Cures for Heartbreak* had been purchased as a YA title. When she told another writer that her book was being published as YA, the writer responded, "Oh, God. That's such a shame." Even Sherman Alexie, whose *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* won the National Book Award for young people's literature, was asked, "Wouldn't you have rather won the National Book Award for an adult, serious work?"²² I have to believe that these authors for grown-ups aren't reading YA lit before they judge it.

Adults who want to read stories of high literary quality won't be disappointed with YA lit, especially if they begin their sampling with award-winning titles.

- In 1996, after more than a decade of dormancy, a National Book Award category for young people's literature was resurrected. This award isn't just for YA lit (it can go to titles for a younger audience or to non-fiction), but the YA lit titles to which it is awarded are of the highest literary merit.
- The Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards are a prestigious award in youth literature. They have a fiction and poetry category that recognises winners as well as up to two honor books.



<http://paperhangover.blogspot.com/2011/06/ya-saves-ii-teens-speak-out.html>

- The Michael L. Printz Award has been administered by the American Library Association since 2000 and recognises winners and honor books that “exemplify literary excellence in young adult literature.”

While it’s true that not every YA title will appeal to grown-ups – some really are best appreciated by teens – there are many with crossover appeal. Others have made excellent suggestions^{23 24 25}; here are a baker’s dozen of mine:

- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume 1: The Pox Party* by MT Anderson
- *Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi
- *What I Saw and How I Lied* by Judy Blundell
- *Monster Blood Tattoo: Book 1: Foundling* by DM Cornish
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- *On the Jellicoe Road* by Melina Marchetta
- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- *The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness
- *Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys
- *The Monstrumologist* by Rick Yancey
- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

A few closing thoughts...

YA lit is big and getting bigger. YA lit is good and getting better. YA lit is a diverse mix of genres and styles and themes and tones, and it spans the quality spectrum just like books for grown-ups do. While YA lit is written with teens in mind, it has evolved beyond the coming-of-age concerns that first popularised the category and now fully merits adults readers’ attention.

Another thing I love about YA lit is the way authors connect with fans and speak with passion about their field. Many YA authors have Twitter accounts that aren’t managed by a publicist (Maureen Johnson’s interactions with her fans are especially hilarious), and the YouTube channel John Green runs with his brother has created an entire community of Nerdfighters that are spending the summer reading and discussing *The Great Gatsby* – for fun²⁶. Mary E. Pearson wrote an article for the Tor blog about what YA lit is and isn’t, and why it deserves to be respected²⁷. Ellen Hopkins spoke passionately at YALSA’s 2010 YA Lit Symposium about the response she has received from readers of her books that say that she, through her books, saved their lives²⁸. That kind of connection and mutual support is awe-inspiring.

What I think is most exciting about YA lit is that the kids who are reading it now are our next authors, both of books for grown-ups and books for young people. The exciting, innovative stories they’re reading now are what will shape their imaginations and sensibilities when they go on to become writers themselves. That fills me with hope for our literary future.

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Newman College 8–12 Campus was a hive of activity for Children's Book Week. The library staff loved Jeannie Baker's stunning picture book *Mirror* and Sonya Hartnett's standout novel *Midnight Zoo* so much, that we used it as the basis for this year's theme revolving around a Casbah for this year's displays, competitions and lessons.

A class research area was replaced with a large 'Casbah' of rugs and cushions, and tent-like drapings to make a great reading and promotion area. We also had two displays in the middle of the library; one display of the Award winning Book Week fiction books and another that promotes non-fiction and displays students' Book Week story beginnings. All students visited us for a lesson that promoted the CBW books and an activity about great novel beginnings that resulted in students pinning up a first line from a favourite teenage novel. We had a "guess the lollies" competition going and an online wiki literature quiz that students and staff navigated to via our wiki.

Students also contributed a picture of their family to put up on our huge wall map that represents the culture of origin of their family. The aim of all these activities was to connect a child with a book, made even better if it was one by an Australian author.



Marie Grech
Newman College





Methodist Ladies College Junior School Library. The girls decorated the paper dolls.



In our libraries... Book Week 2011

One world, many stories

Jean Anning kindly shared the Book Week glogster she created
<http://janning.edu.glogster.com/one-world-many-stories/>
 and the scoopit she put together
<http://www.scoop.it/t/australian-book-week-2011>

The 2012 Book Week theme is *Champions Read!*

The dates will be August 18 – August 24

The CBCA Book of the Year Short List and Notables announcement date
 will be Tuesday 3 April.

The winners will be announced on Friday 17 August, 2012

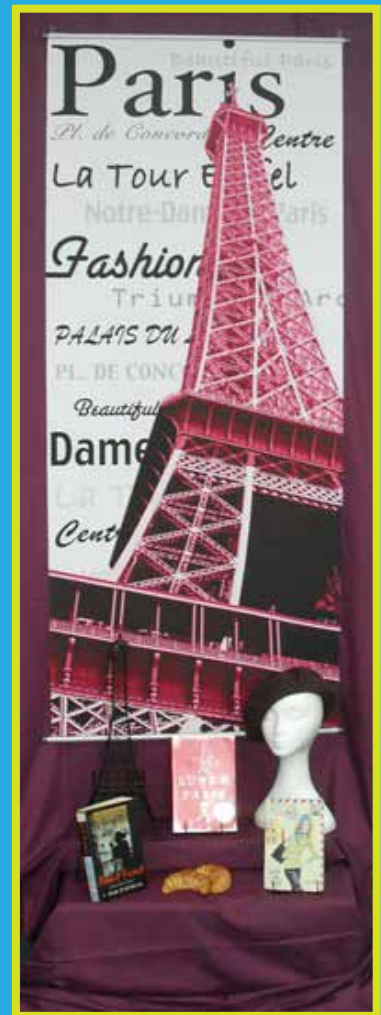


Swan Valley Anglican
Community School



Created by
Library Technician
Ania Zielona





Book Week @ Bunbury Catholic College

This year we have focused on the many stories that people can tell from their birthplace or travel adventures in parts of the world. Our display has been arranged in clusters according to the continents – AUSTRALIA, AFRICA, the AMERICAS, ASIA and EUROPE . The theme also tied in neatly with Culture Week earlier in the term. All items on display were brought in by staff – books, dolls, puppets, costumes, jewellery, hats, art, sculptures – the list is endless. One thousand paper cranes in the Asia display were made by a Year 8 homeroom.

Our Story Lunches during Book Week have been a highlight – staff members told their own stories from a particular country and our music students played African drums and Celtic tunes. The final story reading of the week was *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (by a talented deputy who doesn't mind dressing the part!)

In addition to the usual quizzes, our Year 8 students undertook an 'AMAZING RACE' around the world. The library staff have been truly amazed by the enthusiasm of staff in telling their stories and parting with their precious possessions for a few weeks. Squeezed in between Science Week and Maths Week, the planning, events and display (arranged by three library officers extraordinaire!) made Book Week a standout.



Tye Cattanach
Library Coordinator, Manor Lakes P-12 College

The choice to purchase eReaders for use in your library can seem a daunting prospect. Decisions are made not only in deference to financial considerations, but often subconsciously sentimental intellectualisations. Begin research into eReaders and eBooks and it can be surprising to learn eBooks have been available for more than ten years now. Has passionate loyalty to print books delayed implementation of eReaders in libraries? Many have asked, why implement eReaders at all?

To begin with, let us look at the common perceptions of libraries today, and importantly, what are the user perceptions of them. We must begin by asking the question, what is the contemporary idea of a library and what is it for? The Oxford Concise Dictionary defines the word library as:

1. room or building containing books for reading or reference; room in large house devoted to books.
2. a collection of books for use by the public or by some class of persons; similar collection of films, records, computer routines, etc.; public institution charged with care of such collection...
3. person's book-collection; series of books issued by publisher in similar bindings etc. as being connected in some way.

If we consider the above definition carefully, we begin to see how and why libraries are increasingly viewed as nothing more than a building that houses increasingly "irrelevant" information. For while in the past communities and societies saw these institutions as valuable and as the source in which to seek information, the common perception of libraries being tied to physical books on shelves (as our dictionary definition highlights), coupled with the contemporary perception that this material is now dated and laborious to search, has led to a social rejection of the traditional library as a valued place for seeking information.

Has the introduction and widespread use of the internet led us to this irrevocable situation? The internet, it seems, can provide us with access to a vast array of resources, delivered in a fraction of the time it takes to retrieve similar information from traditional sources such as libraries. So we are left to wonder whether mobile and other technologies, that provide immediate access to open-source content, portable bookshelves, engaging and educational (not to mention fun) applications, social media applications, up-to-the-minute news and information, anywhere, anytime, relegate libraries to being akin to a museum? Where students and the general public might visit once a year to remember/reflect/reminisce that information once came in the medium of a codex, as a physical "book".

Undeniably, the advent of mobile technologies has heralded an enormous change for libraries. Libraries now, more than ever before in social history, need to prove they are worth their weight in books. Is a large part of the problem, the challenge, unwillingness among librarians to acknowledge perhaps:

... that they falsely assume that how they do things defines why they exist? In fact, the inverse relationship should dominate what they do: why they exist should define how they do things... Information is now abundant and distribution is essentially (in theory anyway) free. Institutions are having a hard time adapting, and at least part of the difficulty is shifting a mindset from function to purpose: shifting the thinking from how we do things defining our being now, to why we do things defining how we'll do things in the future. (Hugh McGuire, *What Are Libraries For*, April 2011)

There are those who argue that mobile technologies and devices do not effect nor change the need for libraries. I would counter that they are wrong. I do not, in fact, believe that libraries have become defunct, quite the opposite. But the perception of those who need libraries, in this instance, our students, is that libraries are increasingly if not already unnecessary. We are now firmly ensconced in an era wherein our



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students believe that libraries are non-essential places in which to seek information, when they have access to the world wide web and the internet.

As educators and librarians in 2011 and beyond, this shift of perception has presented a unique challenge. Engaging the Digital Learners. Pause for a moment to consider when you last asked a student/child to assist you with a digital issue. This may have included the importing of images from a digital camera, solving an internet connectivity issue, or conversion of a file from one format to another. Have you ever listened to a technological conversation between students and wondered what on earth it is they are talking about? Our students appear to have been born with an instinctive knowledge regarding everything technical, ranging from the installation of new software to starting a blog. However they have never been so challenging to engage. They certainly seem far too busy to read.

Increasingly, I was hearing the statement “books are boring”. Offering a picture book to a Prep student on his first visit to the library resulted in a perfunctory flick through the pages, a glance at the illustrations and the question; “Yes, but what does it do?” and left me reconsidering how I might endeavor to make books interesting for this child.

It does indeed seem that our students have endless access to digital alternatives, all of them far more entertaining than something as simple as a book. PSPs, PS3s, DSs, Xboxes, internet access, social networking sites, mobile phones, smartphones and I am sure thousands of other devices we have yet to hear about.



