Becoming and Being: Reflections on Teacher-Librarianship

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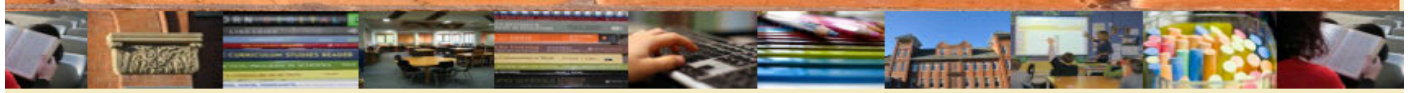

Being and Becoming: Reflections on Teacher-Librarianship Companion Site

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Thank you to our students, past and present, in the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program. Our program is strong because of your commitment to becoming and being school leaders. Please continue to stay connected with us and with the school library community as you take on leadership roles in your schools and districts.

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Introduction

> *The bottom line is this: [teacher-librarians] must see their work as "the school's work" not just because the physical space and resources are shared by all, but because the significance of the learning that is conducted in the library media center is at the heart of the school's purpose. (Zmuda & Harada, 2008, p.11)*

Becoming and Being: Reflections on Teacher-Librarianship is a collection of writings that highlight the central importance of the work that teacher-librarians do in schools. The chapters are written by twenty-five newly qualified teacher-librarians (TLs) who hail from Newfoundland, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. They are all soon-to-be Master of Education graduates of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning (TLDL) program at the University of Alberta. The book is edited a team from the Department of Elementary Education from the University of Alberta. Jennifer Branch is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program, Joanne de Groot is an Adjunct Assistant Professor, and Kandise Salerno is a doctoral student and Technology Coach with Edmonton Catholic Schools.

The TLDL program introduces teachers to the leadership role of the teacher-librarian in schools and school libraries and focuses on four major themes: evaluation, selection, organization and management of print and digital resources; inquiry-based instruction; new and emerging technology integration; and contemporary literacies. Their MEd degree in the Department of Education also includes a research methods course to help prepare TLs to find, critique and summarize educational research, a curriculum foundations course to help TLs understand the history and development of curriculum, and the final capping course which requires a major paper. This book is a collection of those major papers and highlights the individual passions and interests of these new TLs.

Most of these teacher-librarians completed their degree while also working full-time in schools and school libraries. They chose to do a graduate degree in teacher-librarianship; most were not required to do so. They believe that to be a school leader, you need to have the same degree as other school leaders. And these new TLs are now ready to take on the leadership roles in their schools and districts.

Graduates of TLDL have told us that the program:

- Empowered them to take on greater leadership roles in their schools and districts.
- Transformed them – both personally and professionally.
- Provided them with flexibility and the opportunity to succeed while managing their diverse work and home responsibilities.

- Helped them to develop professional contacts and friendships across the country and around the world.
- Focused on global issues of teaching, learning and the school library while having the opportunity for choice in assignments that could be tailored to unique situations and professional learning needs.
- Engaged them in thoughtful, high quality discussions.
- Consisted of quality instruction and support from the TL-DL administration and community.
- Provided good value - reasonably priced compared to similar programs in Canada and is a deal compared to programs from the US.

The book is organized very much like the TLDL program itself. The first section details the process of becoming a teacher-librarian. Many new teachers-in-the-library come to their positions with little training and only a vague understanding of what it means to be a qualified teacher-librarian. How does a teacher begin this transformation to become a teacher-librarian?

The next section explores the school library as a space and place. The school library goes by many names (media center and learning commons are two of the most popular terms right now), but regardless of what it is called, the school library and the school library program exist to provide the school community with access to recreational and informational resources that meet the diverse learning needs of students and teachers. As a physical space, the school library may undergo name changes and transformation, indeed many functions of the school library may occur outside the four walls of the physical space.

