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Scan

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From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of *Scan* for 2011. New readers and regular subscribers will appreciate the range of inspiring articles and resource reviews in the following pages. For those involved with NAPLAN 2011, several articles on persuasive writing will be useful.

Do you wish to contribute to *Scan* this year? Do you have examples of student work and learning reflections to share with readers in our new *Learning journal* section? Have you collaborated with teachers on a successful research task?

If the answer is yes, please contact me on (02) 9886 7501 or by email <cath.keane@det. nsw.edu.au>

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cath Keane
Editor

Currents

Colleen Foley is Team Leader, School Libraries and Information Literacy <colleen.foley @det.nsw. edu.au>

Challenge and change

The beginning of a year is a good time to reflect on how we respond to challenges. Do we see the opportunities for creative endeavour that challenge can provide? We have seen much of this sort of bravery in the community responses to flood and fire in Queensland, Northern NSW, Victoria and Western Australia.

Such human capacities can inspire how we approach planning and initiating teaching and learning adventures in the digital landscape. Our School Libraries and Information Literacy team in the Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre (CLIC) look forward to continuing to support teacher librarians and teachers working together for exciting student learning, as we work with our colleagues across CLIC, in regions and schools, and partners in professional associations, networks and universities. Seeing almost 18 million visitors using the *Raps and book raps* site, and a similar number searching the online database of resource reviews in 2010, reflect our combined commitment to supporting connected teaching and learning.

Student voices

As educators, some of our best moments are when our students talk about or demonstrate real excitement about learning. Student voices are reflected in a number of articles in this issue, including the research reported by Catherine Nielsen on the annual educational game, *Murder under the Microscope*, and the Guided Inquiry case study from Lee Fitzgerald.

In the inaugural *iInquire ... iLearn ... iCreate ... iShare* student learning journal feature, Joshua and Nicola share what and how they learned when researching a topic for Commerce. Their presentation at a recent *21C school libraries: getting into the action* seminar with Dr Ross Todd and Lyn Hay, presented in partnership by Syba Signs and School Libraries and Information Literacy, inspired and stunned teacher librarian and teacher participants.

Actions and evidence

Joshua and Nicola's reflections on their learning provide powerful evidence of engaged learning, from a carefully planned collaboration of their teachers and teacher librarian.

Recent online discussions, research and other articles provided in *Scan* focusing on 21C school libraries, and presentations and reports from Dr Ross Todd and Lyn Hay, have reinforced the importance of evidence based practice. Recommendations in the *School libraries 21C* report by Todd and Hay <www. curriculumsupport. education.nsw.gov. au/schoollibraries> highlight the urgent need for our profession to provide actions and evidence of how our school libraries are centres of inquiry supporting digital learning and citizenship.

Actions and evidence of learning support are far stronger than any other form of advocacy or role discussions. Teacher librarians need to incorporate an evidence based practice approach to provide explicit feedback about learning achieved through programs initiated by or planned with the teacher librarian.

Over to you

How do you provide evidence of your library's contributions to learning? Are you a teacher librarian or teaching team wanting to try some simple action research? Departmental teacher librarians can contact <Colleen.Foley @det.nsw.edu.au> for information about a support package including planning support, ideas for simple action research, and guidance through the process.

Have you already conducted action research? Why not share it with colleagues through *Scan* or our website? Do you have student work samples or reflections on learning, either short and simple or more sustained, that you'd like to share through *Scan*'s new *iInquire ... iLearn ... iCreate ... iShare* student learning journal feature? Submissions from all are welcome.

We also want to know what you think of *Scan*. What you think our future directions should be? Contact us any time and watch for the reader survey online and with the next issue.

If your school library has been affected by recent floods or other disasters, please do not hesitate to contact me for support.

If you would like to know about endorsed *OASIS Library* trainers in your region please contact me or check our website.

Finally, I would like to thank Lizzie Chase, Carol Thomas and Jody Wilmen, who are no longer with our School Libraries and Information Literacy team. Their valuable contributions to our work supporting teachers and students are greatly appreciated. We miss them and wish them well. ■

iInquire… iLearn… iCreate… iShare: Guided Inquiry at Broughton Anglican College

Alinda Sheerman, teacher librarian at Broughton Anglican College, provides the learning context for a Year 10 Guided Inquiry task, and introduces students, **Joshua Little** and **Nicola Breward**, who share their learning journeys.

Learning journal

The learning context

Established in 1986, Broughton Anglican College is an independent, co-educational, Preparatory to Year 12 day school at Menangle Park NSW that is committed to quality education for students from all backgrounds and cultures.

After a staff presentation in 2009 on the application of the Guided Inquiry process to four Year 7 History classes, Brad Gillion approached the teacher librarian, Alinda Sheerman, with a request to be supported in its implementation for one of his classes in 2010.

For this purpose, he selected Option 12 *School-developed option* of the NSW *Commerce Years 7–10* syllabus in which the students undertook research of a personally selected topic. A class wiki was used to share and present learning. The teacher librarian supported the teacher and students in a teams approach to learning and also undertook action research to assess the use of Guided Inquiry in the teaching and learning process.

Strategies used to gather evidence of the learning

- The *Student Learning through Inquiry Measure (SLIM)* <cissl.rutgers.edu/guided_inquiry/slim.html> toolkit was used to analyse individual needs at three stages of the inquiry process so that individual support could be given at the point of need. This analysis was also an indicator of learning and was used in action research.

Additional evidence was recorded by

- asking questions and recording students' responses about their journey throughout the process (using a small Flip Mino camera)
- an online survey at the evaluation stage
- a brief questionnaire sent home to parents.

This gave a complete picture of how the students travelled at all stages and on all fronts. The teacher librarian analysed all of these results and discussed them with the class teacher and later the team shared the experience at a K–12 staff meeting to promote the use of Guided Inquiry across the school.

Key learning achieved by students

It is amazing how many syllabus outcomes and objectives were met through using the Guided Inquiry process. In analysing the work done by the class, it was very evident that every student achieved almost all outcomes and objectives.

The teacher and teacher librarian shared the assessment of the tasks evaluating both content and skills. The content for the unit of work was varied as students could select an issue of personal interest. Consequently, through sharing on the wiki, in completing peer evaluation and through listening to presentations, students gained and shared a vast amount knowledge about many issues in society – on topics such as *Eco-Consumerism* and *The use of sow stalls*.

Joshua Little and Nicola Breward produced outstanding work. All students, without exception, achieved well above their usual level of work and all made excellent presentations to their peers both through their wiki pages and in oral presentations.

Joshua's reflections
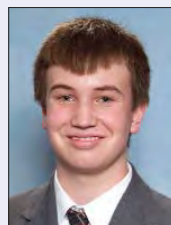
Joshua Little, Year 10

In 2010, the Year 10 Commerce class at Broughton Anglican College studied the topic *Current issues in Australian society* using the process of *Guided Inquiry*.

This was a new and at times daunting experience, but was very rewarding and exciting in the end. My topic was inspired by the 2010 Federal Election, in particular the issue of asylum seekers and border protection. This involved posing the following research question:

Evaluate and assess (with recommendations) which border protection policy services the needs of both the Commonwealth of Australia and refugees.

Forming my own recommendations was the highlight of my Guided Inquiry research. I completed a policy analysis of the asylum seekers policies of each of the major political parties, as well as the views of the United Nations. I designed a 12 point policy, which I felt met the needs of Australia and asylum seekers/refugees. I placed a strong emphasis on encouraging legal migration and a high intake of bona fide refugees from the United Nations High Commissioner.

After studying the various forms of visas available to asylum seekers (including permanent protection and the former temporary protection visas), I developed my own class of visa – the Refugee Protection Visa. My policy discouraged illegal immigration through initiatives such as third country mandatory

Item 8

An asylum seeker whose application for refugee status is denied by the Immigration Department has the right of appeal. The hierarchy and procedure for any appeals are:

Process Exhausted

Federal Court of Australia

Visa Appeals Board

Any asylum seeker appealing their application or visa is to be held in a State/Territory Correctional Facility for the duration of the appeal.

Research and Conclusions

Investigated policies of:
- Liberal Party (including Tampa incident)
- Labor Party
- The Greens + The United Nations (Humanitarian)

- Conclusion
- Development of my own policy

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detention, while still seeking, where applicable, to protect the rights of children and families during detention.

When I reflect about the Guided Inquiry process, I can see how it challenged and extended my learning. The Guided Inquiry process allowed me to shape a question which I passionately and actively desired to answer thoroughly. This was the aspect of Guided Inquiry that I found most pleasing – posing a question that I had designed which was of great interest to me. The scaffolds and especially the use of Wiki pages to present information relevant to my question were very beneficial. The structured nature of Guided Inquiry – the stages of information research (e.g. exploration, formulation, collection...) were of great assistance in building knowledge of my topic.

The work I have completed through Guided Inquiry has made me feel extremely satisfied. I have been able to develop my own policy from the detailed research I completed. It is a fantastic feeling when you have used knowledge through the process of Guided Inquiry to create your own practical ideas to be seen and have an impact upon the world.

Nicola's reflections

I took part in Guided Inquiry on the topic of *Current issues in Australian society*. The issue I studied was *Depression and self harm*. I found the process extremely

Nicola Breward, Year 10

rewarding. I learnt ways to look deeper into the topic and found I could apply the skills of gathering information to my everyday life both in other topics at school and in general.

My teachers guided every step of my inquiry. I learnt to look at numerous different sources before deciding on the information I would include. I also learnt much about copyright laws. I went through stages of confusion and desperation throughout the inquiry process from all the information. Sometimes it was like I was drowning in facts and figures! What I felt most though was excitement and anticipation towards the final product!
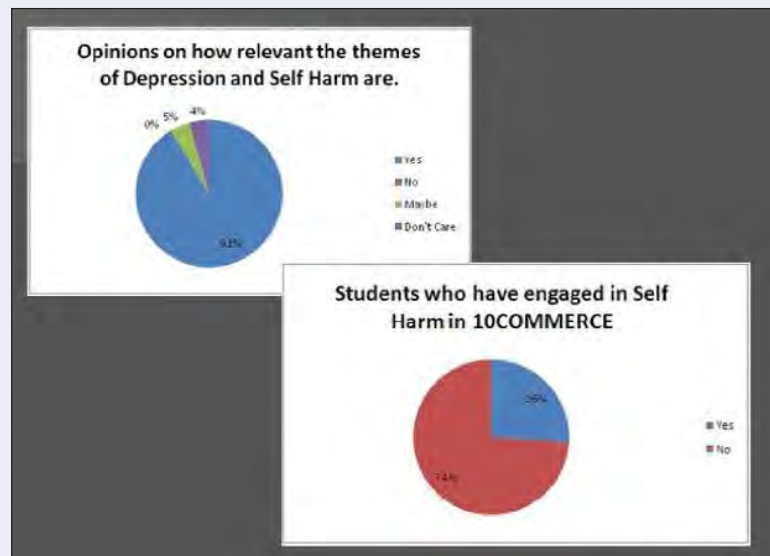
I conducted surveys for my classmates to complete on the topics of depression and self harm. They were anonymous and I found the information gathered in these surveys were on par with the information I had gathered about the rest of Australia.

I was incredibly proud of my work! It wasn't just any assignment; it had become my own project. By the end of the process the information really had become my own. I knew my topic like the back of my hand and I had become extremely passionate about it. This is still the case now. It was honestly the most fulfilling piece of work I have ever completed. ■

[Editor's note: These students presented at the *21C school libraries – Getting into the action* seminar jointly provided by School Libraries and Information Literacy and Syba Signs.]

Wiley Park Public School's experiences using *blogED*

Marie Murphy, Principal at Wiley Park Public School, describes how technology is one of the vehicles that supports language acquisition and development.

Teaching and learning

Located in south western Sydney, Wiley Park Public School caters for a large culturally and linguistically diverse community. Ninety seven percent of the school population is from language backgrounds other than English. Language acquisition and literacy development are a driving focus for the school.

The recent increase in the uptake of blogs by teachers is a response to the identification of blogs as an authentic way to promote second language acquisition and motivate students and teachers. Many students, teachers and parents have been discussing the usefulness of blogs to work together to support all students' learning.

The excitement and learning resulting from our blogs has definitely put blogging on the map at Wiley Park. It is the key phrase on the tip of everyone's tongue within the community.

Advantages of blogs: what our students and teachers report

Before unpacking the learning benefits within the classroom, it is important to show how blogs have increased communication across the school.

Blogs have provided an additional means of communication within the school, making knowledge public and accessible. Gone are the days when teachers were unaware of teaching and learning in other classrooms. Blogs have made the school a more open learning space with teachers and students sharing their learning experiences together and being inspired and motivated by each other's experiences.

They have become an additional way of communicating with parents and actively involving them in classroom activities. This has meant that students have consolidated their learning through conversations about their work with their relatives in Australia and overseas.

Parents have more direction in supporting their children's learning within the home, as they witness what the teachers do and complement these lessons through links with the child's real world. This has allowed us to show authentic respect to parents as their children's first teachers. A student in Year 2 acknowledged the benefits in having her family see her work over the internet:

> *I show the blog to my mum at home. And my mum writes on the blog and she knows what I'm learning about.*
>
> Eman 2M

Our community partners have also been involved in the dialogue online. For example, the education officer from Taronga Park Zoo and lecturers from our partnership university have left comments about the students' work and asked the students questions. At school, the students have been involved in lessons around identity privacy, plagiarism and credibility of sources. Not only have they learnt how these issues affect them,

they have also been taught ways to prevent any negative consequences. Blogging helps children express their feelings over the internet.

> *It's really safe because the only people who see it are your teachers and the people who created blogED.*
>
> Gabriel 5CS

Teachers have found an additional benefit in using blogs. They have included links to various learning sites which the students can access via their blog. Some of our students have even added comments to the blog suggesting suitable sites in order to share resources with other children. Vincent is one of these students. He is an ESL learner who, according to his Year 2 teacher, became really engaged in lessons after the introduction of the class blog. When his class started their blog last year, he made suggestions about suitable websites he had accessed, evaluating them according to the audience of the class blog (other students within his year and class). When interviewed about the impact blogs have had on his learning, he stated enthusiastically:

> *They [The children] can put up questions and chat about it. You can learn more stuff about what the other kids know. They [The children] can have cool websites for maths and English games linked to the blog. –*
>
> Vincent 3B

Another student who regularly accesses the blog at home with her mother also commented on the useful links on the blog:

> *When my mum asks me questions, and I sometimes don't know them, I ask my teacher on the blog. She answers me to help me learn. I sometimes use the websites that my teacher has on her blog to play games and learn.*
>
> Rheanne 2M

Our blogging journey

Some early adopters of blogging programs, such as *Edublogs*, started the interest within the school amongst the staff. Once these teachers migrated to *blogEd*, news spread about the benefits of using the Department of Education and Training's (DET) blogging program. Linking the blogs to the portal and *Kidspace* has made this publishing tool easily accessible to students and teachers alike. Teachers felt reassured about privacy and plagiarism since the Department has strict protocol pertaining to these issues.

It did not take long before there was a general request from staff for professional learning in setting up blogs. Teachers who had experimented with both *Edublogs* and *blogED* ran a very practical *blogED 101* training course in the computer laboratories at school during one staff development day. Links to quality ESL pedagogy ensured that teachers did not lose sight of the reasons behind using blogs. The session was introduced with Mariani's quadrants to remind teachers that a blog can create high challenge for students and that appropriate scaffolding must be incorporated into lesson planning to ensure high support is also offered for our ESL learners to succeed and participate to their potential (Mariana,1997).

From this point there was a mushrooming of blogs across the school with class blogs, student blogs and blogs for specific reasons, such as the choir blog being developed and used for a variety of purposes. Teachers have pursued additional learning in ICT such as using *Movie Maker*, *Photo Story*, *PhotoPeach* and Web 2.0 tools to support learning so they can load photos and videos of class experiences and tap into other resources.

The use of Web 2.0 tools has lead to authentic student learning opportunities around editing and publishing. Although editing was already a feature of many teaching and learning programs in the school, it has been emphasised through the incorporation of blogs into planning since by nature they are very public. The students now have real purpose for thorough editing since their audience can be global. This is highlighted in an interview with a class teacher involved in setting up student blogs for her whole class using *blogED*.

> *blogEd has been a wonderful tool that has given my students opportunity to explore the importance of self editing their work. I send back all submissions with errors to the children for amendment before they are allowed to publish it. Doing this in such a public forum has really shown the students the importance of proof reading and error correction, a vital skill children need to be successful learners.*
>
> Maree Sartor, Year 5 class teacher

Blogs and language learning

In 2009, the Successful Language Learners Project commenced in Wiley Park Public School. One of the aims of the program was to develop whole class *Language learning plans* to support students' language development through the different KLAs.

Technology integration was an element of the plans at our school. The emphasis on the right technology, at the right time, to work within the right context made the integration authentic rather than ad hoc and a tokenistic use of ICT tools. The targeted language was expected to be recast in specific cultural and situational contexts that linked strongly to the real world. Before students were expected to use this language independently through technology projects, communicative activities were organised and included in the *Language learning plans* to provide opportunities for targeted language to be recycled by the students. The idea behind this recycling is to allow students to practise and internalise the language.

Various assessment procedures such as whole school English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) scales assessment, NAPLAN data, second language learner assessment bank data and teacher observations have suggested that the authentic integration of technology in lessons has a positive effect on students' learning. Engagement is high, language and lesson content can be explored thoroughly, and reflections on the work via conversations over the blog consolidate the learning for all students, especially our EAL/D learners.

Another advantage of blogs, which was explored through the *Book Week 2010: across the story bridge with Fearless* rap blogs that our teacher librarian, Gil Maugle, was involved in establishing, was the ability to link with other schools around NSW from different education systems and settings (rural, city, regional, suburban). Our EAL/D students benefited from this interaction as they witnessed work other schools had submitted, using critical literacy skills to analyse the meaning making process involved in such a project.

Read Gil's experiences on using *blogED* to host and moderate the *Fearless K–2 rap blog* and the *Fearless 3–6 rap blog* in the following article. ■

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'*It's a rap!*', (2010) *Scan* 29(4), p. 45.

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Less fear of blogging using *blogED* for the Fearless rap blog

Gil Maugle, teacher librarian at Wiley Public School, uses a variety of strategies to build staff and student confidence to engage with digital tools.

During the last few weeks working on a project with the School Libraries and Information Literacy team, I assisted in the setting up of the *Fearless K–2 rap* blog and the *Fearless 3–6 rap* blog. The blogs were the communication tools for students participating in the *Book Week 2010: across the story bridge* with *Fearless rap*, and an opportunity to use the Department's new blogging tool, *blogEd.* It was my first exposure to *blogED* and I was required to be the moderator and co-coordinator, exposing my learning curve for the whole world to see. Along with moving into Wiley Park's new BER library and reacquainting myself with school life in general, and its inhabitants in particular, it was quite a daunting task.

Planning and resource creation

The problem of how I was to unpack and organise the new library without neglecting the teachers and students rested on the impact I could make with the rap blog. In order for this to succeed I had to promote the wow factor, set up a format of self learning for the teachers, and offer assistance and encouragement when required.

I created a *SMART Notebook* (Figure 1) which was a fail proof step-by-step guide of the blog divided into weeks, to coincide with the tasks on the

online *Book Week 2010: across the story bridge with Fearless* rap which included links to digital tools, with instructions and models, available on the rap's *Technology tips* page. It was a complete package. I combined everything into one resource as the staff had no prior experience of book raps and I did not want to complicate things. My main focus was on the blog, although there were links to the rap.

After briefly introducing the concept of participating in a rap at a staff meeting, I invited teachers to come along to the library for a viewing and briefing session during the next week of lunchtimes where I repeated the introductory session in order that all teachers, no matter what their commitments, would be available to attend at some stage.

As all of our books were still to be unpacked, I purchased four copies of *Fearless* and, using *Photo Story*, I made two digital stories; one with me reading the story and the other without my voice so that the children could read it by themselves. These

Figure 1 SMART Notebook resources for Fearless Week 1

were ideal for the teachers to use on the IWBs which are now in all classrooms. These digital stories along with the *SMART Notebook* were put onto the school's staff drive for easy access.

Strategies for engaging teachers with digital tools and building confidence

The vital time of drawing commitment was during these introductory sessions. As I did not want to scare teachers away by introducing a variety of new technology, I planned to introduce the digital tools one at a time as, and when, required each week. During these sessions, I showed them how to access the *SMART Notebook* and modelled posting a comment to the blog. I included a *Word* document with blog ideas to promote class discussion for their first posts.

Figure 2 Ideas for posting comments to the rap blog

During the second week of using the blog (Figure 3), lunchtime sessions were again held in the library. By this stage, it was exciting to share comments posted by participating school groups from all over NSW. As moderator, I felt compelled to post these as soon as possible so, in between unpacking boxes, I was constantly checking my emails.
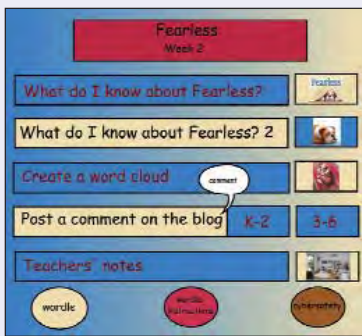
Figure 3 SMART Notebook resources for Fearless Week 2 activities

Figure 4 Fearless word cloud by 4F

Figure 5 Fearless word cloud by KH

Week Two heralded a few enthusiastic teachers and some new ones who felt inspired to join the rap.

Creating word clouds using *Wordle*, the task for Week Two of the rap, was a huge hit with the teachers and the students (Figure 4 & Figure 5). They realised how simple it is to use this tool to create main ideas and keywords. With just a few formatting changes, the word clouds can highlight different words and engender discussion about persuasive texts.

Safe blogging

It was important at this stage to introduce the vital component of cybersafety, so a link was attached to *CyberQuoll* (Figure 6).

Figure 6 CyberQuoll,<www.cybersmart.gov .au/cyberquell/>

By Week Three I realised that the teachers were setting their own pace; some were just starting while others were taking off in all directions. This was also reflected in the *Fearless* blogs, where new schools were still introducing themselves. The library was still a mess and nowhere near completion. Learning was an adventure!

Week Three was all about making a digital story or a book trailer. It was interesting exploring the concept of

book trailers for promoting books, and this task was certainly greeted with more excitement than writing a book report. K–2 students were encouraged to collaboratively produce a digital story about Fearless. I showed the *SMART Notebook* story model, *Diver makes a splash*, which I had prepared for the rap (Figure 8).

Figure 7 SMART Notebook resources for Fearless Week 3 activities
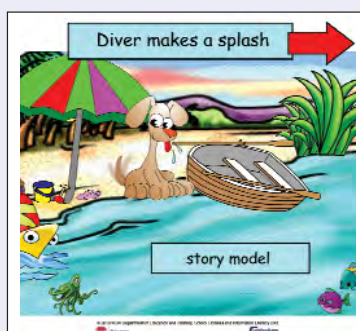
Figure 8 The SMART Notebook story creation model, Diver makes a splash, is available to download from the School Libraries & Information Literacy website.

The *My story builder library* notebook (Figure 9) contains images for students to create their own digital stories about Fearless. The resources, including images for selecting:

- main character – a variety of dogs
- place – a variety of settings for background
- other characters – for interaction, events, complication and resolution
- props – to create interest

were all there for classes to make their own.

Figure 9 My story builder library contains a selection of images to build a digital story

Teachers were encouraged to use digital authoring tools that they had not used before to explore new skills. I chose several tools suggested in the rap and linked them (Figure 10) to
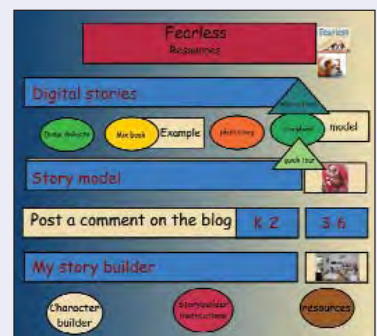
Figure 10 Links to resources for creating digital stories about Fearless

the digital resources, instructions and models located on the *Technology tips* page <www.schools.nsw.edu.au/raps/fearless10/>.

It was so invigorating to hear from schools all over the state and to see the incredible results of their digital learning.

Time to reflect

Now happily ensconced in the new BER library, it is interesting to reflect on this learning experience. Moderating the *Fearless* blogs was a great experience. It was so invigorating to hear from schools all over the state and to see the incredible results of their digital learning.

I was happy that so many teachers joined me on this journey. I thought I had lost a few on the way but, although they were no longer taking part in the *Fearless* blog, I discovered that they were actually using the digital tools within the concepts of their own Stage focus and busily posting on their own

class blogs. Mission accomplished. All bodes well for an exciting, digitally enhanced blogging future here at Wiley Park Public School.

Fearless is now visiting the schools in NSW that took part in the rap blog and a *Travelling Fearless* blog has been created to follow his adventures. ■

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Beyond *I like it*

Julie Grazotis, teacher librarian at Werrington Public School, collaborated with a colleague,

Kylie Hansen, to develop a unit of work to improve student responses to picture books through explicit teaching and visual literacy strategies.

Investigating strategies to improve student learning

Inspiring students to observe, explore and reflect by sharing quality literature with them sets the stage for inquiry and is a vital part of the teacher librarian's role.

The time parameters to achieve this can vary. For example, how do I introduce a story, develop ideas of theme, character and setting and respond critically to the story in 30 to 60 minutes each week? So it was with great interest that my colleague, Kylie Hansen, and I attended the School Libraries and Information Literacy Unit's *Visual literacy online* workshop, presented by Lizzie Chase, in early 2010.

I was hoping to gain answers and strategies that would move student literature responses beyond *I like it*.

Kylie, as coordinator of Literacy, was looking for reading and writing benefits to address areas of need identified in our National Assessment Program Literacy and Assessment (NAPLAN) results. The workshop met our expectations and provided us with the strategies to undertake a professional practice revolution.

Trialling strategies

Following the workshop, we each trialled the strategies in our individual teaching environments. I employed the *See, Think, Wonder* strategies (Richards & Anderson, 2003) to expand shared reading time in the library, while Kylie focused on introducing the visual literacy glossary of terms to unpack picture books with her Year 1 and 2 students.

> …plan a collaborative approach to developing student awareness and application of visual literacy.

After a two week trial period, we met to compare our experiences and to plan a collaborative approach to developing student awareness and application of visual literacy. It became obvious that these strategies were beneficial when we each shared the observations of students who were usually disengaged from literacy lessons.

This important step in an evidence based practice approach is detailed and reinforced in Dr Jon Callow's recent research article, *I'm not interested: using visual texts to engage students from low SES backgrounds*, published in *Scan* (2009). During visual literacy lessons, these students were connected and active participants, often dominating discussions with their opinions and thoughts. It was at this point that we knew we had to do more with these strategies.

Planning the research project

We organised a planning meeting to investigate, through a collaborative approach, how to apply our knowledge of visual literacy to improve student reading. At our first meeting, we identified the goals for our project and our expectations of student learning:

- improved student response to shared texts beyond I liked it
- use of meta language to justify individual response to illustrations
- improved personal connection to reading/stories.

Our second meeting involved planning and programming individual and team teaching lessons in which five visual literacy texts would be introduced over a five week period. Each lesson would build from introducing the text, to identifying individual visual literacy cues and culminate with the unpacking of one selected image. The lessons would incorporate sharing scanned illustrations and *PowerPoint* software using an interactive whiteboard (IWB).

Gathering evidence of learning

Student responses and participation during each visual literacy lesson were noted through observation and *See, Think, Wonder* (STW) student record sheets (Figure 1). During a follow up meeting, Kylie and I examined and discussed the students' responses. We used the data to identify the areas in which students were confident and to recognise gaps in their knowledge, when they lacked the confidence or were unable to discuss the images in relation to the text and story. This collaborative approach provided us with support from a colleague and consistency in our teaching practice that enabled
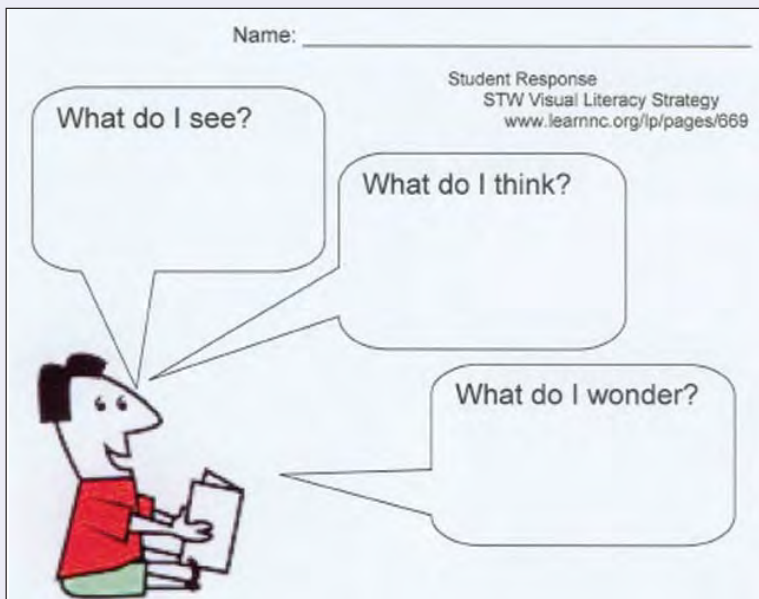
Figure 1 See, Think, Wonder (STW) student response sheet

the students to support each other in voicing their thoughts about the images presented.

What we noticed

Over the five weeks, student responses (Table 1) progressed from simple character observations, such as *I see a boy, I see a fish*, to the application of the language of visual literacy:

- salient object
- demand
- offer
- size
- position
- colour.

With each new book the language was explicitly introduced, demonstrated and applied to picture book illustrations. Developing metalanguage empowered the students to approach the images with confidence. This was observed by visiting teachers who found it almost impossible to read a picture book to the students without them deconstructing each image with comments like *That's a salient object* and *That character is making a demand.*

This confidence extended to shared reading experiences. The students used their knowledge of the language of visual literacy to make informed responses during large, small and partner groups (Figure 2). Once again, it was the students who had previously sat quietly who spoke confidently and contributed often to discussions.

Students also spoke about and related to stories beyond that which was written in the text. They interpreted the images, placing their own perspectives on the events, characters and theme of the story. They were connecting. A major contributing factor to student connection and confidence was the fact that there were no wrong answers. Provided a student could support their statement with evidence, their response was justified. A student had to back up an *I think* response with *because I see…* Responses were not random; they were thought out. They were, in fact, critical.

…students were confident in their ability to identify the visual literacy terminology to a picture…

Analysing the data at the end of the cycle

Following the completion of the five lessons, Kylie and I met to discuss the student responses. While students were confident in their ability to identify the visual literacy terminology to a picture, more guidance was required to focus their attention on the selected image, separate to pictures and information found elsewhere in the book. Nevertheless, a solid foundation had been created. We had achieved our expectations and, in doing so, had moved our students towards achieving a better written response to literature.

Figure 2 Student partners share responses to images

Examples of student responses to one illustration in a book			
Book	**See**	**Think**	**Wonder**
Blabey, Aaron (2009) *Stanley Paste* Cover reproduced with permission of Penguin Group (Australia)	• boy • girl • tall • small • smiles	They are becoming friends.	Will they be best friends?
Jennings, Paul & Turner, Jane (1995) *The fisherman and the theefyspray* Cover reproduced with permission of Penguin Group (Australia)	• fish • boat • hook • no water • demand • vector	The fish is crying. The fish wants to go back in the water.	Will the fisherman eat the fish or put it back? Is the mother sad?
Base, Graeme (2008) *Enigma: a magical mystery* Cover reproduced with permission of Penguin Group (Australia)	• vectors • offer • shadows • grandpa is looking down • a window	They look sad. Grandpa is lonely. They are talking. We are looking in.	Will they find enigma? Will grandpa be happy?
Applegate, Cathy & Huxley, Dee (2000) *Rain dance* Cover reproduced with permission of Dee Huxley, illustrator	I can see a little bit of sun because the girl is kind of in the light. I can see heavy rain. The girl is so happy with the rain. I can see the dog likes the rain. I think the rain will stop and I think the dog is daydreaming about the weather. I think it is windy. I think the girl is looking at the clouds (a vector) because she loves the rain and they have not had it for two years. I think the dog and the girl are both drinking the water. I wonder if when the sun comes out, the girl will be sad. I wonder if they are still going to sell the farm after the heavy rain. I wonder if the dad knows anything about the rain - if it's heavy or light or even there. I wonder if the girl is shouting out saying *I love the rain*. I wonder if the girl is screaming.		

Table 1 Examples of student responses to one illustration in a book

Where to next?

Our next goal is to combine the STW scaffold with the language of visual literacy to develop sentences and paragraphs that critique and analyse a piece of writing using evidence. This would then support the teaching of the exposition and persuasive text types to prepare our students for the NAPLAN 2011 writing task (Figure 3).

Improving Student Aims

Reading: Comprehension – Here, Hidden, Head
Writing: Descriptions, Explanations, Persuasive texts
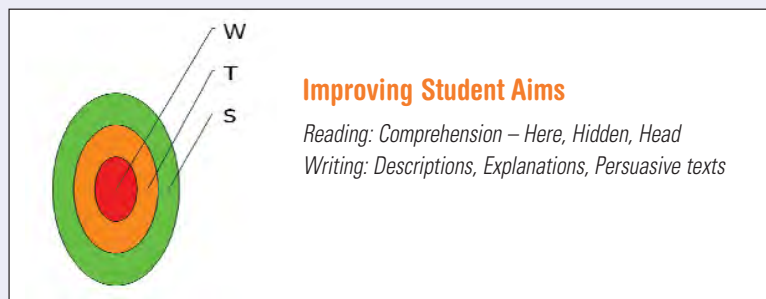
Figure 3 Improving student aims

Sharing our research with the staff

Feeling empowered by our research, we collated the strategies, student responses and images to inform our school staff through a staff meeting presentation. The responses from staff were enthusiastic. They could see the potential to improve teaching practice and student learning, as well as the links to the *Quality Teaching* dimensions of intellectual quality, significance and quality learning environment and the potential to improve student results in NAPLAN (Figure 4).

Five simple steps were promoted to guide staff in use of STW strategies to teach visual literacy.

1. Unpack the front cover discussing the illustrations, colours, characters, setting, author and illustrator.
2. Read story up to a critical point or illustration.
3. Unpack the illustration using the STW student worksheet
4. Finish reading the story and answer the I wonder questions
5. Draft a written response to the book using both textual and illustrated elements.

Since the completion of the five week program, Kylie and I have created wiki pages as a means of presenting students with visual images to unpack and interpret. The wiki has enabled student to freely discuss images with small and class groups and post their responses regarding what they see, think and wonder for each image. The additional benefit in using the wiki has been the opportunity for students to develop their persuasive writing skills by using the STW and wonder response sheets as evidence to write their opinions. Wiki responses can be viewed at *Werrington library wiki* (Figure 5) by following the *Visual literacy with 1/2H* link on the front page.

As Kylie and I continue to apply our working knowledge of visual literacy to our teaching practice, we reflect on the fact that we no longer hear students respond to a story with *I*
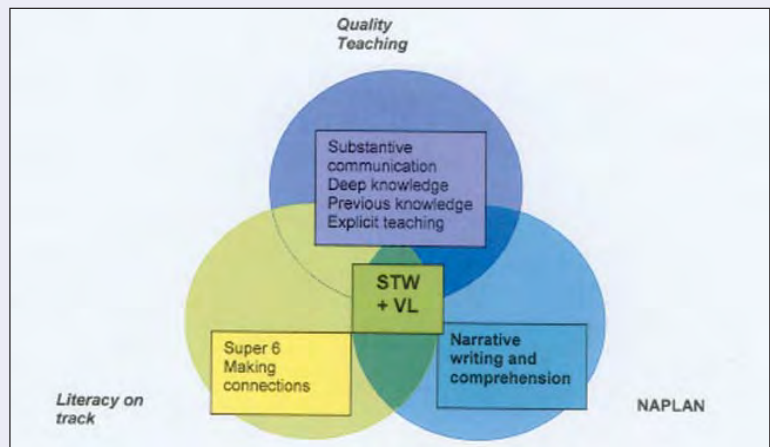
Figure 4 *Making connections with STW strategies and visual literacy to improvge teaching practice and student learning*

Figure 5 *Werrington library wiki <werringtonlibrary.pbworks.com/w/page/9139645/FrontPage>*

liked it. Our students respond with *I think that… because I can see… and this makes me we wonder…* We feel we have prepared them to be critical of their visual environment and confident enough to explain what the images mean to them. ∎

Although a picture does tell a thousand words the story is different for everyone who stops to look

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Persuasion in digital contexts

Prue Greene, Senior Curriculum Support Officer, K–12 English, Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre, discusses how advertisers and marketers have reacted to the participatory nature of social media sites to promote products, and the need to make students aware of the persuasive strategies used to manipulate online users.

Persuasion is certainly a hot ticket item in light of the announced National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) text type to be tested this year. While it may look as if I am on the persuasion band wagon, this article and the workshops that have driven it were conceived long before the text type was announced. Persuasion (in its various forms) and the way in which it is taught in schools could do with a serious extension to include the ways in which it works online. There is a considerable array of persuasive texts, processes and digital products available to teachers for use in the classroom once they are aware of how it all works in this context and have the language to deal with it.

The premise that underlies any study of persuasion in digital contexts is that we live in a participatory culture rather than a spectatorial one (Jenkins, 2005). In other words, students are no longer passive receivers of the information available online (Web 1.0), rather, they are participants in online culture and therefore participants in texts (Web 2.0). They are content producers. Each comment on *Facebook*, response to a video, sound track, article or upload of an image is content.

…social media is about developing an online identity…

Advertisers and marketers have long understood this and very cleverly exploit the way in which young people and adults use the web and participate with social media sites and tools. They also understand that social media is about developing an online identity, a way of distinguishing yourself from others or a way to become just like everyone else in the tribe. A promotional website is just the start of the story. No website can be thought to be *of the moment* without links to its social media and being embedded with associated *YouTube* videos. The story or product therefore continues across various platforms with the capacity for the consumer to interact and participate in different ways. Young people are very good at moving from one platform to another through transmedia stories. They expect to find stories morphing into multiple forms of media; movie, blog, *Facebook* page, website, game and *YouTube* for example.

Personalisation

What is important when considering these manifestations is that the purpose of websites, communication and social media applications becomes fluid and mixed. For example, you could say that purpose of social media is to connect people and to aid in communication. However, if you consider the ability to embed a favourite *YouTube* video in your home page or wall and to include *like* links to particular products, the purpose of social media becomes mixed. Is it persuasion, entertainment, communication or identity creation and enhancement? It is all of these things, but the most seductive of all is the ability of users to personalise their experience and use of the site.

The dynamics of the web and the ability to personalise your interaction with it is one of the distinguishing feature of Web 2.0. Consider the difference between the *Google* and *iGoogle* search engine pages. *iGoogle* encourages users to create their own search page by providing a wide selection of tools to display on the page which reflect the users own interests and needs. These widgets update automatically and can be swapped around at any time. Is this persuasive? Yes, it is. Any empowerment of user experience is persuasive. It fosters the illusion of control and individuality coupled with the ability to stay aware and informed.