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We have all borne witness to the speculation, discussion, debate and even argument, over the eBook in recent times. It seems everybody has an opinion and those opinions often seem to conflict with one another. Not unlike a civil war of sorts, the battleground is divided by those who love them, those who hate them and those who have no idea what everyone else is talking about. Those who laud them as heralding in a new age for literacy and diversified education and those who deride them as a flash in the pan ‘fad’ that will soon fizzle out.

Until fairly recently, I had found my position amidst all of this talk, to largely be one of ‘fence-sitter’. I had no real opinion on the eBook debate. In fact, my opinions were largely shaped by my prior occupation as a young adult and children’s specialist bookseller, and I will admit to being a little fearful of what the eBook might mean for ‘real’ books. The desire to preserve the printed codex, my natural instinct to instill a love of reading in the way it evolved for me, complete immersion in books of all formats, made it tempting to fight the technology.

That began to change for me as a direct result of the DEECD decision to elect Manor Lakes P-12 College as a participatory school for the Departmental 1:1 iPad trial in 2010. I was able to observe as a core team of teachers responsible for the establishment of an effective trial environment, in which positive student and teacher response were paramount to ensuring the iPad was maximised for demonstration of its efficiency as a true 1:1 mobile learning device, began to yield results. A decision to trial a buddy system between Year 5/6 students participating in the iPad trial and our Prep cohort was the dawning of my realisation of what the iPad might come to mean to readers.

I am both delighted and more than a little excited to report that, in my personal opinion, and solely as a result of observing 100+ students explore and navigate eBooks using an iPad – the iPad may just be the greatest thing to ever happen to books. In fact, I will venture so far as to say, I wonder if the iPad and the interactive nature of eBooks and book related Apps, may be responsible for engaging a whole new generation of readers.



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It has been a both a privilege and a delight to be an observer for such a trial and I have been fortunate enough to have spent a significant amount of time discussing with our students, the implications of the iPad as an eReader.

So. What's so great about eBooks? And why should you invest in facilitation of use and borrowing them in your library?

Interactive eBooks and Apps, allow students of all ages to experience books in a completely unique way. Whether introducing books and book friendly technology to a prep student or attempting to engage a reluctant or struggling reader, eBooks might just be the most powerful tool in your book bag.

How so? For a start, they allow for unprecedented discovery and exploration of text and illustrations. The implications for visual literacy are extraordinary. An excellent example of this is my often and shameless employment of Penguin's *Animalia* – Graeme Base, eBook. This eBook allows for detailed

exploration of Graeme's magnificent illustrations as well as fun exposure to the text. There are games and activities to entice children (and adults alike!) to further explore the illustrations and invariably, this experience always ends with the question, "do you have the real book of this?"

Students with vision impairment are able to size text to suit their own comfort level and screen brightness can be increased or decreased to suit the reader.

We are all aware of the 'hook' factor being, ultimately what draws a reader into a book and piques their curiosity in the hopes of keeping them reading. I have yet to discover an interactive eBook or book App that does not have the 'hook' factor completely down pat. The

wonderful aspect of this built in 'hook' factor, is similar to the phenomena

of the book trailer. The reader is engaged enough to want to keep reading.

I have discovered that eBooks are a wonderful way to introduce particular books to my students, and it would seem that the students themselves see eBooks as an introduction, for they do always ask me for the 'real' book afterward.

I have seen this pattern repeated over and over with reluctant and struggling readers. We understand that reluctant readers and struggling readers are one and the same, they are reluctant because they are having difficulty understanding, enjoying and therefore grasping reading as a pleasurable and worthwhile concept.

EBooks and book related apps, with their built in functionality for choosing to have text read aloud to them, illustrations that are interactive and encourage the reader to explore and comprehend a large part of the story as a result, and increasingly, embedded video, that assist further with comprehension of the story line, give these readers a power they may never have experienced before. No longer do they need to sit frustrated with a book, striving to understand text. The interactivity of most eBooks allows them to choose to listen to audio narration of the text and follow along as the words spoken are highlighted before them.

For the more accomplished readers, encountering a word they may not fully understand, becomes a simple double tap on the screen to activate the Dictionary functionality. The word is highlighted and the dictionary definition appears, complete with how to pronounce the word and even use it further in a sentence. Readers are then able to make notes (that are automatically saved to that page) if they wish, allowing them to track their reading progress, challenges and triumphs. Readers are not only engaged, but they begin to experience the delightful thrill of confidence as a reader, that comes from knowing they have tools at hand to assist them with their improvement and enjoyment of reading.

I have seen an increasing number of reluctant and/or struggling students begin to develop a true love



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of reading and begin to venture towards 'real' books, as a result of the newfound confidence they have gained from experimenting with eBooks.

How then, does one go about establishing iPads or eReaders within a library collection? I am by no means an expert, I am only able to share my own experiences.

The first and most important consideration that needs to be researched and decided upon is which eReader? The market for eReaders is growing everyday. Do your research and perhaps consider only those devices which have seen

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A very interesting, helpful and comprehensive website for those of you considering using Kindle eReaders can be found here: [<http://theunquietlibrary.libguides.com/kindles>] Moderated and written by Buffy Hamilton, every step of the process, from purchase to permission forms has been documented in minute detail.

The process of cataloguing eBooks and issues surrounding syncing, charging and downloading to the actual devices is another important consideration. A great deal of the information available for other eReaders is comprehensive, however there seems to be some conflict over correct procedures. Many of them need additional software providers or facilitators to assist with the cataloguing and borrowing of eBooks.

It is these factors coupled with my personal experience with the device that made iPads the simplest choice for our library. As we are a P-12 College, it means the set up of three separate iTunes accounts – Junior, Middle and Secondary school. I purchase/download ebooks and book related apps that are suitable for the students in those year levels and sync the iPads to the relevant account.

The iPads themselves are catalogued as a piece of equipment and it is the actual iPad that is then loaned to the student. iTunes itself is the record of which eBooks and apps we have purchased so there is no need to catalogue these titles in my library system.

The library budget has purchased insurance for a 36 month period and all students wishing to borrow an iPad from the Library first take home a comprehensive agreement with clear guidelines stating that should the iPad be damaged accidentally, they are responsible for a \$150.00 excess fee. If the damage is not deemed accidental, the cost of replacement for the iPad must be met. Once this agreement is returned, signed by parents and student, alongside an acceptable use of technology agreement, an allowance is made in the settings for the student borrowing record and that student is free to borrow the iPad in the same manner they would a book.

Among the myriad of questions I have been asked the most interesting so far has been; how I intend to keep track of what my students are reading. Their borrower record will show they have borrowed a secondary level iPad and whilst I am aware of which books are on that particular iPad, I have no record of which book they read, or even if they read it all.

My response to this was simple. I ask the student when they return the iPad which book/s they read and how they felt about the title, this is something I do with all students upon return of a book. How do I know they read it? I talk to them about it. If you think about it, how do you know if a student has read a 'hard copy' book they have borrowed, unless you talk to them about it? A borrowing record for a title does not actually reveal how many times a book has been READ.



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Love them or hate them, there is no denying that the eBook is here to stay. I personally, do not think this is a bad thing. My own experiences with students and eBooks has shown me that they are an invaluable and perhaps underused, tool for literacy. A tool that we would do well to embrace.

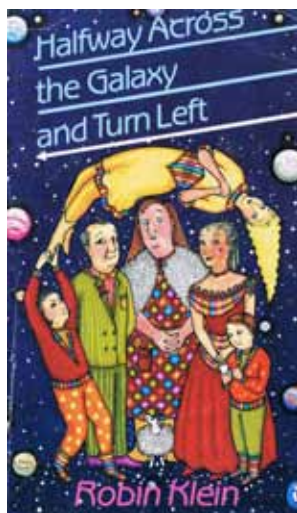
It is a beautiful thing to see an eBook and a 'real' book work seamlessly alongside one another to achieve the end result we all wish to see, a love of reading and a love of books. After all, isn't that the ultimate objective for us all?

Saving space, one planet at a time...

First published at Locus Online, 6 September 2011:

<http://www.locusmag.com/Roundtable/2011/09/tansy-rayner-roberts-saving-space-one-planet-at-a-time/>

The first kids SF novel I remember reading was *The First Travel Guide to the Moon: What to Pack, How to Go, and What to See When You Get There* (1980) by Rhonda Blumberg. It stuck with me for decades, with its cute cartoons and ridiculously detailed world-building. Trained up by *Doctor Who* from



a very early age, I loved stories about space and aliens – and read the old Target novelisations by the bucketload. I recently passed a bunch of these novels on to a friend's seven-year-old son and it's extraordinary to watch him tear through them, and to have serious chats with him about *Doctor Who* stories that were made before even I was born.

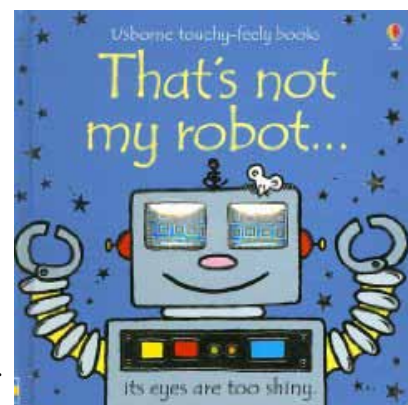
I also still have my copy of *Halfway Across the Galaxy and Turn Left* (1985), a classic Australian kids novel about an alien family on the run, trying desperately to pretend they are human – I still remember the protagonist, earnest twelve-year-old X, who worries so much about everyone that she forgets to take care of herself. Crazy screwball family stories are my favourite thing in the world, and it's about time I shared this particular one with my eldest daughter!

Speaking of daughters, I have two of them (six and two years old) and I'm glad to say that they also both have a taste for science fiction. Rockets, robots and spaceships ahoy!

I've been complaining for years about how chapter books for young readers are so awfully gendered – not just in the colour and cover art, but also in subject matter. The 'girl books' are sparkly and enticing, and my six-year-old lunges for them with rainbows in her eyes, but really, how many books about fairy princess ponies does she need? So I was delighted the other week to spot a new Australian middle grade series which offers girl readers something a bit different: *Star Girl*, by Louise Parks. The books are set in the Space Education and Action School – the students live in space and go on missions to save planets. There are gadgets and spaceships and diagrams, along with the more traditional girl fare of friendship dramas and makeovers. I left one of the books lying around quite casually and before I knew it, my big girl had read her first chapter book solo!

Star Girl's motto is 'saving space – one planet at a time,' and it's hard to think of a more empowering message for girls than that.