The third section focuses on the role of the teacher-librarian as an instructional partner and inquiry teacher. This collaborative role of the teacher-librarian is integral for the success of the school library program and requires teachers to see the teacher-librarian as an important member of the school teaching team. The fourth section examines the role of the teacher-librarian as technology leaders in schools and school districts. Teacher-librarians model and support the effective integration of technology into schools. From providing professional development opportunities for their colleagues to developing and teaching inquiry units infused with technology to curating content to support student research, teacher-librarians are technology leaders who are at the forefront of the use of technology in schools.

The fifth section highlights the role of the teacher-librarian as a literacy leader in schools and school districts. Teacher-librarians have a critical role to play in the development of readers in their communities. Teacher-librarians not only support their students' reading habits, they provide ongoing professional development, mentorship, and support to their teaching colleagues, who may need assistance choosing books for their classroom libraries or even finding just the right book to read themselves during a school-wide sustained silent reading time. The sixth section details the role of the teacher-librarian as a resource manager in schools--the school's Chief Information Officer, if you will. With the abundance of print and digital resources currently available, the selection of materials for the school library collection has become increasingly more important and more challenging. Selecting resources to meet the recreational and informational needs of diverse school communities is a vital role for teacher-librarians.

The final section brings us back full-circle to the leadership role of the teacher-librarian. In this section, we see specific examples of teacher-librarians taking on specific challenges in their school community. This final section of *Becoming and Being* highlights further ways in which qualified teacher-librarians can be and are school leaders.

Reference

Zmuda, A., & Harada, V. (2008). *Librarians as learning specialists: Meeting the learning imperative for the 21st century*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Book Organization

Each author was asked to frame their chapters around four fundamental questions which are used in the chapters as subheadings to guide the reader.

Why should school leaders care ... ?

This introductory section contextualizes and provides a general overview of the topic. Some authors included their own story in this section and shared what brought them to this topic.

What do school leaders need to know...?

This section serves as an introduction to the research and professional literature about the chosen topic. As an expert in their topic, each author guides readers through the important literature and helps us understand what we need to know about their topic.

What can school leaders do about ... ?

The third section of each chapter helps readers see the connections between the "theory and the practice". Using examples and situations from their own experiences, as well as connections to the literature, this section guides readers through the process of actually putting the idea or topic into action in schools or school libraries.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

The final section of each chapter serves as a summary, a conclusion, and a place to look towards the future.

Further resources

Each author provided a list of further resources for those interested in learning more about their chapter topic. This information will be available on the book's website - https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/becoming-and-being/. This companion site for the book will also include a link to the eBook version and further information about the TLDL program. Readers of the book are encouraged to add their own favourite resources on a particular topic to the site and we hope that the book's site will be a valuable resource for everyone interested in learning more about the role of the teacher-librarian.

Whether you are a school administrator, a classroom teacher, a teacher-in-the-library or a qualified teacher-librarian, we hope that *Becoming and Being: Reflections on Teacher-Librarianship* inspires you and gives you ideas and information about the role of teacher-librarianship and the school library program in schools.

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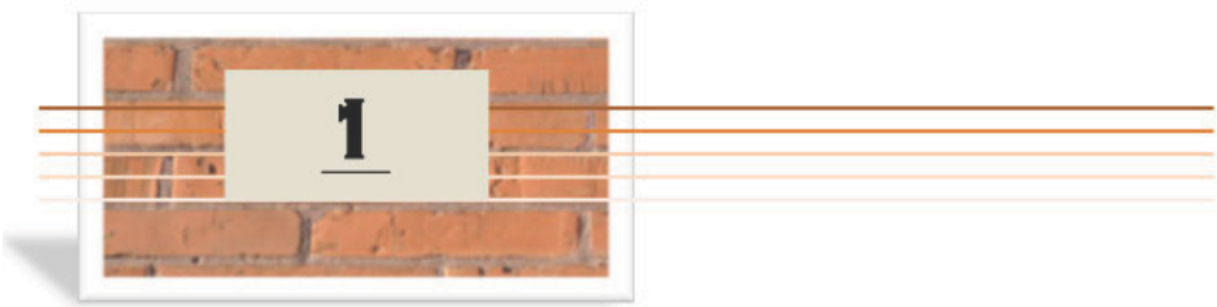
Becoming and Being a Teacher-Librarian librarian

After being a classroom teacher, the process of becoming a teacher-librarian has many challenges and many rewards. Many new teachers-in-the-library come to their positions with little training and only a vague understanding of what it means to be a qualified teacher-librarian. How does a teacher begin this transformation to become a teacher-librarian?