Once a search item is typed into *Google* the persuasion game continues. Most commercial sites employ search engine optimising techniques to ensure that their site gets to the top of the list once you hit the enter key. Keywords, links and website design can all be manipulated to perform better in search engines. The importance of individual words and their placement is paramount in creating the most findable link. Surely this is a skill often overlooked in teaching students to write, if writing for the web is taught at all in schools. Of course, no matter what you search for,

paid advertising links will appear on the right hand side of the screen. The order in which they appear relates closely to how much you are willing to pay for the privilege.

Involvement and connection

As in the print or moving image world, there are different kinds of websites and genres. Some mirror their old world counterparts and some are new types of hybrids. Corporate and eCommerce sites such as *eBay* are blatantly persuasive. More subtle are search engines, video and image sharing, social media, media and news sites. They increasingly consider their audience to be participants rather than passive consumers of their products, and organise their campaigns to reflect this change. The new questions advertisers and marketers ask are:

- *How will you involve people in your story or product?*
- *How will you sustain this involvement?*

The involvement begins with fan sites on social media and is kept regularly updated with enticing copy.

For instance, if your product is a film, your story might start with a movie trailer posted on *YouTube*, a production/talent blog and/or a tie in with a book, and the production of an official site and social media campaign. These all continue with the release of the film and cross promote the book and the new game out in time for Christmas. Later the DVD will come out and pay TV or free-to-air release of the film will follow. The involvement begins with fan sites on social media and is kept regularly updated with enticing copy. The trailer elicits comments and hits. *Harry Potter and the deathly hallows* trailer had over
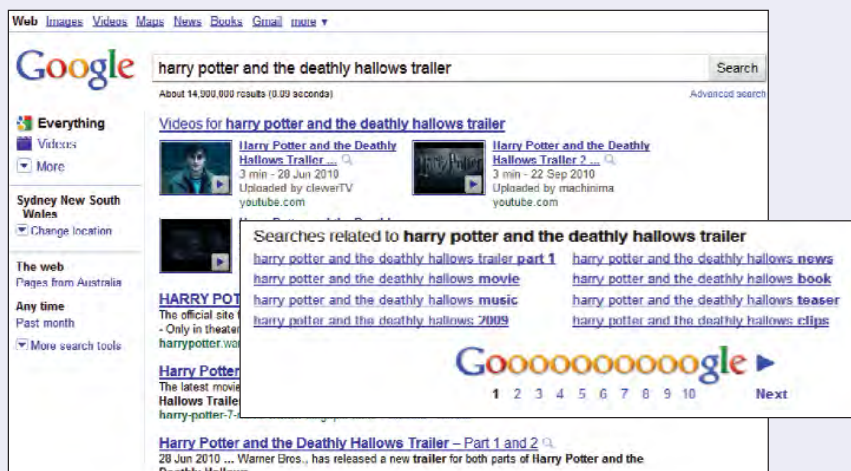
Figure 1 A search for Harry Potter and the deathly hallows *trailer has 14 900 000 hits and related search options are offered at the bottom of the search page*

19 million viewings in the months previous to release, well before the actual release of the film and allowed loyal fans to express their interest in the coming movie (Figure 1).

Facebook fan pages are very closely developed and maintained by advertisers and marketers. They rate fans as either casual, engaged or committed. It is their job to convert the casual to the committed through targeted and relevant postings. The companies get feedback from their fans about likes and dislikes, and reward them for their loyalty with give-aways and discounts. The Coca-Cola *Facebook* page (Figure 2) has an amazing 19 869 352 people registered as *liking* this product, which says much about product association and the development of identity.

Entertainment and humour

It is safe to say the holy grail for most advertisers and marketers is to have one of their products or videos *go viral*. This means that their video is so entertaining that it is viewed by millions of people, by choice, through a video hosting site. The knowledge of this video is spread by sending its link through social media as recommended viewing. An excellent example is the recent *Old Spice* campaign which had many more viewers than if it had just been broadcast on television. All of them chose to see the advertisement. In response to viewers' comments, the company made a further number of video responses by the character in the same style and humour as the original advertisement – yes, the web responds. There is no doubt that
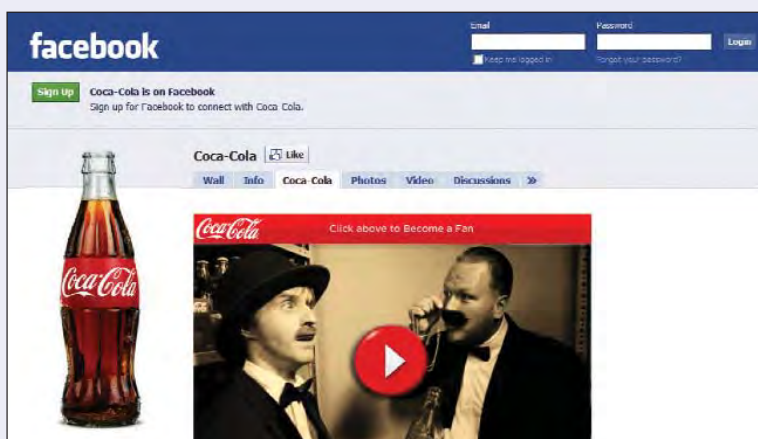
Figure 2 The Coca-Cola Facebook page <www.facebook.com/cocacola>
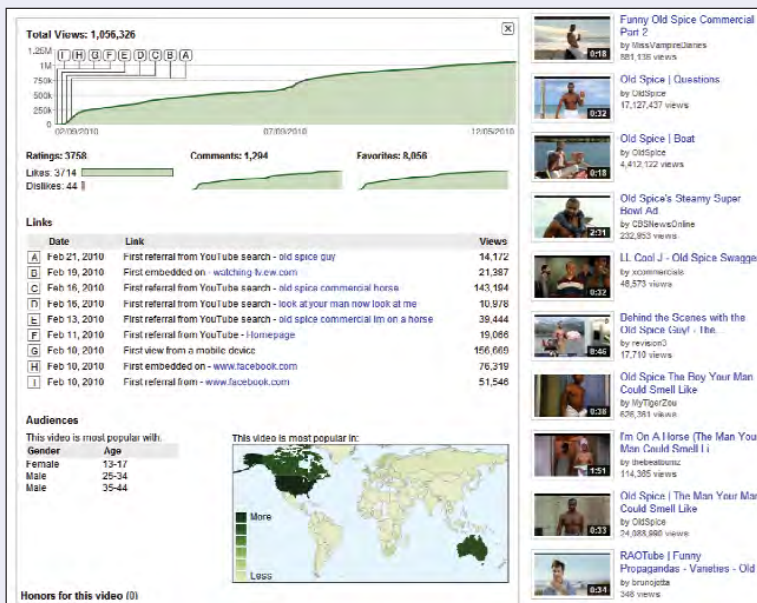
Figure 3 Statistical data for the Old Spice advertising *on* YouTube *and mash-ups*
<www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZOm2YhOI4c>

humour contributes greatly to getting a video to go viral but quirkiness and interactivity can also play a part. *YouTube* videos are easily downloadable and therefore easily re-made, re-authored and mashed-up to produce a series of memes that parody the original production (Figure 3). These can be also excellent forms of persuasion as they generate extra viewings of the product.

Designing and writing to persuade on the web

It is extremely difficult to develop a hard and fast system to describe the features of a website. Website design changes so rapidly – most commercial sites are redesigned every four to five years. Currently, the trend is to provide multiple points of access so that consumers/participants can choose how they wish to engage with the content. The user drives the narrative of the site rather than the producer. Websites do have conventions such as navigation links that traverse the top, right or left hand side of the page and banners which can utilise Flash to reveal a range of images and words. Images, font choices and colour all produce a set of

Emails are the most direct form of persuasion because they come to your very own virtual letterbox.

meanings and connotations related to the site's purpose and corporate image.

More revealing is what the site can do or link to and how the content is arranged. The site must allow the user to access the content in a way that suits their needs – this can be pre-empted by arranging the content to reflect new trends. For example, a book seller might re-arrange and re-badge some navigation buttons so that users can go to the new big thing in YA literature: vampire books. The site might also have a video player showing related videos (this reflects the cross media movement of story mentioned earlier) and links to social media. Of course, competitions incentivise the site and provide ways in which to gather email addresses and names. If you do not tick the box which stops the company contacting you through email, you can expect to be on their list for promotional emails.

Emails are the most direct form of persuasion because they come to your very own virtual letterbox – exactly where you live, sort of. There is a very interesting gap in the levels of sophistication of emails that attempt to persuade. If you have been lucky enough to have been left several million dollars in Nigeria or been contacted by a needy widow who has money to deposit in your account you will probably know the features of a not very persuasive email. I find these so interesting because they give us wonderful examples of poor spelling, inappropriate tone and register, unusual use of grammar and punctuation. It is a profound moment when you explain to students that good grammar, spelling and punctuation are persuasive. The other indicator of their obvious purpose is that these kinds of emails are in plain text. They do not have colour, logos or images which makes it easier to get through fairly rigorous spam filters. They also lack any sign of authority, reveal far too much information about themselves and rely on extreme amounts of emotive language to entice the reader to respond.

Effective persuasive emails have succinct subject lines, they do not exaggerate their company's claims, they are well written, they use colour and images and logos which enhance their authenticity, even if you do not buy steel garden sheds and have never wanted to.

Even though reading longer texts on computers and tablet devices has become more common, it is still true that consumers/participants are usually on a mission and want short well written web content that is actionable. Studies show that only small amounts (the first two to three words) of headings on web pages are ever read. Therefore it is important that information bearing words and sentence fragments are pulled to the front of sentences – users do not need well crafted sentences when they are searching for content.

Each and every website requires users to take action, to click on something, to participate in their own version of what the site has to offer. Naturally, the data about what parts of the site the consumer clicks on is fed back through analytical software to the site's owner and shapes the way in which future design is crafted.

Using digital persuasion in the classroom

In responding to the persuasive features of online texts the nature of what is persuasive must take into account the very nature of the internet and digital communications itself. This has to expand the metalanguage and discourse currently available for students to use. Language techniques (call to action, emotive language, etc) and visual features (colour, symbolism etc) are not enough. It is these features' placement on the page, their searchability, their actions and how

...the text's life in digital contexts and the involvement of people is what really makes it truly persuasive...

they link to other content and social media that really keep users engaged with the site. The key questions must be asked:

- *How does this site involve people?*
- *How does the site sustain this involvement?*

The same questions can also be posed in the creation of persuasive texts.

For instance, if students compose persuasive speeches, letters or even posters, the text's life in digital contexts and the involvement of people is what really makes it truly persuasive in contemporary contexts. The poster can be uploaded to *Voicethread*, the letter to a blog and the speech recorded for uploading. Students are content producers and content must have a life that traverses platforms and even forms. The key questions should be:

- *How can I involve people in my text?*
- *How can I sustain this involvement?*

This is the way of the digital world. ◼

References and further reading

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Beyond the review: Stage 3 English – persuasive writing

Beyond the review...

The Resource review program supports teacher librarians and teachers in the selection and effective use of resources. **Lizzie Chase**, Review Coordinator, School Libraries and Information Literacy, suggests teaching and learning ideas for resources which are reviewed in this issue.

Figure 1 VCOP mat <www.primaryclassroomresources.co.uk/acatalog/free_section.html>

Queensland Education's website *The learning place* <learning place.com.au/deliver/content. asp?pid=48220> contains a webpage called *Exposition* which contains many useful links, word documents and PDFs to support the NAPLAN 2011 persuasive writing task. The following multimodal teaching and learning experiences explore the potential for using these resources in Year 5 English to teach students as they discuss and write persuasively in response to the question: *Are cats better pets than dogs?* A variety of posters are suggested to enrich students' vocabulary and an animation will assist students to understand the concept of persuasion. *Glogster EDU* is discussed as a useful tool for summarising main ideas, and also for persuading an audience.

Table 1 provides the programming proforma for the following multimodal teaching and learning sequences.
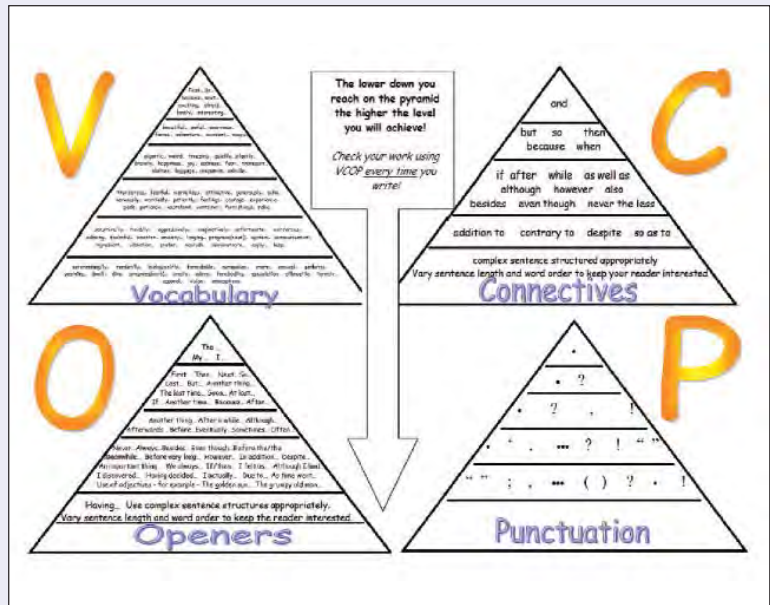
Pre-test to gather information about student learning needs

The teaching sequence, described below, supports persuasive writing for NAPLAN 2011 in Year 5 English. Benchmark students' persuasive writing skills at the start, before explicit teaching has commenced. Without discussion, request students to write a brief response in answer to the question: *Are cats better pets than dogs?* By analysing initial student writing samples, teachers will understand students' current skill levels and be able to set teaching directions for the following lessons.

Prepare for teaching about persuasion

Prepare by printing out and displaying the many useful posters featured on Exposition webpage, including:

- *VCOP mat* poster
- *IBET poster*
- *power genre – exposition chart.*

The *VCOP mat* poster (Figure 1) encourages students to enrich their persuasive writing by displaying vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation prompts of increasing sophistication.

IBET, a persuasive speaking and writing strategy (Figure 2), uses an acronym to create a planner for off the cuff speech making. The acronym works in this way:

- I – my opinion
- B – because = reason
- E – example
- T – that's why = conclusion.

As additional preparation, print out the six vocabulary handouts to share with students as required. These include *Vocabulary for appreciation*, *Vocabulary for expositions*, *Vocabulary for meaning organisation* (Figure 3) and *Vocabulary for text transition*. They provide a wealth of vocabulary for persuasive writing, including conjunctions and words of approval and disapproval, which are so central to persuading with vigour.

Figure 2 IBET <www.ryanandassociates.com.au/index.htm>

Figure 3 Vocabulary for meaning organisation <learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=48220>

Build a shared definition and understanding of persuasion

It is important to establish a clear shared understanding of the concept of persuasion with your class. Use an IWB so that the class can view and discuss the animation *Writing to argue, persuade and advise* at <tiny.cc/x7cu4> for its seven techniques for persuasion. After watching this clip, create a class definition of persuasion together and make notes as a group about the seven common techniques for persuasion. The techniques are:
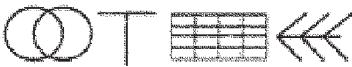
• using anecdotes,
• presenting facts,
• offering opinions,
• asking rhetorical questions,
• using emotive language,
• using striking similes and metaphors and
• writing in triplets.

These persuasive techniques are summarised below using the acronym, a forest.

Figure 4 A forest acronym in Writing to argue, persuade and advise <tiny.cc/x7cu4>

Consolidate individual understandings

As a follow up activity, students will consolidate their understanding of the concept of persuasion if they explore *Admongo.gov* (Figure 5). This interactive game highlights the persuasive techniques used in advertising and asks players about the persuasive impact of each specific example.
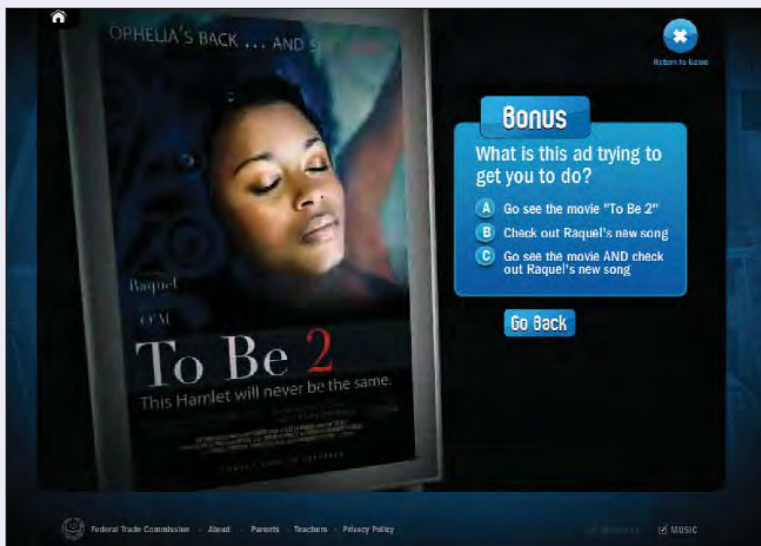
Figure 5 Admongo.gov <www.admongo.gov/admongo.html>

Brainstorm, vote and justify decision

After gaining a general understanding of persuasive techniques, students now vote in answer to the question: *Are cats better pets than dogs?* Record the voting result. Create a preliminary brainstorm on the IWB, using two columns, cats and dogs, and gather the reasons and linked evidence (Figure 6) for students' votes. Later, a vote will be taken again to see if students have changed their opinion based on the reasons which other students have provided. It is vital that students give elaborated answers and justify the vote they cast. The *IBET* (Figure 2) prompts will be very useful as students discuss this issue.

Share and annotate models of writing

Explain to students that you are about to show them some writing which uses some of the techniques outlined in *Writing to argue, persuade and advise* animation clip which they saw earlier. The *Dog diary vs. cat diary* entries feature emotive language and the *Cats v dogs persuasive argument* (Figure 7) features facts, opinions and anecdotes. Annotate these two texts and explain that the same language techniques will be used in the assessment. Explain and generate rhetorical questions, similes and metaphors with students which could enrich these texts even more. In their assessment task, students will be required to write an introduction stating their thesis, body paragraphs giving reasons and supporting examples, and a conclusion which wraps up their argument. The previewing role of the paragraph topic sentence is a crucial one to explain to students while the class annotates these model texts.

The Dog's Diary

8:00 am – Dog food! My favourite thing!
9:30 am – A car ride! My favourite thing!
9:40 am – A walk in the park! My favourite thing!
10:30 am – Got rubbed and petted! My favourite thing!
12:00 pm – Milk bones! My favourite thing!
1:00 pm – Played in the yard! My favourite thing!
3:00 pm – Wagged my tail! My favourite thing!

The Cat's Diary

Day 983 of My Captivity

My captors continue to taunt me with bizarre little dangling objects. They dine lavishly on fresh meat, while the other inmates and I are fed hash or some sort of dry nuggets. Although I make my contempt for the rations perfectly clear, I nevertheless must eat something in order to keep up my strength.

Figure 6 Extracts from Dog diary vs. cat diary <www.goodeatsfanpage.com/humor/otherhumor/dog_cat_diary.htm>

> **Because dogs are so smart, they can be trained to do important jobs. There are dogs on the police force, dogs that herd sheep and do other farm work, and dogs that help people with disabilities. Blind people trust their dogs so much they wait for their dogs to let them know when it's safe to cross the road. Some dogs are even smart enough to get help for their owners when they are in danger.**

Figure 7 Extract from Dogs are better than cats *downloaded from* Cats v dogs persuasive argument *at <learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=48220>*

Plan main arguments in *Glogster EDU* or Persuasion map

Students will benefit from planning their main arguments before writing their assessment tasks. Creating a glog (an online multimedia poster) in *Glogster EDU* (Figure 8) is a way for students to show which main arguments they will use. It is vital to use *Glogster EDU* rather than *Glogster.com* as the edu site is suitable for students in secondary school and the adult site is not. Begin by showing

Information literacy: programming ideas for teacher librarians when collaborating with teachers: organising

Topic: Stage 3 English – persuasive writing: *Are cats better pets than dogs?*

Quality Teaching elements:

Substantive communication

- Students engage in sustained discussion and writing in order to persuade an audience. Communication is focused on the substance of the lesson and peer feedback allows students to gauge the persuasive impacts of their arguments.

Metalanguage

- Students discuss how types of texts, discourses and other symbolic representations actually work, showing how language and symbols can be used to construct texts, knowledge and power.

Resources:

All links and documents named in this proforma have been accessed from the webpage below, except for the *Glogster EDU* link and glog samples below. [The *IBET* poster needs a font change – highlight text symbols]

- *Exposition* ,Queensland Education portal page with persuasive writing links <www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=48220>.
- *Glogster EDU*, <edu.glogster.com/>. [Remind students not to use their family names]
- Glog samples – explore these beforehand to check appropriateness for your class:
  - *Child labour*, <rachelharris.edu.glogster.com/child-labor/>
  - *Childhood obesity: call to action*, <fade12.edu.glogster.com/childhood-obesity-call-to-action/>.
  - I have a dream, <tgun25.edu.glogster.com/i-have-a-dream/>.
- See References and further reading.

Pre-unit assessment to gauge current level of understanding: (in terms of unit/topic/focus) eg pre-test, teacher judgment, brainstorm, discussion questions prior to unit study

Evidence based practice: As a pre-test, before any explicit teaching is done, students have written a brief response to the question: *Are cats better pets than dogs?* This will also be the assessment task question at the end of the sequence of lessons. Compare the pre-test and assessment task work samples, in order to see which text structure, vocabulary or persuasive writing techniques students have learned about, to see which gaps or misunderstandings remain, and to set teaching directions for the future.

Syllabus outcomes:	Suggested teaching and learning activities/strategies
English K–6	Topic preparation: *Are cats better pets than dogs?*
WS3.14 Critically evaluates how own texts have been structured to achieve their purpose and discusses ways of using related grammatical features and conventions of written language to shape readers' and viewers' understanding of texts.	• students have already written an exposition as a pre-test, before explicit teaching has begun • wall posters display the *VCOP* resources, *IBET* poster and *power genre – exposition chart* <learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=48220>.
• *learns about how persuasive texts have been structured in order to convince the reader about a point of view.*	Introduction: • define and discuss the concept of persuasion with students • on an IWB, view together the animation, *Writing to argue, persuade and advise* <http://tiny.cc/x7cu4> for its 7 techniques for persuasion • distribute vocabulary sheets (from *Exposition* site)
Related computer competencies focus:	• to consolidate, students find the persuasive items in advertisements in *Admongo.gov* <http://tiny.cc/etzwa>.
Students will: • use *Glogster EDU* to create a glog (multimedia online poster) to summarise their main points in planning for their persuasive writing task.	*Are cats better pets than dogs?* Write to persuade your friends • class vote: students vote, choosing cats or dogs as their preferred pet • class brainstorms on IWB in 2 columns – cats and dogs • record reasons and linked evidence [examples, anecdotes, quotations, adjectives].
Related information skills focus area: organising and synthesising	Discuss models of persuasive techniques: • discuss with students the persuasive techniques used in *Dog diary vs. cat diary* and *Cats v dogs persuasive argument* • annotate texts together (same text structure and language techniques will be used in the assessment) • add new words to the class brainstorm map.
Students will: • organise their ideas and make their own notes • plan an exposition • create a glog (online multimedia poster) • write an exposition to express and synthesise their views.	Plan main arguments: • teacher shows students samples of persuasive glogs • teacher demonstrates how to use *Glogster EDU* [No identifying information should be used in the login or in the glog.] • students plan their own main arguments • each student creates a glog, featuring these key ideas, to persuade • students write exposition using one main argument per body paragraph.

Post unit assessment to determine progress towards stated outcomes

e.g. post-test, guided evaluation sheet, skills achieved in context of outcomes (indicators) and planned assessment

Post-test writing task: *Are cats better than dogs as pets?* Persuade your classmates, giving four reasons. Teachers may wish to use the *Persuasive marking writing guide* <www.naplan.edu.au/verve/_resources/Marking_Guide_2011.pdf> and descriptions of the writing criteria available at 'Writing 2011', *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy* <www.naplan.edu.au/writing_2011_-_domains.html> to assess student learning.

Table 1 programming proforma for Stage 3 English – persuasive writing: Are cats better pets than dogs?

Figure 8 Extract from Child labor glog <rachelharris.edu.glogster.com/child-labor/>. NB Teach students not to use family names

students samples of persuasive glogs. Explain that no identifying information should be used in the login or in the glog. Demonstrate how to use *Glogster EDU*. After students have planned their main arguments, they each create a glog to persuade their viewers, featuring these key ideas. No registration is required to create a sample glog, but it will not save. If you prefer, your students can plan their exposition in ReadWriteThink's *Persuasion map* <tiny.cc/j2c1s>.

Publishing and sharing student work

When students have created their glogs, ask them to share the URL of their completed glog with you. They may also present a short talk about the issue to the class on the IWB. These online posters will show you whether students have a clear plan of the main arguments they will use in their exposition. If you are satisfied that they have a logical and persuasive line of argument, you can give them the go ahead to write their assessment task in response to the question: *Are cats better pets than dogs?* Remind them of the acronym, *a forest,* so that they remember to persuade through the use of the seven techniques.

Evidence based practice

Compare the assessment task writing at the end of this lesson sequence with the pre-test writing to see which text structure, vocabulary or persuasive writing techniques students have learned about, to see which gaps or misunderstandings remain, and to set teaching directions for the future. This evidence based assessment for learning will yield rich rewards – both in analysing whole class patterns in writing and also in analysing the progress of individual students. Another benefit is that these samples provide evidence of the effectiveness of teaching strategies used in the lessons.

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The twin purposes of Guided Inquiry: guiding student inquiry and evidence based practice

Lee FitzGerald, Head Teacher Librarian, Loreto Kirribilli, Sydney

Research columns

In this issue, **Lee FitzGerald** provides an overview of a Guided Inquiry project undertaken by teachers, teacher librarians and student groups participating in the *2008 NSW Association of Independent Schools' project*. The paper includes Lee's case study, which focuses on her small scale practitioner research on a 2010 Year 11 modern historical investigation

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Also in this issue is an evaluation of the online, ecological mystery game, *Murder under the Microscope* (MuM). **Catherine Nielsen** reports the findings of data gathered from four anual evaluations to determine the depth of student engagement and learning in meeting curriculum standards.

Introduction

Guided Inquiry is a means by which student enquiry can be facilitated in schools, while simultaneously being the vehicle for evidence based practice. This paper illustrates this twin purpose in two contexts. First is an overview discussion of the 2008 NSW Association of Independent Schools' project, led by Dr. Todd. This is followed by a case study of a 2010 Guided Inquiry Year 11 modern historical investigation at Loreto Kirribilli.

The project and case study are discussed as student practice, and as a means of gathering data about student learning using the School Library Impact Measure (SLIM) Toolkit, while highlighting the use of wiki as an organising tool.

The paper affirms the impact that Guided Inquiry has had on some Sydney schools, with a summary of the developments in some of the schools that participated in the 2008 project.

Guided Inquiry

Guided Inquiry offers an integrated unit of inquiry planned and guided by an instructional team of a school librarian and teachers, together allowing students to gain deeper understandings of subject area curriculum content and information literacy concepts. It combines often overlooked outside resources with materials in the school library. The team guides students toward developing skills and abilities necessary for the workplace and daily living in the rapidly changing information environment of the 21st century. But how is it different from what teachers and librarians have been doing all along?

Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2007

It is grounded in a constructivist approach to learning, based on the *Information search process* (ISP) developed by Professor Emerita Dr Carol Kuhlthau's extensive research over a twenty year period (Kuhltau, 2004).

Guided Inquiry (GI) means just what it says — teachers and teacher librarians guide students through the process of doing an task. It is applicable both to long-term, open-ended tasks, such as the NSW Year 11 modern historical investigation, as well as to shorter, more contained tasks, which are obviously much more frequent. Essentially, GI seeks to scaffold students at the points in the information search process where they cannot proceed without difficulty. It asks both teachers and students to develop a greater awareness of process in research, and to develop an understanding of the thoughts, actions and feelings common to all researchers, whether primary, secondary or tertiary. It also respects the student's right to be autonomous in research, if they do not need any intervention.

The research task

At the base of GI is the task itself. Ideally, it is an open-ended task where
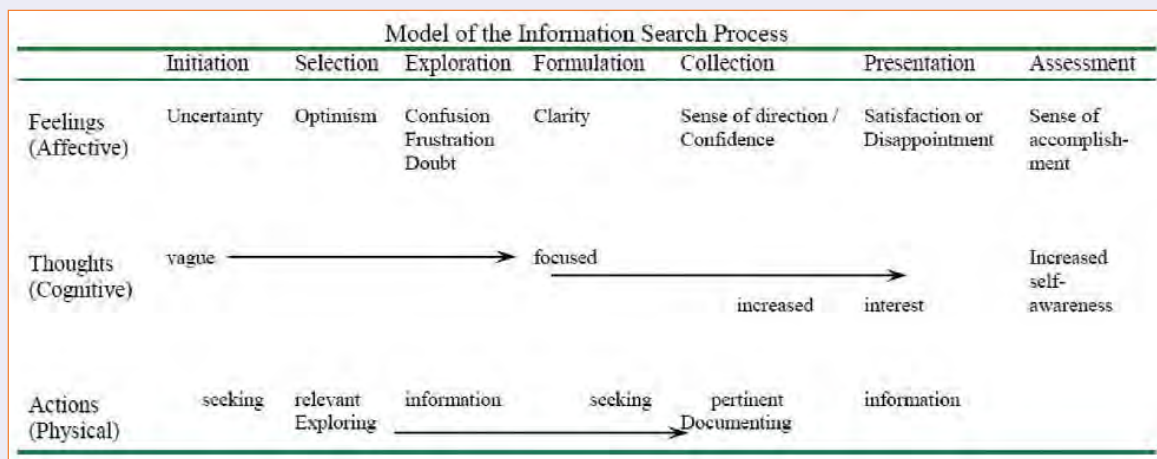
Figure 1 Model of the Information search process, Community information <comminfo.rutgers.edu/~kuhlthau/information_search_process.htm>

students can choose their own topics. In narrower tasks, the question needs to be constructivist in nature, forcing students to do more than transport information. Students need to transform the information they have gathered into knowledge. In GI, open-ended tasks should be connected with curriculum. They should seek to link to what Kuhltau (2007, p. 32–33) terms the *First space*, students' local and cultural knowledge, including Web 2.0, with *Second space*, the school curriculum – the goals, standards, and learning outcomes at the base of what is taught. The aim is to engage students in research that creates the *Third space*, where students use out of school knowledge to make sense of the curriculum.

Tasks which are *go find out abouts…* do not connect first and second spaces. They result in the transport of information with little deep understanding or interest. But curriculum-based tasks, aligned with students' interests and prior knowledge, can create the *Third space*.

The *Information search process* (ISP)

The *Information search process* (Figure 1) lies at the heart of GI. Because it is supported by a great deal of evidence, from studies carried out by Carol Kuhlthau, (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2007, p .21) Ross Todd and others (Kuhlthau, Heinström & Todd,

2008), this model of information seeking and using behaviour is very telling. It is not a superimposed process; it describes the experience of thousands of researchers as they handle information.

The diagram of the *Information search process* (Figure 1) shows the affective domain, which all researchers experience. Most noticeable is the *dip* which occurs at the exploration phase of an task, where the searcher goes into overload and experiences confusion, frustration and doubt. This is a critical zone of intervention by teachers and teacher librarians for students.

Noticeable also is the length of time it takes to get to formulation of student understanding their *take* on the problem of the task. This applies whether the task is open-ended or not.

The analogy has proved helpful to students in describing and experiencing their information process.

Students at Loreto Kirribilli have responded well to The *research river* analogy (Appendix 1) for the ISP. This *PowerPoint* presentation aligns the stages of the ISP to the passage of a river to the sea, from small and weak

beginnings, to basking in the shallows of information, to steadily getting deeper into the flow of information, to falling down the waterfall then plunging headlong into the *dip* (confusion/frustration/doubt), predicted by Kuhltau at the exploration phase. After that, the river streams through various paths to the sea, leaving behind much of its water, and dividing into many possible paths. The analogy has proved helpful to students in describing and experiencing their information process, as the research described below at Loreto highlights.

Kuhlthau differentiates the types of searching students need to do at the different stages of the ISP (2007, p. 84). Students participating in the recent Year 11 historical investigations were specifically instructed in this structured searching approach (Figure 2), but the research shows they still have more to learn about this.

The 2008 Association of Independent Schools (AIS) project

The 2008 NSW Association of Independent Schools' project: guiding student inquiry and collecting data about student learning, was part of the 2008 NSW Association of Independent Schools/Catholic Education Commission Quality Teacher project. Twelve independent schools in Sydney,

Structured searching approach			
broad preliminary searching:	**exploratory searching:**	**comprehensive searching :**	**summary searching:**
• at beginning of task • to develop a concept of the scope of the topic • focus on reading broadly for understanding scope of topic.	• deeper searching • explore topic.	• formulate own understanding of the topic • formulate own point of view of the topic.	• before writing the product of the research • check to make sure vital information has not been missed • check that information has not changed.

Figure 2 Structured searching approach

Australia, carried out GI research in their schools, under the guidance of Dr. Todd. Wiki was the tool used for planning and carrying out the research. Available at <giresearchers.pbwiki.com>, the *GI researchers wiki* was the communication tool for all stages of this research, including ongoing leadership from Dr. Todd, planning, execution, sharing of scaffolding and the inquiry units themselves, and reporting of findings on this 12 school project.

The AIS project is a demonstration of the twin purposes of GI as the means by which open-ended student inquiry can be carried out and scaffolded, as well as providing a means by which evidence of student learning can be gathered during the inquiry using reflection sheets.

With Dr. Todd's support, each school developed an open-ended research task with GI scaffolding, which we carried out in our schools. During the project, we sought feedback from our students at three critical points in their research. Student feedback involved:

- defining their growing knowledge of their topics
- outlining their difficulties
- defining what they found easy and difficult at the three stages of the ISP.

This feedback provided us with material for direct interventions with our students, as well as data to be analysed using the School Library Impact Measure (SLIM) (Todd, Kuhlthau & Heinström, 2005).

As Dr. Ross Todd will be disseminating findings and implications to a wider world audience in 2011, coverage of this project in this paper is restricted to an overview of aims and achievements.

...evidence of student learning can be gathered during the inquiry using reflection sheets.

Aims

The aims of the project were to engage participating teams of teachers and teacher librarians in developing and carrying out *Guided Inquiry* units, based on the *Information search process*; to track changes in the language students used at different stages of their enquiry to describe their understanding of their topic; to find out what students find easy and difficult in research; and to learn to use the SLIM Toolkit for analysing data.

Participating schools were from the NSW Association of Independent Schools, and included:

- Abbotsleigh
- Broughton Anglican College
- Loreto Kirribilli
- Newington College
- Northholm Grammar
- Queenwood
- Roseville College
- Santa Sabina (junior and senior)
- St. Luke's Grammar School

- St. Paul's Grammar School
- St. Vincent's College
- Wenona.

Inquiry units

Most projects involved students in Years 7 to 10, with eight in History, one each in English and PDHPE, two in Geography and one in Science. Two primary schools were involved, with projects in Year 5 Geography and Year 4 Science. All projects had significant teaching input from teachers and teacher librarians. In total, 34 teachers, 18 teacher librarians and 935 students took part.

Each inquiry unit involved:

- using the *Information search process* (ISP) as the instructional design framework
- planning instructional interventions to initiate the project, to help students select topics, build background knowledge, develop specific focus questions, analyse, synthesise, deal with conflicting knowledge, develop arguments, and develop personal positions and perspectives
- offering an area of inquiry which allowed students freedom to develop their own focus questions.
- developing and using existing background knowledge
- providing high quality resources for students, and instruction in their use.

The project focused on:

- the presence of teachers and teacher librarians at each stage of the process to guide and intervene,

both in planned ways, and in unplanned ways which arose out of information provided by students in the SLIM reflection sheets

- the process more than product, and most teachers did not tell students what the product was to be until they had passed the collection phase of the ISP
- the gathering of data from students at three points of the ISP – at initiation, collection, and at assessment.

Methodology

Data were gathered from students at initiation, collection and assessment using the SLIM Toolkit. These questions (Figure 3) were asked at each stage:

The third reflection sheet also included students' reflections on what they had learnt. These are the standard questions of the SLIM Toolkit.

Results

Each school showed substantial growth to deep knowledge (as evidenced by number of explanations). This finding will be elaborated on by Dr Todd in a coming article for School Libraries Worldwide.

Difficulties students faced were identical in all the schools:

- developing focus questions – that formulation of a question takes a long time
- finding the right information targeted to focus – looking for the right answer
- taking notes –link found with poor notetaking and plagiarism
- synthesising information – putting information together, developing arguments, conclusions
- acknowledging sources
- interest dip at formulation stage, in line with the stages of the ISP.

SLIM Toolkit Questions

1. Write the title that best describes your research project at this time.
2. Take some time to think about your research topic. Now write down what you know about this topic.
3. What interests you about this topic?
4. How much do you know about this topic? Check (✓) one box that best matches how much you know. Nothing, Not much, Some, Quite a bit and A great deal.
5. Write down what you think is EASY about researching your topic.
6. Write down what you think is DIFFICULT about researching your topic.
7. Write down how you are FEELING now about your project. Check (✓) only the boxes that apply to you. Confident, Disappointed, Relieved, Frustrated, Confused, Optimistic, Uncertain, Satisfied, Anxious or Other.

Figure 3 SLIM Toolkit questions

It is interesting that all schools reported difficulties in locating the right information for the stage of the research process, and is strong support for the different kinds of searching advocated by Kuhltau (2007, p. 84), preliminary, exploratory, comprehensive and summary searching. This aspect is reinforced in the small Loreto study following.

Wiki is a valuable tool for the interaction and feedback…

Conclusions

Anecdotal evidence in reflections of teachers and students added to the qualitative findings provide support for GI in its first purpose: a structured process to support and guide inquiry units. The feedback element was highly regarded by teachers as formative assessment, and by students as a source of personalised and relevant help. Students displayed growing metacognition about information processes and expressed

continuing interest, even in the dip at exploration, because they were able to own their research and inquiry questions.

Teacher librarians involved developed understandings about how the SLIM reflection sheets can be used for guiding interventions with students on an individual and group basis, and as an individual diagnostic tool for formative assessment.

In essence for teacher librarians, GI as demonstrated through this research project provides a way of making information literacy a mainstream element of the major assessment tasks students encounter in their school life. Wiki is a valuable tool for the interaction and feedback that GI demands. It also was a clear demonstration of the twin purposes of GI – using reflections from students in two ways:

- providing feedback to them
- using the reflection sheets for data to be analysed for evidence based practice.