Meanwhile, there's plenty of SF in my toddler's book basket too – or, at least, as much as we have been able to find. A regular bedtime read is *That's Not My Robot*, one of the brilliant Usborne touchy-feely books (we have *Princess*, *Mermaid* and *Dragon* too) – fun illustrations, bright colours and interactive panels. There's also Charlie and Lola, who have been favourites in our household for a long time – two highly imaginative children with a gorgeous and realistic sibling relationship, playing and making their own adventures. The artwork for these books (written and illustrated by Lauren Child) is fabulous, using all manner of textures and collage techniques. Charlie and Lola's imaginary play leads to all kinds of gorgeous settings, including space, and like all kids in the playground, they mix up their genre tropes quite happily, with aliens and jungles and witches and football all mashed together. My favourite (that really means something when you've read a picture book twenty or more times) is *Whoops! But It Wasn't Me*, about the rocket Charlie builds at school out of milk bottle lids and yogurt containers, and how Lola accidentally destroys it. The science fiction and fantasy concepts in these books are (almost certainly) either metaphorical or entirely imaginary, but portrayed with great style and artistic flair.



Speaking of building rocket ships out of bottle tops, the star of our book pile is *Jemima to the Rescue!* Australian readers will guess that the Jemima in question is the rosy-cheeked doll from our iconic children's TV show *Play School*, in which adult presenters entertain the kids at home by telling stories,

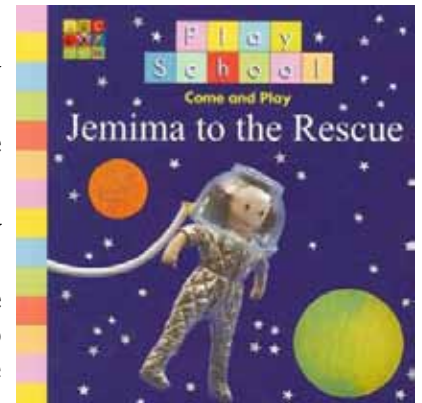
singing and dancing, and making glorious things out of tin foil, cardboard boxes and construction paper. The TV show celebrated its forty-fifth anniversary this year (yes, really) and some of the toys have been used on the set since its very beginning.

Jemima is also our daughter's name, so we were bound to love this book, which shows Jemima and Little Ted living on a space station. Drama ensues when they run out of honey for their toast. Mission Control is called, a rocket is sent up with a fresh supply, but an unlucky meteor shower bounces the honey right out of the rocket, and it drifts off into space...

"Jemima knew exactly what to do. She put on her space suit, and went for a space walk."

A great feminist moment. She rescues the honey. The day is saved because Jemima is a big damn hero who is also good at her job. In space.

The illustrations are created by photographing the toys from the TV show (actual toys, not cartoon characters or puppets) along with a variety of simple, imaginative homemade props. The space station is a cardboard box. The comets are made with tin foil. The meteor shower is made from scrunpled up brown paper balls. Mission Control is Big Ted with pretendy specs. The whole effect is delightful and very Play School – it sums up my childhood memories of the show as well as those I now share with my daughters.



Every kid needs to know that you can make a space station out of a cardboard box.

Tansy Rayner Roberts is a writer, a mum, a doll merchant, and in her spare time (ha!) likes to cut up fabric and sew it back together in an amusing fashion. She lives with her partner and our two constantly alarming little girls in Hobart, Tasmania, and she is one of the three voices of the Galactic Suburbia podcast. Her most recent book is Love and Romanpunk.



DATE CLAIMER

WASLA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY 24 NOVEMBER, 2011

VENUE: Mill Point Book Caffe,
254 Mill Point Road, South Perth

TIME: 4.15pm for 4.30pm start

RSVP: Phylis Paioff
[phyl67@bigpond.com]
by Monday 21 November

Nominations for the Committee are due by Monday 14 November. Nomination forms are available on the WASLA website at <http://www.wasla.asn.au/committee/>





The TL in a 1:1 laptop environment...

Gary Green

Presbyterian Ladies' College, ggreen@plc.wa.edu.au

The 1:1 laptop challenge many schools are now facing presents both opportunities and challenges. At PLC, we have been working in such an environment for nearly 20 years. Here are some of the changes and challenges I have witnessed in my role as Head of Library.

There are a number of general guiding principles for teacher librarians to be cognizant of in a 1:1 environment, which will impact upon the way you work.

1. You need to be flexible in your thinking and approach in a laptop environment. In short, you need to work differently.
2. Irrespective of the platform schools use, teachers and teacher librarians need to recognise that they are still the significant players in learning. Information Learning Technologies (ILT) are tools to enhance learning outcomes. Students still need pedagogical and instructional intervention to support them in their learning. So, the TL teaching role is as important as ever.
3. Books are essential for learning. ILT just means the access to them and how they are used is changing but not necessarily diminished.
4. ILT requires even greater collaborative skills and levels of advocacy. This is because your work in a traditional sense may decline as a result of decreased library usage. Investing time in relationship building and having something to offer staff is vital for your on going credibility and influence within your school communities.

Working differently in learning:

- Your role will change because you will get fewer students come to you. It is a role reversal of sorts in that you need to go to where the learning is because the walls of the classroom have just expanded exponentially rather than the students coming to you. In short, you need to become a nomad!
- The traditional emphasis on finding information will slowly and inevitably devolve to class teachers as students have fewer reasons to visit the library to access some of the resources. This means that you may need to work with staff to up-skill them in terms of what skills students will need with the finer details of locating information (Boolean searching etc).
- With less emphasis on finding information, a great opportunity is possible for working on higher-level skills of information literacy, such as focusing on how to engage in a more interactive way with students, unpacking and distilling tasks and the analysis and evaluation of information. This is particularly evident when trying to determine the veracity of information such as through examining authority, accuracy, currency and bias. This is a natural 'fit' for our skill set and taking a leading role to support teachers who are often not as savvy as we may be in this regard is essential. At PLC, we have done this in several ways, mainly using the technology via 'home made' podcasts, keynotes and movies in QuickTime to show students what to look for, how to analyse and judge sources and how to make decisions about the quality of data.
- In a 1:1 ITL environment, there is a need to reassess how to connect with students in your learning role. Digital learning allows multiple ways of 'cloning' how you can connect to a task and unpack it to accommodate the student's learning styles. The traditional standing up in front of students to guide them in the learning still has a place but it is only one way of making students part of an inquiry. ILT offers increased choices to engage with and experiment so your teaching becomes less formalised and individualised with students not all sitting in front of you doing the same thing in lock step all of the time.




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- ILT lends itself to working in smaller groups with students and an ability to use ‘station teaching’ to allow for greater differentiation. Station teaching using ILT is a highly effective and flexible tool for teacher librarians. It means you can group learning experiences and utilise the technology to package them up and then give students a number of pathways to engage with learning. Providing a negotiated choice in learning is hugely powerful. It acknowledges the student’s humanity in terms of their learning style and way they might prefer to learn something and this can lead to greater levels of motivation in terms of the task. We frequently use a podcast, look at a blog or web site, offering a range of visual images to garner information and ideas with learning along with more traditional means through books to offer a differentiated choice.
- Useful too is having a level of computer knowledge and or proficiency that is greater than the majority of staff. This is crucial because it makes you a far more ‘attractive’ proposition for staff who will be eager to find colleagues who have the skill set to help them build their technology rich learning experiences. It is a hugely fertile area in which you can build sustained relationships with staff.
- Having a role in creating digital resources is vitally important. Being able to offer teachers newly created digital packages is a great way of building influence and credibility. These ILT packages will actually save you time because once they are created, you can focus on learning and supporting students rather than being the sole focal point for delivering the learning. Once they are designed and built, you have a natural segue into asking teachers to co-deliver them in the classroom. How can they possibly say ‘no’ when you have designed them! This focus on the digital curriculum has been the most transformative and rewarding part of my job for the past twenty years!

Library environment and equipment:

- Traditional ‘banks’ of computers and laptop trolleys in the library are now ostensibly out-of-date. You may still require a few OPAC terminals to search the catalogue but not many. Use the space for other things.
- Remote access to the catalogue and subscription databases is very important in a 1:1 environment. So, this could have budget implications.
- The loaning of equipment for students and staff will increase. This too has budget implications, especially with maintenance costs.



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- Make sure you have sound policies for the loaning of equipment so that fairness and equity is maintained. For example, if you have laptops, the library will be seen as the place to borrow laptop chargers and adaptors. You never have enough of these because students don’t bring them to class and are constantly borrowing them from the library. We have a one period only loan for this type of equipment because students tend to want them for a day and deny others access.
- When thinking about the configuration and spaces for accommodating 1:1 use of ILT, you need to consider the learning emphasis of your school and not just what you will need in terms of practical applications that will support the technology. Ask, “what are the learning and recreational spaces I want to see here and how do they reflect the philosophy of our school?” This should be one of your initial and ongoing guiding questions. Once you can answer this question you can start to plan what you want and need. Bringing your administration into the process is essential as they are the ones who can enact the changes and provide the funding needed.

These are just a few of the implications I envisage for teacher librarians in moving to a technology rich environment. 1:1 is a brilliant and exciting chance to recast your role and build lasting collaborative rapport with your learning environments. Go for it!

Book Shares

In which students and their mum or dad read the same book. It can either be Mum or Dad's favourite when they were young, or a recent book which the student enjoys.

Students might produce a variety of outputs following the shared reading: interviews with parents about why they loved the book and whether it was as good as they remembered, mini book reviews written collaboratively with parents, and more!

Bookpass

Everyone gets a book from a table of pre-selected titles, then sits in a circle. They read for two minutes, pass, repeat, stopping every once in a while to ask questions about genre, how did it fit you, who do you think would like it, can you summarise for others, let's find the summary on the back of the book.

Try a sticky note reserve system that later is entered into the circulation system, to avoid slowing down the process.

Principal's Book of the Month

For this junior primary school promotion, the principal reads a picture book to the school, and every class gets a copy to use during the month.

Requires a picture book each month (perhaps matching a theme or season) that is not too babyish for the older students, but with not too many words for lower grades. It must be meaty enough to generate responses, discussions and connections.



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50 Book Challenge

shared by Rosemary Burton

Rosemary says: *We have been running 'The Perth Modern School 50 Book Challenge' across the school in terms 2 and 3 this year. It has been very successful to date with students involved from all year levels. We had students passing the 50 books in the first term and currently have two students who have read and reviewed over one hundred books. Staff are also involved with their own 20 Book Challenge and prize. As part of this we also have a 'Reader of the Week' featured on the electronic notices – first term it was 'Staff Reader of the Week', this term it is 'Student Reader of the Week'.*

Aims

- Promote recreational reading across the entire school community, encouraging students at all year levels to extend their free reading choices and at the same time cater for individual preferences.
- Promote Perth Modern School as a literary community in which members socialise and share all things literary.
- Promote reading using students themselves as role models.
- Encourages participants to set reading-focused goals to make reading a greater priority.