The chapters in this section will begin to answer that question, leading the reader through the process of becoming to ultimately being a teacher-librarian. The section begins with Jacqueline Higginbottom's account of her first year as a teacher-librarian. With humour and practical advice, Higginbottom explores the role of a modern teacher-librarian and shares her "survival tips" which will help both the new teacher-librarian and the seasoned veteran looking to polish up their practices in the school library. The second chapter, written by Tracy Woodward details her transformation from a teacher-in-the-library to a teacher-librarian. The chapter considers the various key roles of a teacher-librarian, the specific activities that make a difference in student achievement, the importance of administrative support and professional development, and the role of the teacher-librarian as an instructional leader. Finally, Pam Wenger's chapter concludes this section with a look at the changing (and often unclear) roles of teacher-librarians in today's schools. By investigating current literature and her own experiences, Wenger identifies why it is important for pre-service and current teachers to recognize the strong partnership that can exist between classroom teacher and teacher-librarian and the benefits of such partnerships for teachers and students.

The shift from becoming a teacher-in-the-library to being a teacher-librarian takes time, training, and a strong support system. This section clearly identifies some of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions required to aid in this transformation.



Surviving Your First Year as a Teacher-Librarian

Jacqui Higginbottom

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Our opening scene

Focus on a Bookstore from across the street. Zoom in on the door and fade. Shot moves to inside the store where our heroine, a 40-something woman, is scrutinizing a book at a display table. She examines the pages of the hardcover book, feels the binding, smells the ink. She looks at the price on the back of the book, peers inside again, checks back to the price, taps a bit on her mobile computing device, ponders for several more moments. . . finally she puts the book down. She picks up the next book, opens the pages and leans in to smell the ink . . . Fade out.

My first book buying expedition was challenging. Being new to the teacher-librarian (TL) position at my large middle school, I hadn't given much thought to the actual individual components of the job when I applied for the position. The administrators who interviewed me didn't touch on the specifics of how I would go about maintaining the book collection, nor was I left any specific instructions from the outgoing TL. My first few months were full of *"How do I . . . ?"* phone calls and emails to several other TLs in the district. I was not able to access the catalogue computer for over a week because I didn't know the password!

In the years leading up to my career switch from classroom teacher to TL, I became known as an "expert" in my subject area. I had been teaching middle-school Drama for fifteen years. I tracked ideas that worked well, delivered workshops, coached Drama Club, and became known for presenting entertaining school plays that included up to sixty cast and crew members. Students enthusiastically signed up for my courses! I was quite good at what I was doing.

I also taught English. And while I never felt I was a subject-matter "expert" (just what *is* a hanging participle?), I pushed beyond the walls of the classroom and integrated technology into my students' learning experiences. We used a class blog, collaborated with wikis, and created book trailers that I posted to my YouTube account. I became known as a budding, technological leader in my school. Again, I was often asked to share my expertise.

And then I decided to become a TL.

Fortunate enough to actually get a TL position, I have found the learning curve to be very steep. I am now the one who is asking for help (on an almost daily basis). It is humbling, and I don't do humble very well. At some point in my first few weeks, with my constant barrage of "*How do I . . . ?*" questions, I was reminded of a wonderful little book, *The Girlfriend's Guide to Pregnancy*, by Vicki Iovine (1995). Iovine says she wrote *The Girlfriend's Guide* because, if she called her doctor each time she had a question or a concern, she would have been on the phone with him for "two to three hours a day, and at least half an hour in the middle of the night" (Iovine, 1995, p. xvi). This is exactly how I felt.