Loreto Kiribilli case study

The 2010 Loreto Kirribilli Year 11 modern historical investigation: guiding student inquiry and collecting data about student learning research task was carried out in May/June. The task was undertaken to show how GI methods facilitate student enquiry. A wiki, available at <http://11modernbleby.pbworks.com>, shows all the steps of the investigation.

The modern historical investigation, mandatory in NSW schools, allows students to choose an area of interest which contains historical debate, within the constraints of the syllabus, to research widely and deeply to develop their own inquiry question. The final product of this guided effort is a scholarly essay, in which students answer their own question, using scholarly conventions such as footnotes. Both process and product are marked in this task. Teachers marked the essays and the teacher librarian marked the process. Cross-marking of the essays allowed the teacher librarian to see the impact of process on product.

TTeachers and teacher librarians have collaborated over the last three years to work out the best way of presenting this GI. The front page of the wiki contains a brief description of the project and the essential dates. Accessed from the side bar are the tasks elements:

- the task itself
- reflection sheets
- peer evaluation
- self reflections
- annotated notetaking grids
- resources which include *The research river*, developing questions, essay planning, writing footnotes.

In this enquiry, each student had her own page which contained:

- her daily learning journal
- uploaded reflection sheets as required

- developing notetaking grids
- feedback from teachers and teacher librarian
- feedback from peers, using the comment function of wiki.

Reflection sheets

Reflection sheets provided information for interventions required (individual and group), as well as data to be analysed using the SLIM Toolkit. This is the essence of the twin purposes of GI scaffolding.

Evidence based practice

Goals of case study

We observed the research process used by students involved in open-ended enquiry supported by Guided Inquiry scaffolding, in particular:

- to measure changes in knowledge as students pass through the stages of the *Information search process*, in terms of the type of statements students make about their topic i.e. by observing how often they make factual statements, explanations or conclusions.
- to find out what students find difficult when researching and to compare this with expressed learnings at the end of the project.
- to gather reflections on the Information search process (ISP).

It is important to add at this stage that the evidence based practice was a simple second use of the scaffolding of the task. This is a very small scale study, of what is a very high quality GI in terms of the output of students, which was carried out in two classes, using a wiki and in identical fashion. There was no time, however, to analyse the responses of the second class.

The following analysis was a by product of the task itself, as data for the analysis was part of the task.

Research questions

1. What do you know about your topic?
2. Have you any particular difficulties relating to your topic?
3. What have you learnt from this Guided Inquiry?
4. Describe your feelings as you progressed through the stages of the Information search process – initiation, selection, formulation/ exploration, collection and presentation.

…a sure guide to student growth towards deep knowledge…

1. What do you know about your topic?
We wanted students to synthesise their growing understandings of their topic in a way that was not an add on to the task, as experience from the 2008 GI showed us that students resent taking the time to write their understanding of the topic on three separate occasions. This question was administered in Reflection sheet 1 at initiation and at formulation. At collection, students wrote an essay plan, which was useful to them to organise the information, but not useful to us in data collection. Lastly, for Question 1, we analysed the essays themselves. This was a sure guide to student growth towards deep knowledge, executed with real purpose and a reliable guide to what they ended up knowing about their topics.

2. Have you any particular difficulties relating to your topic?
This question was administered at Reflection sheet 1, 2 and 3 (just before presentation), as we wanted information from students as to what interventions they needed on a personal and class basis. This is essential to GI in its first purpose, guiding the inquiry of students by

using feedback from them to tailor individual and group interventions. This was the essence of the work the teachers and teacher librarían did on this project, providing feedback in person, and on the wiki, using the comment function.

3. What have you learnt from this Guided Inquiry?

This question was administered in Reflection sheet 4, at the end of the task. We used the same information skills headings as in *What did you find difficult?* so that we could make some conclusions about what they learnt relating to what they found difficult.

4. Describe your feelings as you progressed through the stages of the *Information search process* – initiation, selection, formulation/ exploration, collection and presentation.

Lastly, we gathered their reflections on the *Information search process*. These are analysed below, showing casebook

The reflection sheets were central to student inquiry proceeding, providing a feedback mechanism between teachers, teacher librarians and students.

links, particularly with the dip in the formulation stage, expressed by many students. At the introduction of this unit, students were taken through the ISP, using *The research river PowerPoint* as an analogy, and so many students couched their reflections using this analogy.

To reiterate, our Year 11 task is a good example of the twin uses of GI scaffolding, particularly reflection sheets. The reflection sheets were central to student inquiry proceeding, providing a feedback mechanism

between teachers, teacher librarians and students. They also provided analysable data about student growth to deep knowledge, to what they find difficult, to what they learnt, and to the intrinsic nature of the *Information search process* to Guided Inquiry.

The participants

Fifteen Year 11 students at Loreto Kirribilli, Sydney. Loreto Kirribilli is an Independent Catholic day school with an enrolment of approximately 1040 girls from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Data collection

We gathered data at three stages of the ISP

- initiation
- formulation
- presentation.

Findings

Question 1: *What do you know about your topic?*

This was the question which analysed changes in student knowledge by coding student responses according to whether they were facts, explanations or conclusions. We collected data at initiation, formulation and presentation (essay itself).

Analysis

For all students, there were high levels of facts at all stages of the project, an increasing number of explanations,

reaching a peak in the essay; no conclusions in early stages, very small number mid stage, and an impressive 100 conclusions drawn from all essays.

Analysis:

All students in the top range had a large number of explanations, as well as a substantial number of conclusions, showing high levels of synthesis. Students who achieved most highly also show a clear link between high achievement in process and high achievement in product.
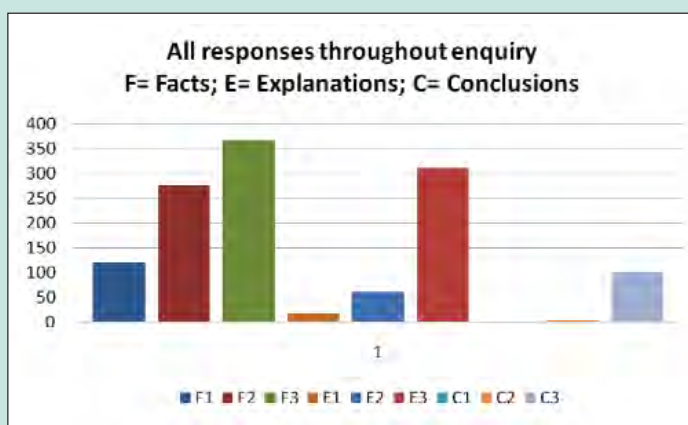
High achievement

Student L (orange column), the highest achieving student, made the biggest number of conclusions, started making explanations early, and made the fewest number of facts at outset. Her topic was the reasons for the waxing and waning of support for the Klu Klux Klan over time, not a simple topic by any means, and she set about very early looking for patterns in her information gathering.

Both Student C and Student I show a large number of facts at the outset, fewer explanations, and substantially fewer conclusions than Student L, reflecting difficulties in finding patterns in the information gathered and synthesising as they went through the process of the GI.

Comparison of top, middle and lower range students
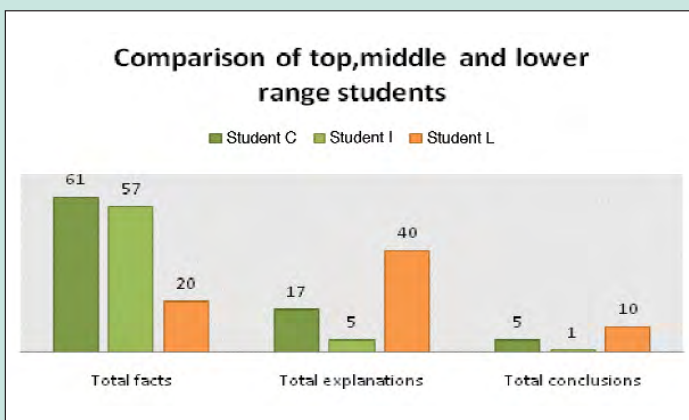
Implication for Loreto

More explicit teaching may be needed on the kinds of searching appropriate to each stage, and highlighted above in Kulhtau's preliminary, exploratory, comprehensive and summary searching concepts (2007, p. 84). Students need to be taught to begin with overview information so they can gain a basic understanding of the scope of their topic, before they steadily go deeper as the enquiry proceeds. We did stress this in the process of this GI, but there is evidence to show that it needs to be reinforced, particularly finding ways of emphasising ongoing synthesis of information to work towards establishing patters, (explanations, conclusions) earlier in the journey to understanding a topic.

Question 2 and Question 3: *Have you any particular difficulties relating to your topic? What have you learnt from this Guided Inquiry?*

These questions were combined to show difficulties expressed, and self expressed learnings at end of project.

Analysis

Problems with evaluating information (blue) have been addressed in the project, according to students. Students did not think they had any difficulties locating information (teal) but it is finding it at the right level that is problematic (red). This reinforces the findings in the 2008 AIS Guided Inquiry project. Students search too deeply at first, when what they need then is overview information. We taught them how to search for an overview at first, then move to deeper information and, when their question is developed, to use online databases.

Expressed difficulties and learnings Part 1
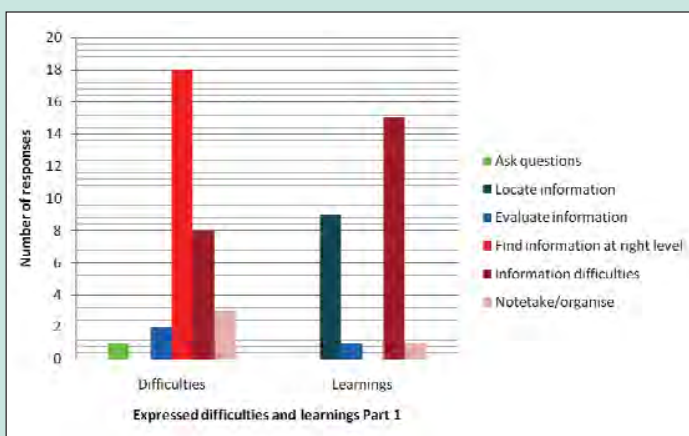
Anecdotally, students expressed that they have learnt this, but this is not reinforced in this graph. It is clear that it needs further explicit teaching.

Information difficulties (dark pink) referred to overload, underload, and unevenness of quality of information. Students felt strongly that they learnt this from this project, and we experienced great success with *Questia* and *History study centre*, our online History databases. Teachers and teacher librarians feel that students have taken in the advantages of using quality information.

Analysis

Difficulties with *Create own question* (pink) shows that some students felt that they've learnt quite a lot about this, but a big percentage expressed that they found this hard.

Students had few difficulties with *Synthesise into essay plan* (red), and found it relatively easy.

Students found *Write essay* (navy) difficult, and only a few felt they had learnt it properly.

The *Footnotes and bibliography* (teal blue) area appears to be a resounding success. More students said they had learnt it than those who had difficulties with it!

Expressed difficulties and learnings Part 2
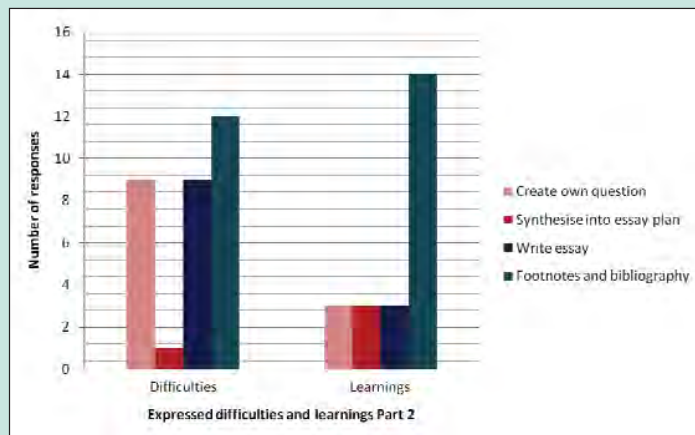
Implications for Loreto

It is clear that students found it difficult to develop their own questions, and that they experienced a *dip* in confidence. Based on this small numerical evidence, and from the anecdotal evidence following, this behaviour is similar to that experienced earlier on at formulation when they are in information overload.

Implications of topic choice

Anecdotally again, it was clear to teachers and teacher librarians that the topic chosen impacted on student process. Those who chose topics which are very complex and highly written about had difficulties carving a path through the information, while others who wrote about areas that have virtually nothing written about them, experienced difficulty as well. This was evident in one of our student's decision to compare Kokoda with Gallipolli, which no one has ever done before!

Question 4: *Describe your feelings as you progressed through the stages of the Information search process – initiation, selection, formulation/exploration, collection and presentation.*

	Initiation	Selection	Formulation/ Exploration	Collection	Presentation
Student A	Confusion, excitement	A sort of frenzy	Deep in the Dip	Confident	Another Dip
Student B	Unsure, optmistic	Daunted	Very unsure	Confident	Difficult
Student C	Worried, daunted	Changed topic, but happy	Lots of trouble	Relatively easy	Big Dip
Student D	Enthusiastic	Indecisive	Anxious	On the right track	Very stuck writing essay
Student E	Freedom to research anything	Not very confused	Unsure, quite stressed	Seen as not necessary*	N/A
Student F	Liberated and excited	Uneasy, topic v. big	Maximum anxiety	In tune with the River	Overwhelming, confusing, overload of information

	Initiation	Selection	Formulation/ Exploration	Collection	Presentation
Student G	Enthusiastic and excited	Tiresome, but content	Still cruising down river	Hit a boulder in the middle of the river, question change	Very tiring rock wall to climb in the research river
Student H	Optimistic	Good state of mind	Anxiety over area of debate	Changed course slightly	Quite excited to get started on essay
Student I	Excited	Less excited	Less interested	Changed course slightly	Difficult and disappointing
Student J	Unsure	Happy with choice	Choosing a question difficult	Easy and interesting	The most difficult stage, word limit and answering question
Student K	Very interested	Difficult, too much info	Choosing a question difficult	Difficult to organise because question uncertain	Very happy with this
Student L	Excited, unsure	Definite about topic	Change in direction difficult	Not difficult	Extensive work, but happy
Student M	A little anxious	N/A	Very unsure, overloaded	N/A	N/A
Student N	Very hard to choose topic	Difficult but interesting	Hard being organised	Getting there	Pride of my work
Student O	Very hard to choose topic	A feeling of worry	Making question very hard	Easier than I expected	Overwhelming and a bit of a worry

Analysis

There is strong support for the *dip* in confidence at formulation, with everybody, except one student, experiencing it. There is a case from our reflections for another dip in the research process – creating the essay. It also anecdotally reinforces a major finding – that it is the type of searching a student does at the different stages of the research process that impacts very heavily on their progress without too much pain throught the ISP. Student reflections above are a reason by themselves for doing a GI. The level of metacognition brought to their information process is an end in itself.

And anecdotally

I think using The research river process *(although slightly corny) is very useful, as it allows us to properly plan our research processes and make sure we don't leave our work up until the last minute.*

Student G

I think this is one of the first tasks where all I had to do the night before it was due was read through and edit any weaker parts of my essay and ensure that it all made sense and was written well (as well as the footnoting and bibliography etc) For this I am very proud of myself.

Student G

Once I finished this process, I felt an immense relief and accomplishment, as I had put a great effort into the research and writing of this essay. I particularly liked the notetaking tables that we were suggested to use as they assisted me in taking more concise notes from my sources, as well as the bibliographic details.

Student L (top student)

Anecdotal responses from the second class participating in the GI

There was a second class doing this GI – Ms. Gabi Jory's class. Here are some of their responses. In general, they:

- liked choosing own question
- thought that notetaking grids helped with organisation
- felt that next time they should only have one notetaking grid which is added to as the task progresses
- thought reflection sheets kept them on track
- were not strong on learning journal and peer evaluation.

In general, this year, the peer evaluation section did not work as well as last year. It was probably done too close to the writing of the essay,

and the girls felt their time could have been better spent.

Student comments

I have... developed an analytical voice needed for my historical arguments. I am glad that our processes are being marked as I feel… it motivated me to research and reflect more thoroughly than I have before. I found the notetaking grid forced me into summarising the information in a visual way so I knew I was not plagiarising. When it came to incorporating such arguments into my own essay, it made it easier to distinguish that I was writing my own points. History study centre *and* Questia *I will use in other tasks. I was really proud of my work because it was the most effort I have ever put into the research stage of a project and I felt that it was justified in the end.*

Student 2A

I have become aware of more accurate and relevant information sites such as Questia *and other school subscriptions.*

Student 2B

The notetaking grid made the actual writing of the essay a lot less stressful because I knew I had all the information I needed.

Student 2C

I have also learnt how to properly use citations in my essay and establish a accurate reference list. This will be helpful to use in other tasks to avoid plagiarism.

Student 2D

The notetaking grids were a very useful and organised way to record and summarise information. It also got my bibliographic process out of the way, so when it came time to create my bibliography, it was half done for me already. These grids really kept my information organised and succinct, and gave me a clear view of where I was going and what else I needed to complete.

Student 2E

Major findings

Research aim 1: To measure changes in knowledge as students pass through the stages of the *Information search process*, in terms of the type of statements students make about their topic, such as, whether they make factual statements, explanations or conclusions.

Conclusions

Todd (2006) found a pattern in students' knowledge construction which he described as *an integrative approach where students did not see the task as one of just gathering facts at each stage, rather they manipulated these facts in a number of ways: building explanations, synthesizing facts into more abstract groupings, and consequently reducing the number of statements in their representations, organizing facts in more coherent ways, reflecting of facts to build positional, predictive conclusion statements.*

Most of the students in this small scale research project fit into this pattern, and we should be proud of the move towards deep knowledge exhibited in this project.

Research aim 2: To find out what students find difficult when researching and whether they felt they had learnt how to overcome these difficulties.

Conclusions

There was evidence in our 2008 PDHPE Guided Inquiry to suggest that students only say that a research skill is easy, prior to actually doing it. When they said that locating is easy, this turned out not to be the case when they were actually doing it and looking at complex, biased and sometimes unreliable information. This is reinforced with this study, showing that there were no students who thought they had difficulty locating information at the outset, but it turned out as they progressed that locating the right information for the level of research they were at was a crucial obstacle.

…students need more work on how to search in an appropriate way for the stage they are at…

We can conclude that students need more work on how to search in an appropriate way for the stage they are at, using the concepts of preliminary, exploratory, comprehensive and summary searching that Kuhlthau (2007, p. 84) recommends. Essentially, this means:

- using encyclopedias at initiation
- moving on to books and *Google* at formulation
- moving to the quality information available in online databases at collection
- finishing with a summary search just prior to presentation.

Research aim 3: To gather reflections of our students on the *Information search process*.

Our students' comments are text book reflections of the ISP. It is of great value to students to know that the process they undertake every time they have a research task sees them undergoing the stages of the ISP. It is normal, for example, to feel overloaded and confused at formulation – where students are either creating their own question in an open-ended GI, or in a more closed enquiry, formulating their own *take* on the information. It is, perhaps, self-evident that this small group of students demonstrated a second *dip* in the information process – when they had to synthesise all, and create the final product. But most of them felt much more ready to write their essay than they normally do, because of the preparation that they did beforehand – notetaking grids, ongoing support from teacher and teacher librarian, and lessons on referencing and keeping bibliographic details from the beginning.

Concluding statement: implications for practice at Loreto Kirribilli

Naturally it would not be practical to include all the elements of a open ended GI every time students do tasks. Combined with wiki, however, it is the perfect way to do the quite regular open-ended research tasks that come up in for example, Senior Geography project, Year 11 modern and ancient historical investigations.

In more regular tasks, where the question is given, and the scope of the research is the same for each students, it is clear that there are benefits in teaching students how to search at the various steps in their information process. It also appears that students need more experience in:

- developing their own questions
- dealing with information overload, underload and uneven quality
- working on an ongoing basis from the beginning of a task to force synthesis of information to enable students to make explanations and conclusions.

…there are benefits in teaching students how to search…

As far as this teacher librarian is concerned, accompanying students right through this learning journey, showed me that my resourcing changed in each individual case, mirroring each student's journey to defining question and locating the area of debate. I found the work intense as I helped them with online databases, using our own and the State Library's excellent range, trying to help students locate the perfect piece that might have been missing, for example, the Siege of Malta question which was completely missing the Maltese reaction side, and it took the student and me a very long time to locate the missing links.

It was a very big workload, but to have students begin to understand the role of the library in helping them research was rewarding.

Impact of Guided Inquiry on Sydney schools

A summary follows of developments in some of the participating schools since 2008.

Broughton Anglican College – Alinda Sheerman reports

After last year's staff presentation there has been a lot more interest. I have assisted in the Year 7 classes repeat GI unit but, as it was running at the same time as I was taking Year 8 Science and Year 5/6 for *Murder under the Microscope*, I only guided their work and did not do action research. Year 5 also did an inquiry unit but, as the teachers wanted the students to answer their questions, it was not true Guided Inquiry.

I am doing Guided Inquiry action research with a Year 10 Commerce class. They are doing the optional unit of work called, *Issues in Australia*, and I am getting some remarkable areas of interest and some excellent questions. One girl is looking at State rail infrastructure and possibilities of improved services! She has made an online survey that I shared in the school newsletter.

Frank Pirozzo came for a day of staff development in July, and I have used his *wheel of verbs* and activities to help them compose their questions (Blooms). This is great! I continue to use the scaffolds from the *Ban those bird units* book (Loertscher, Koechlin & Zwaan, 2005) and these are particularly useful for issues.

Again this is all being done using a wiki and the students, being more mature than the Year 7 students with whom I am accustomed to having for GI, have been working hard and not spending huge amounts of time on each other's pages. We will do peer evaluation later so they read a few more issues closely.

The class teacher came with me to the March AIS Day with Ross Todd. We are working so well together. He read up on the theory, followed through with planning, and then set up and runs the wiki himself. He taught the previous unit of work on a wiki to get students used to them before they had to tackle GI at the same time. He actually set a few of the scaffolds as minor assessments, which really got the students moving with background information, etc. We are up to the collection stage and moving along quite well.

A lot more teachers are using wikis now after seeing me work with them. They then show their peers too. Almost every day a teacher asks for help to set up a wiki or a blog and things are really moving along well as far as integration of technology. I am constantly overwhelmed with the workload. Although, I have to admit I am enjoying it!

Loreto Kirribilli – Lee FitzGerald reports

Guided Inquiry elements have been incorporated into many tasks, across the curriculum – for example, structured notetaking, scaffolds to assist with synthesis of information, bibliographic and citation scaffolds, and explicit teaching of diffierent types of searching at different stages of the process.

Full, open-ended guided inquiries have been running over the last three years in History, with overwhelmingly positive response from students.

Teachers have recognised, in every subject, that students need support through the various stages of research. They realise that elements of choice need to be applied to as many tasks as possible, that the research question needs to higher-order, that top quality resources are needed, and that students need help with notetaking, synthesising, referencing, and creating their final product.

Students are now much more aware of process in their tasks and, to a greater or lesser extent, appreciate the scaffolding of their tasks throughout the years. They value expressing their difficulties and their growing knowledge of their topics, and the feedback available to them from teachers and teacher librarians.

Teacher librarians have always known the value of collaboration to create inquiry units, and to work alongside teachers to ensure students have a successful research experience. We are delighted that GI has given us the means to do this is an accepted, and relatively simple way.

Queenwood – Heather Voskuyl reports

We are using *Libguides* to deliver point of need assistance to students (at home or at school). We started small with Year 7 History inquiry, but this is growing steadily. This is my favourite tool. We can scaffold the process of completing a task, while focussing on particular skills, and explicitly link it to the assessment criteria.

For our IB girls we run an incursion (getting a question, time management, drafting, critical reading, critical literacy & referencing). Content of the day is divided into two parts:
- creating a response process
- researching your response.

This is supported by a the research wiki.

Roseville College – Jeanette Harkness reports

We have come a long way with our *Guided Inquiry* since 2008. This year we are working with Year 9 History for the third year, with three classes. The History department say they already have anecdotal evidence that the Year 10 and Year 11 students are far better prepared for their independent research project because of the GI project they did in Year 9.

We have begun working with Year 9 Commerce on a GI project running for 15 weeks with three classes. This time period will give us the opportunity to run classes on Blooms questioning at the exploration stage of the unit. The overall topic area is crime.

Both the above are assessment tasks where the process is half (Commerce) or one third (History) of the total mark.

For both, Denise and I will run the full SLIM assessment and each girl's progress in terms of interest, number of facts, and number of explanations and conclusions will be graphed and used as normative assessment.

As a result of the GI success here, the library now has one period per cycle for all four Year 7 classes. All lessons work towards a GI unit for Semester 2 which is produced on a class wiki. Results will be graphed for assessment.

Finally, I have been asked to join a new committee, the *Academic Care Committee*. The benefits of GI – higher-order thinking, student engagement, creativity, assessment for learning, differentiation and the National Curriculum – are all clear, and they want more. The committee is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Professional Learning and the Director of Teaching and Learning. We have our first meeting tomorrow.

We are pushed to the limit but it is highly satisfying. We feel so much more confident with it all now.

Caddies Creek Public School – Jenny Scheffers reports

This year (2010), I trialled GI with students designing their own research questions. Up until this stage, we had been using webquests as the basis of our GI units.

I visited Christina Higgins, Santa Sabina Junior School, who very kindly shared her ideas and experiences. Last term I took the big plunge and trialled a Year 4 Guided Inquiry unit (five classes) based on the early Australian explorers. It was amazingly successful! The students could construct their focus question and supporting contributing questions very well. I used one class as a case study and collated their *Skinny surveys* (an adaptation of SLIM Toolkit).

Although the students' final presentations were not very in-depth, their survey and journal comments certainly reflected Kuhlthau's ISP roller coaster of emotions and a few very higher-order quotes from some students. The research journey was amazing for all students.

We plan to do similar units in the future, that is, move beyond webquests, and have students design their own questions.

Santa Sabina – Helen Schutz reports

This is what we are doing in a nutshell.
- Year 6 major interest project, plus one other project per term
- Year 7 History (Roman Britain)
- Year 7 integrated project – one per term
- Year 8 History – one per semester (NZ and modern world study)
- Year 8 PDHPE
- Year 9 PDHPE
- Year 10 English
- Year 11 SGP, HIP
- Year 12 Society and Culture.

All of the above are not single classes but whole year groups! We are not analysing all the data, although I have a stack on my desk from Year 6 at the moment. I just do not have time to do it for all. I am just concentrating on building up interest at this stage.

St. Luke's Grammar School – Alicia Broadbent reports

At St Luke's, we have incorporated GI into two independent research tasks for Science and History. The History research task was choosing an event in Modern History, creating a question and researching. This was with Year 9. The same group of students in Year 10 then used GI in a Science research task. It was interesting to see the students' progress.

The teachers have taken elements of GI and are now incorporating them into their assessment tasks.

St Paul's Grammar School – Cathy Hill reports

How does Guided Inquiry work with gifted and talented students and IB program?

For a number of years I have been working with Yvonne Hammer (Director of Gifted Education & Independent Learning) on an aspect of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years program – *Approaches to learning* (ATL) – which looks at the following questions:

- How do I learn best?
- How do I know?
- How do I communicate my understandings?

In looking at these questions, ATL observes students developing:

- organisational skills
- information literacy
- collaborative skills
- problem solving
- reflection.

In attempting to develop the school approach to learning, models were investigated using the resource *Teaching models in education of the gifted* (Maker & Schiever 2006, pp. 4–11). When discussing the curricula for gifted students, Maker and Schiever suggest models of teaching and learning for gifted students should allow for:

Content modification through:	Process modifications through:	Product modification through:
• abstractness • complexity • variety • organisation • study of people • study of methods.	• higher levels of thinking • open-endedness • discovery • evidence of reasoning • freedom of choice • group interaction • pacing & variety.	• real problems • real audiences • transformation • variety • self-select format • appropriate evaluation • learning environment modifications • learner centred • student independence • open environment • acceptance – understand student ideas, timing of value judgements, evaluation not judgement • complexity • varied groupings • flexibility • movement in & out of the classroom environment.

While Maker and Schiever (2006) provides many models, it was felt that Kuhlthau's *Model for the information search process* covered all the above providing a framework for intervention in the investigative process to support highly able students. The affective domain of this model is especially important and is a powerful tool in allowing students to move on.

The key to St Paul's Grammar School's experiences with GI (and not just with gifted and talented students) has been the framing and reframing of questions as the result of immersion in the literature of selected fields of inquiry, along with students being able to determine the final product or form of communication.

Along with this, the IB program required integration of what it calls the *learner profile* through all units of work. The *learner profile* outlines the character of IB learners to be:

- inquirers
- knowledgeable
- thinkers
- communicators
- principled
- open-minded
- caring
- risk-takers
- balanced
- reflective.

I feel, as do the other teachers who worked with Years 7 and 8 on the 2008 *Guided Inquiry* Project, that the students involved displayed all the above qualities. They just happen when working with GI. They do not have to be forced.

In conclusion

Since the 2008 project, participating schools have benefited from Guided Inquiry both in acceptance of its inclusion into curriculum and of the findings from the project in terms of students' construction of knowledge and information behaviour. For teacher librarians in these schools, inclusion of GI methods in the tasks of students has become commonplace. This has provided us with a means of ensuring that the information literacy skills of students are addressed in a systematic way, as well as giving us opportunities for small scale action research any time the reflection sheets synonymous with GI are used.

All of us have seen our workload increase exponentially, but it is exciting to report that, after a long time of trying to introduce ideas of collaboration, CPPT, and information literacy into schools that remain somewhat baffled, GI provides this opportunity. It is intricately woven into the fabric of tasks in schools and, as such, cannot be seen as an add-on, or slightly peculiar *librarian* thing.

Over the years, all teacher librarians have developed the kinds of scaffolds now re-emerging and freshened up for use in GI units. They really are not new. What is new is the context in which we can place them. The context is the *Information search process*, which

allows students to become aware of their own processes and allows teachers and teacher librarians to frame the task, and to bring together in a meaningful way scaffolds which we might have used in an unconnected way in the past. New also, and central to the success of Guided Inquiry, is the feedback sought from students thoughout their process, which allows teachers and teacher librarians to frame individual and group interventions, and which forms the basis for ongoing evidence based practice. It is simple, it works, and is keeping us all busier than we have ever been before.

Appendix 1: *The research river*

The research river: Formulation

It is only after you've researched widely, navigated the flood of information that you feel strong and confident.

In the process, some of the water is left behind, as you work through the process of formulating your enquiry question.

After this sifting process, you are streaming ahead to the sea. You feel confident and focused now.

Lee FitzGerald, Loreto Kirribilli, November 18th, 2010

The research river: Collection

- The flow of the river has been controlled.
- You are now in charge of the information
- You are sorting it, controlling it, shaping it to answer your question.
- Use **Comprehensive Searching: Pertinent not just relevant** – Questia/ Online databases.
- Use and adjust notetaking grids.
- Keep quotes for your essay
- Keep bibliographic details.

Lee FitzGerald, Loreto Kirribilli, November 18th, 2010

The research river: Presentation

Finally, as you approach your destination, you may be faced with choices [What exactly is the shape of my essay? How can I shape all my information into an argument?] Which way will your research river flow to the sea?

Summary searching: Go back and check you've covered all angles.

Do I _really_ have to do a bibliography? Footnotes? In-text citation?

The Research river: Assessment

- You've conquered the raging Information River! You have reached the calm sea, peaceful and happy with yourself.

- Or maybe there's a little hole back in that old dam you might need to fix next time...

The research river PowerPoint *was created by Lee FitzGerald, Loreto Kirribili, 18 November 2010*

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Are you including e-books in your school library collection for teachers and students? See the e-resources article and FAQs from *Scan* 29(4), and reviews of e-books in every *Scan* <www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/ schoollibraries/index.htm>. See page 48.

A report on *Murder under the Microscope*: four years of successful student online investigations

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Research columns

Murder under the Microscope is an annual, online, educational game in which teams of students compete to solve an ecological mystery 'crime'. Each year the crime is different. Clues to the eco-mystery crime are progressively delivered via a multimedia web interface, including online communications with science experts. Over the six week period of the game, the teams become immersed in a battle of wits to be the first to correctly identify the specific *victim*, *villain* and *crime site*. Typical *victims* are endangered animals, typical *villains* are ecological pests or contaminants, and typical *crime sites* are ecologically sensitive environments.

Introduction

This paper is a report on four annual evaluations of the online, ecological mystery game, *Murder under the Microscope* (MuM). Questionnaires and structured interview sessions with teachers and school students were analysed to determine the success of student engagement and the depth of learning required by curriculum standards. The findings have been used to isolate features of the program that account for student engagement and deep learning. The features that were isolated include problem-based learning, team work and investigative tasks. The features result from a constructivist learning approach to using technology in education with a strong focus on 21st century skills. The data and analysis strongly indicate that the model used in MuM provides a powerful model for teaching, and for helping young learners to maximise their learning potential, in the 21st century.

Data was gathered from 2007 to 2010, through:

- students' and teachers' online questionnaires
- statistical data from participation rates and numbers
- website usage, Google Analytics statistics
- teachers' and students' emails sent to game producers
- structured interviews with students
- structured interviews with teachers
- debrief interviews with the producers of MuM.

Teacher and student reflections

A strong theme that quickly emerged from evaluations over the four years was the high engagement of students in their learning. Each year, from 2007 to 2010, teachers and students were asked to reflect on their participation in the game in online surveys and interview sessions.

Teachers typically said they liked MuM because their students became highly engaged in it and therefore more connected to the content of the curriculum, more willing to learn concepts and skills deeply.

Many teachers claimed that the enthusiasm of their students actually spilled over into other classroom activities and provided a memorable experience.

In 2010, Sara, a teacher involved in MuM wrote,

> *My class is totally addicted to this game, as am I! We are even emailing each other at night to continue to solve the clues.*

Students also demonstrated their enthusiasm for the game in their survey responses and unsolicited emails to the MuM producers. An email from a student, who completed MuM in 2008, indicates their eagerness to participate again in early 2009:

> *im such a big huge fan I love the thought of making a thing like this I was playing 4 cannington comunity college last yr and it was hell fun I wanted to do this yr but im yr8 now im tooooooooo old xoxoxoxo *#**

Many teachers who participated in MuM suspected that the engagement in learning during MuM would enable their students to become more ecologically informed and optimistic. In fact, changing behaviour as a result of participation in the MuM 2010 was reported by the majority of the students (66%). Students' comments in 2010 included:

> *[MuM] Made us realise that some of the little things we do have a bad affect on the environment.*

> *I have started turning off lights at my house and unused appliances.*

Thinking about the Weedy sea dragon reminds me to turn them off.

More quotations are included in the appendices.

Do students learn from playing MuM?

In each year of implementation from 2007 to 2010, 91% of teachers answered *Yes* to the question, *Does MuM support your students learning the targeted syllabus outcomes?* Teachers also identified additional learning benefits beyond the curriculum (Figure 1).

Providing opportunities for investigative research was consistently ranked as the highest additional benefit by the surveyed teachers from 2007 to 2009. When asked about other benefits not listed here, teachers typically listed *real-life learning* and *higher-order thinking skills* as additional benefits.

Participation rates and website usage

Data on participation rates supports the teachers' positive feedback. In 2009, MuM was played in 16% of all schools in the state of New South Wales. The vast majority of surveyed teachers and students indicated that MuM need not be changed as it is already a high quality
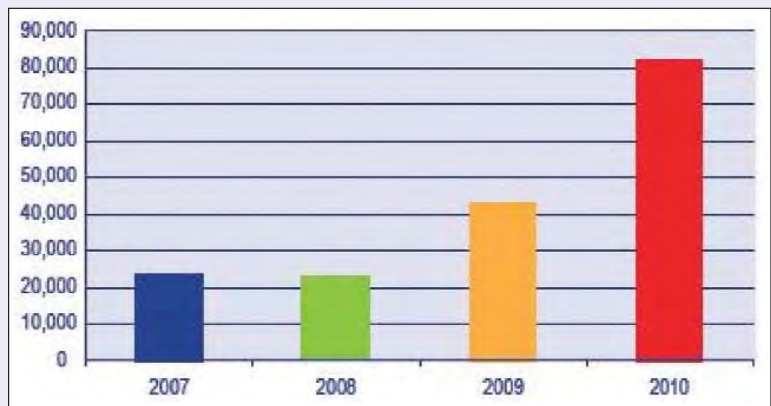
Figure 2: The number of unique visitors to the MuM website over the years 2007 to 2010

educational program. Furthermore, 97.1% of teachers and 80.6% of students indicated they would like to have programs like MuM for other subjects. See samples of general student and teacher comments from the online surveys in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Significantly, the online survey reported that 84.9% of teachers and 73.3% of students accessed the site from home as well as school, further indicating the game's popularity, penetration and accessibility.

The data on website usage indicates that the upward trend of MuM will continue (Figure 2). The number of unique visitors during the game period in 2010 was 81 862, a significant increase from 2009 (43 269), and 2008 (22 250).

The data also shows that the proportion of teachers who are new or experienced MuM users is approximately 50:50. This indicates that the past users return, while each year there is a healthy uptake amongst teachers new to the program.

Does the literature explain the growing popularity of MuM?

How does MuM fit into current thinking on definitions of games-based learning?

What are the benefits of games-based learning in the classroom?

Are teachers ready to incorporate games-based learning into the classroom?

According to Derryberry (2006), games have a story or purpose, rules, graphical environment, interactivity and a sense of challenge or competition. In keeping with this definition, MuM *is* a game because it has:

- a scenario of the ecological mystery crime
- a set of rules about how and when to compete
- a website that creates a graphical, interactive environment
- teams of students that compete against others to find the answer to the mystery.

Many of the current researchers (de Freitas, 2006; Michael & Chen, 2006; Ulicsak & Wright, 2010) use the term *serious games* as a way of
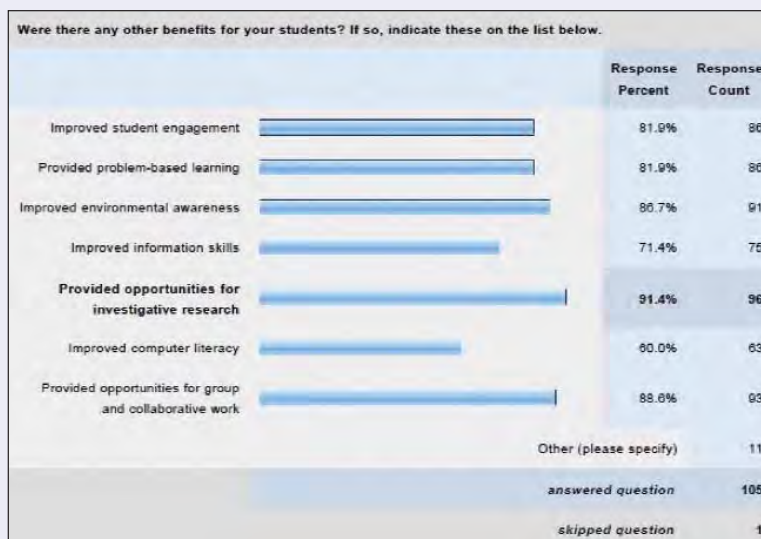
Figure 1 Teachers' responses to survey question, Were there any other benefits (in addition to the benefit of providing support for your curriculum) for your students?

differentiating between games for pure entertainment and other games that help people learn skills. MuM fits into this definition because it helps students to develop skills rather than being designed for entertainment only.