- Provide prizes as incentives for each entrant.
- Share the top reader's book choices by having them on display to encourage others to try new books.

50 Book Challenge rules

- Participants must sign up to the competition.
- Books must be at least 180 pages long and must be from the school library.
- Participants fill in a short form to have each book counted.
- Participants receive one house point for each book read as part of the challenge (maximum 50 points awarded).

At the end of October everyone who has reached 50 books receives a certificate. The first 20 students to reach the 50 Book target will receive a Perth Modern School Canteen voucher to the value of \$10 each.

The three students who read the most books during the Challenge receive Myer Gift cards: First place – \$50 Myer Gift card; Second place – \$30 Myer Gift card; Third place – \$20 Gift card.

Perth Modern School 50 Book Challenge sponsored by: Myer Ltd, Perth Modern School Canteen and Joseph Parsons Library.

WASLA Recommends...

WOW Websites

Children's Books Forever

Free children's classics and favourites as ebooks. Can be used with smartboards.

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

Teaching Library

Lesson plans for Children's Books.

<http://www.teachinglibrary.co.uk/>

How to do Research: an interactive map

<http://www.freetech4teachers.com/2011/08/how-to-do-research-interactive-map.html>

Apple Education

A website to support teachers using iPads in the classroom. Some amazing apps divided into learning areas.

<http://www.apple.com/au/education/apps/>

PD & Advocacy

Something to Shout About

http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/slj/home/891612-312/something_to_shout_about_new.html.csp#.TmHOQ1KMmv1.twitter

21st Century Fluency Project

<http://www.fluency21.com/blog-post.cfm?blogID=2078>

The Book Nut podcast

<http://fablecroft.podbean.com>

The Book Whisperer

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/book_whisperer/

ASLA Advocacy Resources

<http://www.asla.org.au/advocacy/>

The Hub

<http://hubinfo.wordpress.com/>

Top Tip – senior fiction loans (Jill Oats, Ursula Frayne Catholic College)

I photocopy a copy of the cover of the book, making sure that the blurb is clearly visible. I then write on the back of the photocopy explaining to the parent that this book is usually reserved for older students, however their child has expressed an interest in reading it.

I ask whether the parent gives permission for their child to read the book. I also explain the reason why the book has been reserved for seniors. The parent is requested to sign the photocopy as proof of permission, which is then returned to us. I file the photocopy for future reference, if necessary!

If they don't approve, the parent simply disposes of the photocopy!

More WASLA Recommends...

The School Library Journal (US) unveils the "Touch and Go" app reviews blog:

http://www.slj.com/slj/newslettersnewsletterbucketextrahelping2/891060-477/slj_launches_touch_and_go.html.csp

10 skills every student should learn ("READ" tops the list):

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/2011/08/11/ten-skills-every-student-should-learn/>

Why teens should read adult fiction: http://entertainment.salon.com/2011/10/13/why_teens_should_read_adult_fiction/

25 essential children's book apps:

<http://digital-storytime.com/wp/?p=574>

Top 200 free book apps: <http://appshopper.com/bestsellers/books/paid/?device=ipad>

A Book and a Hug (book recommendation site):

<http://abookandahug.com/>

"Google can bring you back 100,000 answers, a librarian can bring you back the right one." Neil Gaiman





When H.J. Harper was growing up in Perth, Western Australia, she wanted to become a mad scientist. However, when she found out that being a mad scientist required some skill in science, she turned to her other dream: writing books. She has worked in three bookshops and a library, and now finally as an author in Melbourne, where instead of creating stitched-together monsters and mysterious potions, she writes about them. You can find out more about Star League at www.randomhouse.com.au/starleague

1. The Star League, your first series, are lots of fun to read – what age group did you have in mind when you wrote them, and what do you think makes them ideal for this group?

Thanks, they were lots of fun to write! Working as a specialist kids' bookseller, I get a lot of enquiries about specific age groups and tastes. One group that I continually had problems recommending titles for was reluctant readers aged seven and up. There were a couple of titles, but not much variety within that. So I decided to write a series that was really action-packed, with elements of fantasy and humour as well. The character cast of an action movie star, a werewolf, a ninja, a zombie, a robot and an animancer appeals to what kids love and the cliffhangers at the end of each chapter keep reluctant readers hooked. Of course, the brilliant anime-like illustrations from Nahum Ziersch help too!

2. How many books do you have planned for the series? Can you tell us a little more about what's to come?

At the moment there are eight books in the series. The first four were out in June, and the second four have just come out in September. Each of the books is told from a different Star League member's point of view, so the first six books tell each of their stories, and books seven and eight are a two-part set told in alternating chapters by each of the characters.

3. You've worked in bookstores and libraries in the past – has this helped you in your writing career?

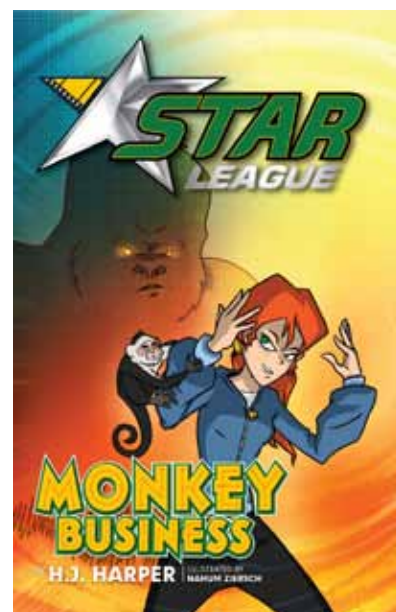
Definitely! It really helped me to get a feel for the market, and also to find out what kids love to read. In a bookshop you get to eavesdrop a lot, so whenever I'd see a younger customer get really excited about a book, I'd make sure I went home and read it to find out what had got them so enthused. Also, there really is no better way to learn about writing than reading wonderful books, and in my positions, I've been lucky enough to have access to an endless supply.

4. What other projects do you have on the go? Anything we can look forward to soon?

At the moment I'm working on another book called *Bureau of Mysteries*, which will be out through Random House in February next year. It's for slightly older readers, eight and up, and it's a steampunk puzzle adventure, about a boy called George Feather who joins a secret code-breaking organisation to stop the evil schemes of the Clockwork Octopus Society. There are lots of gadgets and contraptions, and readers will be able to join in and solve the puzzles as part of the story.

5. What are your favourite books for children and young adults?

I think I could write an essay on this alone! The Chaos Walking trilogy by Patrick Ness will always have a big place in my heart, but my other favourite authors are Darren Shan, Garth Nix and Joseph Delaney. I love the dark fantasy worlds that are written so well in YA and kids' books, many of which are coming out of Australia, such as *Burn Bright* by Marianne de Pierres and *Blood Song* by Rhiannon Hart.



Kevin Hennah: interior design, layout and merchandising for libraries

Over thirty participants spent an enjoyable day being entertained by Kevin Hennah, as he led them through his layout and merchandising workshop for libraries. Rather than a typical presentation, Kevin's approach was closer to a warm and receptive casual chat which invited the participants to question and share information. Clearly Kevin's reputation had preceded him.



Photo by Patricia Lam Sin Cho

Kevin spoke of pre-internet and post-internet environments and the survival of school libraries. What will kill our profession will not be laptops or the internet but a lack of imagination. We need to think big, to see the big picture. We must envision a bright future for teacher librarians and the communities we serve, and then fight to make that vision a reality. We need to see our school libraries from the customers' perspective. In much the same way as we weed out old books, we must be prepared to weed out old ideas and old attitudes.

Kevin covered the externals of the library, then presented examples ranging from expensive to low budget changes for the inside. He suggested that we

put a microscope to every aspect of our operations and look at the retail trade to determine why they are so successful. On the outside he suggested be bold, stand out from the crowd and create your own branding which should be on all your paperwork and stationery. Think like a customer – if there's anything in your library that you would not like to see in your favourite bookstore, deal with it today. Rejuvenate, refresh, repaint, or get rid of it!

Question: why are newsagents and video stores going out of business? Examine the ideas behind the layout of supermarkets for ideas for survival. Make it easy for our customers to shop.

After several slides demonstrating the inside of effective libraries, Kevin raised the query: Are you storing your collection or merchandising your books? Knowing that the best display is a book cover, are your books on display face out? Compare how retail shops employ colour; space and ease of customer movement to sell their merchandise.

All shelving should be moveable and no higher than 1.4 metres.

On the topic of shelves, Kevin suggests metal construction, moveable and double sided, in either grey, silver or black. Every third shelf must display front facing books, to drive impulse borrowing and keep print alive. Being on rollers makes it possible to create exciting learning areas with the shelves in an L-shape or another angle to suit any learning requirement. Seating is also a major component of the milieu. Consider different seating for different actions. Pouffes between the shelves for five minutes whilst browsing; comfy chairs or couches or bean bags for ten minutes small group discussion and a range of chairs for lesson length study. Armrests are out for all chairs as the arms wear out too quickly.

Carpet should ideally be tiles, a grey or charcoal and never employ patterns.

The effective use of different slides to compare and contrast before and after shots of the same library drove home each point that Kevin was making. The variety of national and international examples lent an air of authority to his presentation and had the participants asking for more.

Consider this: if you could gain a dollar for every resource that was lent by your library, what would you change?

Kevin left us with several point to ponder. The mission of school libraries should be to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation, not to have fancy displays, have the largest collection or the quietest library. Set your library up to meet the needs of the 'customer' – not just staff; be assertive about maximising loans and most importantly challenge traditional styles of display and presentation.

Congratulations to Cally Black and her team from Chisholm Catholic College for organising an exciting and informative day.

Jeff Herd
Churchlands Senior High School

WA Teacher Librarian of the Year
Brenda Clover
Perth College



Brenda Clover embodies the ASLA standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians in every way. Brenda is an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and passionate teacher librarian, advocate, facilitator and life long learner, lighting the way for leadership and learning in libraries.

She works collaboratively with teachers from many departments within her school, at many year levels. On top of her work commitments, Brenda is involved in a number of professional associations and organisations that provide her with state, national and international discussion about current issues and changes within teaching and librarianship. She is committed to sharing her own experiences in order to support the professional development of others.

Most notably, Brenda recognises the dynamic nature of the profession, and is highly adaptable to changing curricular needs and technological advances. The engagement she facilitates for students in terms of literature and information skills is most admirable.

Brenda's dedication to her role, and to the advocacy of the ever-evolving role of the teacher librarian, make her an inspiration to library staff everywhere.

**WASLA would like to congratulate
Brenda and Lee on their Awards.**

WA Library Officer of the Year
Lee Woodland
Kolbe Catholic College

During her time at Kolbe, Lee Woodland has consistently worked well beyond the parameters of her role, providing unfailing support to a succession of teacher librarians and school staff. She consistently works far more hours than are asked of her, and feels guilty if she is not there early enough in the morning to meet the morning crowd of students! To these, and generations of students who have passed through Kolbe's library, she has offered a safe and warm (or cool) space to be, and an ear to listen.

