
Being part of a global information society is basic to the role of every teacher librarian. The librarian must deliver directed, coherent, progressive, curriculum-based information skills support, helping students and staff to acquire skills for independent research, to use the Web 2.0 and other mobile tools, to handle the web intelligently and efficiently and to demonstrate an ability to research and present work to a high standard.

The author indicates that the beginning of the improvement process is an assessment by the librarian of the school: the library’s contribution to the school, the time allocation to tasks in the library, the level of librarian expertise with regard to information literacy, the understanding of where students are placed in regard to technology, knowledge of the curriculum, relationships with teachers and the executive in the school, an assessment of work practices and management of the library, the level of confidence projected by library staff and the perception of communication processes to and from the library. The librarian must assess his/her attitude to learning and to the contemporary shifts in the processes of learning and independent information skills.

The author illustrates a simple Helping Hand with Research model which uses the fingers of a hand to highlight an essential stage and skill. However, information literacy without a curriculum context is of limited value for students, so collaboration with curriculum areas is essential for productivity. In this publication the authors refer the reader to www.sla.org.uk/learning-and-teaching for a shortcut to identified literacy elements across all subject areas for all years.

Dubber recommends that the librarian develop a set of curriculum tables to gain an overview of the requirements in literacy skills for the whole school. This requires variables of time (Term 1, Term 2, etc), years (Year 7, Year 8, etc), subjects (Geography, Science, etc) and topics (Geography – deserts, Science – animal senses, etc). In this way there is a map of topics being taught to different year groups across various departments so that relevant information skill programmes can be developed, whether these are to be used in a designated library time or integrated into team teaching arrangements. The author discusses the practical issues of working with various age groups in the school and the staff and offers a myriad of suggestions for getting started on an information literacy ‘campaign’. Two detailed case studies offer inspirational and encouraging tales of real experience in this quest.

There is a very full reference section with books, articles and reports (mostly online) and websites followed by appendices detailing research models, target descriptors for information and reading literacy and a table of freeware tools to
assist information literacy development. This publication offers every school librarian food for thought and many practical ideas to consider in working towards better learning outcomes of students.

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