The *Horizon report: 2010 K–12 edition* (Johnson, and others, 2010) offers some other parameters about games-based learning, into which MuM fits. The Report claims that educational games can be grouped into three main categories:

- games that are not digital
- games that are digital but not collaborative
- collaborative digital games.

The third category – collaborative digital games – includes open-ended, challenge-based and truly collaborative games, and often occur in Massively Multiplay Online (MMO) forms. This is the group into which MuM is aligned. Each team competes against other teams, while team members collaborate to advantage their team.

The report claims that collaborative digital games lend themselves well to curricular content, as they require students to discover and construct knowledge in order to solve problems. Students are required to draw on skills for research, writing, collaboration, problem solving, leadership, digital literacy and media making. According to the *Horizon report: 2010 K–12 edition*, when games like these are embedded in the curriculum they enable the student to learn how to learn – mastering and truly owning the subject matter.

> *They are challenging to design well, but the results can be transformative.*
>
> Johnson, and others (2010, p. 3)

The report predicts that the use of this category of games will dramatically rise in the next two to three years.

In their literature review on games in education, Ulicsak and Wright (2010) maintain that the major criterion for a teacher to use a game is its ability to make the life of the teacher easier. To make this judgement, teachers need to assess whether the game will enhance students' learning. Teachers need to be convinced that their students will learn more by completing the game than by other methods.

Ulicsak and Wright highlight the discrepancy between the dramatically increased use of serious games for training within the business community and the seemingly slow uptake in the educational system. They propose several reasons:

- *Are they rarely used because they are not yet fit for purpose?*
- *Is it to do with the method of teaching in schools …quality of games and relationship to the curriculum?*
- *Or the ability and knowledge of the teacher?*

So, why is MuM growing in popularity?

If the current literature points to a reluctance of educational systems to use games, why then is MuM growing in popularity and usage?

The interview and survey responses of the teachers indicate that the majority of teachers who use MuM in the classroom clearly see its learning benefits, and become steadfast adopters of it as part of their annual teaching program.

The data on MuM, therefore, supports Ulicsak and Wright's proposition that teachers will use games when the learning benefits for students are clearly visible and relevant to the curriculum. How then do teachers make that judgement?

It seems that the majority of teachers who have used MuM in their classroom decided to do so upon a

recommendation from a teacher or principal. The survey and interview responses show that teachers who are supported by, and communicate with, other teachers using MuM are more likely to try it and to have a positive experience with it, especially the first time around. In fact, the data shows that the most common way a teacher comes into contact with MuM is through a colleague, supporting the view that MuM thrives in a collegial environment.

This is reflected in the way in which most teachers find out about MuM. According to the survey responses over the four-year period, the majority of participants (51%) find out about MuM through a colleague. The other ways in which teachers become involved with it can be grouped into five main categories, ranked 1 to 5, with 1 being the most commonly cited.

1. participated previously
2. searching on the internet for innovative resources, competitions, Gifted and Talented programs
3. word of mouth
4. my child did it at her/his school
5. CLI website.

Role of the teacher

Most of the teachers surveyed said they enjoyed their classroom teaching while participating in MuM because it enabled their students to be actively involved in finding, selecting and using information. They reported that the students become self-directed. In fact, MuM is predicated on the teacher becoming a facilitator, because the teacher does not have the answers. The game is designed around a mystery to which no one knows the answer until the end of the game.

The feedback from the interviews shows that teachers who are practised in the role of facilitator quickly become immersed in MuM. Others, who were not used to the role of facilitator, reported that they learnt how to take on the role of facilitator and *do* MuM from their colleagues. They also

suggested that when they realised there is no need for them to know the answer to the mystery before the students do, they adjust well to learning with the students. Some teachers reported that, having experienced MuM, they are now more skilled in the role as facilitator or guide, rather than as sage the on the stage or the keeper of knowledge.

This facet of MuM was also documented during 2007 in some video footage of students and their teacher working on MuM. During classroom interaction with students, the teacher realised, on camera, that there was no need for him to know the answer to the mystery; he was working with the students as a team. The video is part of a series of resources designed to help teachers implement the game. They are available on the website at <www.microscope.edu.au/Public/Static/howtoplay.aspx>. Watch *The investigation* video at 6:00 to 6:51. The teacher exclaims, *The free-floating fern just – free-floating fern! Ah!*

Students also commented on the role of the teacher when they were all learning together. As one student put it:

> *MuM is different to many other projects because our teachers didn't know the answers.*

Most teachers reported that, despite not having the answers up front, they could actually draw on their existing repertoire of teaching practices, such as class and group discussion, students presenting their findings, negotiating, and reaching consensus.

> *...I love that the kids need to access all kinds of information, listening visual and reading skills are all necessary... I am seeing such wonderful discussions and skills being used...learning so much about internet researching, skimming and scanning information and summarising facts. They each have an investigation file which includes a clues note page. It is so neat to see them all taking notes from each*

other and from the clues and then referring to them when they ask questions and present their ideas. They are like real life mini investigators. There is some really exciting learning happening in our room at the moment. Thanks again for providing such a fun and high quality educational experience.

<div align="right">Amy (2010)</div>

It appears then that teachers can be ready adopters of games-based learning when:

- the learning benefits and links to curriculum are clear
- there is collegial support
- teachers can draw upon their existing repertoire of teaching practices.

These factors seem to work in tandem, piggy backing onto each other to enable the uptake of games-based learning. They are like the cogs in the same wheel, fitting and working together, a power house of energy and dynamism that manifests itself in the classroom.

What do the students say?

When students were asked to identify the benefits for their own learning, they typically listed:

- improved skills for research
- learning about animals and plants
- learning how to solve problems
- becoming more aware of the environment.

Some students' comments allude to a heightened sense of critical awareness, *I now look more closely into what people say and do*, and the idea of cause and effect in ecosystems.

When students were asked about what they enjoyed the most, the predominant response was *figuring out the mystery*. The other features that students commented on were grouped into the following list. The list is not hierarchical.

1. interactive video and graphical interface
2. time-released clue drop via video episodes

3. characters based on everyday people
4. a strong episodic narrative
5. presentation of real world issues
6. conflicting evidence and information
7. opportunities for self-directed learning
8. team-based learning
9. 24/7 web presence
10. connection with real expert scientists to answer their questions.

The list was not a surprise to the designers of MuM. In regard to features 1, 7 and 9, the MuM interface is deliberately highly visual and interactive, with multiple forms of data and entry points, resonating well with contemporary mobile and video communication devices and the Net Generation's desire for *experiential learning*, *working in teams and social software* (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005, p. 1.4).

To create the metaphor and drama of the *murder* reported in features 2 and 3, the website is programmed to roll out a series of timed and synchronised videos and messages, day by day and even hour by hour in the last stages of the game. This creates excitement and an anticipation to find out the answer to the mystery. The designers intended that the students use the website to access up-to-date reports in video format, and messages from the case coordinator, crime site investigator and forensic scientist. The student can access any of these data sources in the order and format of their choice.

With regard to features 3 and 4, the characters, script, narrative and setting of MuM are typical of popular Australian, teenage television. The characters in the website exist in a virtual world and speak to one another, as well as to the students. The crime site investigator reports from the crime site and interviews other characters to help solve the case. These videos depict a drama unfolding at the crime site (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Danno, the crime site investigator and Zahara, the case coordinator

What surprised and, in some cases, delighted the designers and producers of MuM, is that many of the students referred to or spoke about the website characters as though they were real life people. Teachers also reported that most students believed in the authenticity of the narrative and characters.

Even though the setting and characters of the MuM game are fictitious, the environmental problem portrayed in the scenario is based on factual evidence of environmental science. This is another element that proves to engage students, as cited in feature 5. When asked how MuM is different to other ways of learning, one student remarked:

> *It's way, way cooler… you actually feel like you're doing a real life task at any time, unlike other projects.*

The designers of MuM deliberately present conflicting information during the roll out of clues, as in feature 6. The students are compelled to evaluate their findings and draw conclusions in order to achieve their goal. Some parts of their investigation may appear to be inconclusive but this adds to the excitement. As the date for the end of the game draws close, the quest to solve the problem gathers momentum.

In regard to feature 8, the mystery in MuM is far too big for students to solve individually. They must share their knowledge, in a similar manner to investigators on TV crime shows, to solve the case. They also consult with a range of experts in various fields, as in feature 8.

The producers of MuM maintain that the list of features identified by the students is a result of their connections with a learning design that is based on:

- a constructivist approach to learning
- the *Quality Teaching* elements of deep knowledge and understanding, problematic knowledge, knowledge integration, connectedness, narrative, student direction
- a focus on 21st century skills.

21st century skills

It is widely accepted that accessing information, and creating knowledge and understanding around concept are among the important skills for the 21st century. Creating knowledge includes synthesising a wide range of information from numerous different resources and resource types.

The MuM program uses this process through development of real life problem-solving tasks. In MUM, the endpoint in learning has been moved from having static knowledge to one where the students develop a deep understanding of the ideas and concepts underpinning their world view.

Skills in finding, evaluating and utilising information, collaboration, investigation, problem-solving, computer literacy and information management are central 21st century skills and core to successful completion of *Murder under the Microscope*.

As an essentially democratic, internet-based experience, MuM reaches a wide cross-section of the community, including areas with high levels of Indigenous students and

students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Surveys show that teachers successfully used MuM both with gifted and talented and low-achieving students, indicating its ability to challenge a broad range of students.

An external evaluation of 2009 MuM (Treadwell, 2009) reported:

> *What the Centre for Learning Innovation is opening up via the* Murder under the Microscope *program is the opportunity to address the issue for the explicit teaching of the [21st century] competencies in order to enable a greater degree of success in the MuM program. The results of the one-on-one interviews showed quite clearly that almost all teachers saw the need for the explicit teaching of the competencies in order for the students to have success in real life problem solving.* Murder under the Microscope (MuM) *program provides teachers with a rich, inquiry learning program where students are able to develop these competencies. The levels of engagement in the MuM program are quite extraordinary when compared to engagement in the normal classroom program.*
>
> *This is not a reflection of generally poor teaching practice but rather it highlights the possible rich and complex results of teaching and learning if programs like this are resourced.*

The producers of MuM have met the challenge of designing a game well, the results of which have been transformative (Johnson, 2010). Given that the technology to produce and deliver virtual environments is becoming increasingly widespread, and the popularity of MuM is growing, the *Horizon report: 2010 K–12 edition's* prediction about the rise in Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) in the classroom may be proven true.

Teachers can register for the 2011 game at <www.microscope.edu.au>.

How did MuM help to improve your skills and knowledge?		Response Count
		228
	answered question	228
	skipped question	15

	Response Text	
1	Improved our methods of investigation and research. We also learnt quite a bit about catchments and maintaining their health.	Jun 5, 2009 1:25 AM
2	We now know that there are results from our behaviour which are effecting insects and other wildlife; Learn problem solving skills within class members; Open up tabs during online during research; new research skills and how to use information; has given us awareness of what is happening in the world around us	Jun 5, 2009 2:07 AM
3	i learnt about animals and how important they are in our environment.	Jun 5, 2009 4:10 AM
4	keeping up researching clues, being a slueth	Jun 5, 2009 4:10 AM
5	i now look more closely into what people do and say.	Jun 5, 2009 4:11 AM
6	it helped me understand problems that our world today are facing. through MuM i have discovered knowledge and skills that i would not normally learn in the classroom.	Jun 5, 2009 4:12 AM
7	MuM taught me a lot that I didn't know about certain crime sites, villans and victims. It also improved my problem solving skills, as for this task you really had to think.	Jun 5, 2009 4:12 AM

A sample of students' responses to the question, *How did MuM help to improve your skills and knowledge?*

Appendix 2: A sample of teachers' general comments in 2009

The students were highly engaged in this program and it provided them with some excellent skills in researching, as it was about something they actually wanted to do. Can't wait til next year!	Jun 9, 2009 2:29 AM
A great program. Suits my teaching style. the students engaged and outside discussion is fantastic. the students only have 2 class hours per week as we run this as an extension program. but in a class situation it sould be a whole integrated unit of work! Any chance of changing the time becuase of the NAPLAN testing being right in the middle of the program? Keep up the great work!	Jun 9, 2009 3:05 AM
Fanastic project. Whole class was engaged especially the lower achievers!!! Thanks!!	Jun 9, 2009 3:06 AM
Every year I get Year 6 children involved in this project I am amazed at the quality of learning that evolves. Keep up the great work my kids and I loved it!!	Jun 9, 2009 10:20 AM
Fantastic once again. thoroughly enjoyed by teacher and students.	Jun 9, 2009 10:24 AM
Have recommended this project to other staff members as I used for our Talented and Gifted students, I believe it could be beneficial for all students Year 4 and up. Thankyou	Jun 25, 2009 1:14 AM
It is good to have the framework and resources supplied so teacher can focus on the feedback, support and development of collaboration and skills.	Jun 25, 2009 3:26 AM
MuM is one of the most engaging competitions that is available to students. All of my students were excited each day when we took part in MuM. Towards the end they even gave up their recess and lunch times to work. They students in Year 5 are already talking about taking part next year. Producing a video of the event was also of benefit.	Jun 26, 2009 2:36 AM

Appendix 3: A sample of teachers' comments on the MuM 2010 program

An extremely engaging, worthwhile project.

It's a fantastic learning tool – motivating, exciting and relevant.

Absolutely! I have used the program in the past, I love it, my children love it and I love the open-ended problem solving. I also enjoy the fact that the teachers don't know the answer so we are just as engaged as the students.

I have never seen a group of students so immersed in their learning! It taught them to take responsibility for their learning and to work collaboratively with others.

They were riveted! Loved it and want to do another one.

The engagement of students has been reported by both the independent report and the Teachers' survey.

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e-books and library management

As a taster of the digital world of e-books, *Links4Learning* (L4L) in the *OASIS Web Enquiry* (or *My Library*) browser, now includes some free e-books.

SCIS catalogue records for these e-book L4L titles are included in a new download option in <H1> SCIS Download <G3> Load Special Orders. See the latest *OASIS release notes* for details. For these links the location is L4L, as it is a centrally provided specialist collection. The e-books also have the subject heading, E-books, to assist searching.

See the e-resources article and FAQs from *Scan* 29(4), and reviews of e-books in every *Scan* <www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/schoollibraries/index.htm>.

Literacy and numeracy demands in Science and Technology K–6

Harry Vassila, Senior Curriculum Advisor Science and Technology K–6, Curriculum K–12, identifies some of the literacy and numeracy demands of the *Science and Technology K–6 syllabus*, and showcases three resources to support teachers to address these demands.

Figure 1 Science and Technology K–6: Literacy and Numeracy demands*, for Stage 1 to Stage 3 are available at <www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/primary/ scitech/teach/>*

Science and Technology K–6 offers many opportunities to explicitly address literacy and numeracy skills. To help teachers use science and technology contexts to address literacy and numeracy, a set of three books has been developed by Curriculum K–12 Directorate (Figure 1). These books outline the Stage expectations and progression of learning for common literacy and numeracy tasks addressed by students in primary school.

The books, *Science and Technology K–6: Literacy and Numeracy demands*, have been developed for Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 teachers. Together they outline the progression of learning for items such as graphs, tables and text types. The books have been extensively mapped to the relevant NSW syllabus documents including English, Mathematics, and Science and Technology, as well as to the K–10 Mathematic continuum and the NSW Literacy continuum. Each book

includes Stage expectations and annotated student work samples.

In Science and Technology students are often asked to:

- make decisions about measuring and collecting data
- record, organise, display and interpret data
- recount their investigations or design processes
- describe changes to, or differences between phenomena they have observed
- report to others using factual texts, e.g. information reports, procedural recounts, explanations
- communicate findings in a scientific way
- develop design concepts through drawing, modelling and labelling
- produce and interpret detailed labelled drawings
- communicate what has been learnt by choosing from a variety of media, tools and forms.

Many teachers are able to identify literacy and numeracy opportunities in science and technology but struggle in identifying the appropriate syllabus expectations for the conceptual understandings of their students. Often teachers have different expectations of the same task for different key learning areas.

Graphs are a very good example of this issue. In a scientific investigation
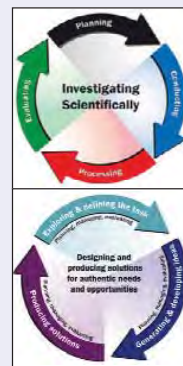
students could be asked to collect data for analysis, and create a graph. What type of graphs are Stage 2 students expected to produce? To answer the question teachers need to consider the type of data that has been collected and refer to the appropriate syllabus document.

The NSW *Science and Technology K–6 syllabus* does not specify the expectations for graphing for Stage 2 students or for any other Stage of learning. Teachers need to look across syllabus documents to identify the appropriate standard. The Mathematics K–6 syllabus and support documents describe the expectation for graphs for stage 2 students as:

- construct vertical and horizontal column and picture graphs, using 1:1 correspondence
- include graph features: title, axes labels, equal spaces on axes
- pose questions to obtain information from graphs

- apply multiple representations of data e.g. table, picture, column graphs and justify which is the most appropriate
- interpret data, making complex comparisons.

Figure 2 is an annotated example of a Stage 2 graph as described in Stage 2 *Science and Technology K–6: Literacy and Numeracy demand*s.

Each book should also assist teachers' understanding of the essential processes of investigating scientifically and designing and making for each Stage of schooling. The aspects of the process have been unpacked, and descriptions are included, of the suggested Stage-appropriate activities students are expected to be able to complete. A list of helpful teaching strategies is also included.
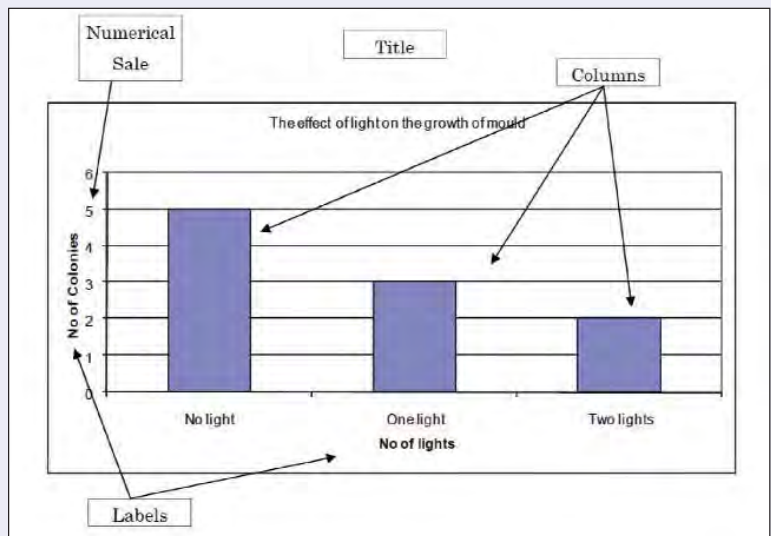
Figure 2 annotated example of a Stage 2 graph

The books are available for download from the *Curriculum Support* website <www.curriculumsupport.education. nsw.gov.au/primary/scitech/teach/>.

The table below outlines the developmental sequence of graphs from Stage 1 to Stage 3 as described in *Science and Technology K–6: Literacy and Numeracy demand*s.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
- gathers and records data using tally marks or concrete materials e.g. blocks, coloured squares - uses symbols to represent objects/ pictures, using 1:1 correspondence - constructs picture/column graphs - includes graph features: baseline, equal spacing, same size symbol - interprets graphs e.g. compare using words, numbers - uses technology to construct picture graphs.	- constructs vertical and horizontal column and picture graphs, using 1:1 correspondence - includes graph features: title, axes labels, equal spaces on axes - uses technology to generate graphs - poses questions to obtain information from graphs - applies multiple representations of data e.g. table, picture, column graphs. justifying most appropriate - devises questions to obtain information from graphs and tables - interprets data, making more complex comparisons.	- calculates and uses 'mean' of data - devises questions to obtain information from graphs and tables - organises information from surveys in databases - uses spreadsheets to display tables and generate graphs - demonstrates evidence of ability to use a variety of graphs - explains rationale for graph choice - constructs picture and column graphs: scale and key, construction, interpretation using key/scale - constructs line graphs: naming and labelling of axes, construction to represent continuous change, vertical axis scale, interpreting using scales on axes - constructs divided bar graphs: graph name, category name for each section, interpretation of data, generalisingand predicting - reads and interprets sector (pie) graph, stating absolute quantities for $^1/_2$ or $^1/_4$ segments or from relative size of segments - includes graph features: many-to-one correspondence - analyses data to suggest possible trends and explanations - identifies misleading information.

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TaLe4Students: a resource discovery service for students

Kevin O'Gorman, Project Officer, *Teaching and Learning exchange (TaLe)*, introduces *TaLe4Students*, a new search and save resource discovery service for secondary students.

What is *TaLe*?

TaLe <www.tale.edu.au> and *TaLe4Students* are online services of the NSW Department of Education and Training for teachers and students in NSW public schools and TAFE.

This year the *Teaching and Learning exchange (TaLe)* launched a new resource discovery service for students in Years 7 to 12. With *TaLe4Students*, secondary school students can find and access more than 5000 resources especially selected to assist with: assignments, essays and general study.

With a simple uncluttered interface, *TaLe4Students* (Figure 1) is especially suited for use on DER – NSW laptops. Students are able to conduct simple keyword searches that can be filtered to show only resources for particular year groups or expanded to search *Google* and *Wikipedia* with a single click. Using *TaLe4Students*, students can search for resources themselves

Figure 1 Tale4Students *home page*
<www.tale.edu.au/TaLe4Students>

and also retrieve resources suggested by their teachers with the aid of save codes.

Although *TaLe4Students* was created to support secondary students, it is open to primary teachers and students who will find resources for Stage 3 and upwards. Save codes can be used to access resources for earlier stages.

TaLe4Students is designed to be used with minimal instruction. It contains a number of aids to support student use.

Where will I find *TaLe4Students*?

Teachers and students will find links to *TaLe4Students* on:

TaLe home page
DET portal page
<www.tale.edu.au/TaLe4Students>

Students trying to login to *TaLe* will be automatically directed to *TaLe4Students*.

For example:

- short focused tips are displayed the first three times a student logs in. These can be easily viewed again if needed.
- contextual help prompts are displayed for many actions
- other support information is available from the Help link in the top menu.

With its larger collection of 30 000 resources and sophisticated tools, *TaLe* will continue to be the main access point for teaching and professional learning resources. *TaLe* and *TaLe4Students* are complementary services. Teachers will need to use *TaLe* to obtain save codes and create resource lists for using with *TaLe4Students*.

Finding resources

TaLe4Students is a good starting point for individual or group research activities, providing opportunities for student

to practise basic search skills with a curated set of resources. It can be readily used with an interactive whiteboard or projector for whole class activities.

Search is simply accomplished by entering some keywords for the topic and hitting the Go button. As a query is typed into the search box any search queries that match the keywords are shown (Figure 2).
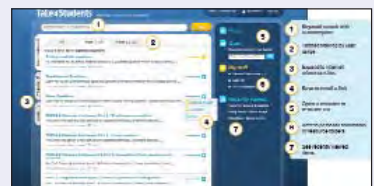
Figure 2 Searching in TaLe4Students

A results list for the first ten items is displayed with the option to display 20 or 50 items at a time. These results can be further refined by selecting either the Year 7–10 or Year 11–12 tabs. Where no relevant resources are discovered the search can be broadened to see *Wikipedia* and *Google* entries that match the keywords by clicking on one of the side tab. The safe search filter is applied to this operation.

Each result title is a direct link to the resource whether it is an intranet or internet item. This opens in the same window as *TaLe4students* so the browser back button is still needed to return to the search page. Resource records are kept to three lines to support easy scanning. An expansion link (…) is provided for descriptions for further detail. As time progresses, the language of these descriptions will be refined to better suit the audience. Results are linked only to online versions of multimedia resources. Teachers who need a downloadable copy of a resource should use *TaLe*.

Saving resources

TaLe4Students provides every student with a personal space, called *My stuff*, in which they can save resources links for later retrieval. Students can use this area to store frequently used resources and to create reference lists.

Saving is a simple process. Students use the Save/share link which appears with each search result to select from three options. Choose

- *Save to My stuff* – to save the resource record with an optional personal note to an existing or new folder.
- *Quicksave* – to save the resource record to the General resources folder.
- *Email* – to share a resource link with other students.

Students use the *My stuff* heading in the sidebar to access their saved resources. Underneath this heading are shortcuts to the General resource folder and the two most recently user created folders. The *My stuff* screen displays a date-stamped list of all their folders. They can select:

- General resources to see all resources saved using *Quicksave*
- a folder title to open a list of resources saved to that folder.

Students can edit, email or delete saved resources from any folder and can also rename and delete folders. Teachers can access and edit their *TaLe* bookmarks and resources lists in *TaLe4Students* but are not able to save items.

Sharing resources

TaLe4Students supports two ways to share resources—email and save codes.

Students and teachers can email resource links with title and descriptions from search lists or saved item lists. To email a resource link select *Save/share* in search results or *Edit/share* and then *Email* in saved resources. At this stage email addresses need to be entered manually but the email window does provide an automatic editable message. This feature is limited to individual items.

Figure 3 Students use Save to My stuff to save resources records in folders

A better and more powerful way to share resources for both students and teachers is to use save codes A Save code is a five character code assigned to every resource found in *TaLe*. Save codes are also assigned to resource lists created in *TaLe* and folders created in *TaLe4Students*. Save codes provide quick access to one resource or a group of resources:

- Type a resource save code into the Save code box in the sidebar of *TaLe4Students* to immediately open the resource.
- Type a save code of a resource list or folder to view the list of resources.

Suggested ways to use save codes with students:

- Use a save code with *TaLe4 Students* to open a resource or resource list in whole class activities.
- Create a resources list in *TaLe* for a particular topic and provide the save code to students. Save codes for resource lists are displayed in *My lists* tab of the *My saved* items area.
- Ask students to create a folder of resource links and use the folder save code to share with other students.
- Include save codes for individual resources or resource lists in worksheets and assignments.

More about save codes

Every resource in *TaLe* has been assigned a code starting with the letter X followed by four letters and numbers like this: X068A. A save code can be found in a search result, on a resource description page or with each bookmark record. Any resource save code found in *TaLe* will work in *TaLe4Students*.

Every created resource list or folder is assigned a code starting with the letter L followed by four letters and numbers like this: L32EC. A resource list code can be found in the lists area of My saved items for teachers or the My stuff area for students.

Notes added to saved resources in *TaLe* and made public will appear in resource lists shared with students.

TaLe4Students has proven popular with teachers and students and we hope to be able to expand this service in future implementations.

Figure 4 Save codes provide quick access to resources

A set of short *Captivate* presentations providing an overview of *TaLe4 Students* functions is available at <www.tale.edu. au/tale/live/global/T4S /walkthroughs.jsp>.

If you encounter any problems using *TaLe4Students* or need more informa-tion, please use our contact page <www.tale.edu.au/tale/live/global/ contact.jsp>. ■

References and further reading

Boomworks (2010) 'DET student TaLe user research interview findings', prepared by Boomworks on behalf of NSW Department of Education and Training (available on request from Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre).

Groundwater-Smith, S. (2008) 'Supporting student learning environments in a digital age: listening to young people', study undertaken for the Teaching and Learning exchange and the Information Technology Directorate (available on request from Centre for Learning Innovation).

Hand, T. (2007) 'Student services for TaLe – a theoretical framework for development', discussion paper prepared for the Centre for Learning Innovation (available on request from Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre).

Premier's Reading Challenge: congratulations on a bumper 2010

Rosie Charles, Senior Project Officer, PRC, shares the highlights of the 2010 Premier's Reading Challenge award ceremony.

On Monday 22 November, 110 lucky students from 25 randomly selected schools joined the Premier to celebrate the success of the 2010 NSW Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) at Sydney's Maritime Museum. The Challenge, completed by 15 000 more students than last year, has grown 3207% since its inaugural year.

Of the 195 142 successful students in 2010, there were 47 who received special medals for completing the Challenge every year from Years 3 to 9 and 18 314 students who received a gold certificate for their fourth year of participation.

Students had an exciting day, arriving early in the morning to be entertained by the Caringbah High School saxophone and barbershop quartets before the formal ceremony, a quick morning tea, lots of great activities and photographs, a picnic lunch and a visit to the Maritime Museum.

Anh Do (Figure 1) told the audience that when he arrived in Australia from Vietnam he could not speak English. His Mum taught herself and her

Figure 1 Anh Do's speech entertains the crowd

children to speak English by reading books they had been given. Now Anh has graduated as a lawyer, become a comedian, and has written a top selling book, *The happiest refugee*, which is on the PRC booklist for older readers.

The Director-General of Education and Training, Mr Michael Coutts-Trotter, congratulated the young readers who had *chewed their way through a mountain of books to complete the Challenge*. He believes one of the wonderful things about the Challenge is that it encourages the reading of more Australian books, giving Australian writers, illustrators, stories and histories a bigger audience than a decade ago.

Premier Kristina Keneally talked of the special love of reading her mother inspired by presenting her with Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little house on the prairie*, an opportunity to understand another little girl just like herself but who had grown up in a different time and place.

The Premier also thanked all the teaching staff, teacher librarians and public librarians who supported and coordinated the Challenge. She thanked the Premier's Reading Challenge team in the Department of Education and Training including the members of the committee who give their expertise and advice and the members of the book panel who review all those books in their own time. There are 600 new titles on the 2011 booklists.

The Premier particularly thanked all the students (Figure 2). *If we took all of the books that were read in the Premier's Reading Challenge this year and stacked them on a shelf, the shelf would go from here to Tamworth.* And the Challenge is set to get even bigger and better.

Figure 2 The Premier shares a book with students

In 2011, there will be much greater interaction. Students will be able to:

- read an online magazine and contribute to it
- suggest books to the Premier that the panel will review for future booklists
- provide reviews and comments to tell other readers what they liked and didn't like reading
- vote for their favourite books.

The Premier thanked the wonderful PRC ambassadors, Deb Abela, Andrew Daddo, Peter FitzSimons, Libby Gleeson and the members of Hi-5, who continue to support reading and the Challenge. In 2011, they will be joined by reading captains from each of the National Rugby League teams who, through their One Community Project, will also act as PRC ambassadors as they take good literacy strategies into schools and promote reading.

The reception was also an opportunity to recognise the sponsors who continue to generously support the Challenge including Principal Partner, Dymocks Children's Charities. In 2010, their Authors On-line series

brought you Margaret Wild, Jeannie Baker, Andrew Daddo and Jackie French. There will be more Authors Online events in 2011, enabling students, including those in rural and isolated schools, to talk to and learn from their favourite professional authors and illustrators.

Dymocks Children's Charities is also piloting Book Bank, a fantastic initiative to help provide resources for schools with disadvantaged students, by giving all the students books to own or to share. In 2011, students in the Challenge can participate in Book Bonus, an optional fund-raising initiative linked to Book Bank that will help resource their own school and other less advantaged schools.

OPSM, our Supporting Sponsor, ran their *Eye love books* campaign with school libraries receiving financial support. They also held a campaign for healthy eyes and healthy reading behaviours. You may have seen Hi-5 at your local shopping centre promoting the Challenge and healthy eyes.

The Sun-Herald, our Media Partner, helped celebrate the Challenge communicating information and ideas to the general public and it has provided a valuable resource, *The Sun-Herald* Premier's Reading Challenge supplement. The students also love to see their names printed in *The Sun-Herald* Premier's Reading Challenge Honour Roll.

Hi-5 sent a video message of support and wished everyone happy reading for 2011!

Andrew Daddo spoke about the amazing world that writing kids' books has opened up, and the wonderful joy that parents can find in reading to their children.

The Premier drew three winning schools on the day. The teacher and children from lucky Sherwood Ridge Public School were able to take home the wonderful artwork that Kim Gamble produced at the event. Dymocks supplied $100 gift vouchers won by an attending school, The Lakes Christian School, and by a school chosen from all participating schools across the state, St Patrick's Primary School, Albury.

Supporters of the reception provided free travel by State Rail, subsidised air fares from Rex, books for teachers and students, donated by HarperCollins, University of Queensland Press and The Penguin Group of Publishers, and Grug gift boxes for K–2 students donated by Simon and Schuster Publishers (Figure 3).

After the formal ceremony, students were able to engage in a range of engaging activities, meet and greets with Tina Gotsis, Andrew Daddo, Ursula Dubosarsky, Duncan Ball, Deb Abela (Figure 4), James Roy, Tohby Riddle, Moya Simons, Boori Monty Prior, Kim Gamble, Peter FitzSimons, Hazem El Masri and Mario Fenech. Superman, Snow White, Grug and Selby came – thanks to Super Heroes Inc. Students were also given free entry to the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Figure 3 Minchinbury Public School students with Grug

Figure 4 Deb Abela entertains a captive audience of readers

Along with certificates to all students, all their names in the Honour Roll and book packs and certificates for outstanding schools, the reception was a fitting finish to a terrific year.

Attending Schools

Caringbah High School	Mary Immaculate Primary School, Bossley Park	St Peter's Catholic College, Tuggerah
Condell Park High School	Minchinbury Public School	Stanford Merthyr Infants School
Erina High School	Muirfield High School	Tamworth South Public School
Floraville Public School	Parkes Public School	The International French School
Greenwich Public School	Passfield Park School	The Lakes Christian College
Holy Family Primary School, Menai	Sherwood Ridge Public School	Waniora Public School
Iqra Grammar College	St Dominic's Centre for Hearing Impaired Children	Wauchope Public School
Leppington Public School	St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Belmont	Weethalle Public School
Malabar Public School	St Mary's Primary School, Bellingen	

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KOALA 2010 Awards day

Barbara Kirszman, teacher librarian, shares the excitement of the awards day at her school.

On Wednesday 25 October, the 2010 KOALA (Kids Own Australian Literature Awards) Awards Day was held at Fairfield Public School. It was an amazing day attended by over 200 students from 13 schools.

Emily Rodda with students

We were very lucky to have some superstars in the world of Australian children's literature participate. Aleesah Darlison, Duncan Ball, Moya Simons, Sarah Davis, Colin Thompson, Lisa Shanahan and Emily Rodda were all there and, in keeping with the Summer Reading Club theme of *Scare up a good book*, entertained us with scary tales of spooky things that have happened to them; sometimes, it was their imagination getting the better of them but there were also some real life and very frightening tales.

Emily Rodda was inducted into the Hall of Fame and Sarah Davis illustrated live on stage.

Every attending student received a free book and there was plenty of time at the end for the students to get autographs and have a little chat to their favourite authors.

Participating in KOALA was a very worthwhile and extremely enjoyable experience for me and for my students. With KOALA, students nominate and vote for their favourite authors and illustrators.

KOALA turns 25 in 2011. Join and get involved! I hope to see you at the 2011 KOALA Awards Day. Go to <www.koalansw. org.au/> for details.

In Touch website project

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations under the Adult Learners Week 2010 grant, *In touch: your gateway to further education* <www.intouchaustralia. com/> is a single portal to higher education and training in Australia for adults seeking information about university, TAFE or other formal education.

Together in the Digital Era Conference (Northern Sydney Region)

Discover more about the role of teacher librarians in the digital era, in particular digital literacy and digital citizenship. Monday 7 March 2011 at Checkers. Cost $75. Contact Enone Melville <enone.melville@det.nsw.edu. au> or 9980 7570. RSVP 28 February.

Check these sites

AwesomeStories <awesomestories.com/about-us> allows students and teachers to find primary source information located in national libraries, historical societies and government created websites. Sign up for free.

dkonline.animal <www.animal.dke-encyc.com/> enables students to use a keyword search to link to websites, fact sheets and images of a large collection of animals.

Making tracks <www.nma.gov.au/kidz/making_tracks/>, showcases National Museum of Australia objects that inspired a series of fiction texts by leading Australian authors and illustrators. A synopsis and classroom activities are provided for each title.

Nothing beats the real thing!: how copyright, creativity and citizenship shape our society <www.nothingbeatstherealthing.info> has resource guides for print, interactive and screen units of work for the secondary curriculum.

Teachit.co.uk <www.teachit.co.uk/> hosts a range of online resources for English teachers. Some resources are free while others require individual or school subscriptions.

Share this

Resource reviews

Lizzie Chase Review Coordinator, School Libraries and Information Literacy

The following resources have been reviewed by a panel of teacher librarians and teachers throughout the state. Reviews of some less recent print publications are occasionally included where they have not been previously available in Australia, or have not been reviewed before and address a significant priority area. Information about reviewers for this issue can be found at the end of the review section. Classification given in *Scan* for nonfiction material is the 14th Abridged Dewey, although when ordering SCIS cataloguing records, the 22nd may be specified. Many more reviews than we publish in *Scan* go onto the DET website <www.curriculumsupport. education. nsw.gov.au/schoollibraries/>. Site reviews and some other resource reviews for a number of HSC syllabuses are also available on NSW HSC online at <hsc.csu.edu.au>.

Resource reviews are provided for teachers to support their teaching and learning programs. The views expressed by reviewers are their own and should not be considered as an endorsement of the material by the NSW Department of Education and Training. Copyright for reviews is held by the NSW Department of Education and Training. Permission for reproduction of reviews in part or full for any purpose must be sought in writing. For further information contact <colleen.foley@det.nsw.edu.au>.

USER LEVELS are given in Stages as follows:
Early Stage 1	*(for preschool/early childhood)*
Stage 1	*(for lower primary)*
Stage 2	*(for middle primary)*
Stage 3	*(for upper primary)*
Stage 4	*(for lower secondary)*
Stage 5	*(for middle secondary)*
Stage 6	*(for upper secondary)*
Community	*(for community/parent/adult)*
Professional	*(for teachers)*

The category **KLA** is intended to provide a guide as to which key learning area the resource supports. These, and the **USER LEVEL**, should only be used as a guide, as many resources transcend age and subject barriers.

The following symbols indicate the key learning area:
CA	*Creative Arts*
English	*English*
HSIE	*Human Society & Its Environment*
Languages	*Languages*
Mathematics	*Mathematics*
PDHPE	*Personal Development/Health/Physical Education*
Science	*Science*
SciTech	*Science & Technology*
TAS	*Technology & Applied Studies*
and	
VET	*Vocational Education and Training*
CEC	*after a syllabus denotes that it is a Content Endorsed Course*
COGs	*indicates the Connected Outcomes Groups from the Planning and programming framework.*

The subheading ABSTRACT indicates this resource is described rather than evaluated.

Images for internet sites are from Microsoft clip art and media <office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx?lc=en-us>.

e-resources
Resources are listed in Dewey order.