Lee is always willing to give time to new library staff (from any school) to demonstrate procedures and processes of all kinds and provides unstinting support of her current teacher librarian, who frequently asks for ideas and help with WA projects. Lee's extensive background in WA school libraries means she is a priceless knowledge repository!

In addition to her quiet pastoral care for students, Lee exemplifies excellence in her library duties – she has rescued many a favourite book from certain death, designed marvellous displays, assisted staff and students alike to find the perfect resource for teaching and learning, and put her fabulous organisational skills to work on events for not just the library, but the whole school, countless times.

Lee takes such personal pride in her work and the quality of the service she offers is what makes her so vital to Kolbe. In the transition toward a new direction, one that befits Kolbe's status as a leading digital school in WA, Lee is more than prepared to do what it takes to remain helpful and relevant. She will undoubtedly be both for many years to come.



Top Tips for new Tls

Being a TL does not mean that you are a superhero. It's okay to make mistakes – we are all learners together.

Join local networks and the state/national association.

Don't stay in the library 24/7.

Relax ... what doesn't get done today goes on the list for tomorrow.

Keep a tight rein on your budget in the first few years – the urge to spend is great, grasshopper!

Put the learning outcomes first.

Get out all the policy documents you can find at your school – BORING but necessary – especially note those about your job description and duties and about disposing of weeded items.

Be pleasant with the students, but firm. It's your space and your rules. They are not your friends.

A smile goes a lot further than a growl – especially with students, but also with staff.

Breathe.

Be as indispensable as you can manage in your first year. It will pay off in your second year. (but don't overcommit yourself in your eagerness!).

Use the force – OZTLnet, Twitter, ALIA, SLAV/SLAQ/ASLA etc., RSS feeds from great library bloggers, #vicpln or #austl on Twitter, etc – can all give you great, instantaneous feedback. Librarians are great resources (of course!) – use them!

Carry a notebook and pen so you can make a note of requests or things people talk about that you don't understand; your brain may be in overwork mode for a while.

Never panic!

Create an environment that suits your beliefs and maximises your strengths.

Keep communication channels open.

Take time to enjoy your role: it contributes so much to the entire school community.

Start a blog and record your steps/ progress/ successes.

Make an appointment with your principal and find out what their

priorities are, what they expect from you in your role.

Set your alarm clock for fifteen minutes earlier than before – you need that extra time each morning to get everything working and ready before the daily deluge begins.

Take time to understand your different 'client bases': children, teachers, principal, parents.

Take time to learn about your collection, not just the 'what' you have, but how is it organised, who makes buying decisions, who decides budgets, etc.

Work out your communication, advocacy plan, how you are going to maintain a positive profile: how do I let my 'client base' know what is happening, how do I involve them, how do I ensure my services make life easier, more productive etc for them.

Relationships with your staff will be paramount.

Take time to learn how your school and library works: go gently with big eyes and big ears.

Cultivate your business manager – what is their learning style? They hold the purse strings!

Attend a conference in your first year and as many afterwards as possible.

Select one teacher to collaborate with and do one thing at a time – then advertise your successes.

Start small.

Sue Spence's online tips at: <http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/rblonline/teacherlibrarianship/TLadvice.htm>

Compiled by Clare Burford

With thanks to OZTLnet contributors.

"L" corner: learning, leadership, literature & leisure

Get your National Year of Reading 2012 merchandise here:

<http://www.cafepress.com.au/NationalYearofReading2012>

These high quality products are a great way to show support for next year's theme!



100 things kids will miss if they don't have a school librarian in their school:

<http://www.outstanding-schoollibraries.org/>



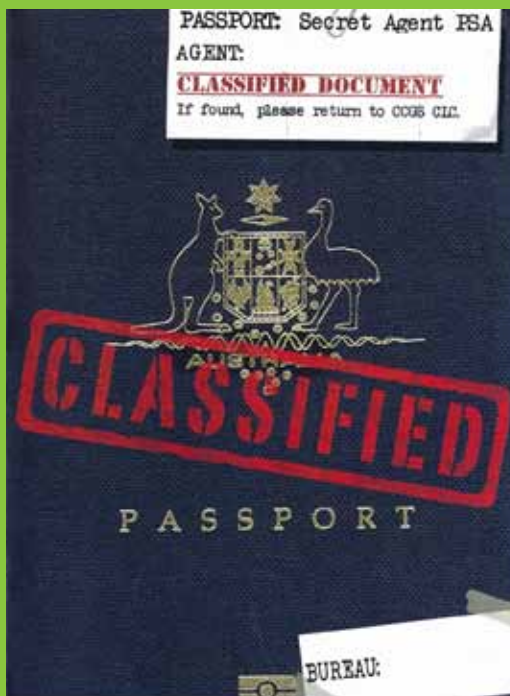
What librarians and Google are for:

http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2011/06/what-librarians-google-are-for.html



Because we all need ways to relax... This gorgeous Tumblr gathers pictures, quotes and more about reading and books. While away some time wandering through the posts!

<http://firefliesinthelabyrinth.tumblr.com/>



Passports for Secret Agents

When the Year 7 cohort entered our Middle School in 2010, Greg Lindorff, Helen Knight and I wanted to establish a reading program that would engage the boys and which they would hopefully enjoy. We are shamelessly prepared to bribe and cajole boys into reading and listening to stories using every available means.

As so many boys become hooked on adventure stories, and particularly those that send young boys on men's missions, I selected an imitation Australian passport (enlarged and altered to look like one for a secret agent) as their recording device. The passport became a "classified document".

Helen and I worked closely with our English Department during the planning stage of the program and the first pages of the passport follow the themes they cover.

I was particularly fortunate to be able to work collaboratively with Luke Milton on the layout and composition of the passport, which he created in Photoshop. We have used card for the cover and plenty of colour throughout. We had to make adjustments to ensure that the boys are able to write (or print) in the spaces provided with ease. It looks very professional! (200 cm x 140 cm).

I adopted "Missions", "Operations", "Other Dangerous Assignments" and "Briefings" to describe various reading and listening activities. Agents belong to "Bureaus" and "Agents Comments" have to be secretive and only intelligible to those who have embarked on the same "missions". The teacher librarians became the "Case Officers". We cut and paste their school photos into the document. This is a time-consuming exercise but well worth the effort. Fake fingerprints are part of the design. The "Extra Reading" section is used for additional titles in series; entries for genres not allocated a page. The passports are housed in clear plastic boxes and kept in the library.

With the assistance of a staff member from Community Relations and Sticker Factory, we created gold and cream embossed stickers, which look like a customs stamp. The stickers include the school name and logo and "Senior Library". Students receive a stamp on the cover of their passport for every five books read. We include audio and e-books, graphic novels, picture books and class novels in the count.

Obviously, we incorporate plenty of promotions and feedback activities such as shoebox (or shopping bag) presentations into the program.

The boys have responded extremely well to the program. The Passport has proved to be a great motivational tool.

If you like the idea of a Reading Passport, we are happy for you to use ours as a basis for your design, however, you will have to create your own files.

Margaret Chapple
Christ Church Grammar School

Margaret has kindly given permission for us to share all the files for creating the Reading Passport in the Members Only section of the WASLA website.

www.wasla.asn.au



Caring for Books

One of the biggest problems with using filament tape to reinforce the gutters at back/front covers and over centre staples is that it thickens the centre of the book and pushes pressure on the stapled centre. One technique that we show during our How to Care for Books workshops (a one day workshop offer by QLS for free) is to stitch paperbacks and also magazines/big books.

Drilling/Stitching

Used as an alternative to stapling and where a spine is thicker than 20mm paperbacks; magazines can have top tied or spine tied stitching work done. This type of work can be a preparation or repair task.

The tools required will include:

- drilling board
- drill (cordless works best)
- 2mm steel drill bit
- binders thread
- binders needle

To judge how much thread is needed, simply measure two half inch lengths of the height of the book you'll be preparing or repairing.



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For Top Tied Stitching of a Paperback/Magazine

Please note before starting this process, ensure there is a sufficient margin between spine and text. Place your book on top of the Drilling Board face up, with spine of the book against the back board to ensure the spine is square and vertical.

Next drill three holes along the spine. Drill the centre hole first, followed by a hole a 1/3 of the way down from the top of the book and 1/3 of the way from the bottom of the book.

Once you have drilled the required holes, insert the Binders Thread through the Binders Needle and starting with the centre hole on the back cover, pass the needle through.

Ensure that the tail of the thread is left behind – 10cm approximately, then pass the needle through the top hole, then back through the centre and then

back through the bottom hole.

This method creates a series of figure 8s.

The needle end of the thread should then be passed under the top loop and the needle removed.

Take the tail end of the thread and pass it under the first loop in the opposite direction to the first piece.

Pull the thread tight and tie a double knot. Trim off the excess thread.

The paperback is now ready for spine tape and/or a self adhesive.

Covering applied to add additional protection.

Ensure not to drill too close to the text or the spine of the book. You can drill more holes if needed however remember to always drill an odd amount. Generally three holes for a paperback is sufficient.

For Spine Tied Stitching of a Magazine or Children's Soft Cover Picture Book

The tools required are the same but the drilling will take place in the centre of the open magazine/book.

To judge the amount of the thread needed, simply measure two and a half lengths of the height of the magazine you'll be preparing/repairing.

For an A4 sized Magazine/Book a minimum of three holes is required in the same way as a paperback. Drill the centre hole 1/3 of the way down from the top and 1/3 of the way up from the bottom.

Once drilled, insert the Binders Thread through the Binders Needle as before, and starting with the centre hole on the inside this time, pass the thread and needle through, leaving a 10cm tail. As before then proceed to the top hole, then back through the centre and then through the bottom hole.

Again this method creates a series of figure 8s.

As before pass the needle end of the thread under the top loop and remove the needle.

Pass the tail end of the thread under the same top loop but in the opposite direction to the first piece.

Pull the thread tight and tie a double knot. Trim the excess thread.

To stop the thread being tampered with it is recommended to place either white plastic hinge tape or clear spine tape down the centre to cover the thread.

The outside cover of the Magazine/Picture Book can also have a clear spine tape and/or self adhesive covering applied to add additional protection.

Colin Matthews
QLS Technology

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*QLS will soon be releasing its new edited **How to Care for Books** CD rom as well as relaunching their "How to" workshops*

Opening up Pandora's box: Teacher librarianship in the twenty-first century

Barbara Combes
Lecturer, Edith Cowan University

Abstract

In a world that is currently struggling to come to terms with the internet, the exponential explosion in the volume of readily available information and a plethora of delivery modes and resource formats; the role of the teacher librarian and the school library in this new information landscape is murkier than ever before. This presentation looks at how teacher librarians can re-invent themselves and their school libraries to become an essential component of the core business of the school, ie. teaching and learning. It's all about unlocking hidden talents, facing challenges and taking control.

Continued from Issues 1 and 2...

Challenge 3 – Status and role

A major challenge for TLs over the last ten years has been establishing our status in the school community and clearly communicating our role. After the heady days of the 1970s and 1980s when the importance of school libraries and their contribution was clearly recognised through centralised funding and professional staffing, we have now reached a stage where libraries of all kinds are under threat, even though there is a plethora of research that tells us that pro-active school libraries make a huge difference to student learning outcomes (LRS, 2007; Todd, Kuhlthau & OELMA, 2004; NCLIS, 2006; Lonsdale, 2003; Bertland, 2006; Williams, Cole, & Wavell, 2002; McKenzie, 2005; Hill, 2004; Kirsch, et al. 2002). Across the US, Canada, Australia, Europe and the United Kingdom, libraries and school libraries are under-funded and under-staffed. In some cases they have been closed or transformed into internet cafes.

There are several reasons for these changes.

1. There is a belief by politicians, systemic educators and senior administration, that technology can be used as a means of education delivery, and has the potential to provide a wide range of 'free' resources for schools (SOCCI, 2000). Underpinning this belief is a basic lack of understanding about information as a commodity, the public domain internet, issues such as copyright and intellectual property, and the hidden costs of technology.

2. Apathy on the part of school library professionals who have focused on the service and management aspects of their role, rather than teaching and learning, has been a major contributor to the school library's poor image. We have not placed the library squarely at the centre of the school's core business, ie. teaching and learning outcomes for students. Many of us have looked on the teacher librarian's role as an opportunity to 'escape' from the classroom and the current educational change process that demands major alterations to content, the way teachers teach and the assessment of learning outcomes. The latest of these changes is the Australian curriculum. Parents, industry stakeholders, administration and society are demanding a more professional attitude and accountability from teachers in schools. They want graduates who are flexible and adaptable, able to cope with a constantly changing workplace and who are able to learn new skills. The library, rather than being an escape option, should be the centre of teaching and learning for the whole school community. The TL should be leading and supporting educational change.

3. A lack of succession planning and the public perception that libraries are populated by grey-haired, middle-aged women and who are technological dinosaurs in a new information age, has only enhanced the stereotype of librarians. Instead of launching ourselves into this brave new world, many of us are still standing nervously at the water's edge, afraid to get our toes wet. Others, who have successfully begun swimming, are still caught up in the service ethic and fail to capitalise on their expertise. TLs and librarians are not perceived as leaders in their school communities, either in terms of curriculum or technology.

Clearly, if we are going to survive, this perception needs to change – we need to change. We need to accept that part of our role is educating administration, the staff and our school community as a whole about the new information landscape and our role.

Strategy 1 – Learn to prioritise

Prioritise your time and value yourself. These are two important steps towards changing perceptions about your status and role within the school community. Have a booking sheet for the library (physical on the front desk or virtual in the school email system or both) and include yourself, other library staff and teachers booking into the library on the sheet. Plan and set aside time for



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your professional and teaching duties, management/housekeeping tasks and collaborative meetings. Avoid crisis management and actively discourage teachers from using the library and yourself as stop-gaps for their poor planning. Your time and expertise is valuable and you need to let them know it!

Strategy 2 – Be realistic

Change is an intimidating process, both for the individual and the organisation. Incremental change and education are the best strategies to use here. Slowly introduce new procedures, plan your staff/school community education program and always let people know well in advance if you are going to change things. Always ensure that change is for a specific purpose related to the teaching and learning outcomes of the school. 'If it ain't broke, then don't try to fix it.' Save your energies for the important things. Don't shift furniture, re-write policies and procedures or change things unless there is a clear cost-benefit for the school, and make sure you articulate the benefits. Use technology as a tool to make time and space in your day. Don't allow library management to overwhelm you or dictate why and how you do things. Take charge and be in control. Of course, in the real world this takes time, patience and persistence. Always take little steps, be kind to yourself and remember your value.

Strategy 3 – Become a strategic planner

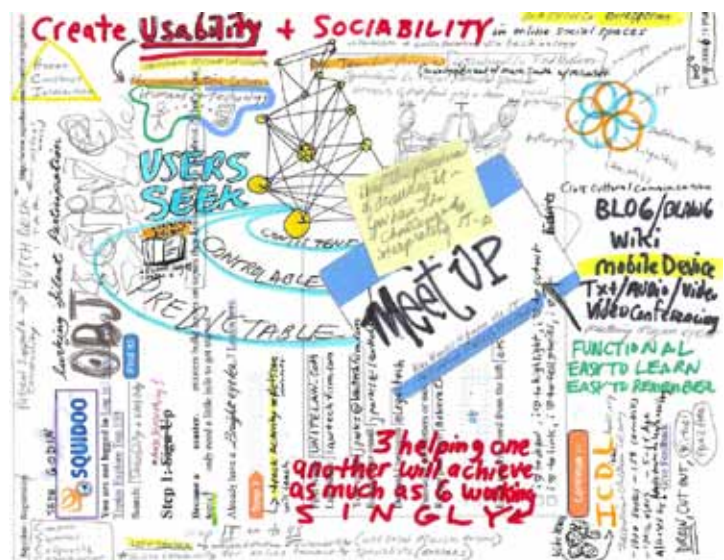
Differentiate yourself (Green, 2004) and become a strategic leader in your school community. There are a number of strategies you can use here.

- Observe your colleagues closely. Who is the most powerful or influential person in the school? It may be the Principal, but can also be the Deputy, the Registrar, the Teaching-Learning Coordinator, the Computer teacher or even the secretary in the front office. Target this person/s and find out how they see your role and the role of the Library. You cannot change your role and status if you don't know how you are perceived by the key players in the school.
- Make decisions based on educational outcomes rather than organisational ones. You must have a clear educational vision and couch all your discussions with staff in an educational context. This gives you credibility as a teacher and information specialist. Provide professional development for staff to help them become technologically literate. You will gain respect and influence.
- Don't just belong to educational committees and groups within the school, offer to be the chair person. As the chair person you will be doing what you do best – delegating and organising and managing tasks, and collecting, collating and disseminating information. It is always the chair person who knows what is going on in the school.

- If you have complaints, then keep them focused on educational issues, always have positive suggestions ready as your negotiation tools, and be ready to be an active participant in any solutions.
- Become the resident learning expert on how students learn best in your school. Know the current strategic goals of your education system and the school, relate these to the curriculum, identify the gaps and seek to fill them.

Strategy 4 – Learn to delegate and collaborate

Know your staff, empower them and work with them to build a cohesive library team. They need to feel valued too. Always be a model for best practice. You and your team (even if the team consists of one untrained library officer and some volunteer parents) should present a united vision of the role of the library in your particular school. While your library should always have a client focus, avoid doing it for them and this includes teachers as well as students. Make every occasion, no matter how small or trivial, a teaching-learning opportunity.



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Strategy 5 – Don't make assumptions

Don't assume anything. Successful curriculum programs engage students only when the students know and clearly understand expectations.

- Use technology as a tool to enhance learning outcomes for students, rather than as an administrative or organisational tool.
- Create templates, 'how to' FAQs, instruction guidelines, skills review sheets, pathfinders and directional signage – both electronic and physical – to assist your students.
- Get away from the library or information skills model and work towards integrating skills development where it is most relevant to the student – at the point of need during a curriculum program which often takes place in the classroom.

This is especially true when laptop programs are introduced and teachers no longer see the need to come to the library. In this instance make sure your virtual library leads students and teachers to a range of resources- virtual, print, multimedia.

- Don't assume that students know how to manage or evaluate information, participate in group activities, hold discussions, take notes or write assignments.
- Work with teachers to develop generic information literacy templates to scaffold and guide student learning. Initially this is a lot of work, but the templates are re-usable learning objects, they provide consistency for students and allow you to develop a highly structured, safe learning environment that also allows students to exercise autonomy and independence while continually developing information skills.
- You become a curriculum designer and specialist support teacher for staff, and a facilitator and guide for students.

Strategy 6 – Staff professional development

Share your expertise and knowledge with your teachers. You want to position yourself and the library as the information and curriculum hub of your school community. You want to be perceived as a curriculum leader, designer and professional development support teacher. You want to be the catalyst in your school for the development of innovative and exciting teaching-learning programs that develop literacy and information literacy skills. It is the library or information hub that will help students to become lifelong learners, not silos of out-dated content locked away in subject specialist areas. It is your role to help teachers and students to make the connections across the curriculum, to transfer generic skills and further develop their literacy and information literacy. Offer reference services to your Principal, school administration and teachers too.

Strategy 7 – Promotion and advertising

Promotion of your role is not just advertising. It is also about modelling, best practice and perceptions. Change your image from someone who is focused on the management of the library to someone who is vitally interested in curriculum and student learning outcomes. Initial perceptions are very important. Some strategies include the following.

- Always arrive early and leave late. This is a fine balancing act between taking charge of your workload and being perceived as hard-working; and being perceived as disorganised.
- Always carry a box of books with you in a trolley. This sends a message to other staff that you are hard-working and a teacher too.
- If a request is unreasonable, don't be afraid to tell the person how it will be done much better next time, when you have time to provide the resources

and assistance required to help students achieve their learning outcomes.

- Actively advertise yourself to your parent community. Their support can be invaluable and provide more publicity than anything else. Offer your parent body workshops on cybersafety, cyberbullying, plagiarism and how to use a computer. If you don't have the time, skills or energy to do this yourself, then organise someone to come in and do it for you, for example from your local professional association, education department or university.
- Choose your collaborative partners wisely. Look for the innovators and those more open to working differently. Note: this may not necessarily be the younger teachers in your school.

Changing perceptions and your status in the school will be a slow process, but persistence, careful planning and the smart use of technology can make a difference.

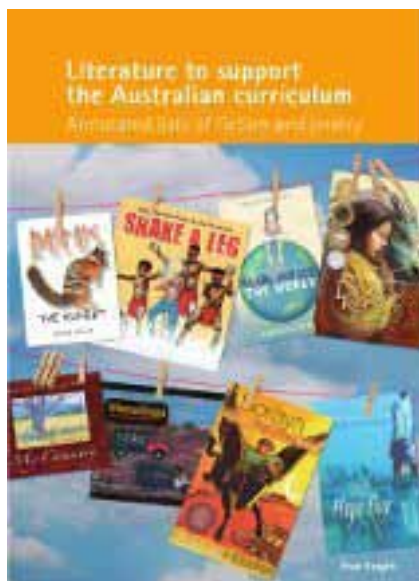
Conclusion

Our TL's box has certainly let loose a multitude of issues and challenges. We have much to do and overcome as a profession and I have alluded to some today. There are new challenges on the horizon as technology influences the information landscape, funding becomes tighter and the expectations of society become greater. We need to meet the challenges head-on. This is a big ask, I know, but the survival of our profession is hanging in the balance.