Changes happen daily on the internet. Sites may not be permanent or structured as they were when reviewed. Reviews indicate fees, registration or devices as needed. Icons used:

	digital authoring tool; learning platform software
	e-book; e-journal; online database
	interactive e.g. game; learning object
	media presentation e.g. podcast; slide show; digital story; video; audio
	website
	must be purchased
	scan selected e-resources into SCIS *Create orders* or check SCIS *Special order files*

BURROUGHS, Edgar Rice

Tarzan of the apes [electronic resource]
www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/78

Is a virtuous character a function of inheritance or upbringing? Tarzan as the noble savage raised by apes in the African jungle became the focus of adventures that explore this question. At the same time he is a forerunner of the principle of local ecological knowledge triumphing over simplistic scientific progress. Above all he is the power of one good soul defeating evil. The *boy's own* flavour that Burroughs brought to Tarzan established him as a perennial hero and he is worth rediscovering in this free **e-book** format, as a classic archetype for the morals and skills that are still valued. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	E-books; Adventure stories; Jungles – Fiction; Africa – Fiction
PUBLISHER:	Project Gutenberg, USA, 2008
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [F]

SCIS 1492666

Scan the SCIS barcodes to select e-resources for your collection.

= **must be purchased.**

CONRAD, Joseph

Heart of darkness [electronic resource]

www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/526

At anchor off the world's greatest port of London a sailor relates Marlow's journey up the Congo River to the heart of darkness, where Mister Kurtz is bringing civilization to Africa. Revered as a genius, Kurtz has slid into barbarous tyranny and Marlow tells a tale of horror. Conrad has been called a prophet for calling into question all the values of progress that Europe was pursuing before the Great War. *Heart of darkness* is the essential narrative underpinning the Vietnam War film *Apocalypse now* and can be read as its companion. This compelling tale of one of the greatest journeys into madness is available as a free **e-book**. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Imperialism – Fiction; E-books; Africa – Fiction
PUBLISHER:	Project Gutenberg, USA, 2006
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [F]

SCIS 1492660

FLAUBERT, Gustav

Madame Bovary [electronic resource]

www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/27575

Emma Bovary yearns for a life of light and beauty but she is trapped in a country town with a pedantic husband in a small minded, grasping community. Her passion for romantic love leads to obsession with two men who cannot satisfy her needs and her desperate death is one of the great tragedies of literature alongside Tolstoy's Anna Karenina. As a setting, mid 19th century France was subject to continual change as science, economics and political thought transformed it. This classic is available for download as an **e-book**. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	E-books; Women in France – Fiction; Married persons – Fiction; Love stories
PUBLISHER:	Project Gutenberg, USA, 2006
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [F]

SCIS 1492688

KIPLING, Rudyard

The jungle book [electronic resource]

www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/236

A lost boy adopted by a wolf pack in the Indian jungle must find his place in the world among the friendly elders, the greedy predators and their slavish followers. The jungle overflows with threats and marvels but Mowgli finds the values he needs to live with dignity. Kipling has a political reputation for supporting the principles of imperialism and there are many critiques of *The jungle book* which search for metaphors and parallels. However, Kipling told spell binding stories and should be remembered at that level. Numerous adaptations over the last century make a return to the original which is now available as a free **e-book**. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	English

SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Jungle animals; Animal stories; Feral children – Fiction; E-books; India – Fiction
PUBLISHER:	Project Gutenberg, USA, 2006
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [F]

SCIS 1492601

The killer

www.submarinechannel.com/app/webroot/project/killer/

Based on a French comic book series, this fascinating graphic novel is brilliantly presented in digital form. As an **e-book**, it utilises traditional comic devices such as sequential panels, captions, and speech bubbles, and combines these with an audio soundscape and minimal animation, to construct an interactive motion comic. Aimed at a mature audience, the narrative, told in 12 episodes, exposes the thoughts and actions of a nameless professional assassin. The crime noir genre is clearly evidenced in the choice of colour and use of darkness, heavy shading and shadow patterns that echo the grim, heartless, calculating psyche of the protagonist. It is an excellent example of genre and comic style and, used with discrimination, could provide an excellent focus to elicit higher order thinking on the crime noir genre and on graphic novel techniques. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Assassination – Fiction; Graphic novels
PUBLISHER:	SubmarineChannel, Netherlands
REVIEW DATE:	24/10/2010 [F]

SCIS 1470462

NESBITT, Edith

Five children and it [electronic resource]

www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/778

It is Edwardian England in the early 20th century. Father is away in the city and mother is busy with domestic duties. The children must make their own amusements and when they begin digging in the sand pit they uncover a magic Psammead, a rather moody fairy. He grants wishes, but the reality of making dreams come true always has a downside. Wealth, beauty, and the power of flight are countered by the risks of greed, obsession and the dangers of falling. The personalities of the children and the interplay between them are written to perfection. The ability of the family to pull together with an unfailing humour established Nesbitt as one of the finest fantasy writers. This fascinating tale is now available as a free **e-book**. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Country children – Fiction; Brothers & sisters – Fiction; Family relations – Fiction; Fairies – Fiction; Magic – Fiction;Wishes – Fiction; Fantasy; E-books
PUBLISHER:	Project Gutenberg, USA, 1997
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [F]

SCIS 1492654

StaySmartOnline

www.staysmartonline.gov.au

ABSTRACT

The Australian Government's cyber security website provides information for Australian internet users about the simple steps they can take to protect their personal and financial information online. The site's main sections are: **Small & medium business; Teens; Kids; Alerts; Schools & teachers; What's new** and **Home internet users**. It has a **Security alert service**, with information on the latest security threats and vulnerabilities; downloadable **Factsheets** on key online security issues; **Quizzes** for site users to test their knowledge; a **Self-assessment tool** for small and medium businesses; plus links to further information and online resources.

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Community Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Internet – Safety measures; Internet – Social aspects; safety education
PUBLISHER:	Dept. Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	12/08/10 [004.67]

SCIS 1354468

Microsoft OneNote

lrr.dlr.det.nsw.edu.au/Web/tools4u_onenote/

ABSTRACT

Microsoft OneNote allows teachers and students to gather, organise and share notes and resources, and collect them into one location. This website presents a range of **Getting started tutorials** and **Tips for teachers** that provide information and demonstrations on how to use the application. Practical classroom tasks teach students how to **Develop and track units of work**. They include lesson plans, resources and assessment tasks. **Open a side note to make notes** shows how to record ideas or capture research material. **Develop a research assignment** facilitates the setting up of a notebook that students then use for their work.

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Notetaking
PUBLISHER:	CLI, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	15/11/2010 [005.5]

SCIS 1478923

Making photo stories

www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content. asp?pid=36049

The site is aimed at teachers who are beginning users of *Microsoft Photo Story 3*. It is a simple resource of ideas and techniques, with eight dot points detailing practical strategies for using photo stories in the classroom, and two PDF tutorials. One tutorial instructs users how to make a digital photo story while the other explains how to create a *What am I?* text using the program. Both are useful tools in relation to writing outcomes in early childhood education. Each tutorial provides a practical and easy to follow guide for using the program for a specific purpose. Graphics consist of screenshots from the program which complement written instructions and there is a clickable link to download a free version of *Photo Story 3* from Microsoft. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA:	English

SYLLABUS:	English K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Digital photography; Photography – Data processing; Storytelling – Study and teaching
PUBLISHER:	Queensland ICT Learning Innovation Centre, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [006.6]

SCIS 1468147

Children's books online

www.childrensbooksonline.org/library.htm

An exciting compendium of free digitised classic children's fiction and picture books, the collection is grouped by reading level from pre-reader to adult. The **Library super-index** and **Rosetta search engine** also facilitate the location of resources. The e-books are well reproduced with outstanding colour or black and white drawings and clear written text. **E-books** are provided in JPEG format and arrows enable users to move between pages. Some e-books are available with audio files. Given their outstanding clarity, the audio books would afford different reading experiences. Multimedia books are available for purchase online. Useful in the research of picture books from earlier times, this site has many applications for teaching and learning. A. Frost

USER LEVEL:	Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Children's literature
PUBLISHER:	Children's Books Online, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [011.62]

SCIS 1368779

Duck duck go

duckduckgo.com/

A plain uncluttered interface and child friendly name belies the capacity of this search engine to deliver quality information. Aiming to rival the more established search engines, *Duck duck go* (DDG) eagerly explains its advantages over *Google* in **About**. Searches produce fast and copious results, categorised under summaries of each site. Where there is ambiguity, DDG is intuitive and asks for clarification. Sampling the site, random searches on Australian content produced reputable information from a large range of sources. The simple, advertisement free homepage may suit younger users and when *Safe search* in **Settings** is turned on, objectionable material is omitted from searches. Further information regarding the functions of the site can be found in **FAQ**. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Search engines, Web browsers
PUBLISHER:	Duck Duck Go, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/09/2010 [025.04]

SCIS 1466778

Using the Web

www.eduplace.com/kids/usingweb/index.html

Three sequential sections on using the internet are presented on this section of the *Education place* site. **Learning from websites, Searching for web sites** and **Finding and evaluating web sites** leads users through steps and stages which become more complex as knowledge is transformed into understanding. Learning can be

assessed as tasks are completed on the worksheet. Downloadable, printable worksheets are available for note making and organising information as students work through the quests within each section. The models used for learning internet skills in context would be useful for teachers to adapt to create their own quests and worksheets. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS SUBJECTS: World Wide Web
PUBLISHER: Houghton Mifflin, USA
REVIEW DATE: 15/09/2010 [025.04]

SCIS 1232964

Visual dictionary online

visual.merriam-webster.com/

A dictionary with a difference, this site provides labelled diagrams and other colour images that present definitions in context and answer questions about function, significance and purpose at various levels of complexity. Words are organised around major subject fields, such as **Astronomy**; **Energy** and T**ransport and machinery**. There are categories in the main fields with subcategories a click away. Efficient tracking lists the path followed to reach a particular point. The labels on individual images are also defined, and audio allows the searcher to hear the word as well as see it. A game of the week introduces a word to label. There are links to **Brain games** which require free registration. M. Davis

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS: General knowledge – Dictionaries
PUBLISHER: QA International, Canada
REVIEW DATE: 01/10/2010 [030.2]

SCIS 1376752

Documentary Australia Foundation

www.documentaryaustralia.com.au/index.php

For students developing a social conscience along with their film making skills, this comprehensive site on documentary film making will be a valuable resource. The site concentrates on the power of film to make social change, and it looks at the perspectives of grant makers, grant applicants, charities, film makers, and the international community. The site's emphasis is on collaboration, and **For grantmakers** has useful information for Business Studies students who are researching the philanthropic side of business dealings. The 16 topics in **Issues & themes** have multiple examples of films, with synopsis and details about how and why they made it to the screen. The films link to study guides and websites that will prove useful to English teachers. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL: Stage 6 Professional
KLA: CA; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: Business Studies Stage 6; English 7–10; Photography, Video & Digital Imaging CEC Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS: Film making; Documentary films
PUBLISHER: Documentary Australia Foundation
REVIEW DATE: 01/02/2011 [070.1]

SCIS 1465801

Free ebooks

www.bookdepository.co.uk/free

The site offers more than 11 000 freely downloadable **e-books** in PDF version. By following the **Search free ebooks** link, it is possible to peruse the vast treasure trove of digital books under the headings presented. There are several categories that are useful for the classroom situation, including **Children's books, Poetry & drama** and **Biography**. A range of classics for younger readers, such as *Robinson Crusoe for children*, *Dot and the kangaroo*, *The butterfly's ball*, *The house that Jack built*, *Nonsense books*, and *The tinder box and other stories* are available, with exquisite illustrations from bygone times. More mature readers will discover a range of quirky, obscure titles and a vast array of classics including the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *A tale of two cities*, *The turn of the screw*, *Pride and prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*, and an intriguing version of *Lysistrata* illustrated by Norman Lindsay. An impressive digital library for use in the connected classroom, this site is well worth spending some time browsing. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS: Booksellers and bookselling; Free material
PUBLISHER: Book Depository, UK
REVIEW DATE: 12/09/2010 [070.5]

SCIS 1478548

How a book is made

www.penguin.com.au/puffin/kids/book/f_book.htm

Using cartoons and a little publishing jargon, this pleasant site shows how a book goes from being an idea in an author's head to a product in a bookshop. Amusing graphics present 16 steps, one at a time, to focus student attention. The cartoons are very suitable for IWB use. The site describes book creation in succinct and accurate terms, and it would be an excellent resource to teach the language of book design and publishing. Images strongly support the language of the subject, and a sidebar glossary is a fine adjunct. The site's angle is books as a business and it explains manufacturing processes such as designing and printing, and writing processes such as proofreading and illustrating. This could be an enlightening resource for young writers who have only published to the classroom wall. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS: Book design; Authors and publishers
PUBLISHER: Penguin, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 01/02/2011 [070.5]

SCIS 1465785

Thinkit! contract activities

www.kurwongbss.eq.edu.au/thinking/Contracts/contracts.htm

Designed by educators for classroom use, these theme based contract activities incorporate several higher order thinking skills and strategies, such as Edward De Bono's *Six thinking hats* and Gardner's multiple intelligences. Permission is given for downloading, saving, printing and adapting the activities to suit individual students. Although the contracts are designed for independent use, mention is made of the prior need for explicit teaching of thinking skills. Graphic organisers are used in various ways throughout the activities. As each file includes visually stimulating images, they may take a few moments to download. This site is suitable for use in connected classrooms. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS: Thought and thinking – Problems, exercises, etc; Classroom activities

Cultures for kids

www.exploreandmore.org/world/default.htm

With links for **Kids** as well as **Teachers**, this interactive site allows students to explore 11 countries on the world map and gives teachers downloadable files for recipes and activities related to specific countries. Although Australia is not one of the focused countries on this site, the information gathering and locating skills are applicable to any country and would give novice researchers some exciting practice material. **Memory game** and **How do I say…?** include visual and audio prompts which enliven the snippets of information. The simplicity of what is offered belies the value of this type of reference tool for younger students. Quality not quantity is the aim of this resource, making it a worthy inclusion in connected classrooms. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
SCIS SUBJECTS: Social life and customs
PUBLISHER: Explore & More Children's Museum, USA
REVIEW DATE: 25/09/2010 [305]

SCIS 1417306

Quest Atlantis

atlantis.crlt.indiana.edu/start/mission.html

ABSTRACT

Quest Atlantis (QA) is a 3D multi-user environment which immerses students aged 9–16 in educational tasks. The program operates in over 18 countries with over 50 000 questers and is part of a university research project. QA combines strategies used in the commercial gaming environment with lessons on learning and motivation. Teachers and students are represented as avatars who travel to virtual places to perform educational activities, talk with other users and mentors, and build virtual personae. Students and teachers conduct rich inquiry-based explorations through which they learn particular standards-based content, and at the same time develop pro-social attitudes regarding significant environmental and social issues. The site allows students to work in a moderated environment. Teachers can create a guest account, download the software, watch the QA legend introductory video, find out about QA units, access the QA blog and various other projects. The **Educators**, **Researchers**, **Questers** and **Parents** tabs provide information about the inquiry-based approach used in QA, videos, a comic, online professional development workshops and general information about the program for parents. The resource has specific application to outcomes in Science, Science and Technology, and HSIE syllabuses.

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS SUBJECTS: Human ecology; Atlantis; Environmental protection; Webquests
PUBLISHER: Indiana University, USA
REVIEW DATE: 12/10/2010 [333.7]

SCIS 1313080

Sydney Water. Education

www.sydneywater.com.au/Education

Clearly laid out and easy to navigate, the NSW based information and statistics on this site are relevant and contemporary. The site provides information and activities appropriate for investigating

water in primary and secondary syllabuses. There is specific information for the school executive about sustainable water use within schools. Definitions are provided by scrolling over terms, and interactive games, Web Quests, lessons, diagrams and quizzes are appropriate for a wide range of student abilities. There is a strong focus on the water cycle and the importance of water in citizenship and civics discussions. The site examines actions to conserve water, linking well to the Geography 7–10 Topic: *Issues in Australian environments*. Competitions which incorporate technology also feature, lending the site to cross curricular projects. V. Gilmore

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Professional
KLA: HSIE; TAS
SYLLABUS: Geography 7–10; HSIE K–6; Technology (Mandatory) 7–8
SCIS SUBJECTS: Water conservation; Water cycle; Water supply
PUBLISHER: Sydney Water, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 30/09/2010 [333.91]

SCIS 1442759

Child Support Agency

www.csa.gov.au/

The school is an important source of support for children whose families are separating. Teachers need to know something about the role of the CSA and the support available for parents and children in order to help affected children in their classes continue to learn. The site has plenty of information, including an excellent family separation guide for teenagers. The guide tells young people about their rights, gives hints on coping strategies, explores feelings, looks at ways of maintaining friendships and provides a quick reference to key support services. It is beautifully illustrated and very teenage friendly. Free multiple hard copy versions of the information can be ordered from CSA. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Community Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS: Children of divorced parents; Family allowances; Child welfare – Australia
PUBLISHER: CSA, Australia
REVIEW DATE 23/09/2010 [362.71]

SCIS 1462067

Triple zero kids' challenge

kids.triplezero.gov.au/game.php?lang=en

Sponsored by ambulance, police and fire services Australia wide, this site offers a number of interactive scenarios that provide information about coping in an emergency. The safety messages are pertinent and clearly outlined using nine animations, three for each service. These are simple and engaging mini dramas, with plenty of repetition of the key messages. The scenarios reinforce triple zero as the emergency number and they demonstrate how a caller needs to describe where they are and what is happening. They model how to talk to the emergency dispatchers. There is a **Parents & teachers guide**. The site provides substantial support for the PDHPE K–6 Strand: *Safe living.* M. Davis

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA: PDHPE
SYLLABUS: PDHPE K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS: Assistance in emergencies; Educational games
PUBLISHER: 360 Entertainment, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 26/09/2010 [363.1]

SCIS 1462156

Arcademic skill builders

www.arcademicskillbuilders.com/

Engaging and motivating students to learn, this enjoyable site has a large number of online games. The user first clicks on tabs at the top of each page according to what topic they want to learn about, then a single or multi player game can be selected. Students who choose the latter will each need their own computer. Games are not separated into ability levels so it would be up to the teacher to ensure that students play age and skill appropriate games. Four of the six subject areas are mathematics based, but there is also a tab for **Language arts** and **Geography**. The games use colourful animations and comic style graphics, with most being accompanied by sound effects. Game instructions are written in simple language before the start of each game. This website is a fantastic tool for practising computer skills and consolidating learning across the curriculum. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA:	English; HSIE; Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; HSIE K–6; Mathematics K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Educational games; Computer games; Mathematics – Problems, exercises, etc; English language – Problems, exercises, etc; Thought and thinking – Problems, exercises, etc; Skill development
PUBLISHER:	Arcademic Skill Builders, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [371.3]

SCIS 1377240

Flashcards: the world's largest library of printable flash cards

www.flashcardexchange.com/

The creation and use of flashcards is made easy on this site. By clicking on the **Study** link the user then goes to **Search** to find sets of flashcards by entering a keyword. After choosing a suitable set, flashcards then appear on the screen with a subject question. The student then clicks to reveal the answer and then must click the correct/incorrect button to flag any errors they make. A study summary is generated and student can analyse their errors, pinpointing gaps in their knowledge. This is the only section of the site that can be used without registering; registration allows users to create flashcards and print them. Students must follow the numerous blue hyperlinks to arrive at their desired destination, but the site is easy to navigate through handy tabs at the top of the page. Teachers can be creative with the site's tools, and older students can create their own revision cards. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Teaching – Aids and devices; Educational games
PUBLISHER:	Tuolumne Technology Group, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [371.33]

SCIS 1424373

Graphic organizers

www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

The graphic organisers on this site facilitate the organisation and communication of information and ideas and would provide valuable scaffolds for students. Student understanding of the concept and benefit of classifying ideas should underpin the use of structures such as **Planning chart** and **KWL chart**. Initially, teachers would need to select the most appropriate organiser for the task at hand, with a view to allowing students to make those choices as they become more familiar with this aspect of information literacy. This site is suitable for use in connected classrooms. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Visual literacy – Problems, exercises, etc; Thought and thinking – Problems, exercises, etc; Writing (Authorship) – Problems, exercises, etc Classroom activities
PUBLISHER:	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, USA
REVIEW DATE:	15/09/2010 [371.33]

SCIS 1417299

Visuwords online graphical dictionary

www.visuwords.com/

Visuwords is a free graphical **e-book** showing a dynamic web of thesaurus-like connections between words. This Princeton University open source database uses a graphic display called a neural net, due to its resemblance to the brain's network of neurons. There are useful and explicit instructions on the opening page, and operation of the site will be enhanced by reading this information. The visual presentation evokes the interaction between words and meanings; colour links between words indicate their function or connection, and overlays provide information about definitions and use. Users enter a word in the search space and the dictionary gives meanings and shows how the word fits into the great schema of the English language. It is an easy and effective tool for language work. Students entering a simple word with multiple meanings, such as *lift*, will see a vivid demonstration of how an interactive dictionary can work. ESL students will find this digital tool especially helpful, once the layout is explained. S. Pollard

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	English language – Dictionaries; English language – Synonyms and antonyms
PUBLISHER:	Logical Octopus, USA
REVIEW DATE:	31/09/2010 [423]

SCIS 1414600

LearnEnglish kids

learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en

A vibrant and busy layout, with loads of clickable links and easy to navigate tabs, make this site a fantastic English resource. Students have the opportunity to play **Games** which aid in developing language skills. These include reading to follow basic instructions, writing, and learning nouns such as colours, insects and fruit. Students can also **Listen and watch** a large selection of stories and **Read and write** about a small number of different topics. **Make** is a range of hands-on activities, including printable craft downloads that will foster and encourage the use of English and allow students to practise their skills. The website also features quick links to games, songs and words of the week. A search tool can be found on the page at all times for quick access to specific activities. This excellent site can be easily utilised by ESL teachers, either with students using individual computers or as a class IWB activity. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6

English grammar website!

members.cox.net/teachro/

Simple and practical, this site provides good backup for teachers seeking knowledge about grammar, although some of the metalanguage differs from that used in English K–6. **Diagramming** offers a possible teaching strategy for developing teacher and student skills in identifying the components of a sentence and how they work together. **Grammar practice** allows users to apply their understanding of such things as complex sentences in traditional exercises. **Writing help** is well indexed and offers brief, down to earth advice, suitable for students across the middle years, on matters such as punctuation, essay construction, writing an introductory paragraph, and proofreading. Each topic has an independent home page, making navigation fiddly. M. Davis

Briefeschreiben = Personal letters: a letter-writing guide for German

german.about.com/library/blper_briefe.htm

The resource supports students in writing a range of personal correspondence in German. It clearly sets out the conventions required and provides a range of appropriate greetings. The content is suitable for students in Stage 5 who wish to develop their written communication skills. One of the strengths of this site is the scope it offers. **Sample personal letters** provides a clear explanation of the new spelling rules and **Pen pals** leads to a wide range of associated resources. **Glossaries** is particularly useful to students wishing to access vocabulary appropriate for occasions such as birthdays. **E-Cards und Grußkarten** provides students with a range of free greeting cards and postcards for specific occasions. Music can be added to the cards. This resource has direct application to the German K–10 syllabus. P. Robertson

Photo album: celebrations. 1 (German)

https://portalsrvs.det.nsw.edu.au/learningobjects/Content/L5957/object/index.html

This Learning Federation site can be accessed through the NSW DET portal. An interesting and informative site related to the topic of celebrations, this learning object offers a range of activities to reinforce and practise linguistic structures and vocabulary. The activities are varied and engaging and include contemporary stimulus material. Immediate feedback and comments are constructive and guide students towards the correct response. Vocabulary quizzes reinforce basic material before students complete a photograph album, matching captions and audio files with pictures. There are further activities and the option to print enables students to keep a record of the work covered. The site is suitable for Year 9. P. Robertson

Newton's apple

www.newtonsapple.tv/

With over 300 video clips, this excellent website is a resource library well worth bookmarking for all Science teachers. The clips are organised into the categories of **Animals and plants, Earth and space**, **Health and medicine**, **Chemistry and food**, **Technology and invention** and **Physics and sports**. Many video clips are accompanied with teacher guides that provide further information, activities, external links and a glossary. Science 7–10 teachers will find useful clips on a variety of common Science topics such as earthquakes, the greenhouse effect, gravity, lightning, DNA, and cancers. The site is very suitable for IWB use. I. Mavin

Ology

tiny.cc/x048k

The site created by the American Museum of Natural History is *The museum's science website for kids*. It presents basic information about the work of specialists in the natural sciences. There is a diversity of activities, vibrantly presented but lacking in sound. Activities include quizzes, interactive maps and graphs, student polls and instructions for completing tasks such as building weather stations. This information targets students aged 7–12, and the site overall is best suited to a primary audience. **Biodiversity** and **Climate change** are the most usable for Stage 4 students as an IWB tool or WebQuest resource for collecting and interpreting geographic information in the Geography 7–10 Topic: *Global issues and the role of citizenship*. V. Gilmore

Digital learning network

dln.nasa.gov/dln/

Teachers and students can learn more about our planet and the universe by communicating with NASA experts and education specialists directly via this site. The **Event catalog** is a useful tool to search for upcoming events such as booking a class in for a video conference. In **Education calendar > Multimedia > NASA TV** students can watch live video feeds of current NASA events, such as direct coverage from the International Space Station. There are NASA podcasts, NASA e-clips, and general career information. Senior Science Stage 6 students taking the Option: *Space science* may find many aspects of this website very relevant. Science students across primary and high schools will enjoy watching and listening to many of these items on an IWB. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	Science; SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science 7–10; Science & Technology K–6; Senior Science Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Space sciences; Space technology; Classroom activities; Universe
PUBLISHER:	NASA Education, USA
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [500.5]

SCIS 1465580

Techniquest. Virtual exhibits

www.techniquest.org/virtual/

Ideal for use with an IWB, this site allows teachers to bring a science exhibit into the classroom. It features four interactive science exhibits, each promoting students' thinking in a different area of science and technology. Students will enjoy **Sketching symmetry**, where they can get creative by drawing online. Students can also answer four simple questions about their physical appearance to discover how common their characteristics are amongst other users of the site. The site is basic in design, with a white background and minimal text and small graphics, each of which opens in a new window. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Science – Study and teaching; Interactive media
PUBLISHER:	Virtual exhibits, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [507.1]

SCIS 1468165

A maths dictionary for kids

www.amathsdictionaryforkids.com/dictionary.html

An online dictionary with over 600 commonly used terms, the site is colourful, attractive and easy to navigate. Each term is given a basic definition, accompanied by diagrams and examples of the word in use. Words are cross referenced and link to expanded meanings. There is no search box and students reach a word by using the alphabetical links. A small number of definitions lack clarity but the well designed graphics and excellent examples more than compensate. **Writing fun** examines commonly used text types while **Rainforest maths** connects to the author's hugely popular interactive mathematics site. This is a very valuable online resource which will appeal to both students and teachers. P. Hannan

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5

KLA:	Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	Mathematics 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Mathematics – Dictionaries
PUBLISHER:	J. Eather, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	29/09/2010 [510.3]

SCIS 1075318

Mental gymnastics

tiny.cc/k8if3

ABSTRACT

A text version and a Flash version show mathematical exercises on this *Working with numbers* site created by the Centre for Learning Innovation. Addition and subtraction activities are designed to help students develop strategies to solve problems using mental gymnastics. Students can select several characters to see how they would solve the problems on offer. Each character arrives at the answer a different way, and each way is shown in an animated graphic. The activities are led by a cartoon professor and the site uses humour in its graphics. Each activity has examples and exercises; students can immediately check their answers.

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Professional
KLA:	Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	Mathematics K–6; Mathematics 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Mathematics – Problems, exercises, etc.
PUBLISHER:	CLI, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	11/01/2011 [510.76]

SCIS 1477099

Sumdog: free maths games designed to improve numeracy

www.sumdog.com

A lively, new mathematics site, this online resource allows students to choose from eight games covering over 100 topics at 10 different levels. The games are clever and enjoyable with simple but effective animations. Students play against the computer or against other students from their class or around the world. Teachers complete a free registration and then add their students manually or from a spreadsheet. **Dashboard** lets teachers set up lesson topics and levels, and manage student, school and class details. **Help** provides a guide to setting up classes and has a useful list of topics at each level. There are no video tutorials, worksheets, or explanations for incorrect answers on this site but it is useful for revision and skills practice. An expanded subscription package is also available. P. Hannan

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	Mathematics K–6; Mathematics 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Mathematics – Problems, exercises, etc.; Number games
PUBLISHER:	Crocodile Clips, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [510.76]

SCIS 1478740

MacTutor history of mathematics. Index of biographies

www.gap-system.org/~history/BiogIndex.html

The site contains the biographies of over 1000 mathematicians. Students can select a biography from an alphabetical list, an era, or

from special categories such as **Female mathematicians**. All biographies are concise, well written and come in a printable format. **Mathematician of the day** links to all mathematicians born on a particular day and contains a mathematical quotation. **Famous curves index** is a comprehensive list of curves, each linking to an image of the curve, a sample equation and a short history. The site has a very plain two colour, single font layout making it uncluttered and simple to navigate. It is a valuable resource for students completing research assignments and for teachers needing background information. P. Hannan

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	General Mathematics Stage 6; Mathematics 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Mathematicians – Biography
PUBLISHER:	University of St Andrews, UK
REVIEW DATE:	29/09/2010 [510.92]

SCIS 1467010

Hertzsprung-Russell diagram

aspire.cosmic-ray.org/labs/star_life/hr_diagram.html

This useful website on the life of stars has two sections specifically helpful for Physics Stage 6 students. The first is an *Interactive lab* which would be perfect to use on an IWB demonstrating an animated version of the Hertzsprung-Russell diagram. The second activity involves students interactively answering 17 questions on the life cycle of stars. Students completing outcomes on the limited life span of stars in the Physics Stage 6 Topic: *The cosmic engine* will find the information presented interesting and valuable. This website is also useful when completing the various associated outcomes in the Physics Option: *Astrophysics*. The round shaped TOC icon is a table of contents that provides a lot of other useful information and activities about the life cycles of stars. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Physics Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Stars – Problems, exercises, etc; Graphs; Classroom activities
PUBLISHER:	Aspire, USA
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [523.8]

SCIS 1465546

Furry elephant: animations, simulations & activities for teaching and learning

www.furryelephant.com/player.php?subject=physics&jumpTo=re/2Ms4

Covering a variety of physics related areas in the NSW curriculum, this interesting website will sustain students' interest due to its fine interactive design, colourful appearance and straightforward presentation. Areas covered include atomic theory, fusion, fission, nuclear power generation, radiation, radioactivity and associated nuclear waste. The website would be particularly useful for Science 7–10 students when covering outcome 5.7 on atomic theory. Physics Stage 6 students exploring radiation based topics in *The cosmic engine* will also find the interactive Geiger counter simulation activity very useful. There is a large volume of information and activities available on this website, but users need to subscribe for full access. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Physics Stage 6; Science 7–10

SCIS SUBJECTS:	Physics – Study and teaching; Classroom activities
PUBLISHER:	Furry Elephant, UK
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [530.07]

SCIS 1465565

Cathode ray tube

tiny.cc/jo2b3

Physics Stage 6 students completing the first group of outcomes for the Topic: *From ideas to implementation* will benefit from watching this quality two minute **animation** about the science and mathematics behind the cathode ray tube. The clip is divided into four chapters: **Introduction**, **Apply magnetic field**, **Apply electric field** and **Determine charge-to-mass ratio** of an electron. A transcript of the audio is provided at the bottom of the clip, and users can pause the animation at any stage. Ideal to use with an IWB, the site's use of straightforward scientific language and clear colour labelled graphics makes it a wonderful and precise teaching resource. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Physics Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Cathode ray tubes
PUBLISHER:	McGraw-Hill, USA
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [537.5]

SCIS 1465575

Essential chemistry. Flash animations

www.mhhe.com/physsci/chemistry/essentialchemistry/flash/flash.mhtml

These quality animations are very relevant for numerous topics in Chemistry Stage 6. Each colourful and interactive animation is only several minutes long, and the language is relevant and specific to the Stage 6 syllabus. Topics are simply laid out on the home page. Of particular use when studying *Production of materials*, are the animations on **Galvanic cells** and **Radioactive decay**. For the Chemistry Topic: *The acidic environment*, the outcomes concerning **Le Chatelier's Principle**, **Buffers** and **Acid ionization** can all be enhanced using the animations. Students taking the Option: *The chemistry of art*, will find the animation on Line spectra very useful. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Chemistry Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Chemistry
PUBLISHER:	McGraw-Hill, USA
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [540]

SCIS 1465569

ChemEd DL

www.chemeddl.org/

A collection of digital education resources, tools and online services, this is a fine collection of resources for Chemistry Stage 6 teachers. The website is divided into three sections: a collection of chemistry videos named **What's this?**, **Molecules 360**, where a selection of common molecules can be viewed in a variety of formats, and **Periodic table live!**. The latter is the most useful as it allows users to click on and view facts, pictures and reactions of many elements. The videos would be very useful for Chemistry teachers when completing the outcomes on metal reactivity in the Topic: *Metals*. I. Mavin

Natural History Museum: kids only

www.nhm.ac.uk/kids-only/

These well designed, colourful and engaging children's pages have a rich variety of offerings. **Fun 'n' games > Mission explore** introduces students to processes used by practising scientists at the museum, and the irresistible game of **Race your louse through a head of hair**. **Earth** includes a chance to create volcanoes and to see how a fossil is formed. **Life** explores habitat and adaptations, and I **want be an 'ologist** introduces young scientists, including an entomologist and a palaeontologist. **External links** are to reputable sites such as NASA and BBC Science and Nature. The language is student friendly and useful for the Science and Technology study of living things and the Earth. M. Davis

Blueprints database

www.the-blueprints.com/blueprints

Students interested in technical drawing, especially with an automotive focus, will love this website. It has a large collection of drawings on topics such as **Motorcycles**, **WWI airplanes**, **Science fiction**, **Humans**, and **Phones**. Students can refine their search within the broad topics by accessing links to specific models. 2D views of the subject matter are provided and these can be used for illustrating orthogonal and isometric drawing, and as a basis for building production drawing techniques. **Vector drawings** is a good source of car material, and the **Gallery** contains 3D pictorial designs to use in the development of rendering skills. **Tutorials** are provided, including a demonstration of how to use CAD tools. Students can upload creations into the gallery and edit designs as they develop, allowing students the interesting possibility of presenting their work to a real audience. M. Timperley

Culture and design virtual gallery: showcasing the work of NSW design students

https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/curr_support/technology/culture_design/index.html

ABSTRACT

Available within the NSW DET portal, this virtual gallery was developed by the Technology Unit. It is an interactive cyberspace for exhibiting student work from three schools which participated in this virtual gallery project. Schools uploaded student work to a forum that has photographs and podcasts. Instructions for using video editing programs and uploading details are provided. Staff and students can view the resources and ideas used by the three project schools and share ideas. The pages contain photographs of students with their work, information, and some have a video of the student talking about their inspiration and techniques. Resources include sample units of work, documentaries and internet links, plus information for teaching multicultural, Aboriginal and Indigenous design content. The sample units of work are: *Soft sculptured dolls exploring cultural stories*; *Micro documentary: culture and design*: and *Discover the world through soft furnishings*.

Body builder

www.abpischools.org.uk/activescience/module4/home.html

Using this site, which requires *Flash 7*, students can assemble a range of bones and organs onto a male or female body. **Body fact file**, which describes each organ or bone by location and function and then places it on the body, is the starting point. **Interactive body builder** provides a brief description and asks the user to drag the body part to the appropriate place on the figure. **Against the clock** is a demanding test of knowledge about what goes where. The site is easy to navigate, business like, and it offers basic information for studying the human body as a complex system. M. Davis

Days of wonder: heart & circulation

www.mystery-productions.info/hyper/Hypermedia_2003/Abboushi/Artefact/index.html

Excellent graphics, animation, interactivity and sound allow this site to focus on the heart and its functioning at quite a complex level. The sequence of learning is clear and logical: **Organ warehouse** identifies the organs and their placement and offers a description of each one; **Heart lab** zooms in on the functioning of

the heart; **Pumping zone** explores pulse rate. The testing of knowledge in **Holo deck** is varied and obdurate, allowing no fudging. The site uses an animated professor who guides students through. M. Davis

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Science 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Heart
PUBLISHER:	University of Staffordshire, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [612.1]

SCIS 1444301

The hormone factory

thehormonefactory.com

The audio of this site will raise student interest immediately. Factory style bubbling and creaking, plus images from the hormone conveyer belt graphic, are successfully aimed at students aged 11–13. There is basic but informative content on feelings, sexuality, bullying, STDs, AIDS, and adolescent physiological issues. It is easy to navigate, and therefore easy to drop in and out of on a needs basis. Short paragraphs contain non-judgemental comments and facts that dovetail well with PDHPE syllabuses, particularly the information on sexuality. While the lack of depth would be an issue for middle or upper secondary students, the simplicity does make it ideal for the target audience. Teachers would be able to develop useful learning strategies very quickly through using the site. R. Cox

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Professional
KLA:	PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	PDHPE K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Sex education; Puberty; Sexual health; Sexually transmitted diseases: Homosexuality
PUBLISHER:	La Trobe University, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [613.9]

SCIS 1100815

MRI scan

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages /MRI_scan

Providing a concise description about magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), this brief but useful website provides basic information about this medical technique. The information covers how MRI works and the issues associated with its use. It is particularly useful for Senior Science Stage 6 students when completing the outcomes on minimally invasive techniques in *Medical technology: bionics*. Links are provided to other techniques such as X-rays and ultrasound which are also both covered in this set of syllabus outcomes. This website is unfortunately limited to providing only text. The **Resources and tools** section may be more useful in providing some images and further information. Physics Stage 6 students will also find this website very useful if completing the outcomes on MRI, when completing the Option: *Medical physics*. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Physics Stage 6; Senior Science Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Medicine – Equipment; Diagnosis
PUBLISHER:	Better Health Channel, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [616.07]

SCIS 1465541

Electric circuits

www.hyperstaffs.info/work/physics/child/main.html

Students will love exploring this exceptional website dedicated to electricity and circuits. Beginning with a safety message about the dangers of electricity, it provides detailed written explanations of all aspects of electric circuits. Students can move through the six different areas, completing online tasks and questions as they go. Each page has a consistent layout and it is easy to move from one section to the next with all topics remaining at the bottom of the page. Students read information that is written in a clear, large font, look at the accompanying graphics, and use this newly acquired knowledge to complete tasks. If questions or tasks are incorrect, the site provides an explanation and the opportunity for the user to try again. This exciting and thorough tool, which supports learning in the Stage 3 COGs unit (F): *Physical phenomena*, will captivate students. K. McDonell

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3
KLA:	English; SciTech
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; Science & Technology K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Electric circuits; Computer games
PUBLISHER:	Staffordshire University, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [621.319]

SCIS 1444069

Electric motors and generators

www.animations.physics.unsw.edu.au/jw/electricmotors. html

This website is ideal for the Physics Stage 6 Topic: *Motors and generators*. Concepts covered here are specific for this topic and are written using simple language and complemented with good colour animations and clear graphics. Areas covered include the main concepts behind the workings of both AC and DC electric motors, generators, back emf, transformers and loudspeakers. Simplified diagrams make the principles shown obvious. The animations are also simple and ideal for use on an IWB. Links to external websites make this a very valuable resource for Physics students. I. Mavin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	Science
SYLLABUS:	Physics Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Electric motors; Electric generators; Loudspeakers
PUBLISHER:	University of NSW, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [621.46]

SCIS 1369197

E-business guide: an Australian guide to doing business online

www.e-businessguide.gov.au/

The site is an initiative to provide information, advice and support for people beginning an online business. Its user friendliness would make it a very useful resource for the teaching of Business Studies and Commerce. Sections of the site include a glossary and downloadable fact sheets in PDF format. Using six headings with ample subheadings in drop down menus, the site organises a great deal of information efficiently. **Case studies** has 80 small to medium size e-businesses as in a range of industries, and it is searchable by state and industry type. Commerce and Business Studies teachers may be interested in downloading and showing the

introductory *PowerPoint* presentation that outlines the main features and challenges of e-business. The site contains a significant amount of useful information for the study of e-business. J. White

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA: HSIE
SYLLABUS: Business Studies Stage 6; Commerce 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS: Computers in business; Small business management; Ecommerce
PUBLISHER: Dept. Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 01/09/2010 [658]

SCIS 1270935

My small business

www.smh.com.au/small-business

The site is an excellent source of information and resources for Commerce and Business Studies students and teachers. Site content is a combination of introductory information on topics including **Marketing**, **Finance**, **Franchising** and **Technology**, with links to *The Sydney Morning Herald* articles on each topic. This current news content is the site's most valuable aspect for students. Layout is user friendly, although there are multiple links to other commercial sites. The examples and case studies will allow teachers and students to keep up-to-date for the Business Studies Preliminary and HSC courses and several of the Commerce 7–10 options. J. White

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA: HSIE
SYLLABUS: Business Studies Stage 6; Commerce 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS: Small business
PUBLISHER: Fairfax Digital, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 01/09/2010 [658.02]

SCIS 1459885

Architect studio 3D

architectstudio3d.org/AS3d/index.html

The studio is a user friendly interactive website specifically designed for 11–14 year olds to attain an appreciation of architecture. Hosted by Frank Lloyd Wright, it begins with an entertaining musical introduction demonstrating what the website does, stressing the interrelationship with people's needs. Users will need to download the free *Shockwave* program to design their house, furnish and tour it in 3D, but users can merely view it by using a non 3D version. This innovative site has much to offer students who are investigating built environments, graphics and model making technologies. Students gain an understanding of architecture, client briefs, and the importance of location and its relationship to the design process. The site is an excellent resource that will challenge and excite students. M. Timperley

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: SciTech; TAS
SYLLABUS: Design & Technology 7–10; Science & Technology K–6; Technology (Mandatory) 7–8
SCIS SUBJECTS: Architecture, Domestic – Designs and plans; Houses
PUBLISHER: Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust, USA
REVIEW DATE: 01/10/2010 [728]

SCIS 1219198

The case of the mysterious object

kids.tate.org.uk/games/art-detective

Arousing the curiosity of young investigators, this section of the large Tate Gallery site is cleverly designed around a quest to discover the secrets of a mysterious object. Leading questions such as *What do I remind you of?* and *What name would you give me?* guide explorers through a set of clues, providing bites of information and feedback about the artist and the style of the work as the answers are selected. Each question is extensively explored, so time is needed to complete the quest if students are to absorb and really appreciate the processes surrounding the construction of artworks. The techniques used in this interactive model may inspire teachers as they incorporate critical literacy into lessons using an IWB. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: CA
SYLLABUS: Creative Arts K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS: Moore, Henry; Sculpture, English; Educational games; Sculpture, Modern – 20th century
PUBLISHER: Tate Britain, UK
REVIEW DATE: 01/09/2010 [730.92]

SCIS 1445403

The adventures of Tintin at sea

www.nmm.ac.uk/tintinfun/

Highlights from the work of the Belgian artist, Georges Rémi, writing as Hergé, are featured in this online exhibition. Hergé's most well known work, the Tintin series of comics are explored on this site via games in **Sort it out** and **Drawing inspiration**. A snapshot of how Tintin was created is contained in **Hergé's studio**, where information about the life and times of the artist is available through an interactive photograph of the artist at work. **From sketch to strip** shows the stages of transforming rough drafts into the finished adventures of Tintin. Students interested in cartooning and keen to know more about this iconic comic character will be attracted to this site. Teachers may find that the activities for constructing a comic strip and sequencing a story are valuable motivators for students who find traditional narrative writing challenging. The games and storylines are available in English and French. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: CA; English; Languages
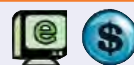**SYLLABUS:** Creative Arts K–6; English K–6; French K–10
SCIS SUBJECTS: Tintin (Fictional character); Illustrators, French
PUBLISHER: National Maritime Museum, UK
REVIEW DATE: 01/10/2010 [741.5]

SCIS 1444607

BRENNER, Robin E

Understanding manga and anime

tiny.cc/xiycx

A growing interest in manga and anime has had a tremendous impact on school library collections in the last decade. The majority of school libraries have embraced the new format. An understanding of the origins and development of manga is important and Brenner's publication is a valuable reference. More than providing an explanation of aspects of visual literacy, she uses the genre to demonstrate an

understanding of Japanese culture, history and sociology. This useful reference for serious manga collectors and teacher librarians is available in purchasable **e-book** format. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Manga – History & criticism; Anime – History & criticism; E-books; Japan – Social life & customs
PUBLISHER:	Libraries Unlimited, USA, 2007
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [741.5] $34.40

SCIS 1493086

Di LIDDO, Annalisa

Alan Moore: comics as performance, fiction as scalpel

tiny.cc/fdlag

Watchmen, *V for vendetta* and *The league of extraordinary gentlemen*, as movies, brought the graphic novelist, Alan Moore to the attention of the public after having been a cult writer for 20 years. One of the foremost practitioners of the art, he brings intellectual tools to the comic format. He has undoubtedly sought to subvert the pulp comic genre and has succeeded, at the level of both parody and high art. Though he began as an illustrator he went on to write what are essentially scripts that his artistic partners bring to graphic life. His abilities to create, what he refers to as, an *under language* and integrate intertextual references are exquisite. Analysis of the graphic novel is a demanding but rewarding activity and the composer of this e-book sets the benchmark. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Moore, Alan – Criticism, interpretation, etc; Graphic novels – History & criticism; E-books
PUBLISHER:	University Press of Mississippi, USA, 2009
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [741.5] $17.16

SCIS 1493056

Drawn & quarterly

drawnandquarterly.com/

Students can explore a range of comic artists, who are published by Drawn & Quarterly, on this website. The **Artists** link showcases a range of comic styles through identifiable self portraits that lead to the artists' personalised pages. Information on each artist is provided in an interesting, interactive layout. Users can click on tabs that provide biographical information, **News**, **Previews**, and more. The content is clear and concise. PDF files showcase a range of comic stories and still frame images. This format allows users to reproduce the images as a hardcopy. The array of different comic styles presented would provide inspiration on layout and design ideas for students undertaking similar tasks in Visual Arts projects, or could form the basis of visual literacy studies in English. N. French

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; Visual Arts 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Comics; Cartoonists
PUBLISHER:	Drawn & Quarterly, Canada
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [741.5]

SCIS 1476968

Gocomics

www.gocomics.com/

An online repository of popular comic strips and editorial cartoons, this American site is updated daily. Comic strips can be searched under A-Z listing, which includes well known newspaper comics like **Andy Capp**, **Doonesbury**, **Fred Basset**, **Garfield**, **Ginger Meggs**, **Wizard of Id**, and many more. Archives for each comic strip can be searched by date, with some being available over a period of several years. A number of **Editorial cartoons** are also readily available. There is the facility to view the comic or cartoon in a larger online format and to print the selected comic. Free registration allows a user to subscribe to specific comics making navigating much easier. Teachers and students wishing to access examples of comic strips and editorial cartoons for analysis and evaluation will find this a valuable source. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10; English Stage 6; Visual Design 7–10; Visual Design CEC Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Comics; Cartoons and caricatures
PUBLISHER:	Uclick, USA
REVIEW DATE:	24/09/2010 [741.5]

SCIS 1470493

One manga: the home of manga

www.onemanga.com/

An online repository of manga extracts, this site features excerpts from many manga publications. **Manga list** allows users to browse the **e-book** style publications alphabetically, or they can be browsed by categories such as **Top 50** or **Shoujo**, **Shounen** and **Seinen** which are aimed at more specific audiences. A study of manga style and techniques would be enhanced by using some of these resources, especially in the connected classroom situation. The site is extensive and it would require teachers to select material appropriate for a particular unit of study and the learning stage of their students. A few carefully selected pages would be valuable for examining the unique techniques and devices associated with the manga format and could make an excellent study when compared and contrasted with western style sequential art narratives. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6; Visual Design 7–10; Visual Design CEC Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Manga
PUBLISHER:	OneManga.com, USA
REVIEW DATE:	24/10/2010 [741.5]

SCIS 1470485

POWER, Natsu Onoda
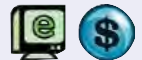
God of Comics: Osamu Tezuka and the creation of post-World War II manga [electronic resource]

www.amazon.com/gp/product/B002RT8AAO/ref=yml_dp

This purchasable **e-book** is a wonderful reference on Tezuka's work and it provides insights to the graphic novel culture. Tezuka towers over the manga landscape. Universally acknowledged in Japan as a genius, he took manga to a new plateau, crossing genre with ease and bringing audiences to a new consciousness. The English speaking world knows him as the originator of **Astro Boy**, but that

series barely touches the volume or range of his work. Tezuka was an articulate critic and his writings are still revered. His specific use of cinematic technique set the agenda for the new generation of manga artists. Tezuka's biography includes a history of Japan in the post war period. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Tezuka, Osama – Criticism, interpretation, etc; Manga – History & criticism; E-books
PUBLISHER:	University Press of Mississippi, USA, 2009
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [741.5] $18.47

SCIS 1493067

Oculi.com.au

www.oculi.com.au/

Oculi is a site that showcases a collection of award winning Australian photographs in a non-competitive forum. The photographers are committed to promoting contemporary Australian culture through documentary photography. Covering a range of photographic themes and styles, this site is guaranteed to spark the interest of any budding photographer. Easy to navigate, the website features a range of photographers and their recent work. Biographical information is provided for each featured artist along with an array of their photographs. **News** features some interesting articles, including newspaper stories, links, and events that are worth further exploration. N. French

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	CA
SYLLABUS:	Visual Arts 7–10; Photography, Video and Digital Imaging Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Photography, Documentary
PUBLISHER:	Oculi.com.au, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [779]

SCIS 1476975

Puppetry

https://portalsrvs.det.nsw.edu.au/LRRView/12452/

ABSTRACT

Accessible through the NSW DET portal, this cross KLA *Sites2See* by CLI looks at the uses of puppets in classrooms. In *Learning through puppetry*, there are links to ideas about using **puppets in the classroom** and **puppets in education**, instructions on how to build puppets and puppet sets, help with making a shadow puppet play, and ideas for play production. In *Modern puppetry*, there are links to fairytales, traditional puppetry, and combinations of traditional arts with contemporary styles and motifs. Examples of the latter are shown in **Cinderella** and **Helena and the journey of the hello** from the Sydney Opera House ED program. Teachers can find ideas on using traditional fairytale elements with girls as the heroes, and read about digital puppetry.

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Professional
KLA:	CA; English; SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Creative Arts K–6; Drama 7–10; English K–6; Science & Technology K–6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Puppets and puppet shows
PUBLISHER:	CLI, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	11/01/2011 [791.5]

SCIS 1477101

American Theatre Wing

americantheatrewing.org/

Vibrant, informative and resource rich, the website acts as a discussion forum for contemporary theatre practice in the USA. It uses video interviews and panel discussion sessions with playwrights, directors, actors, designers, choreographers and producers. It also provides behind the scenes information about costume, sets and the rehearsal room, and it has a reference and resources section. The American focus makes it a more useful tool for theatre practitioners rather than teachers and students in NSW. Drama and English teachers interested in contemporary theatre practice may find the information in the **Working in the theatre** and **In the wings**, plus the regular podcast interviews with playwrights and theatre practitioners, to be useful. The site is wide ranging and well worth a look by teachers who are preparing lesson material on American plays, films and musicals. D. Giorgi

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	Drama 7–10; Drama Stage 6; English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Theatre – United States
PUBLISHER:	American Theatre Wing, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [792.0973]

SCIS 1468512

Mystery matters

www.mysterymatters.edu.au/Player/frmPlayerMainPage.aspx

ABSTRACT

Accessible within the NSW DET portal, in this set of online and interactive games created by CLI students work their way through puzzles and clues to solve a mystery. The mysteries are linked to NSW syllabus content and teaching guides are provided with extension activities. The **Sydney Opera House mystery** is an English based game. **Bathurst or bust** and **City of fear** use HSIE outcomes, and **Event 17** focuses on Mathematics. The object of each game is explained and prompts along the way direct a user on how to engage in the laptop friendly learning activity.

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	English; HSIE; Mathematics
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10; Geography 7–10; History 7–10; HSIE K–6; Mathematics K–6; Mathematics 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Educational games; Computer games
PUBLISHER:	CLI, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	15/11/2010 [794.8]

SCIS 1478936

Digital story telling in the early years

https://portalsrvs.det.nsw.edu.au/LRRView/7398/

ABSTRACT

Accessible through the NSW DET portal, this *Sites2See* has been created by CLI. Digital technology gives everyone the opportunity to be a storyteller online. This site offers an array of useful tools to facilitate the activity with students. **Adobe Digital school collection teacher resources** include lesson plans, assessment tips, portfolios and video tutorials. **Inside Pre-K** provides an example of how one teacher has used digital storytelling to engage and motivate the learner. There are **Resources** from the Centre for Learning Innovation, including an audio slideshow explaining what a digital story is and the steps for making one.

Exposition

www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=48220

Education Queensland's literacy site *The learning place* has dedicated this webpage to a multitude of resources that support the writing of expositions. Teachers can link to the **ACARA NAPLAN** site to find the sample exposition and ten persuasive writing criteria. Arguing that exposition writing often requires initial research by students before forming an opinion, teachers are encouraged to discuss current events with their classes. **ABC Behind the news, CYH Kids health, ABC News online,** *The Age* **education,** *Choice* and the **Australian Bureau of Statistics** are provided as good sources of evidence on arguments about current issues. A useful feature of the site is the 20 downloadable documents to support teaching students to write effective and compelling expositions, including sample expositions such as **Cats v dogs persuasive argument** and **Country v city**. In addition, teachers can access Vocabulary for appreciation, Persuasive writing advice and **Vocabulary for visual texts**. Using an IWB, teachers can link from the site to demonstrate how students can use ten engaging interactive websites which encourage persuasive writing, including **Admongo**, **Persuasion map** and **Road safety**. E. Chase

Free epub children's picture books

www.snee.com/epubkidsbooks/

A few classic children's picture books are contained within this effortlessly navigated website. Clear instructions for downloading and opening the free picture e-books are provided. All **e-books** are available in EPUB format that provides a reading frame and allows zooming. E-books must be scrolled through. Links to additional Project Gutenberg versions are supplied. Metadata includes the title, author, language of the book, and file size. Users scroll down the page to locate resources, which may become cumbersome if the number of books increases. Helpful for providing diverse experiences when examining children's picture books, the site is well worth consideration as a digital resource to support the English curriculum. A. Frost

Online stories for interactive whiteboards

tiny.cc/bwnt0

ABSTRACT

Accessible through *TaLe* for public view, this resource for teaching and learning in English K–6 has three interactive sections. In *Student reading*, teachers are directed to story collections and websites for students, such as **Beantime stories** or **Seussville**. In *Reading aloud*, students can read and listen to fairytales and nonfiction, watch animations, and interact with stories and games. **E-book** examples include **CBeebies**, **Clifford the big red dog** and **Ziptales**. In *Text tips for IWBs*, teachers can download *SMART Notebook* files for text types, including narratives, procedural recounts and expositions for Stages 1–3. In *Make your own stories*, there is a choice of online story makers which allow students to create a variety of text types. There is a link to a specific story maker for ESL students.

Writing narrative history

terpconnect.umd.edu/~jklumpp/spch711/narrative.htm

The depth and breadth of content immersion necessary to achieve quality results in the HSC History exams is daunting. The practical skills necessary to write History essays can be taken for granted, but in fact there are certain precise analytical skills that can be applied. This short and straightforward site was a unit of a university course, and a senior student could ask for no better manual for writing history as a narrative. It has an excellent definition: **What is a narrative?**, and practical advice: **How to write a narrative**. It discusses how to locate the narrator, how to scaffold a plot with **Moments of action** and **Characters**. There is a checklist for the key qualities of a good narrative and a method, **Burke's pentad**, for shaping narrative history. Hard copy study guides abound with advice that is contained here. It is an invaluable site that students can either save as a favourite or download and print and can be a constant reference point when creative urges need fashioning and directing. V. Davidson

Poets.org

www.poets.org/

The site is imbued with a love of poetry, and awash with fine poems and poetry critiques. **For educators** is an excellent collec-

tion of resources, including essays and lesson plans for teaching poetry, information on targeting adolescents, and a library of poems selected for impact in the classroom. **Poets & poetry** has a superb collection of **Audio & video** readings, critical discussions, and plenty of good advice on writing and reading poetry. In **Poetry near you > Online resources**, teachers will find more interesting tools. The site illustrates and explores the literary and emotive role of poetry in the human psyche. In positively showing poetry's status and value in the international community, it will open doors for some students. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Poetry; Poets
PUBLISHER:	Academy of American Poets, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [808.1]

SCIS 1465767

ZIPES, Jack

Speaking out: storytelling and creative drama for children [electronic resource]

tiny.cc/sphtd

In this purchasable **e-book**, Zipes gives the overview of the key genres of fairytales, fables, trickster stories, myths, legends and tall tales. The academic gravitas that Zipes has brought to the folk tale genre has been a boon to educators. His immense knowledge has shifted the paradigm for storytelling into the mainstream educational discourse. He displays a strong interest in the oral tradition and its position in the social context of children. He details sample sessions for introducing them into games and drama sessions. His conclusions on the politicisation of children's theatre in the age of globalisation are fascinating and compelling. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Professional
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	Drama 7–10; English K–6; English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Storytelling; Communication in education; Oral communication; Teaching methods
PUBLISHER:	Routledge, UK, 2004
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [808.5] $18.47

SCIS 1493081

Fictionwise

www.fictionwise.com/ebooks/freebooks.htm
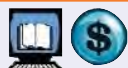
Containing a limited number of free **e-books**, this virtual bookstore would be useful for purchasing fiction and nonfiction resources. Users must register, with all e-books stored on a virtual bookshelf until downloaded. Easily navigated, the site has numerous search options, including keyword, category, genre, and best sellers. E-books are available in 13 formats. Links to formatting software are provided on the **Reading devices FAQ** page. The list of free e-books is limited to a few fiction classics and nonfiction resources, including an unusual book on chess. A brief synopsis of each e-book is provided, with reader ratings, formats available, and whether printing or read aloud facilities are enabled. They are easily downloaded into the chosen format. A reading frame allows page turning, zooming, highlighting, annotating, and copying. Settings can be altered to enhance the reading experience. A. Frost

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Professional
KLA:	English

SYLLABUS:	English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Literature – Collections
PUBLISHER:	Fictionwise, USA
REVIEW DATE:	07/09/2010 [808.8]

SCIS 1477870

Richard-Nathan-scripts: a variety of stage and film scripts available on-line

www.richard-nathan-scripts.com/

The site has contemporary scripts, short and full length, written by Richard Nathan. The short scripts include monologues and political sketches. Most of the scripts are humorous, easy to read, and written to appeal to students across the middle years. There is a focus on the science fiction genre and a distinctly American voice is obvious throughout. Examples of full length stage scripts that might be useful to Drama teachers are *Commedia*, which is a combination of Commedia dell' Arte and early 20th century American film comedies, and the amusing *Shakespeare parodies* of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. D. Giorgi

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	CA
SYLLABUS:	Creative Arts K–6; Drama 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Drama; Film scripts
PUBLISHER:	R. Nathan, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [808.82]

SCIS 1468509

HUTCHEON, Linda

A poetics of postmodernism

[electronic resource]

tiny.cc/hdbjr

A purchasable reference **e-book**, this is an open minded exploration of postmodern theory that can be brought to a variety of literary and art forms. It establishes vocabulary and discourses that are necessary to navigate aspects of the English syllabus. Hutcheon is exceptional in dealing with concepts such as metafiction, intertextuality, parody, and discourse. Postmodernism has many critics amongst the traditional and conservative supporters of the established canon. While it may be problematic for some, it is important to engage in the polemic, and Hutcheon has written an appropriate introduction to this field of study. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Fiction – History & criticism; Postmodernism; Philosophy, Modern; Popular culture; E-books
PUBLISHER:	Routledge, UK, 2003
REVIEW DATE:	20/12/2010 [809.3] $17.92

SCIS 1493073

Area of Study for HSC 2009–2012 is Belonging

www.e-rudite.net/belonging.htm

In these support materials for HSC English students, there is some general information and clarification about the Area of Study unit, as well as links to material for *The crucible*, *Romulus my father* and

Skrzynecki's poems. Its best offering is undoubtedly the supplementary material, which incorporates texts from all genres in an extensive list. Students can use the site to link to libraries and national media in their search for additional material. The site has a wealth of material and, while not particularly glamorous, does a fine job of compiling information that teachers would spend many hours to find. S. Pollard

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Connectedness (Psychology) in literature; Human relations in literature; Social groups in literature
PUBLISHER:	E_rudite.resources, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	31/09/2010 [809.9]

SCIS 1461761

Belonging: representations of belonging in texts

www.webquestdirect.com.au/webquest.asp?id=650&page=4922

A fantastic resource for English teachers, this WebQuest deals with the construction of meaning in visual texts. The resource focuses on Shaun Tan's popular picture books: *The arrival*, *The red tree*, *The lost thing* and *Tales from outer suburbia*. The site is usefully complex. The task asks students to create a visual narrative, which is a fitting completion of understanding in this area. The site incorporates material for class work, and scaffolds support understanding. PDF files form the task and evaluation. The WebQuest provides an opportunity to explore visual literacy in an interesting and engaging way. It has potential for English 7–10, and it is specifically useful for the English Stage 6 Area of Study: *Belonging*, with links to other support material and a vast array of support for both students and teachers. S. Pollard

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Connectedness (Psychology) in literature; Self-perception in literature; Human relations in literature; Social groups in literature
PUBLISHER:	WebQuest Direct, Australia
REVIEW DATE:	31/09/2010 [809.9]

SCIS 1461771

Teen ink: magazine, website & books written by teens since 1989

www.teenink.com

Creative adolescents can share their work on this site. It is free to register and submit original creations. Online publications are moderated and are divided into categories including **Poetry**, **Fiction**, **Nonfiction**, **Reviews**, art and photographs. These categories are further subdivided into various genres and styles, making it easy to access examples of works from contributors. There are also **Forums** for lively discussions on a range of issues. Users can join discussions and post comments on particular pieces of writing or art. Within the art and photography section are examples of many different media including **Charcoals**, **Computer graphics**, **Oil paintings**, **Pen & ink**, **Photographs**, and **Sculptures**. Aimed at 13 to 19 year olds, this is a terrific forum for exchange of ideas and publication of personal creations. English and Visual Arts students are sure to gain inspiration from this site. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	CA; English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6; Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Arts Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	American literature – Collections; Children as authors
PUBLISHER:	Teen Ink, USA
REVIEW DATE:	24/10/2010 [810.8] SCIS 1470423

SCIS 1470423

Robert Frost at Bread Loaf

middigital.middlebury.edu/local_files/robert_frost/index.html

Frost had a close association with this American college. His visits over 42 years, until the late 1960s, are documented here in image, word and audio. Teachers and students will find excellent value in **Lectures and readings**. Frost reads 18 of his poems in these lectures, most of which run for about 30 minutes, and the poems within can be accessed instantly. He analyses his own work and talks about the work and processes of other well known poets. Frost's topics in the lectures include the use of poetic symbols and parables, form and structure, technical aspects of poetry writing and reading, and how to understand poetry. The positive and negative aspects of teaching poetry surface in many of his talks, and some lectures focus entirely on poetry and pedagogy. For students researching Frost, the site is an outstanding resource. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	American Poetry
PUBLISHER:	Middlebury College, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [811]

SCIS 1465773

Robert Frost out loud

robertfrostoutloud.com/index.html

Frost was an expert in the use of aural imagery and this compilation of audio recordings is a fine resource to appreciate and critique those sounds. Frost reads 22 of the site's 77 poems, including some that are often prescribed in school studies: *The woodpile*; *Birches*; *The tuft of flowers*; *Out, out…*; *Mowing*; *The pasture*; *Mending wall*; *After apple picking* and *The road not taken*. Each poem on the site has audio and transcript. In **My Robert Frost**, the site's author offers a pleasant take on appreciating Frost and the evocative landscape of New England. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
SCIS SUBJECTS:	American poetry
PUBLISHER:	Robertfrostoutloud.com, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [811]

SCIS 1465781

Converse: the literature website

aspirations.english.cam.ac.uk/converse/gcse/shakespeare.acds

Interactive multimedia will engage students of Shakespeare on this site. Designed to appeal to younger students, the site has interesting sections on Shakespeare's special effects and his use of insults.

The site illustrates aspects of Elizabethan England, such as Puritan reactions to the theatre, and it has some excellent tools in the animated Globe Theatre and an interactive 3D version of the Globe. Each section of the site has teaching notes and icons suggesting specific teaching strategies, including IWBs. This is a fine resource to introduce students to the Bard as it concentrates on vibrant non-literary aspects that will give younger students a little confidence about Shakespeare and his times, before they tackle a play. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; English 7–10
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Great Britain – History – 1485–1603, Tudor period; Dramatists, English; Shakespeare, William
PUBLISHER:	University of Cambridge, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/02/2011 [822.3]

SCIS 1446617

Austen.com

www.austen.com./

This alluring site is a rich source of ideas about Austen's work and it invites engagement with many reading and writing opportunities. As a forum that models the diverse ways in which texts are valued and enjoyed in current and past contexts, the site is an excellent resource for senior English students. It is particularly suitable for the English Stage 6: *Extension 1* Module: *Genre in English*. From **The works of Jane Austen** there are links to Austen's texts supported by chapter descriptions and presented in an attractive reading frame. **Links to Jane Austen on the web**, includes offline resources and information about the Regency. **How does this place work > Using the board**, a tutorial which guides new users to contribute thoughts and stories to a message board. Archived writing based on Austen's works and times is available in **Epilogue Abbey** and in **Fantasia gallery** a variety of modern stories can be accessed. Both of these sections are useful for English Stage 6: *Extension 2* students, particularly concerning Outcome 2. While the site supports many of the outcomes in English 7–10 syllabus and is considerate of its younger audience, teacher preview would be useful before use within this syllabus. J. Stevens

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6: *Extension 1*; *Extension 2*
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Novelists, English; English fiction – History and criticism
PUBLISHER:	Derbyshire Writers' Guild, UK
REVIEW DATE:	30/09/2010 [823]

SCIS 1474189

Find people & places

kids.nationalgeographic.com/Places/Find

A subsection of the much larger *National Geographic kids* website, this section allows users to access information about a chosen continent on the side bar or select from a range of countries represented in photographs. Each selection features tabs of information and resources. Also available are links for **Video**, **Map**, and **Related content**, including games, quizzes, stories and videos about aspects of the country. For more advanced searching and satellite images, there is a link to *MapMachine*. Suitable for connected classrooms, this site is a colourful reference resource

which introduces students to the concept of researching countries and cultures. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Geography Civilisation
PUBLISHER:	National Geographic Society, USA
REVIEW DATE:	25/09/2010 [900]

SCIS 1417292

World geography

www.covenantworks.com/Bouncy-A/SocialStudies/WorldGeography/index.htm

Introductory playful activities such as **Geospy**, **Geo world** and **Country toad**, accessed from this page, engage students in exploring countries and maps of the world. Activities requiring teacher direction and investigation can be located in **World geography**, **Geography bee** and **Explore the world**. Registration is not necessary for any of these sites. Suitable for connected classrooms, this site has application for beginners using reference tools for the first time. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Geography – Problems, exercises, etc
PUBLISHER:	Covenantworks Educational Software, USA
REVIEW DATE:	25/09/2010 [910.76]

SCIS 1417328

Map skills

www.covenantworks.com/Bouncy-A/SocialStudies/Maps/index.htm

A fascinating collection of interactive games and animations related to map reading, navigation and direction sense is presented on this page. Each graphic links to an external website and teachers would need to be aware of the destination and check for suitability. After initial teacher direction, the activities would be suitable for independent use by students. **Find the sunken treasure** links to activities such as **Explore a pyramid** and **Explore Mars** which require students to follow directions and understand grid coordinates. Engaging in games such as these prepare students for more abstract studies in mapping and using an atlas. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Map reading – Problems, exercises, etc; Geographical information systems – Problems, exercises, etc; Charts – Problems, exercises, etc; Navigation – Problems, exercises, etc; Direction sense – Problems, exercises, etc
PUBLISHER:	Covenantworks Educational Software, USA
REVIEW DATE:	25/09/2010 [912.076]

SCIS 1417315

CARLSON, Jeff

The iPad pocket guide

Peachpit, USA, 2010
ISBN 9780321717580   [004.165]

This beginner's guide is an unvarnished introduction to the first successful computer tablet. The author is clearly impressed with what he calls *the first real spontaneous device*, and has written a comprehensive manual with critical insight. It is unlikely that an iPad owner will have no experience of other Apple products, but the extensive operational and organisational vocabulary is covered precisely without becoming too dense. The layout of headings, subheadings, screen grabs, tips and notes is well balanced. From settings through apps to the multimedia potentials, including the book reading apps, this is an excellent hardcopy addition to the endless online resources. Given that iPads are likely to infiltrate all levels of education in the near future, it is worth being prepared. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL: Professional
                              Paper $19.95   SCIS 1465441

Good research begins with a good question

www.teachers.ash.org.au/researchskills/default.htm

Addressing the big questions about how to set assignments and avoid plagiarism, the sections on this site link to creative and critical thinking ideas and further reading. **Question**, **Thinking**, **Planning** and **Examples** develop alternative methods for setting open ended questions and encourage teachers to engage in pedagogy that embraces problem based learning using the internet. Information in **Applying Bloom's taxonomy** and **Curing read and regurgitate disease** provided much food for thought. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS: Information skills – Study and teaching; Problem solving – Study and teaching; Thought and thinking – Study and teaching; Internet; Computers in education; Teaching methods
PUBLISHER: Aussie SchoolHouse, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 15/09/2010 [028.707]

SCIS 1044258

Bursting the bubble

www.burstingthebubble.com/

Information on abuse and domestic violence can be difficult for students to access when they believe their family is the only one which is so unhappy. This site is designed to help young people who are thinking of running away from home as a result of abuse or domestic violence. It has much teenage friendly information including pages on domestic violence, child abuse and sexual abuse, FAQs and stories. There is an excellent page on dealing with feelings and a third of the site is about what teenagers can do, including a safety action plan and links to helpful sites. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS: Family violence
PUBLISHER: Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre, Australia
REVIEW DATE: 23/09/2010 [362.82]

SCIS 1462051

Connecting lives and learning: renewing pedagogy in the middle years

/ Edited by B. Prosser, B. Lucas & A. Reid. Wakefield, SA, 2010
ISBN 9781862548923   [370.15]

With a mainly British focus, but including one South Australian example, this series of school case studies deals with the importance of constructing respectful, collaborative and relevant pedagogies within socially disadvantaged communities. Too often, deficit views of a community lead to a continuation of poor educational outcomes. This book sets out to present an enriched, *sufficient* perspective which focuses on local places and communities as important resources for teaching. Every case study here views young people and their families as possessing funds of knowledge that teachers can access in working with their students. In effect, children come to school with virtual school bags already packed with information. Teachers in these studies were encouraged to see themselves as knowledge producing professionals. They conducted action learning in projects which focused on school based opportunities for urban renewal. This thoughtful examination of how the pedagogical dynamics at play in low socioeconomic communities can present Australian teachers in similar contexts with useful scenarios for action learning. E. Chase

USER LEVEL: Professional
                              Paper $29.95   SCIS472936

ANDERSON, Michelle [and others]

A collective act: leading a small school

ACER, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9780864318626   [371.2]

Collectively, the authors have much to offer their colleagues. Their knowledge has been gained through their leadership, insights and reflections on their leadership, and teaching practices drawn from small school experiences across Australia. In researching the notion of small schools, one contributor suggests that school size is an emotional issue encompassing school enrolments, student performance and community links. Given this context the central thesis explored is how school leaders create the conditions for student learning, and how teaching principals focus and direct resources to achieve desired learning goals for students. The research chapters are strengthened by the addition of five principal case studies which provide practitioners' detailed reflections on teacher quality, leadership, and professional learning, and students as learners and people. Each case study chapter concludes with lessons related to leadership style, challenges of the dual role as teacher and leader, and career path opportunities. F. Plummer

USER LEVEL: Professional
                              Paper $34.95   SCIS 1464326

Enquiring minds

www.enquiringminds.org.uk/

The distinctive approach taken by this project regards the ideas, skills and interests of students as paramount. The constructivist principles on which the site is based allows students to take responsibility for the content and purpose of their learning. Elements of NSW *Quality Teaching*, such as *Students' self-regulation*, *Student direction* and *Background knowledge* are represented in this UK program of curriculum development and research. The benefits of enquiry-based learning and learning are explained in **What does it mean for students?** and **What does it mean for teachers?**. Practical support is provided in **Try it**, which contains **Digital tools** and videos for professional learning in **Online workshop**. Teachers may find that these suggestions for innovative teaching practice enable them to better respond to the challenges of our changing future. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Curriculum planning; Learning, Psychology of; Teaching methods
PUBLISHER:	Futurelab, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [371.3]

SCIS 1474680

Back to school: free classroom resources

www.microsoft.com/education/teachers/

The **Lesson plans**, **How-to articles** and **Teacher guides** on this expansive site support teachers and students to find, evaluate and apply information; digital or otherwise. In **Teacher guides > Critical thinking**, site users will find essential skills including **Validity and reliability**, **Citing web sources** and **Civil discourse**. To expand on issues such as plagiarism, evaluating web sites, ethics and web searching, a **Printable classroom guide** has invaluable links that explain concepts being covered. Many Microsoft **Free tools** are offered, including **AutoCollage** and **Songsmith**, with accompanying tutorials, optimising their value in the classroom. The breadth of information contained on this site makes it a very useful resource for teachers. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Teaching – Aids and devices
PUBLISHER:	Microsoft, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [371.33]

SCIS 1474696

CHURCHES, A. & CROCKETT, L. & JUKES, I.

The digital diet: today's digital tools in small bytes

21st Century Fluency Project, USA, 2010 (21st century fluency series)
ISBN 9781412982368   [371.33]

21st century literacies are constantly evolving and there are essential fluencies which all students will need to have, in order to succeed in learning. The authors conceptualise these as solution fluency, information fluency, collaboration fluency, creativity fluency and media fluency. This book is the third in a series and it addresses the major changes taking place in classrooms today. It aims to provide teachers who are uncertain about 21st century literacies with a series of small, practical steps to take. **The digital citizen** explains key terms in social networking and outlines cyber safety and digital copyright protocols. **Searching** provides handy search hints and a student rubric for effective web searching. Each chapter provides rubrics for the focus of discussion, and these include using Twitter, Voice Thread and Skype as exciting tools for teaching. **Social bookmarking**, **Collaborative editing** and **Media sharing** are comprehensively discussed with useful screen grabs and practical suggestions for classroom use. Many teachers will find this a practical, confidence building and user friendly orientation to 21st century literacies. E. Chase

USER LEVEL:	Professional
	Paper $29.95 SCIS 1465147

NMC: sparking innovation, learning & creativity

www.nmc.org/horizon

The New Media Consortium collects material from international organisations dedicated to the exploration and use of new media and new technologies. Their Horizon Project features emerging technologies for teaching, learning and creativity, and these are publicised in reports. Teachers should begin with **About** on this site, as its design and language are not conducive to understanding what the site can offer. The **2010 Horizon report** focuses on trends in technology and its effect on captivating students' attention and promoting their learning. Each annual report is regarded as a leader in the field. The report discusses the emerging impacts of cutting edge technology upon the way students learn, play, communicate, and socialise. There are links to initiatives such as emerging media technologies, museum projects dealing with online collections of art to maintain cultural heritage, and services to access international resources. The site is professional reading for teachers wanting to expand their understanding of media technologies in education. M. Timperley

USER LEVEL:	Professional
SCIS SUBJECTS:	Educational innovations; Teaching – Aids and devices; Educational technology
PUBLISHER:	NMC, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/10/2010 [371.33]

SCIS 1467972

RINETZKY, Priscilla

Time for ergonomics [DVD]

Ergo Productions, NSW, 2009 (25 min.)
ISBN none   [620.8]

With specific links to the NSW K–6 primary curriculum, the DVD is designed to promote ergonomic computer use in the Australian primary classroom. The kit comprises a DVD suitable for use in single computers or an IWB. An accompanying CD-ROM has Stage-specific posters that review ergonomic poses and stretches, worksheets, and a series of additional activities to extend safe computer operations. The package features comprehensive teacher information resources for Stages 1 to 3, and syllabus outcomes and rationales are included to streamline programming. Key elements of the resource are posters of stretching exercises that can be strategically placed near computers. *Time for ergonomics* is a complete program that teaches students the importance of regular movement and stretching when using computer technologies, reinforcing vital computer safety measures. The resource can be adapted by educators to meet the individual needs of learners. D. Croker

USER LEVEL:	Professional
	$POA SCIS 1437411

The *Office of Schools Plan 2009–2011*

<www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/polici es/literacy/guidelines/> articulates what is needed to best support every learner in NSW government schools. Literacy and Numeracy are priority areas. Reviewers include literacy and numeracy experts to show how resources might support these priorities.