Fortunately, there is something left in our box – hope. We TLs are a resilient and determined bunch. Our most enduring characteristics are our capacity to move forward and change, and to support each other by sharing best practice. Our new journal *ic3* is an excellent example of how we can all share. So, if you only take away from this issue of *ic3*, a little bit of hope; one new idea or strategy; a new contact or buddy; a new link; a reaffirmation that you and what you do has value, and the recognition that your job is much more than a library manger, you will have begun the journey that Pandora started and be ready to take a peek inside the box. I wish you joy on this journey as you rediscover learning along with your students. I wish you good fortune as you meet challenges that will test the quality of your hair dye, but keep you forever young in mind, body and heart. I do not wish you luck, because I know you will strategically plan, organise and design your own!

**THIS ARTICLE BEGAN IN ISSUE 1 AND
CONTINUED IN ISSUE 2 OF IC3**

Book Reviews



Literature to support the Australian Curriculum: Annotated Lists of Fiction and Poetry
Knight, F.

Pledger Consulting, 2011
ISBN: 9781876678258
Reviewed by Jo Schenkel

This brilliant resource is a must for every school library. As stated in the title, it contains clearly set out lists of titles under the themes of Asia, Sustainability, Indigenous Literature and Poetry, as well as providing suggestions for class texts and titles to read aloud.

With a focus on the various age groups, Knight sorts titles to fit entry level to Year 3, Years 4 to 7 and Years 7 to 10. A précis for each title is provided to enable one to get a feel for the book without having to search the shelves and databases. Particularly for teacher librarians who are regularly bombarded with requests for titles which may fit a theme or subject area, this will make life considerably easier.

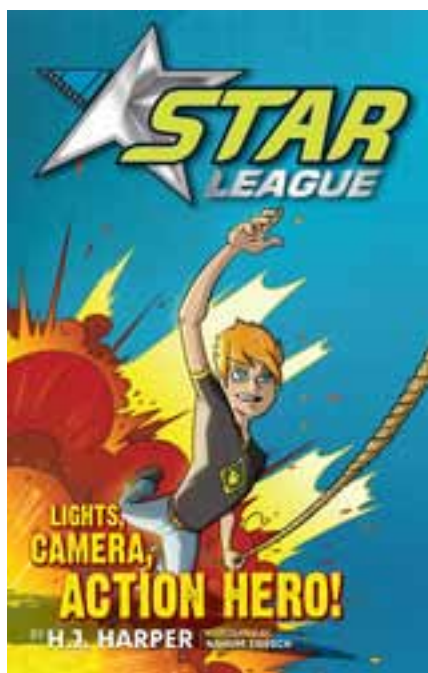
Alongside Pat Pledger and Fran Knight's other titles, *Flash Fiction*, *Historical Fiction* and *Values Fiction*, this title would be a support for any teacher or teacher librarian wishing to truly immerse students in quality literature.

Their previous publications are still relevant and easy to add new titles to as they are released.

Having read many of Fran's reviews, it is obvious that she is a prodigious

reader and I value her opinions on the many titles included in this publication. I now eagerly await a similar title to suggest texts for each subject within the Australian Curriculum, particularly for use alongside the specific history topics.

Whilst I appreciate the networking of colleagues on such lists as OZTL, as we collaborate to find titles to suit a theme, it will be an asset to have good solid lists in place as a first resort. A highly recommended title!



Star League: Books 1-4
Harper, H.J.

Random House Australia, 2011
Reviewed by Tehani Wessely

What a fantastic series for emerging readers! HJ Harper has created fun, action-packed adventure books with an unusual cast of characters in her Star League stories. While quite short and self-contained in an episodic way, there is a larger story arc that will keep readers hooked as they work through the series.

The first book, *Lights, Camera, Action Hero!*, sets the scene, with movie star Jay Casey being recruited for a secret team of kids to fight the battle against a hidden evil. From there, each book focuses on a different team member (a werewolf, a zombie, a robot, an animancer and a ninja), showing their point of view

and expanding on their back story while also moving the overall plot forward towards catching the bad guys.

With short chapters, snappy writing and great illustrations, this series is sure to be a hit with reluctant and emerging readers – highly recommended!



Jake's Great Game
Spillman, K. and Nixon, C. (ill.)
Fremantle Press, 2011
ISBN: 9781921888502
Reviewed by Tehani Wessely

This short, beautifully put together book is a great little read, ideal for younger readers and with some excellent messages, some of them very sneakily embedded in the text.

In this, the fourth of the Spillman and Nixon collaboration, Jake decides he'd like to play soccer. He's not all that good at it though, and gets very discouraged. His father and Nana (I loved that Nana had a gun kick!) help him realise that practise is essential to learn the game, and Jake comes to understand that everyone has different talents.

The writing is this is pitch perfect, and the illustrations add another point of engagement and support for newly independent readers. I have no hesitation about recommending this one for all primary schools.

Here an App, there an App, everywhere an iPad App

It is easy to become overwhelmed by the number of iPad Apps that are appearing on a daily basis. You could spend hours reviewing each one and weighing up its merits only to find that tomorrow an even better one has arrived.

For schools that are 'going iPad' the challenge is even greater to decide on whether to have a 'standard suite' of Apps or whether to let students select their own. That decision in and of itself requires extensive planning and discussion.

With any new curriculum initiative or technology implementation it is important to identify the pedagogical and curriculum implications for students and teachers. The introduction of iPads also needs to undergo this interrogation so that it does not merely become a process of 'getting on the bandwagon' but is a strategic deployment of a technology tool that has the capacity to transform learning if done correctly.

A great deal of time and money can be spent exploring the many thousands (and I mean thousands...) of Apps that are available. Rather than get caught up in the 'candyshop' mentality of jumping from one App to another to see what 'cool things it can do' there needs to be a pedagogically appropriate approach to the selection of the Apps (especially where significant financial outlay is to occur).

This is where it is important to first identify the desired functionality of the Apps as they relate to classroom pedagogy and curriculum content. Such questions as:

- What are the underlying principles for teaching and learning that these Apps will support? (eg collaborative learning, construction of knowledge, multimodal literacies, information management, student-centred learning etc).
- How can specific Apps help transform the ways students learn in the classroom?
- Which Apps are designed to assist with curriculum delivery for teachers, and which are designed for use by students?

- Which Apps have a generic application that can be used across learning areas and which are content specific?
- What will students be doing with the iPads in the classroom?
- Which Apps reflect the curriculum content in our school and are age appropriate for our students?



 Some rights reserved by NASA Goddard Photo and Video

It is imperative as a school or curriculum committee that you establish the criteria by which you will select your Apps. These should be informed by your policies and guidelines for both technology integration and resource selection in the school. Some questions that need to be answered are:

- What functionality do we require?
- Which available App is most appropriate to meet this requirement?
- Do we allow more than one App for each function?
- Do we have a standard suite, allow student choice or have a combination of essential Apps and free choice?

To get you started thinking about this functionality here is a basic list of Apps as they relate to specific functions (most are free). Once you start thinking in terms of functionality and not specific Apps, research about and selection of Apps becomes more focused and streamlined.

Social networking for book lovers



Functionality	Examples
Data Storage	Air sharing HD Print n share iFiles for iPads Box.net ReaddleDocs for iPad Dropbox
Notemaking and Student Organisation	inClass iStudiez myHomework StudentPad Flashcards
Data conversion	DocstoGo Neu.Annotate
Collaboration	ShareBoard Whiteboard
Voice capture (if you don't have an ipad 2)	Audioboo Recorder iTalk Verbally
Mindmapping	Simplemind Idea Sketch Mindmeister Mindjet
Photo Capture, Storyboarding and Sharing	Screenchomp Clibe PhotoShare CropPhoto MyPhotoConverter

For further information related to iPads you can visit:

<http://allaboutipads.webs.com>

Leonie McIlvenny
ICT Pedagogy Officer, Curtin University

Leonie will be sharing a regular Web 2.0 technology reviews column with us in future issue of ic3. Stay tuned!

Goodreads

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



Goodreads is the largest site for readers and book recommendations in the world. We have more than 6,100,000 members who have added more than 200,000,000 books to their shelves. A home for casual readers and bona-fide bookworms alike, Goodreads users recommend books, compare what they are reading, keep track of what they've read and would like to read, find their next favorite book, form book clubs and much more. iThing Apps are available.

LibraryThing

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



LibraryThing is an online service to help people catalog their books easily. You can access your catalog from anywhere — even on your mobile phone. Because everyone catalogs together, LibraryThing also connects people with the same books, comes up with suggestions for what to read next, and so forth.

The prestigious Jean Rhodes Award is going to be announced at the AGM, which is scheduled for 16 November at St Stephen's School Duncraig Campus. Jean Rhodes made a huge contribution to the development of school libraries. The AISWA Librarians' Group decided to present an annual award to a practising school librarian to honour that contribution. The Jean Rhodes Memorial Award was implemented in 1992. The award is open to all current members of AISWA libraries and nominations have been based on the following criteria.

- Develop and foster innovative services within the library.
- Provide students with an environment, which is conducive to learning and information literacy.
- Improve communication and awareness of the library within the school community.
- Provide leadership support to professional colleagues both within and beyond the school community.
- Highlight an image of the best professional service, which should be received in all school libraries.
- Provide a leading role in learning within their schools particularly in information literacy.

Nominations for the award closed in mid-August and the selection panel has been reviewing the applications and looks forward to sharing the achievements and contribution of the worthy winner at the AGM.

Professional Development – Ideas Shop: Reprised

Following the support for the 'Ideas Shop' from the recent WA conference, AISWA Libraries resurrected the format for its recent professional learning opportunity, held at Forrest Library at Hale School on 13 September. Once again this format proved to be highly successful, with both the extra time allocation and the fact that participants were able to attend all the sessions, adding to the appeal. There were three topics covered: the Australian Curriculum, the National Inquiry into Libraries, Literature promotion/Reading Programs, and the use of QR Codes.

In the Australian Curriculum, Sally Morris (Churchlands SHS) and Dee Cunninghame (St Stephens) spoke about their experiences acting as Curriculum Leaders in introducing and unpacking the Australian Curriculum for the teachers at their school. Sally also spoke about the workshop they attended and used in their training session. She finished by mentioning useful documents teachers could use in preparation, including the Melbourne Declaration.

Dee started by saying that the Melbourne Declaration was just one of the documents their English staff were given to read as preparation for their planning by the Head of English at her school. She spoke about the differences in planning and the journeys the English and Society and Environment departments had taken at her school.