HAGUE, Cassie & PAYTON, Sarah

Digital literacy across the curriculum: a Futurelab handbook

Futurelab, UK, 2010

A comprehensive handbook for cultivating digital literacy, this outlines **The importance of digital literacy** and presents guidelines for integrating digital literacy into the school curriculum. Primary and secondary teachers are guided in the creative and critical use of technology in the classroom. It considers new pedagogical approaches that are required in relation to thinking, learning and problem solving in the 21st century. Detailed information and tips are presented on various aspects of digital literacy including functional skills, creativity, critical thinking, sociocultural understanding, collaboration, finding information, effective communication, and e-safety. Practical cross curriculum ideas indicate the ways digital literacy can be embraced on a whole school level. This is a readily available, valuable teaching resource. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Professional
Paper Available to download free of charge from www.futurelab.org.uk/ projects/digital-participation [371.33]

SCIS 1470778

WHITFIELD, Merryn

Targeting text interactively. Information texts. Upper primary [electronic resource]

Blake Education, Vic, 2010   [808]

Geared towards teaching a range of text types in primary classrooms, these booklet and CD-ROM sets are especially designed for IWB use. They are very well conceived and presented. The text types explained and modelled include: report, diary, journal entry, explanation, procedure, biography, autobiography, scientific report, description, travel guide, news article, and encyclopaedia entry. Clickable coloured icons help students to identify the different grammatical forms used in each sample text. Visual presentations are clear, informative and engaging and PDFs of student activities are available to print. The presentation of each text type follows a clear procedure: explaining its purpose or use and structure, presenting examples, and offering tools and checklists to assist students with their own writing. These thoughtfully presented IWB lessons would make a wonderful teaching resource. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Professional
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English K–6
     $199.00 each

Reviewed titles in this series:
Targeting texts interactively. Information texts. Lower primary
     SCIS 1470642
Targeting texts interactively. Information texts. Middle primary
     SCIS 1470647
Targeting texts interactively. Information texts. Upper primary
     SCIS 1470648

Picture books
Picture books are arranged alphabetically by author.

Some books in this section are nonfiction or have relevance to a particular KLA.

BLAND, Nick

The very itchy bear

Scholastic, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741696516

Cranky bear is no longer cranky; he is enjoying a pleasant, quiet read which is interrupted when Flea announces his presence, in a way that only fleas can. The resultant sea journey for both Flea and Bear culminates somewhat surprisingly, allowing the reader to maintain a feeling of uncertainty and expectation until the end, when Bear realises that no matter how annoying, Flea has become a necessary and wanted part of his life. The rhyming text in this picture book is deceptively simple, leaving the story's themes of friendship and getting on despite differences, to be implied rather than stated outright. The illustrations add humorous detail to the story, providing an enjoyable reading experience. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1
     Paper $16.99   SCIS 1470609

BROWN, Kerry & STEWART, Lisa

Can I cuddle the moon?

Scholastic, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741695540   [813]

Baby owl is looking for someone to cuddle and after a long search realises that his mother is the one he has been looking for. Most of the story is written with two rhyming sentences on each double page. These sentences take the form of a question and answer for the first half of the story. They become statements and exclamations followed by a series of questions and finally statements leading to the resolution. It is a wonderful picture book for shared

reading aloud as the reader is able to use the appropriate inflection for questions, statements and exclamations. The question answer format and the choice of colloquial language will support an emergent reader. Charming, whimsical, mixed media illustrations support the verbal text. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English K–6
$24.99   SCIS 1453354

COSENTINO, Ralph

Batman: the story of the dark knight

Penguin Group (Australia), 2010 (Puffin)
ISBN 9780143504177

New audience members of the superhero genre will enjoy this comic book style picture book that provides a background to Batman, his colleagues and villainous counterparts. The story begins with a young Bruce Wayne, orphaned when he lost both parents to a cruel and ruthless thief. Bruce determines from that time on, that he will spend the rest of his life fighting crime. Through meditation, the study of self defence, boxing and academic pursuits he prepares himself to outsmart criminals, Bruce Wayne became Batman, the Dark Knight, protector of the weak. The simple, engaging style is perfect for young readers who love tales of the battle between good and evil and this accessible format offers a wonderful means of introducing students to the graphic narrative format. A. Beedles

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $16.95   SCIS 1441743

COSENTINO, Ralph

Superman: the story of the man of steel

Penguin Group (Australia), 2010 (Puffin)
ISBN 9780143504184

While younger generations may be familiar with the character of Superman, they probably are not aware of his origins. This picture book aims to address the anomaly using an enlarged graphic picture book format. Easily readable, it employs generously sized font, and only one or two pictures and captions per page to introduce the story of *Earth's greatest superhero*. It begins with Clark's emergency evacuation, as an infant, from Krypton and then his adoption by normal earthlings Jonathon and Martha Kent. It goes on to the discovery of his super powers and undercover work at the Daily Planet newspaper. Readers will also encounter all manner of villainous characters. This book will provide context and background for a new and enthusiastic generation of superhero fans. A. Beedles

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $16.95   SCIS 1453599

FENTON, Corrine & CIAFFAGLIONE, Sebastian

Flame stands waiting

Black Dog, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781742030951

Evocative and surreal illustrations lend themselves to this gentle tale of longing, imagination and fulfilment. Most merry-go-round riders rush for the horses that have movement on the beautiful carousel, but Clara is captivated by the stationary horse, Flame,

who stands waiting, unable to move. Clara's imagination is joyously liberating — a gift which enriches her experience and which metaphorically sets Flame free. The yesteryear setting and soft colours enhance the magic and fantasy inspired by the carousel. The importance of imagination to empower, enrich and maintain one's resilience in unfavourable circumstances is at the heart of this picture book, making it a useful lead into discussions relating to personal wellbeing. N. Chaffey

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
$24.99   SCIS 1448004

FRENCH, Jackie & WHATLEY, Bruce

Queen Victoria's underpants

Angus & Robertson, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780732288228

Witty literary devices in this captivating picture book hook the reader while teaching about history and social change. The humorous subject is sure to intrigue and Whatley's outlandish illustrations reveal all the unlikely reasons why queens should wear undergarments. Underpinning this entertainment are the early ripples of women's liberation, brought about by Queen Victoria's decision to wear underpants. This simple fashion trend gave women the freedom to engage in previously taboo activities such as bicycle and horseback riding. The minute attention to detail in the illustrations and artfully worded script will support students in such topics as investigating the modern world and researching the history of clothing. Enjoyed as a picture book or used as a work of historical fiction, this book succeeds on many levels. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
$24.99   SCIS 1461600

GAIMAN, Neil & VESS, Charles

Instructions

Bloomsbury, UK, 2010
ISBN 9781408808641

A set of instructions to guide the reader through life's journey resonates as poetic prose in this fairytale picture book. Glorious watercolour illustrations gather up the lyrical text and spin the words along the path taken by the puss-in-boots character who walks through the pages. Cameo visits by giants, wolves, eagles and dragons lend mystique and intrigue. Taking risks and living bravely while remembering manners and caring for the less fortunate are some of the messages pervading this lovely book. Readers will find their own depth of meaning in Vess's illustrations, with their winding lines, splashes of red and hidden delights. The book reveals how partnering rich language with clever visual effects can turn folklore into a story that has meaning for contemporary readers. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
$24.99   SCIS 1460632

HUNT, J. & MOSS, S. & CHAPMAN, G.

Precious Little

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741751475

Featuring a sequin sewer who dreams of walking the high wire, this fantasy fable demands close attention to savour the sometimes

sophisticated jokes and references. The thought provoking written text is accompanied by magical illustrations of sepia drawings and collages of metallic papers. These repay close scrutiny, as does the inventive and eccentric layout — some pages need to be read upside down or sideways. Precious is prepared to take risks, which pay off as she flies among the stars performing triple somersaults. This beautifully designed picture book provides a spectacular model for teachers wanting to stimulate the verbal and artistic capacities of young students. M. Davis

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: CA; English
SYLLABUS: Creative Arts K–6; English K–6
$24.99 SCIS 1461671

KANE, Glenda & ALLEN, Lisa

Anzac Day parade

Penguin Group (NZ), 2010 (Puffin)
ISBN 9780143504412 [821]

An evocative, poignant picture book, this is an outstanding publication. Soft, watercolour illustrations help to create a pensive mood, inviting readers to consider a significant part of Australia's history. An elderly war veteran shares his sad memories with a young boy who tends to think of war as an exciting adventure. The realities of combat are gently introduced by means of the concise written text and the sensitive double page illustrations. Discussion and research triggered by the tale and the few facts, printed at the end of the book, could support the Stage 1 COGs unit (B): *Our stories*, the Stage 2 COGs unit (B): *Being Australian*, and the Stage 3 COGs unit (B): *Identities*. A. Beedles
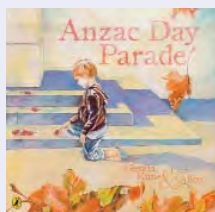
USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $14.95 SCIS 1446756

KIMURA, Ken & MURAKAMI, Yasunari

999 tadpoles find a new home

Gecko, NZ, 2010
ISBN 9781877467271

Mother Frog and Father Frog have 999 tadpoles but when they grow into frogs the pond becomes too small and they have to move. This picture book is a whimsical tale about their journey and the dangers they meet. Some of the humour is aimed at older readers, and there is plenty of reading. Younger readers will enjoy the colour illustrations which lend themselves well to visual literacy activities. Discussion about the life cycles of frogs, habitat, and dangers of terrain, snakes and birds could evolve from a reading of this book. It could be used to support the Stage 1 COGS unit (C): *Growing and changing*. R .Parnis

USER LEVEL: Stage 1
Paper $15.99 SCIS 1464154

KWAYMULLINA, Ambelin

How frogmouth found her home

Fremantle Arts Centre Press, WA, 2010
ISBN 9781921696015

Ambelin Kwaymullina is an illustrator and writer from the Bailgu and Njamal peoples from the Pilbara region in Western Australia. Her story names and describes a variety of Australian animals and explains where they live. The main character is a tawny frogmouth looking for a home. On the way, she helps other animals to identify their own place in the world. It is a useful stimulus text for students studying identity and families. The concept of belonging to the land rather than owning it is accentuated, helping to explain the relationship of Aboriginal people to the land. While the text may be too difficult for an emergent reader to decode independently, it is repetitive and there are vibrant illustrations that support meaning for a young reader. It is a thoroughly engaging picture book which most young readers will enjoy. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–6; HSIE K–6
$24.95 SCIS 1463627

LARDNER, Kym & LARDNER, Oliver

The dragon's lie

ABC, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780733325229

The end of this picture book is, as the end papers suggest, just the beginning for Dragon and the boy. Alone in a zoo, Dragon is challenged by the boy to be a real dragon, but what is the point when you have no-one to share your antics and adventures with? This provides a great starting point for exploring the nature and benefits of friendship, activity and engagement for maintaining one's self esteem, confidence, sense of wellbeing and worth. The boy's beliefs about what makes a proper dragon offers a good model for exploring and developing character and characterisation. Manga style and traditional eastern imagery combine to give this tale a unique look and feel. N. Chaffey

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
$24.99 SCIS 1450861

LESTER, Alison

Noni the pony

Allen & Unwin, 2010
ISBN 9781741758887 [821.3]

Children will enjoy a shared reading of this picture book. Most will be able to use the support of the pictures and rhyming words to predict and join in with the text as it is read aloud. The wonderful Alison Lester, no matter how simple the story, always provides readers with depth and challenge. The story addresses themes of friendship and childhood fears while using alliteration, assonance and rhyme to make the reading of the story rhythmic and engaging. Each double page spread has only two lines of written text, in a large font, and pictures that support understanding of the meaning. Some of the vocabulary may be challenging for an emergent reader,

but after a few readings children who are able to decode simple sight words will be able to use the rhyme to help with others. This is another charming story from a brilliant author and illustrator and will readily engage young readers. K. Rushton

McKINLAY, Meg & JACKSON, Mark
The truth about penguins
Walker, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781921150487

Penguins are coming to the zoo in this captivating picture book. As preparations are being made, a squirrel wants to know what a penguin is. To enlighten him, the animals share their knowledge and, page by page, their information becomes more colourful and outrageous. Finally, the zookeeper, and self proclaimed penguin expert, tries to dispel all the misconceptions and tell the truth about penguins. But is he right? The book is very funny and entertaining. The text takes on the voices of different animals, as their interesting knowledge is expressed, making it a great book to read aloud. Jackson's pictures are bright, colourful and full of quirky details that invite a reader to look closely. This book will amuse and entertain on many levels and will generate discussion on the truth about penguins. J. Foster

MILLER, David
Rufus the numbat
Ford St, Vic, 2010
ISBN 978187646262963

The illustrations in this picture book are wonderful paper sculptures that fill the pages with colour, action and humour. They catch the personalities and preoccupations of a cyclist, a roof-painter, and the coffee drinkers whose peaceful morning Rufus disrupts as he moves through the townscape, causing a variety of disasters. The contrast between the quiet life of Rufus in the bush and the busyness of the town is magnificently captured. The endpapers lovingly portray a landscape of spotted gums, grass and rocks, as Rufus uses a skateboard to get back to his proper place. The subtext offers subtle insight into the clash between the built and the natural environment and provides food for thought for the Stage 1 COGs unit (A): *Places* and the Stage 2 COGs unit (A): *Local environments*. M. Davis
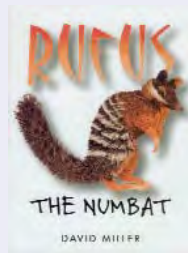
QUAY, Emma
Shrieking Violet
Scholastic, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741695687

A delightful narrative about sibling rivalry and jealousy, the picture book uses Quay's mixed media illustrations which include her daughter's preschool art. The attention demanding older child, who considers herself perfect, seems to have her moments with the mother wrecked by her younger sister. Violet destroys things and gets into mischief if not closely supervised. The older sister cleverly finds a way to manage Violet while maintaining her desired central role. The book may have special appeal for students who have younger siblings. R. Higginbottom

RIDDLE, Tohby
Dog and Bird and the caterpillar
Penguin Group (Australia), 2010
ISBN 9780143503927

In this board book, Dog and Bird confront the small everyday events of life with a down-to-earth logic, which will appeal to children. Aimed at the very young, the language is uncomplicated, allowing a developing reader to exercise skills while also encouraging beginning readers to explore written language. How to remove a wayward caterpillar, which has landed on Bird's back, is something every child has experienced. The help provided by Dog replicates a real-life situation with the transference of the caterpillar to a new back. Using a smaller than usual palette of colours for the illustrations helps to focus the eye of the reader on the visual aspects of the picture book, creating a total reading experience. S. Morton

SHINGLETON, Elizabeth Jane
Swat!
Little Steps, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780980575026

Children who love grubby things will enjoy this grimy tale and will also benefit from its environmental message. Subtly considering one aspect of the impact humans have on our environment, the story opens with a swarm of houseflies happily existing in the midst of human filth. Bright, colourful cartoon style pictures accompany the written text. The ending of the story sees the flies still happy, but now ensconced in a treetop paradise, away from humans. While students may need to have the final lesson explained, this picture book will prove to be entertaining and informative as to the relationship between humans and houseflies and how their respective environments should or should not overlap. The picture book supports issues in the Early Stage 1 COGs unit (A): *Our place*, Stage 1 unit (A): *Local places* and Stage 2 unit (A): *Local places*. A. Beedles

WHATLEY, Bruce
Hunting for dragons
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741693294

A quixotic heroine hunts dragons in her home through a rich tapestry of hidden images, engaging the reader in her clever and amusing imaginative journey. This delightfully entertaining picture book explores and employs imaginative play through visual illusions and good, old fashioned shadow play. Having introduced us to an array of dragons, the heroine does discover the real thing. Readers will pore over the illustrations to discover the assemblage images of dragons. Some images are reminiscent of artists such as Arcimboldo and Escher, and the resource could be used to explore light and shade concepts. N. Chaffey

Fiction for younger readers

Resources are arranged alphabetically by author.
See also e-resources.

Some of these books are also suitable for lower secondary students.

The best nest

/ adapted by Penny Olsen. National Library of Australia, ACT, 2010
ISBN 9780642277046

Olsen has adapted C. E. Stamp's poem *Birds with their own nest agree* (1945) to explain why different species of birds build different types of nest. The robins visit the cuckoo, kookaburra, emu, mallee fowl and grebes, among others, to examine their nests. Each bird explains why they have built their nest in their particular way and particular location. The message is that there are valid reasons for choices made and the birds build their nest to suit their needs and habitat. The robins discuss why the other nests would not suit them. The book has many words and it includes information on each bird and illustrations are supported by reprints of those held by the National Library. R. Higginbottom

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
	Paper $17.95 SCIS 1469915

BUSH, Maureen
Veil of magic [series]
Coteau Books for Kids, Canada, 2010

Set in Canada, this fantasy series centres on two youngsters and a magic which allows travel between worlds. Unfortunately, as the ring passes through the veil separating the two worlds, it creates tears in the delicate fabric, allowing the precious magic to escape, thereby weakening it. Josh and his sister Maddy must evade an angry troll and a malicious water spirit to return the ring to safety. Along the way they make important discoveries about themselves and each other. Throughout the book, the author delicately interweaves subtle themes of greed and selfishness as she critically looks at what mankind is doing to the environment and the repercussions this may have in the future. M. Whitfield

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
	Paper $10.95 each

Reviewed titles in this series:
Crow boy   SCIS 1470392
The nexus ring   SCIS 1352282
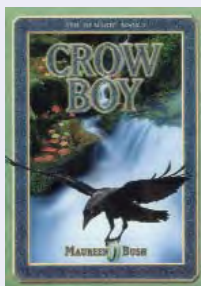
Please be aware that the price of a text may change between the time we receive the resource and the publication of the resource review. Prices include GST.

DELL, Gaye
Bidge's mob
Interrelate Family Centres, NSW, 2009
ISBN 9780977510931

There is a great need for stories like this to help children deal with family separations. Unlike similar books, this acknowledges the child's pain. In a metaphorical sense, it highlights different animals in the bush that live quite happily within different family structures, for example male emus that raise their chicks alone. The book is beautifully and unsentimentally illustrated in a style that will have a wide appeal. It is a very respectful book which will be useful in classrooms where there are Indigenous children in out of home care. School counsellors will find it a particularly useful means to assist troubled children. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Community Professional
KLA:	PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	PDHPE K–6
	Paper $14.95 SCIS 1460902

FARSHTEY, Greg & MHAN, Pop
The fall of Atero
Papercutz, USA, 2010 (Bionicle)
ISBN 9781597071932

Volume 9 in the enjoyable Bionicle **graphic novel** series, this tale takes place in the fantasy world of Bara Magna. An inhospitable world of deserts and mountains forms the backdrop for conflicts between rival robotic tribes. Bands of armed warriors battle for supremacy in gladiatorial style tournaments. Fans of the series will be delighted by another action packed narrative, while newcomers may be captivated by this episode. Like other volumes of the zany science fiction epic, this is presented in high colour and irregular panels that capture the turmoil and create a high level of excitement. A means of cultivating interest in reading and an appreciation **graphic novel** techniques, this is a sound publication for young students. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
	Paper $14.99 SCIS 1474077

FLYNN, Pat
The trophy kid
UQP, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9780702238406

After tackling the topics of obesity and anorexia in his previous novels, Flynn's main character in this story is Marcus, a talented young tennis player who comes to realise he has obsessive compulsive disorder. We are shown Marcus's life of training and tournaments, family health worries and self expectations, and the pressures these put on him even though he has a supportive family around him. Marcus turns to his friends, who help him confront his problems. Flynn writes about this topic with warmth, humour and understanding. This fictional text may support students who are experiencing similar feelings, and those who know someone with this disorder. The novel encourages children to face their problems, reach out to others and get the right advice. R. Parnis

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3
	Paper $16.95 SCIS 1462437
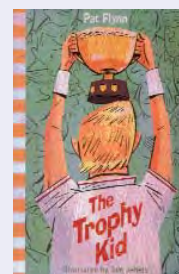
KUSAKA, Hidenori & Mato

Pokémon adventures. Volume 3

Viz Media, USA, 2009
ISBN 9781421530567

A volume in the popular *Pokémon* set, based on video games of the same name, the book relates to the Red, Blue and Green versions of the game. Red is the protagonist and on his extraordinary journey he meets his rival, Blue. Eventually these two characters are pitted against one another in the league championships. Presented as a series of short adventures, these tales are fast moving and action packed. A typically Japanese publication, this English version is read from right to left. The black and white artwork is engaging and drives an episodic story that is suitable for young readers who are excited by manga style. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $12.95   SCIS 1473975

PARK, Mac

Boy vs beast: battle of the worlds [series]

Pop & Fizz, Vic, 2010

Aiming to engage readers by motivating their literacy attack skills, this series has an unstated assumption that middle and upper primary students know what dragons and dinosaurs are, and are well accustomed to sophisticated computer graphics. The fonts are large, the sentence structures are basic and the narratives are simple. Multimodal delivery is effectively employed, complete with computer game references and **graphic novel** sequences, to create a context of science fiction and fantasy. Titles in the series have a consistent style and these books will readily find an audience. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $9.99 each

Reviewed titles in this series:
Aquatan   SCIS 1461280
Infernix   SCIS 1461274
Terradon   SCIS 1461284
Tornados   SCIS 1461282

PARKER, Jake

The star crusher

Graphix, New York, 2010 (Missile mouse)
ISBN 978054511759

Missile Mouse is a talented agent of the Galactic Security Agency with a gritty sense of humour, but he may be too much of a rebel to succeed in the espionage business. He is given Agent Hyde as an offsider to help track down the secrets of the star crushing machine. The lush glossy graphics employ the full range of colour both for foregrounding characters and for the emotive scene setting. The dialogue is snappy without being corny and the plot lines are amusing and complex enough to engage the more savvy **graphic novel** reader. Here is an old fashioned adventure story with enough science fiction to appeal to modern youth. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
Paper $16.99   SCIS 1461343

PRYOR, Boori Monty & ORMEROD, Jan

Shake a leg

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741758900

This story is one of hope, reconciliation and surprise for most readers as Boori welcomes the reader to share his stories which include the pizza making *murri fella*, and his story of the crocodile and the boy who did not listen. This is a rich text that will engage young readers in several ways. It may challenge their concepts of identity and what it means to be Australian. The text is set out like a comic book with speech bubbles and narrated text. In the pages of this **graphic novel**, modern multicultural Australia meets the ancient traditions which are explained and expressed through dance and connected to the story's present through the theme of food, which is used to symbolize culture. One character comments, *That story tastes good*, and this rich, delicious narrative will taste good to many young readers. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–6; HSIE K–6
$24.99   SCIS 1470751

SMILEY, Jane

Nobody's horse

Faber and Faber, UK, 2010
ISBN 9780571253548

The novel takes its audience on a realistic journey through the trials and tribulations of adolescence. The main character, Abby, faces many problems at school, complicated by her family's religious background. She also has to work long hours training horses with her father, as this allows them to keep the farm. One of these horses, Grumpy George, has more problems than Abby, but she is resolute in trying to help him so he will find a good home. This is a moving story of determination that will engage young readers with its lasting message of concentrating on the solutions, not the problem. M. Whitfield

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
Paper $16.99   SCIS 1468930

STEINHOFEL, Andreas

The pasta detectives

Chicken House, UK, 2010
ISBN 9781906427276

Rico lives with his mother in an apartment block in Berlin, where the ALDI kidnapper Mr 2000 has been kidnapping children for ransom. Rico finds evidence in his back garden and he becomes involved in the mystery after his friend Oscar goes missing. Even though he has a learning difficulty, Rico is determined to solve the mystery and save Oscar. Translated from German, this sensitive and fascinating mystery novel is filled with interesting details that link the story. Students will enjoy rereading the book to investigate those important clues that seemed irrelevant on first reading, but which are actually integral to the story plot. R. Parnis

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
Paper $14.95   SCIS 1459477

STEWART, Briony

Kumiko and the dragon's secret

University of Queensland Press, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9780702237805

Following *Kumiko and the dragon*, in this book Kumiko bravely rescues her sister and helps to keep the guardian dragon's secret. Sibling rivalry, facing your fears and the role of the big sister are just a few of the issues young readers will relate to in this adventure story. Black and white illustrations add to the magic of the book that is suited to early readers with its larger print and short chapter length. This book would add to any unit on mythical creatures. R. Parnis
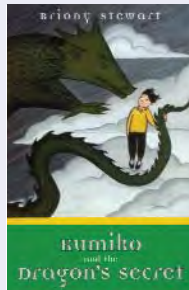
| **USER LEVEL:** | Stage 2 |
| | Paper $14.95 | SCIS 1467574 |

STEWART, Trenton Lee

The mysterious Benedict Society and the perilous journey

Chicken House, UK, 2010
ISBN 9781906427146

Four gifted children come together to form The Mysterious Benedict Society. The second book in this set begins with the foursome reunited for a perilous journey to find Mr Benedict, the person who brought the children together. In this grand international adventure, the characters are engaged in deciphering puzzles, riddles and clues that have been strewn across the continents. It is a race to rescue Mr Benedict from the antagonist, his evil twin Ledroptha Curtain. Throughout the narrative the children are challenged and this leads them to learn more about each of their unique talents. The quirky details and plot twists in this story are entertaining reading and will be especially enjoyed by fans of adventure tales. E. Sly

| **USER LEVEL:** | Stage 3 Stage 4 |
| | Paper $16.99 | SCIS 1459080 |

STRONG, Jeremy

The hundred-mile-an-hour dog

Penguin Books Ltd, UK, 2010 (Puffin) (Laugh your socks off with)
ISBN 9780141330204

Trevor is full of good intentions and ideas that always seem to have disastrous and costly results. In this humorous account of Trevor walking the family pet dog, Streaker, for money, he manages to go to the police station for bag snatching, burglary, and damaging a police vehicle. Streaker is under threat of execution as a result. Trevor's only friend Tina decides to help Trevor train Streaker and makes a bet with the town bully that it is possible. At stake is a drenching in the slimy old horse trough. The book, and accompanying audio CD read by Martin Clunes, may have special appeal for boys, as the fast paced action keeps the reader eager to discover how Trevor escapes sure disaster. R. Higginbottom
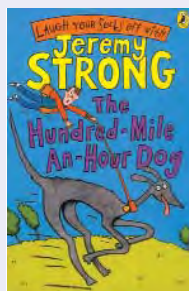
| **USER LEVEL:** | Stage 2 Stage 3 |
| | Paper $24.95 | SCIS 1459977 |

Some of these items are also suitable for upper primary students.

AONO, Shunju

I'll give it my all – tomorrow. 1

VIZ Media, USA, 2010
ISBN 9781421533650

Disappointing his elderly father and bewildering his teenage daughter, Shizuo Oguru quits his job. His midlife crisis results in him lazing around and playing video games. Feeling the need to set a goal in his life, he decides to become an artist and create a manga masterpiece. As a character, Shizuo Oguru is often difficult for a reader to sympathise with, yet the pathos and human frailty exposed in this tale make it compelling. The relatively simple artwork and slow pace are rather unusual for manga and it is interesting to see the format used in this manner. The book is a thought provoking observation of the difficulties of life and feelings of depression, alienation and insignificance. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
	Paper $17.85	SCIS 1474196

CLARK, Sherryl

One perfect pirouette

University of Queensland Press, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9780702238413

A determined young ballerina moves to Melbourne to pursue her dream of being accepted to national ballet school. Bryanna willingly faces the loneliness and isolation that comes from being the new kid in school and she even manages to rise above open hostility from her peers. However, when she realises the enormous sacrifice her family is making, Bryanna falters. Watching her parents slave to pay her dance school fees, while her brother grows increasingly resentful, leaves Bryanna burdened with an enormous sense of guilt. Well written and thought provoking, this novel provides a satisfying reading experience. S. Taylor

| **USER LEVEL:** | Stage 5 |
| | Paper $16.95 | SCIS 1460897 |

CORDER, Zizou

Halo

Penguin Group (Australia), 2010 (Puffin)
ISBN 9780141331850

Any literature that introduces a modern audience to the classics is to be commended. This book does so engagingly and is to be

applauded. Zizou Corder is the nom de plume of a mother and daughter writing partnership that has made a genuinely successful attempt to reweave the tales of ancient Greek mythology for a new audience. The title character has been washed ashore after a shipwreck and is found and raised by centaurs, the half human and half horse legendary archers of mythology. As Halo grows up, she begins to question her origins and sets off to mainland Greece in the hope of finding answers. Instead she finds a country on the brink of war. Disguised as a boy, separated from her friends and on the run from the mighty Spartans, Halo ultimately finds herself in Athens where she begins to feel a sense of identity. The book is more than mythological and historical fiction, it is an adolescent search for self. A. Silcock

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
Paper $19.95 SCIS 1445336

EAGAR, Kirsty
Saltwater vampires
Penguin Group (Australia), 2010
ISBN 9780143011460

Stories of the supernatural, when placed into an Australian setting, are often commercially unsuccessful. Australian audiences seem quite willing to suspend disbelief when horror tales are told in America, but on home soil they seem unconvincing. This novel is a forerunner in the new Australian literature genre. The story starts in 1629, following a circle of vampires as they massacre the survivors of a shipwreck. It then moves forward to the modern day, where this *circle of blood* is planning to suck the life out of the inhabitants of a small coastal town. A young man, Jamie Mackie, is struggling with his family, his desire for a girl friend and the unshakeable feeling that he abandoned his best friend in a time of crisis. Things can and do get worse when he is bitten by a vampire. As he starts to turn, he realises that he needs to find the leader of the *circle of blood* and kill him if he wishes to return to his everyday teenage problems. Readers will confront strong language and realistic violence in a book which is notable for its strong characterisation and thoughtful, morally conflicted main character. A. Silcock

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $19.95 SCIS 1471409

EMERSON, Kevin
Oliver Nocturne: the demon hunter
Scholastic, NSW, 2009 (Oliver Nocturne)
ISBN 9781741693874

An intriguing tale, this is set in an American town where humans are unaware of vampires and the vampires drink without killing their prey, and leaving memories blank afterwards. Young vampires grow up and receive their vampiric skills at puberty when they get their demon. Oliver Nocturne is a witty, likeable 13 year old who is no ordinary New World vampire. His destiny is to free vampires and subjugate humans. In the fourth book in this series, Oliver's brother, Bane, appears to be taking the form of a jaguar to kill human teenagers. However, all is not as it seems and Oliver with his friends Dean and Emalie discover that the evil Half-Light Consortium is behind the murders. Bane, who has been working in secret to help Oliver, finds himself imprisoned and facing death. Oliver's friend Emalie is a strong female character and she is gaining magical powers. Oliver faces moral dilemmas and learns about the nature of friendship and family ties. Fascinating as a stand alone book, readers should be aware that there are some

deaths in this book, although the main characters emerge unscathed. E Chase

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
Paper $14.99 SCIS 1426058

FANTASKEY, Beth
Jessica's guide to dating on the dark side
Penguin Group (Australia), 2010
ISBN 9780143204039

Teenage themes of love, family and belonging play out against the increasingly popular vampire story. Jessica is an adopted teenager whose social scientist parents agreed to care for her in America when her vampire parents were killed in a feud between the two most powerful vampire families. In many ways the novel echoes Romeo and Juliet issues of family and the importance of love in overcoming differences, but this book incorporates teenage angst more relevant to today's audience. Initially, Jessica cannot tolerate the dangerously different Lucius, who seems too strange and arrogant to be appealing. This distaste turns to interest when a cheerleader steps in to take advantage of Lucius' loneliness and growing interest in the freedom inherent in American society. While it may be easy to dismiss, as dully derivative, the ever increasing array of teenage speculative fiction, especially those texts that have vampires as central characters, this novel explores concepts of difference and the inherent desire to belong, in interesting and charming ways. It is a worthwhile read and one which could be recommended to senior students looking for an additional text for the Area of Study. S. Pollard

USER LEVEL: Stage 6
Paper $19.95 SCIS 1449010

FISK, Pauline
In the trees
Faber, UK, 2010
ISBN 9780571236206

Stunning imagery is evoked in this coming of age tale as Kid searches for his father in Belize. After Kid's mother passes away he lives with Nadine and works in a mundane job after school. He finds a photograph of his long lost father amongst his mother's possessions and sets out to find him, joining a group of youths in their gap year. These elements form the focus of the story as Kid learns about himself, and develops his perceptions of other people. The realism of the narrative and strong sense of place is supported by Kid's storytelling of life in Belize, the poverty, and deforestation of the jungle. Middle school students will engage with this easy to read, flowing plot. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $16.99 SCIS 1458611

FUJIYAMA, Kairi
Dragon eye. Volume 2
Random House, USA, 2007
ISBN 9780345498830

This episode in the *Dragon eye* set of stories sees Issa challenging the Dracule, a bird-like creature transformed by a terrible virus. This monster is destined to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the uninfected, in turn affecting the victims. Problems arise and the protagonists, Issa and Leila, are launched on a journey that

requires courage and tenacity. This high energy manga publication moves rapidly from one confrontation to another. The characters are powerfully presented in the black and white artwork which demonstrates the strong emotions often conveyed in the manga style. Readers who enjoy the wild pace of futuristic manga will find this book quite thrilling. The book reads from right to left. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
Paper $15.75   SCIS 1398037

HAVEL, Geoff

Water

Scholastic, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741695601

Utilizing a premise that explores the extended possibilities of genetic engineering and human experimentation, the writer creates a very evocative world which offers much for the reader. The believable shift from what is possible to what could happen is explored in this excellent, gripping tale. The central character struggles to understand her situation and discover her past. She needs to save herself and others from the ambitious, sinister scientists who wish to exploit her. Issues of cloning, future directions, and science's role in the future of humans, make this narrative a valuable springboard for classroom activities. Its style and level of language ensures that it can be used across a wide range of abilities. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $16.99   SCIS 1461354

HEFFERNAN, John

Where there's smoke

Scholastic, SA, 2010 (Omnibus)
ISBN 9781862918665

Explosive from the onset, this intriguing and suspenseful story will engage students interested in human survival stories. Luke and his mother settle in Edenville to escape an explosive father and husband. Students who have moved schools will find resonance with Nick and his new school issues. Nick is bullied, but he also becomes friendly with Tiny, a colourful foreigner. Nick and Tiny come into their own when they warn neighbours of an impending bushfire and undertake acts of bravery while sheltering from the firestorm. It is an outstanding narrative, full of hope and survival, written with purpose, but never didactic. The chaos, fear, and togetherness of the community are narrated with complete plot control. Beautifully delineated characters explore the ultimate message that life goes on. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $14.99   SCIS 1454590

HERRICK, Steven

Slice: juicy moments from my impossible life

Woolshed, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781864719642

The main character, Darcy, is a young man in Year 11 and the narrative is told from his point of view. He is easy to like. In the genre of young male coming of age stories, this one can be a pleasant change. Darcy's major issue is that he speaks without considering the consequences, but what he says is often truthful and very funny. He is a charming role model. This is not a novel driven by plot, but

teenage readers will be engaged by the protagonist's attempts to navigate friendships, rivalries, and his first love. While dealing with the mundane, the story is also very humane, as Darcy learns about the fragility of life and the need to make connections with those who are different from us. P. Gilchrist

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
Paper $17.95   SCIS 1461791

KUBO, Tite

Memories in the rain

VIZ Media, USA, 2001 (Bleach / Shonen Jump graphic novel)
ISBN 9781591164435

In the third volume of a manga series in the supernatural genre, 15 year old Ichigo Kurosaki has the uncanny ability to see spirits of those who are not able to rest in peace. He meets Rukia, a soul reaper, who has been injured in battle and she passes on her sword and much of her power to Ichigo, enabling him to become a soul reaper and avenge the death of his mother. This eerie tale is well suited to the manga format. Black and white artwork, irregular panels, and frequent close-up shots convey the terror of the battles with supernatural beings. It will excite readers who enjoy this style of **graphic novel**. The book reads from right to left. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $12.95   SCIS 1306671

LAKE, Nick

Blood Ninja

Corvus, UK, 2010
ISBN 9781848873872

The ancient oriental world of ninjas, samurai, and codes of honour are interwoven in this fast paced, gripping tale. It explores themes of good and evil, loyalty and duty, and friendship, through the main characters' search for answers to challenging circumstances. The incorporation of a dark side, with the inclusion of vampires, blood thirsty battles, and the supernatural, adds an extra dimension that will attract a broad range of readers. While epic in style, the simple language and descriptive narrative allow it to be readily enjoyed by all levels of readers. It is a very good first instalment of the search for the truth in an exotic world full of danger. It is worth considering as a class text as it has a lot to offer in terms of extended classroom activities. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $24.99   SCIS 1459282

LAWSON, Sue

Dare you

Black Dog, VIC, 2010
ISBN 9781742031491

In this tale of adolescent friendship, Ruby, Khaden and Sas have been friends for *like, you know, forever* but as their interpersonal relationships begin to deepen and grow in unexpected ways, the boundaries of their friendship becomes stretched and they begin to keep secrets from each other. Their childhood pranks and child like innocence is beginning to be replaced by the more difficult and more mature aspects of modern adolescence. From this perspective as every teenager *knows*, every friendship is forever, the first love is the only true love and every secret contains the potential for complete rack and ruin. The story deals with contemporary issues and complex themes of adolescence and loyalty, coupled with the

strain of family relationships. The author demonstrates an enlightened insight into the trials and tribulations of the modern teenager and each chapter is told from the first person point of view of one of the protagonists. This is a warm, thought provoking and delightfully engaging narrative. A. Silcock

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
Paper $18.99   SCIS 1470939

LINK, Kelly

Pretty monsters

Text, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781921656361

Bizarre happenings and distinctive characters become memorable as this quirky collection of short stories explores diverse genres including science fiction, horror and romance. Mysterious and spooky, these five tales engage readers in the weird and at times strangely humorous exploration of monsters, aliens and werewolves. A beautifully unique illustration by Shaun Tan depicts a scene from each story. The title story, *Pretty monsters*, is reminiscent of gothic romance popularised in the *Twilight* series, and yet the twists in the narrative lead to an unexpected conclusion that is open to interpretation. This compelling collection will keep young adult readers wondering what will happen next. E. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
Paper $19.95   SCIS 1458989

LOMER, Kathryn

What now, Tilda B?

University of Queensland Press, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9780702237782

Challenges associated with adolescence are sensitively explored in this honest narrative. Fifteen year old Tilda struggles to find a meaningful direction for her life until she stumbles across the extremely rare birth of a seal pup not far from her home. Sparking her fervour for nature and wildlife, this event gives Tilda a new lease on life. She makes fresh decisions about her future. Mistakes are made and she recognises these in personal reflections presented in an easy to follow chronological, diary style format. Tilda's experiences, and those of her close friends, lead Tilda to mature and take control of her destiny. This coming of age novel raises some sensitive adolescent issues, which are dealt with sincerely and responsibly. E. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
Paper $19.95   SCIS 1453529

MARTEL, Yann

Beatrice and Virgil

Text, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781921656255

Having a public reputation as a renowned writer becomes increasingly problematic for Henry. Consequently, he takes his family and moves to an unnamed city in an attempt to regain some semblance of balance. Yet, upon adopting a relatively anonymous existence, Henry finds himself embroiled in a complex relationship with a taxidermist who has written a manuscript about a donkey and howler monkey. The superbly crafted narrative combines elements of metafiction, absurdism and magical realism.
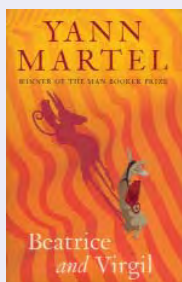
Intricate characterisation adds to a deeply philosophical plot. The multifaceted novel provides many challenges to the reader and its rich language is exquisite. It takes sophisticated twists and turns, but nothing can prepare the reader for the shocking conclusion. H. Gardiner

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; English Stage 6: *Advanced*
$32.95   SCIS 1457426

MASHIMA, Hiro

Fairy tail. 1

Del Rey, USA, 2008
ISBN 9780345501332

An English translation, this manga publication retains the authenticity of the original Japanese version. It is presented unflopped: readers move right to left across the pages. A high action tale of Lucy, a wizard who wants to be admitted to the Fairy tail wizard guild, the narrative tells of her dangerous encounters. Natsu, an enigmatic boy with a talking cat, has to come to Lucy's rescue on many occasions. This zany Japanese comic will appeal to young manga enthusiasts. The black and white artwork is energetic and boisterous, endowing the tale with the excess of emotion frequently associated with the manga style. It contains some interesting additional notes explaining Japanese honorific titles and translation notes to assist Western readers. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English 7–10
Paper $16.85   SCIS416018

MEAD, Richelle

Spirit bound

Razorbill, Vic, 2010 (Vampire academy)
ISBN 9781921518867

Rose Hathaway is a Dhampir, a being with a vampire father and human mother. She has finally graduated from the Vampire Academy. This fifth book in the series has been eagerly awaited by Mead's fans and she does not let them down. The research into eastern European folk mythology is rigorous and the description of the darker side of Slavic culture is comprehensive. The written style is clear and readily absorbing. It would be easy to dismiss this book as a typical sample of the genre, but *Spirit bound* does require commitment to a sophisticated world view. Moroi, Strigoi and Dhampir are vampire variants from Romania and readers should be prepared for bloodlust and adrenaline to merge. Rose is developing a character and many young readers can identify with her quest for identity. V. Davidson

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
Paper $19.95   SCIS 1459969

MURRAY, Kirsty

India dark

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741758580

Set in India in 1910, this is a tale of bravery, friendship and loyalty. Inspired by the true story of a young Australian girl in a travelling theatre company in the heart of India, the narrative exposes the hardships the

children in the troupe endured and the tragedy of having to grow up too early. Told alternately through the eyes of Poesy Swift and Tilly Sweetrick, the novel gives an amazing insight into Indian social life and customs. The book has depth of characterisation and a compelling plot. S. Taylor

| USER LEVEL: | Stage 5 |
| | Paper $16.95 | SCIS 1470653 |

REEVE, Philip
A web of air
Scholastic, UK, 2010 (Mortal engines)
ISBN 9781407115177

Books in this series propose a post nuclear alternative world on par with the best of its genre. As the principles of the machine are rediscovered the best steam punk engineers like the heroine, Fever Crumb, in this prequel become the protagonists who take the risks to lead the world away from superstition and back to the future. Reeve is a master of the genre and he writes instant cult classics. *A web of air* can captivate readers on different levels according to their interests, as a fast paced adventure or a psychologically complex exploration of the place of technology in culture. V. Davidson

| USER LEVEL: | Stage 4 Stage 5 |
| | $29.99 | SCIS 1467440 |

ROWEN, Michelle
Demon princess: reign check
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781742374369

The characters and settings of this novel will be familiar to young readers who are intrigued by fantasy that includes magic and other worlds. The language leans heavily on teenage verbal interactions with a lot of direct speech. The heroine, the demon princess, seems to be as focused on shopping and boys as much as on her demon ancestry so there are many points through which a young reader could connect with the heroine. The plot moves quickly and the characters interact and respond in very familiar ways. For instance the demon father, who is addressed as *Dad* resumes his demon form when angered. In one instance the anger is partly triggered by the demon princess holding hands with a boy. This tale, with its focus on relationships, will provide a fast paced escape to another world for young readers. K. Rushton
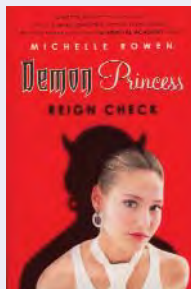
| USER LEVEL: | Stage 4 Stage 5 |
| | Paper $14.99 | SCIS 1465054 |

Tales of the golden avenger
Marvel, USA, 2009 (The Invincible Iron Man)
ISBN 9780785142799

In classic superhero style, the flying Iron Man acts to deter villainous characters who threaten world peace. His adversaries include such reprobates as Living Laser and The Ghost, but Iron Man operates to outwit and defeat these foes. In graphic novel format, this exciting publication contains a series of short stories. The characters and highly active narratives, set in a futuristic technological world, are intriguing. The inclusion of irregular, often diagonal panels and close-up facial expressions indicate a strong manga influence in the visual images. Concise written text and a good deal of explosive onomatopoeia enhance the visual narrative. It is a very good example of engaging graphic fiction. C. Sly

| USER LEVEL: | Stage 3 Stage 4 |
| | Paper $17.30 | SCIS 1452131 |

URASAWA, N. & TEZUKA, O. & NAGASAKI, T.
Pluto: Urasawa X Tezuka. 002
VIZ Media, USA, 2009
ISBN 9781427519197

Based on Tezuka's classic character, Astro Boy, this terrific book is the second volume of a set created for older readers. During a period of constant international conflict the great robots of the world hold the balance of power. Gesicht is a robot detective trying to track down the human or machine responsible for destroying some of the great robots. Atom, based on the original Astro Boy, and his sister, Uran, are in danger. The graphic novel is a fascinating murder mystery with many intertextual links and allusions to historical and contemporary world politics. These include war with the Kingdom of Persia, believed to have robots of mass destruction, and the android characters in the film *Blade runner*. The semirealistic black and white artwork is mesmerising with its alternation between simplicity and complexity. The art conveys an intensity of emotion and helps to blur the line between humanity and robots. This manga publication has a philosophical depth that makes it a superior example of its style. C. Sly

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	English
SYLLABUS:	English 7–10; English Stage 6
	Paper $17.95	SCIS 1437747

<div style="background:teal">

Information, poetry and drama
Resources are in Dewey order.

</div>

BRASCH, Nicolas
The technology behind [series]
Macmillan, Vic, 2010   [004.67]

Prolific author Nicolas Brasch has produced a series which will engage and inform readers of all ages. The spacious, uncluttered format makes information, on a myriad of fascinating topics, easily accessible. *Word watch* boxes included throughout replace a conventional glossary and *Web watch* provides links to worthwhile websites, although it should be noted that many of these links have long urls that may be difficult for students to type accurately. Readers would have benefited from the links being made available from the publisher's website, to increase accessibility. Interesting quotations, well labelled diagrams and the uncomplicated explanation of many technical concepts contribute to this excellent series, which will certainly encourage further investigation into the wonderful world of science. These resources support Stage 2 COGs units (F): *Machines*, *Powering On*, and (A): *Local Places*, and Stage 3 COGs unit (F) *Physical Phenomena*. A. Beedles

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
	$31.95 each

REEDER, Stephanie Owen

I've got a feeling

National Library of Australia, ACT, 2010
ISBN 9780642276971   [152.4]

There are many books and programs for teaching emotional literacy, but this interactive, lift the flap book is one of the best. Children will be attracted by the vibrant colours, the clear drawings, and the quirky verses describing each of twelve emotions. An enjoyable book, it develops an understanding of emotions and the ways they are conveyed through facial expressions and body language. It is a valuable publication for use with young children who are learning to identify and manage their own feelings and to empathise with the feelings of others. The additional activities in the back of the book could form the basis of engaging lessons. It is appropriate for use by teachers in support classes as well as the mainstream. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	English; PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	English K–6; PDHPE K–6
	Paperback $17.95 SCIS 1447411

CARLILE, Molly

Sometimes life sucks: when someone you love dies

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781742371887   [155.9]

There are few books on grief and loss focused on the needs of high school students. This helpful book opens with a story of the loss of a friend followed by tips on how to help a friend who is grieving. Each chapter has a story of loss with information about what can help. There are single page discussions on topics such as *will people think I don't care if I start to feel happy again?* There is a focus on the effect of loss on one's identity. The book does not shy away from looking at terminal illnesses and how a young person might cope with the fact that they are dying. It demystifies death. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
	Paper $19.99 SCIS 1470624

BLOCH, Serge

Reach for the stars and other advice for life's journey

Koala, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780864619730   [158.1]

Colloquial sayings are depicted literally in simple pen and ink sketches throughout this life instruction book. Each page has a single line homily directed at achieving success and being resilient to setbacks. The literal translation of the sayings into cartoons injects humour into this self help book and may assist students struggling with the nuances of the English language. Providing clear examples of figurative language in the form of metaphor, simile and hyperbole, this compact book has a range of uses in mainstream and ESL classrooms. Counsellors may also find the uplifting senti-

ments benefit students needing encouragement when approaching challenges or milestones in their lives. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
	$14.99 SCIS 1464329

RODRIQUES, Chris & GARRATT, Chris

Introducing modernism

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010 (Introducing)
ISBN 9781848311169   [190]

Using graphics and academic language, this little book endeavours to answer 15 key concerns relating to the 20th century concept of modernism. Sketches drawn in a comic style support the explanations of modernism, particularly as it relates to the arts. It raises crucial points to consider when reviewing modernism, making this an interesting resource for teachers to use in generating classroom discussion. Students who have been previously exposed to modernist ideas will get the most benefit from the book. It will strengthen student understanding of this art movement and the cultural and historical factors that impacted on modernism. N. French
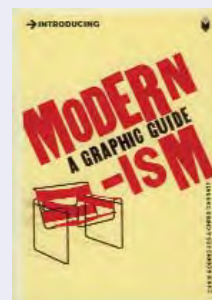
USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	CA
SYLLABUS:	Visual Arts Stage 6
	Paper $18.99 SCIS 1461859

Issues and opinions: Volume 1

/ edited by Justin Healey. Spinney Press, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781921507182   [300.994]

A great addition to the prolific *Issues in society* series, this first volume can be read either in isolation or in conjunction with various *Issues in society* volumes. The topics include **Stem cell research**; **Climate change**; **Globalisation**; **Multiculturalism**; **Internet censorship** and several others. The editor does not seek to comprehensively explain each of these issues. Instead he presents recent data, government reports, and opinion pieces from the Internet and print media, as well as information provided by various NGOs. The book presents selected differing perspectives on controversial issues making it an excellent starting point for research. Teachers and students of Legal Studies and Society and Culture will find this particularly useful, both for its various articles and the concluding page of each chapter which summarises the pros and cons of each issue. J. White

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	HSIE
SYLLABUS:	Legal Studies Stage 6; Society and Culture Stage 6
	Paper $34.95 SCIS 1446891

HUTCHINGS, Melinda

It will get better: finding your way through teen issues

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781742371139   [305.235]

High school students sometimes let teachers and school counsellors know about their problems but often they prefer to talk to their friends or find other sources of information and comfort. This book

was written to give teenagers realistic advice on sensitive issues and it gives realistic and useful information on topics such as suicide, abuse, drugs, alcohol, depression, self harm, and pregnancy. Each chapter has an introduction, stories from young people who have experienced the problem and expert advice from a range of credible sources. The final chapters are about coping with everyday life. This is a helpful book although it is too confronting for all but senior students to use independently. School counsellors could use appropriate extracts with students and their parents. A. Soutter

| USER LEVEL: | Stage 6 Professional |
| | Paper $24.99 | SCIS 1465236 |

JENAINATI, Cathia & GROVES, Judy

Introducing feminism

Icon, UK, 2010 (Introducing)
ISBN 9781848311213 [305.42]

Using brief information and comic style illustrations, this publication presents a history of the struggle to end sexist oppression. It outlines the notion of patriarchy and early thinking about gender, based on essentialist notions or biological determinism. It foregrounds the milestones of organised feminist activity in Britain and the USA since the 18th century. Different factions within the feminist movement and significant theorists, writers, and activists since the 1960s are noted. A concise and valuable overview of the historical development and social impact of the feminist movement, this is a very worthwhile introductory resource for students. The concluding timeline and reading list are useful for ready reference. C. Sly
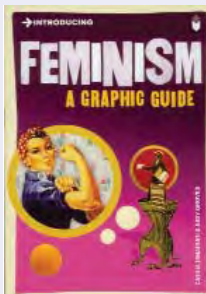
USER LEVEL:	Stage 6
KLA:	HSIE
SYLLABUS:	Modern History Stage 6; Society & Culture Stage 6
	Paper $18.99	SCIS 1470632

Issues in Society [series]

/ edited by Justin Healey. Spinney Press, NSW, 2010   327.1

These latest additions to the renowned series are more colourful and accessible than some of the previous titles. The editor presents the basic facts about each issue through photographs, data and statistics, graphics and photographs. While much of the contents of each volume can be found on the Internet, the value of the books lies in the comprehensive research and reader friendly layout of each title. These volumes integrate colourful photographs with graphical data and written text. As an example, Volume 305 on *Recycling and managing waste* provides background knowledge and up-to-date data that teachers and students of Stage 5 Geography would need in their study of Waste management in the unit *Issues in Australian environments*. Other volumes would be similarly useful for various HSIE courses. J. White

| USER LEVEL: | Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 |
| KLA: | HSIE |

| SYLLABUS: | Geography 7–10; Geography Stage 6; Legal Studies Stage 6; Society and Culture Stage 6 |
| | Paper $20.95 each |

Reviewed titles in this series:

Genetically modified foods and crops	SCIS 1458512
Infectious disease	SCIS 1445567
Nuclear disarmament	SCIS 1472655
Recycling and managing waste	SCIS 1445562
Whaling	SCIS 1472690

Real world data [series]

Heinemann Library, UK, 2010   332.4

An interesting series that cultivates data literacy, the books present information about particular issues through various forms of graphs and tables. The data and issues behind the data are explained simply. Different graphical methods are compared for their usefulness. The value of using particular charts or graphs is explained at the back of each volume in the section called *Chart smarts*. These four volumes range widely in their content, and include information on crime, sport, money, and health. They address numeracy outcomes in a variety of curriculum areas such as Mathematics, Geography, Commerce, and PDHPE. Written and visual information is clear and concise, making these highly engaging references. J. White

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	HSIE; Mathematics; PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	Commerce 7–10; Geography 7–10; Mathematics 7–10; PDHPE 7–10
	$35.95 each

Reviewed titles in this series:

Graphing crime	SCIS 1443613
Graphing health and disease	SCIS 1443612
Graphing money	SCIS 1443609
Graphing sport	SCIS 1443608

BILKUEI, Cola

Boy soldier

Pan Macmillan, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780330403771 [362.87]

Detailing the story of refugee, Cola Bilkuei, this book provides a compelling account of an extraordinary journey. Cola's story begins with a confronting description of his forcible recruitment into the Sudan People's Liberation Army while still a child. Cola managed to survive and escaped. Unable to return to his home, he trekked through central and southern Africa for many years seeking asylum. Without any identification and little outside assistance, he managed to get all the way to South Africa where he was accepted into a UN refugee camp. Cola was eventually allowed into Australia where he now helps other Sudanese refugees who have experienced similar traumatic journeys and difficulties adjusting to a new country. As a narrative, this book is a compelling example of a contentious issue. Its value lies in the detail of Cola's experience and the straightforward way he describes his fear, sadness and joy at various stages in his journey. *Boy Soldier* is a good starting point for the study of refugees and asylum seekers in Geography and Legal Studies, as it successfully humanises a topic that can be over reliant on statistics and generalisations. J. White
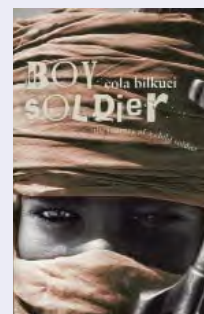
BURGE, Roslyn

No peacetime cinderellas: a history of the War Widows' Guild of Australia in New South Wales 1946-2006

War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780646477374 [369]

Clearly labelled sepia and black and white photographs, maps, diagrams, and scanned newspaper clippings support this outstanding insight into women in postwar Australia. Investigating the beginnings of the Guild, its advocacy roles, fundraising and governance, the book's material also explores issues of welfare, handicrafts, housing, relationships and events in Australia in the latter half of the 20th century. Bold headings separate key themes with in-depth feature boxes reinforcing key facts and case studies. As a social history of women in Australia, the book presents well for students and it is expertly referenced. It will be useful for History students pursuing a related line of interest. A. Frost

Australian celebrations [series]

Pearson Australia, Vic, 2010 [394]

Dealing with celebrations in all forms, this series explains the history, form of celebration and time of each important event in multicultural Australia. Effective use is made of subheadings, index, captions and glossary as well as directions to the publisher's website library for further resources on the topic. The books are standard resources, typical of the genre. They will be generally useful for multiple COGs units at different Stage levels, with particular application to the Stage 2 COGs unit (H): *Understanding each other*. R. Higginbottom

Reviewed titles in this series:
Commemorative days	SCIS 1460275
Public holidays	SCIS 1460268
Religious events	SCIS 1460271
Shows and festivals	SCIS 1460273

THOMPSON, Tony

Vampires: the un-history of the undead

Black Dog Books, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781742031316 [398.21]

Investigating history, mythology and literature, this smoothly written exploration of vampires in fiction, film and television will enrapture students fascinated with the recent vampire phenomenon. Beginning with a historical perspective, the book follows the development of the vampire and horror genre through to contemporary expressions. Polodori's *Vampryre*, Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Stoker's *Dracula* are argued to be the model, with a summary of major influences and characters. A list of suggested readings, listening and viewing adds to the investigation. The writing is unambiguous and supported by fluid reasoning. The book would be a useful resource when studying the horror genre in English 7–10. A. Frost

TWEEDIE, Margie

Anacondas to zebras: alphabet fun

Toy Box, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780980789317 [421]

A brightly coloured alphabet book, this has a good deal to offer young readers. Each letter of the alphabet is represented by a brief narrative, in which the focus letter predominates. On each opposing page is a naïve illustration of quirky animal characters and activities that occur in the story. Children will enjoy hearing the written text read aloud, as it contains an abundance of alliteration and assonance, and they will be absorbed in finding the pictorial representations of the words. This delightful publication offers an exciting means to teach the alphabet and extend children's vocabulary to include some unusual names, creatures and activities. C. Sly

Animal lives [series]

Macmillan Library, Vic, 2010 [591]

Fantastic colour photography is a feature of the books in this series. Each title starts with the same two paragraphs explaining in general terms the challenges animals face to survive and reproduce successfully. Then, the individual subject of the title is explained and approximately 23 examples of animals from all environments and orders are provided. A concise fact file box and interesting fact is included for each animal. Language is clear and simple with short passages linked to each colour photograph. Highlighted keywords are defined in the glossary. The books support the Stage 1 COGs unit (C): *Growing and changing* and the Stage 2 COGs unit (C): *Effects of growth and change*. R. Parnis

Reviewed titles in this series:
Attracting mates	SCIS 1460475
Food and feeding	SCIS 1460474
Having young	SCIS 1460527
Homes	SCIS 1460469
Migration	SCIS 1460479
Movement	SCIS 1460480

GOODALL, Damian

The snake book: slip sliding away

Black Dog, Vic, 2010 (Wild planet)
ISBN 9781742031408   [597.96]

The latest offering in this award winning series continues the high quality we have come to expect. On a topic that both attracts and repels readers, this well researched information is accompanied by large bold images. Goodall has selected the extremes of the snake world, for example the smallest and the deadliest, and used them to explore interesting data on snakes. The short written text uses the jargon of the subject, with technical terms presented in bold font for ease of reference. The book is a general introduction to snake types, behaviours and habitats. R. Higginbottom
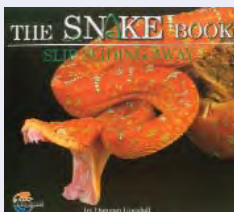
USER LEVEL:	Stage 3
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
	Paper $16.99 SCIS 1447954

The little brainwaves investigate [series]

DK, UK, 2010   [612]

The little brainwaves are cartoon characters who appear on every page of these books and guide the reader through its ideas. They question, guide and comment on the visual and textual information presented. The books are well researched and informative. Each topic is presented in a friendly font and coloured boxes, with a brief overview and subtopics clearly identified. The written text is supported by photographs, with parts of the image often captioned and magnified to elaborate on a point. The series supports the Stage 2 COGs unit (C): *Effects of growth and change.* R. Higginbottom

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
	$24.95 each

Reviewed titles in this series:
Animals   SCIS 1457882
Human body   SCIS 1457885

Food matters [electronic resource]

Pia, SA, 2010
ISBN none   [613.2]

Using a PDF file, this CD-ROM is a user friendly resource which contains information on the body, nutrients, hunger, food products, fluids, food treats, inspiration from multicultural foods, and easy lunch ideas. There are 10 units of work and each comes with activities, discussion questions, riddles, nutrition quizzes, internet links, self evaluations, and teacher answers. Users have permission to print off pages as work sheets. Material can also be projected onto an IWB. Each page has colourful writing and clear colour photographs to help students further understand the work. References and links are provided at the end for further investigation. M. Timperley

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	TAS
SYLLABUS:	Food Technology 7–10
	$POA SCIS 1462457

The commonsense cookery book

Angus & Robertson, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780732290153   [641.5]

A classic in the genre, this revised edition is a great learning resource for students needing to develop basic food preparation skills. The book begins with food pyramids and food groups, measurements, meat sources, and a glossary of culinary terms. It includes step-by-step technique guides, information about Australian food laws and dietary guidelines, cleaning and sanitising procedures, workplace hygiene procedures, and information on the practicalities of running a pantry. There are diagrams on kitchen skills such as making precision cuts, and numerous one-page recipes covering all types of food products with easy to follow procedures. M. Timperley

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Community Professional
KLA:	TAS
SYLLABUS:	Food Technology 7–10; Hospitality Curriculum Framework Stage 6
	Paper $24.99 SCIS 1452472

DONOVAN, Molly & FISKE, Tina

The Andy Goldsworthy project

Thames & Hudson, UK, 2010
ISBN 9780500238714   [730.92]

Andy Goldsworthy remains an admired and favourite artist for many art lovers. Many of his works are outdoor ephemeral installations of great delicacy and beauty. This large, glossy book covers all aspects of Goldworthy's artistic practice. An array of site specific artworks, on location outside or contained within a gallery, is featured. They include more recently completed works up to 2008. Photographs document Goldsworthy and his helpers constructing his artworks with descriptions of the working methods, materials and artistic intensions. Written journal entries and sketches from Goldsworthy's visual arts diaries, along with quotations from the artist, enhance the visual experience of the artworks. This book is a valuable addition to any library and will readily be viewed and enjoyed by staff and students alike. N. French
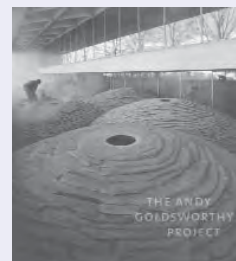
USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	CA
SYLLABUS:	Creative Arts K–6, Visual Arts 7–10, Stage 6 Visual Arts
	$90.00 SCIS 1459017

BAINES, Phil

Puffin by design: 70 years of imagination, 1940-2010

Allen Lane, UK, 2010
ISBN 9780141326146   [741.6]

A fascinating look at the development of book cover designs, this book is a feast for the eyes as it documents changes in typography, illustration styles, and printing techniques over the last 70 years. Presented in a chronological format, the writing is concise in detailing the development of Puffin Books as the children's

publishing arm of Penguin, while also featuring information on authors and illustrators and the secrets behind their success. Page spreads of some books are provided, enhancing visual links between the cover design and inside page layout. Expect to find many favourite childhood stories in this book. It would be a valuable resource when teaching visual literacy in English, and for working with illustration and design techniques in the Visual Arts. N. French

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA: CA: English
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Design 7–10; Visual Design CEC Stage 6
Paper $49.95   SCIS 1462193

TAN, Shaun

The bird king and other sketches

Windy Hollow, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781921136580   [741.6092]

A unique behind the scenes glimpse at the creative process, this publication features preliminary sketches, storyboard roughs, and doodles by acclaimed picture book composer Shaun Tan. His brief, well considered written comments enhance the visual collection. It is a delight to view the unselfconscious drafts and see the seeds of his creative works. Tan's whimsical sketches blur the boundaries between the natural world, mechanical constructions and mystical images and admit readers into fascinating recesses of the artist's mind. Apart from being a sheer joy to browse, it is an enchanting example of the artist's process for budding visual artists, and it offers inspiration for storytelling and creative writing. C. Sly

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: CA; English
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Design 7–10
$39.95   SCIS 1474389

Street/studio: the place of street art in Melbourne

Thames & Hudson, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9780500500200   [751.7]

Street art, to some, is merely tags and graffiti mess disguised under a new name; to others, street art is an expressive form to unleash artistic creativity. This book focuses on 10 influential Australian artists living in Melbourne who work between locations of studio, gallery, and the street to produce art. Each artist is featured in individual chapters which are dominated by full page spreads of their artworks. These include studio photographs, preliminary sketches and designs, and completed works in situ. Written text is concise and interviews with the artists provide insight into their artist practice and intentions. This engaging book captures a wide range of expressive styles which will interest students and create discussions about street art as a legitimate art form. N. French
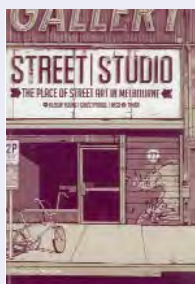
USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: CA
SYLLABUS: Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Arts Stage 6
Paper $59.95   SCIS 1465551

James Fardoulys: a Queensland naïve artist

Queensland Art Gallery, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9781921503108   [759.994]

Celebrating Fardoulys's artistic contributions, these large, glossy reproductions of his bright and vibrant artworks contain a cultural mix of images from Greece and outback Australia. The language is detailed but easy to read, retelling Fardoulys's migration from Greece as a teenager in 1914, with some biographical information and notes on his artistic practice in Queensland in the 1960s. Students should enjoy the style of Fardoulys's painting and will easily relate to the subject matter presented. N. French
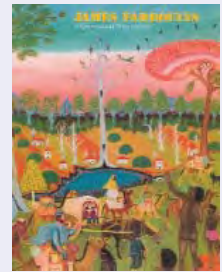
USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: CA
SYLLABUS: Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Arts Stage 6
Paper $25.00   SCIS 1466686

WHEATLEY, Nadia

Making My place: behind the scenes of the television series

HarperCollins Australia, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780733327940   [791.45]

Readers of *My place* will be fascinated by this account of the making of the television series based on the book. It is a detailed look at the roles of the people who brought it to the screen; writer and illustrator, producer, scriptwriter, director and actors offer interesting insights into their contributions. The young actors come from a range of cultures and they make links with their own story and analytically comment on the characters they play. For teachers interested in exploring transformations between media, this beautifully produced book is a very rich resource. It is loaded with photographs and the supporting website <www.myplace.edu.au> offers teaching materials and supporting clips from the series. M. Davis

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
KLA: English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–6; HSIE K–6
$29.99   SCIS 1455775

BRISSENDEN, Alan & GLENNON, Keith

Australia dances: creating Australian dance, 1945-1965

Wakefield, SA, 2010
ISBN 9781862548022   [792.809]

Providing detailed portraits into dancers and dance companies in postwar Australia, the book outlines companies and specific dances, including information on choreography, décor, costumes and music. Material is categorised by state, and it looks at ballet, modern dance, eisteddfods, ethnic dance, and touring organisations. Dance case studies are reviewed separately. A multitude of striking photographs and colour illustrations enliven this densely written collection of data. A. Frost
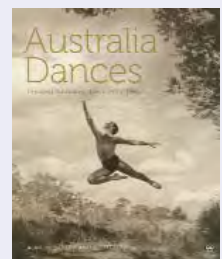
DAVIS, Peter

Writing for comics & graphic novels with Peter David

Impact Books, USA, 2009
ISBN 9781600616877   [808]

The brightly coloured, glossy pages of this publication readily capture the spirit of its subject. Written by an acclaimed and prolific comic writer, information is given in a clear conversational manner. It covers aspects such as where a writer gets ideas, character development, plot and structure, conflict, theme, and scripting for a comic format. The nature of dialogue in comics is discussed, with samples of different speech and thought balloons. In each section, interesting practical exercises are provided. Inspiring illustrations from different comic styles will encourage student creators who have an interest in composing the graphics and the writing for this art driven format. The appendices offer useful tips, including advice on how to break into the industry. C. Sly

KOVAL, Ramona

Speaking volumes: conversations with remarkable writers

Scribe, Vic, 2010
ISBN 9781921640612   [809]

A compilation of interview transcripts, this collection offers insight into the personal philosophies and creativity of some fine contemporary writers. Koval, a probing questioner and astute listener, elicits fascinating responses from an array of international authors, poets, and playwrights. Featuring a wide range of genres, the conversations with writers such as David Malouf, Margaret Drabble, Ian McEwan, Les Murray, Amos Oz and Harold Pinter, are most informative. Writers on the current HSC English list are: A. S. Byatt, John le Carre, P. D. James, Joseph Heller and Judith Wright. Each interview begins with brief biographical information on the writer in focus. Clearly presented in Q&A format, this publication provides enjoyable incidental reading for a wide audience and stimulating background reading for senior English students. C. Sly

VAUGHAN, Marcia & LOFTS, Pamela

Snug as a hug: an Australian lullaby

Scholastic, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741695212   [811]

This is a warm, comforting, night time story. It looks at bedtime for Australian wildlife, before a small child goes to sleep, enveloped by love and surrounded by soft animal toys. Written in rhyming couplets the text is a delight to read aloud making it an entertaining story to share. Pamela Loft's colourful pencil drawings fill each page and focus on each animal in its own habitat where the sleepy animals curl, rest, dream, yawn, snuggle, huddle, snooze and nod. Young readers will find plenty to look at and discuss as they engage with the story. This picture book could be used in conjunction with Early Stage 1 COGs unit (B): *Me*. J. Foster

MACKELLAR, Dorothea & McLEAN, Andrew

My country

Omnibus Books, SA, 2010
ISBN 9781862917309   [821]

Dorothea Mackellar's iconic poem, loved and learnt by generations of Australians, has been presented in picture book format with Andrew McLean's evocative water colour illustrations of the Australian landscape. Originally published in 1908, the poem expresses the poet's love of her country. The accompanying illustrations depict Australian weather and conditions as both picturesque and frightening. McLean's illustrations reveal some of the changes in Australia over the 100 years of the poem's life. This beautiful book could be enjoyed on many levels, and it offers a new way to share the historic poem. It could be a valuable resource to support the Stage 2 COGs unit (B): *Being Australian*. J. Foster
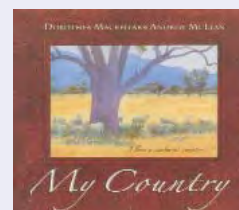
MORRISON, Yvonne & STANLEY, David

Out in the bush

Koala Books, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780864618092   [821]

Australian animals feature in this bright, colourful counting book. Each number, from one to ten, has a double page spread, the left hand side includes small pictures and a verse, and the right hand side presents a full page picture of a mother and the designated number of babies, in their natural habitat. Extra large font portrays the numbers clearly and the verse highlights the activities described. Additional information about the animals is included at the end. A bright, bold, direct counting book, this publication also introduces young readers to a range of fascinating Australian fauna. J. Foster
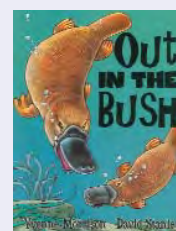
SHAPCOTT, Thomas W.

Part of us

UQP, Qld, 2010
ISBN 9780702237690   [821]

A new collection of work by an acclaimed Queensland poet, this volume presents a variety of gentle, meditative and lyrical verses.

Reflections on some of the simpler joys of life like weeding the garden, listening to music, and contemplating the weather are countered with more brooding reflections on aging, love, and relationships. A delightful series of sonnets focuses on lunches in Adelaide, and a collection of luscious little haiku, dedicated to fruit, stimulate the senses. An exciting, moving and inspiring compilation, this contains many readily accessible poems that can be readily enjoyed and studied by senior English students. C. Sly
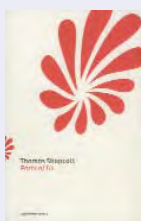
USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; English Stage 6
Paper $24.95   SCIS 1456939

BREWSTER, H. & COULTER, L. & MARSCHALL, K.

882½ amazing answers to your questions about the Titanic

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781864489385   [910.9163]

Packed with facts covering every possible aspect of the *Titanic*, including building, launching, sailing, collision, sinking, rescue and resultant inquiries, this intriguing book uses a Q&A format to cover a lot of ground. There is information about the discovery of the wreck, the movie *Titanic*, passenger stories and the lives of survivors. Paintings, diagrams, archival images and photographs support the written text. This may be read simply as a *Titanic* fact feast by interested students, and there are many of those. It could also be used by History students to gain greater insight into life at the turn of the 20th century, with class distinctions being especially highlighted in the resource. S. Morton
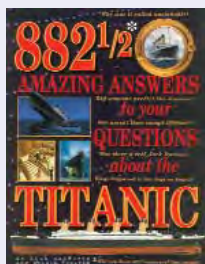
USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; Modern History Stage 6
Paper $19.99   SCIS 1470417

MARSCHALL, Ken & BREWSTER, Hugh

Inside the Titanic

Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781742374604   [910.9163]

We share the excitement and anticipation of a journey on the *Titanic* with Frank, his parents, a neighbour and a friend's son, all hoping for a new and better life in America. They are in the third class section. In first class, another family, Billy and his sister and parents, are returning home to America with their dogs. Through detailed paintings and cutaways, we are shown how and where the passengers spent their time aboard ship, for example in Turkish baths and a gymnasium. The book also shows the workings and machinery of the ship, such as the 15 foot high boilers driving the steam engines. Using a narrative of the two families, presented in chronological sequence, the book explains the ship, the journey, the passengers' stories, the collision with the iceberg and subsequent rescue in an uncomplicated yet informative manner. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English K–6
Paper $19.99   SCIS 1470406

Australia's symbols [series]

Pearson, Vic, 2010   [929]

Symbols are an important representation of who we are. In this series, the author has identified a wide range of typically Australian symbols which represent our rich heritage as well as our contemporary diversity. The most important feature of the series is its close examination of unofficial symbols, as well as the commonly recognised official ones. Each page is crammed with written text, illustrations and captions to impart definitions and details. Some students will find that focusing on print is visually demanding, especially with words laid on top of a semitransparent illustration. This series supports understandings in the Stage 2 COGs unit (B): *Being Australian*, and the Stage 3 COGs unit (H): *Symbol systems*. M. Whitfield
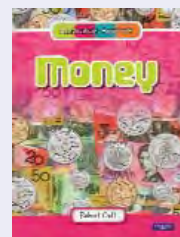
USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
$29.95 each

Reviewed titles in this series:
Money   SCIS 1472743
National emblems   SCIS 1472737
Stamps   SCIS 1472723
State and Territory emblems   SCIS 1472728

LYNCH, Edward

Somme mud

/ edited by Will Davies. Random House, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781741664522   [940.4]

History reads like fiction in this abridged edition of Private Lynch's account of fighting on the Western Front in WWI. Lynch recounts events in the present tense, through a character known as Nulla. He describes war on the frontline in a vernacular and straightforward style, that the editor claims are some rare descriptions of the violence of trench warfare, including at Messines Ridge, Passchendaele, Ypres, and the Australian victory at the Battle of Le Hamel. Injured, he returns to Australia to teach, and his account reads very well, possibly because of that post-war career. As a primary source for History students and a vivid autobiography for English students, the book is an excellent resource. Chapters have a useful historical context, and the book is illustrated with maps and photographs. Lynch's descriptions of army work and food, daily conditions in the trenches, fatigue, gas and bayonet attacks, and German encounters, are revealing insights into the reality of war. C. Thomas

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English 7–10; History 7–10; Modern History Stage 6
Paper $18.95   SCIS 1452103

REILLY, Carmel

Eye on Australia's neighbours [series]

Pearson, Vic, 2010   [959.7]

Australia's relationship with significant neighbours in the Asia Pacific region is explored in this informative, succinct series. All of the usual cultural, historic and geographic topics, including information on endangered species, are covered. Legal differences and lifestyle factors are compared. There is also a personal daily life recount by an urban and a rural child

in each book. Information is presented visually through strategically placed coloured maps, fact boxes, tables, timelines, graphs and captioned photographs which support, assist and highlight explanations. Outlining factors relevant to Australia's foreign relations, the books include essential understandings for citizenship of the Asia Pacific region. N. Chaffey

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	HSIE
SYLLABUS:	HSIE K–6
	$29.95 each

Reviewed titles in this series:

Indonesia	SCIS 1472754
New Zealand	SCIS 1472751
Papua New Guinea	SCIS 1472747
Vietnam	SCIS 1472755

DILLION, Harry & BUTLER, Peter

Macquarie: from colony to country

Heinemann, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9781864710304 [994.02]

An intriguing insight into Lachlan Macquarie, his wife Elizabeth, and the colony of NSW from 1810-1821, this outstanding book follows Macquarie's early life and explores his legacy within Australia's political and social development. The book is part personal history and it looks at Macquarie's vision, leadership style and life experiences. His time as governor of NSW was also a crucial time of development for the nation, and the book successfully marries the two histories to provide a readable account for senior students. Photographs and detailed references facilitate use. A. Frost

USER LEVEL:	Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	HSIE
SYLLABUS:	History 7–10; Modern History Stage 6
	Paper $34.95 SCIS 1464330

SHEAD, Daphne

Hill End heroines & Tambaroora treasures: the women of the goldfields, their lives and stories

/ edited by Lorraine Purcell. Hill End & Tambaroora Gathering Group, NSW, 2010
ISBN 9780980613216 [994.4]

An interesting insight into the history of the goldfields town Hill End, the book focuses on life and family in the goldfields from a female perspective. Journeys from England, Sydney, and over the Blue Mountains are described using conversational language that middle school students will understand. Descriptions of making homes, children at play, education, dress, health, and entertainment are provided. Individual stories of women are recounted, with some black and white photographs that complement the well written text. Some pioneer recipes are also included. A strong sense of place and relationship is drawn from the women's stories. This intriguing resource would be useful when studying this time and place in History 7–10. A. Frost

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5
KLA:	HSIE
SYLLABUS:	History 7–10
	Paper $30.00 SCIS 1472328

Who reviews?

Aveen Beedles, Flinders PS
Narelle Chaffey, teacher
Lizzie Chase, School Libraries and Information Literacy Unit
Robert Cox, Henry Kendall HS
Donna Croker, Taree West PS
Victor Davidson, Birrong GHS
Meg Davis, teacher
Jenny Foster, Warrimoo PS
Nicole French, Singleton HS
Amanda Frost, The Hills Sports HS
Heather Gardiner, Bulli HS
Vanessa Gilmore, Kellyville HS
Paul Gilchrist, teacher
Danielle Giorgi, NSW Parliament House
Patrick Hannan, Chifley College Bidwill Campus
Ruth Higginbottom, Tomaree PS
Bede Kervin, Bowral HS
Karen McDonell, Lethbridge Park PS
Ian Mavin, Jamison HS
Sue Morton, Ermington PS
Rhonda Parnis, Sherwood Grange PS
Frances Plummer, A/State Coordinator NPA on Literacy and Numeracy
Shauna Pollard, Rooty Hill HS
Sally Rasaiah, Cammeray PS
Penelope Robertson, Languages Consultant, Ryde State Office
Kathy Rushton, University of Sydney
Andrew Silcock, The Hills Sports HS
Cathy Sly, School Libraries and Information Literacy Unit
Eleana Sly, Davidson HS
Alison Soutter, Project Officer, DOCS
Jan Stevens, Asquith GHS
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Merryn Whitfield, Bald Face PS

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