Both departments started by looking at the curriculum in its early planning phases, the S&E department deciding to wait until the documents were in their final form before rewriting their curriculum. The English Department started by rewriting the curriculum in 2008 and gradually introducing Australian curriculum language and terminology over the years since then, in a four phase, planned, implementation. The teacher librarians were actively involved in the planning days for both departments (at the departments' request), both with curriculum planning and resourcing. The Heads of English and Society and Environment are both active in their professional associations. The Head of English, Phill Taylor, is also AISWA representative from the Course Advisory Committee on the Australian Curriculum Consultation Forums and in this capacity is actively involved on a state and national level in planning for the Australian Curriculum and is also implementing courses for teachers to upgrade their grammar skills through Milner College in Perth. Dee finished by reminding the audience that there are changes for teachers in the Australian Curriculum (such as the explicit teaching of grammar for the first time) and that they will also need to be supported with resources to update their knowledge and skills.

In the QR Codes session, facilitated by Jean Anning and Alison Spicer Wensley, the presenters provided a very informative introduction to QR codes – those black and white codes that are appearing on books, supermarket products and business cards. A QR code is a visual representation of compressed information. This can then be read (or translated) by a code reader like 'Quickmark,' an application loaded onto a computer, mobile phone or iPad. The ways in which these can be used in education were deftly explained and the audience were able to witness how easy it is to create a QR code with applications like 'QRicket.' More information is available from Jean's Scoopit page.



In Literatur..., facilitated by Gary Green (PLC) and Barbara Stout (Scotch College), a number of ideas were canvassed. Firstly the library environment which can be greatly enhanced and become more visually stimulating through the use of inspirational quotations and other larger images on the walls and throughout the reading area to highlight certain novels or library activities. These images are removable transfers which can be moved and relocated

throughout the library and are relatively cheap to purchase. Banner posters hanging from the ceiling to the floor featuring popular titles or genre-based novels have been very useful in highlighting books for students to read.

The reading program at PLC has also been ostensibly devolved to the English teachers, though still a collaborative effort between the English and library staff. An outline of how this works and the support the library has provided, especially through a virtual presence to enhance the reading opportunities for students was discussed. Further information can be obtained from Gary Green (ggreen@plc.wa.edu.au).

Students at Scotch College Middle and Senior School have enjoyed using the social and interactive functionality of Destiny Quest, from Follett Library Manager software, to self-manage their reading program. They are able to make friends with other students in the school, recommend books to their friends, populate their own bookshelves, create reading lists and upload book reviews and digital responses into the catalogue record for individual titles. The students are engaged in a fun 'real task' as their book reviews/digital responses are then available for all library patrons to read. From a teacher librarian perspective, this platform has been an invaluable tool in our quest to familiarise students with, and provide easy access to, all the functionality of the library catalogue. This has had immediate ramifications on the ability of students to access the eBooks in our collection. Further information can be obtained from Barbara Stout.



The WASLA website is a repository for practical resources, information on professional development, advocacy support, state and national events and reports and much more.

Register for access to the Members Only section for access to a growing wealth of support and resources, just one of the many benefits of being a member of the WA School Library Association!

www.wasla.asn.au

DON'T FORGET! 2011 IS INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS

Encourage discussion in your library about sustainability and conservation, forests and forestry, the different uses of forests by different groups of people, and why trees are great for the Earth.

DESIGN AND WIN FOR YOUR LIBRARY:

A set of USB storage devices

HOW?

Design an 'International Year of Forests' bookmark.

The design of your bookmark is entirely up to you, but must include both titles

'Year of Forests 2011' and 'WASLA'

Make yours unique by adding relevant pictures, sayings or poetry. Be creative!

COMPETITION CLOSES:

Friday 11 November, 2011

SEND ENTRIES TO:

Email: bgreene@studygroup.com

WASLA FORESTS BOOKMARK
COMPETITION

PO Box 1272

West Perth WA 6872

The winning designs will be available to download in the Members Only section of WASLA.

Some useful online information:

'Forests Learning':

<http://www.forestlearning.edu.au/>

'Forests and Forestry':

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/en/>

'Celebrating Forests for People':

<http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>

'Planet Pals':

<http://www.planetpals.com/green-forests-journal.html>

Check the Members Only section of the WASLA for more useful links.

WASLA 2011 – a year to celebrate!

Despite this being my personal *annus horribilus*, 2011 has been another year of strength for a rejuvenated WASLA and I have to thank my co-president Mary Hookey and the wonderful WASLA Committee who share tasks equally and continue to step into the breach when needed.

The publication of the new WASLA journal, *ic3*, has been a major milestone and the fact that we have way too much for the final issue is testament to the quality and quantity of submissions. Of course WASLA could not produce such a professional publication without the skills, commitment and passion of the editor, Tehani Wessely.

WASLA has also embarked on some major advocacy this year, which culminated in a meeting with David Axworthy, the Director of Schools at DETWA. The Committee will continue to push for more professionals in schools and we are currently working with our Library Officers to ensure they are treated fairly in the workplace. A key aspect of this push is the implementation of a TL major in the new Education undergraduate degree at ECU, due to come on stream in 2013. This will ensure that new teachers entering schools have the skills to manage their school libraries while being active teachers. So it is a matter of watch this space in 2012.

WASLA has held a number of PD half day and full day sessions, as well as participating in the organisation of another highly successful School Library Conference. PD on literacy and literature; the Australian Curriculum; important details about Web accessibility and the probable repercussions for schools and all educational institutions; and a very successful Library Officers Day are some of the highlights for 2011. The Committee also hopes to travel to our country colleagues again in Term 4.

I know most of us are looking at the end of the year with a sigh of relief, but there are still a few things to keep in mind.

- **The WASLA Dinner** where we celebrate our Western Australian TL of the Year (Brenda Clover, Perth College) and the Western Australian Library Officer of the Year (Lee Woodland, Kolbe Catholic College). The details will be out soon in the WASLA weekly emails. The dinner is a great way to finish off a busy year, celebrate our passion and all our hard work, and take some much

needed time to celebrate ourselves. Jo Critch, the WASLA vice president, is in charge of the WASLA Dinner. Please put the date in your calendar.

- **The WASLA AGM.** This is also an important function. We still have some tidying up to do to meet the legislative requirements for the incorporation of WASLA and to vote in committee members. The AGM is also a meeting to network and get to know what is/has happened throughout the year. All Committee reports are available on the website and proxy voting will be introduced for the first time this year. We are also moving to a two-year tenure process for Committee members and a half-spill of current members. Nominate for a position and be a part of a wonderful team of TLs.

Next year promises to be just as busy and eventful, and, in spite of the promise of a lot of hard work, lots of fun. It has been a pleasure to lead such a fabulous group of people. The Committee has been my strength in what has been a horrible year for me personally and I can't thank them enough.

Barbara Combes
WASLA President – WA Operations



Participants at the Library Officer Day,
Friday 14 October, 2011.



On Friday 14 October, 65 Library Officers attended the annual WASLA Library Officer Day.

This year the Professional Development day was held at Perth College and included sessions such as:

- K-12 Curriculum Services
- SCIS
- Australian Curriculum – what is it all about?
- Library Officer Level 1/Level 2 what's the difference?
- Diigo – How to use the web to store your internet 'favourites'
- Portable technologies
- Camera (still & video)
- Promoting yourself and your role
- Where to buy what?
- Union presentations
- Web 2.0 tools

It was hard sometimes to make choices as to which one to go to, as they were all relevant.

We were fortunate to have delicious handmade gourmet biscuits for morning tea and a yummy sit down lunch.

Thank you to all the Library Officers who came along to make the day a successful event. I hope other LOs enjoyed the networking as much as I did. Keep up the networking through the year to support each other.

Thanks to the WASLA committee for their ongoing support of School Library Officers across the state. Huge thanks to Brenda Clover from Perth College who made it possible to have our PD here this year. Brenda and her staff Kylie Eddy and Jonathan Dutton presented and worked their magic behind the scenes also. Great job.

Huge thanks also to Barbara Combes, Val Baird, Phyllis Paioff and Tehani Wessely for their knowledge and ongoing support of this day. I

really wish I could find adequate words to express my gratitude for their efforts in making sure School Library Officers across the state have access to appropriate PD.

To the Library Officers and Technicians who attended I hope you enjoyed your day and can take with you a little more knowledge.

Remember one of the benefits of joining WASLA (LO day attendees will receive a discount for 2012) is the access you can have to online resources, proformas and information from the team at WASLA that can help in you in your workplace.

Helen MacCue
Library Officer
Coodanup Community College



Post all forms to:
 WASLA Membership
 P O Box 1272
 West Perth WA 6872

ARN 14 788 316 426

**Western Australian School Library Association
 2012 Membership Form (including Renewals)
 TAX INVOICE**

Membership operates on a January to December basis – calendar year. Your membership includes:

- automatic membership to WASLA & ASLA
- notice of activities from the local association
- one subscription to the WASLA professional journal *ic3*
- online resources from the members only area of the website
- attendance to all WASLA / ASLA activities at the member rate (note: attendance for 2 persons for Institutional membership)

MEMBERSHIP FEES

<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional	<i>2 person membership</i>	\$150.00	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher / Teacher Librarian	<i>1 person membership</i>	\$95.00	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Library Technician / Library Officer	<i>1 person membership</i>	\$75.00	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: Fulltime Student / Unwaged / Retired	<i>1 person membership</i>	\$60.00	\$

Subscription to ACCESS, journal of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) may be included for an extra fee

Subscription to ACCESS (\$50 including postage) <input type="checkbox"/>	Extra copy of ACCESS (\$50 including postage) <input type="checkbox"/>	\$
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Total Fee payable \$

CONTACT DETAILS

Name(Individual) or Contact Person	Position
School Name (Institutional)	
Postal Address	
Courier Code (Govt Schools)	Phone
Email	
Other Memberships ALIA <input type="checkbox"/> AISWA Libraries <input type="checkbox"/> ACS <input type="checkbox"/> IASL <input type="checkbox"/> CBC <input type="checkbox"/>	

PAYMENT METHODS

CHEQUES: Payable to WASLA **Address:** PO Box 1272 West Perth WA 6872

EFT: Account Name: WASLA **Bank/Branch:** BankWest **BSB:** 306107 **Account Number:** 4198265

Please notify and send documentation to Phyllis Paioff (WASLA Executive Officer) of your deposit phyl67@bigpond.com

CREDIT CARD:

Name on Card: _____ **Amount:** _____

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Cardholder's Signature: _____

All members will be issued with a membership card that includes the WASLA membership number. Bring this card to all professional development sessions to ensure discounted rates. Full institutional members will receive two membership cards. **PRIVACY STATEMENT** WASLA has a privacy policy that endorses the National Privacy Principles set out in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000. A copy of the privacy policy can be found on the ASLA website at <http://www.asla.org.au>