I do not have a clerical aide, so I am responsible for all the library administrative duties, as well as the "teacher" part of my job description. In addition, I do instruct regular classes for about 20% of the time. There are so many different things a TL is required to do, and I want to do them all well. Also, declining positions are on the forefront of my mind. I don't want to suffer from "occupational invisibility" (Oberg, 2006, p. 14), so I also need to advocate for my position with administration.

Thankfully, I have a few courses under my belt and have a good relationship with the previous TL. But I still feel like I am just keeping my head above water. There must be some "tricks to the trade" that I am missing. Where is my handbook? Where is my "must do" list, or best teaching practices from the experienced TLs? Since nobody handed it to me during the first week on the job, I have decided (like Iovine) to write it myself.

Well, not really myself. Mirroring Iovine again, these "best teaching practices" will come from the experts - the veteran TLs - my equivalent of her "Girlfriends." In this chapter, TLs will find ideas that will enable their schools' library to make a noticeable and positive impact on student reading and digital literacy skills. TLs will learn how to show that they are much more than a "service provider who merely respond[s] to teacher or student requests" (Oberg, 2006, p. 13). Whether a brand new TL, a seasoned veteran, or an educator looking to improve current library practices, this chapter will have something for every TL.

As the camera re-pans over the interior of the bookstore, it reveals our newbie TL agonizing over yet another book. As the camera slowly pans out, we see three other women walk toward her, each pushing a cart full of books. One of the women nods toward her own cart. Sitting on the top of the pile is a copy of the book our heroine is holding in her hands. Our newbie TL does not hesitate. She places the book she is holding into her own cart and smiles. Thanks to the help of her "Girlfriends", she has made a good choice. Fade out.

What do school leaders need to know…?

Scene two

The camera pans around a recently emptied classroom. Focus on a teacher sitting at her desk. She has a pile of marking in front of her, yet she is ignoring it and is instead reading a novel. A student comes back into the classroom to retrieve a forgotten binder, and makes a comment about the novel the teacher is reading. The teacher and the student begin an animated conversation about the novel, which continues for several minutes. The teacher reaches behind her and pulls another book from the bookshelf and hands it to the student. The student grins and exits the classroom. For a moment, the teacher watches the student leave, then glances at the pile of marking on the desk. She sighs, closes her book, and then pulls out a red pen to begin grading . . . Fade out.

Thinking about making a change from classroom teacher to teacher-librarian? Be forewarned that your role will be as demanding as that of a classroom teacher. The hours of evening and weekend marking and planning is replaced by hours of evening and weekend collection management, collaboration with colleagues, technological skilsl upgrading, and selection of materials, coupled with non-stop school days and the probability of still teaching in the classroom part-time. There will be no time for reading on the job, either! The position of a TL isn't less demanding, just different.

Bromley's (2011) research, which included interviews with forty elementary school librarians, points out three distinct areas related to TLs responsibilities: supporting classroom instruction and student learning, management of facilities while offering technology instruction, and promotion of students' reading interests and enjoyment. Bramley-Moore (2012) echoed these findings and also identified other TL duties such as preparing displays and promotional materials and selecting, acquiring and cataloguing library resources. Kaplan (2008) adds that, along with running the library at a technical level as the program administrator, the school library media specialist is also a teacher, an instructional partner, and an information specialist. "The best part of being a school librarian is that no one truly knows what our job is. . . It is an exciting whirl of projects, planning, and, for most school librarians, the most fun job in the world" (Dickinson, 2010, p. 73). While TLs responsibilities vary from school to school, all educators would agree that a TL needs to be flexible, and must emulate the qualities of a lifelong learner as the role continues to evolve.

Klinger, Lee & Stephenson (2010) report that the role of the TL has changed significantly over the past two decades. An exemplary TL takes on a broader leadership role within the school, collaborates with educators, and supports all students through shared teaching. This modern TL offers cross-curricular support and integration of curriculum to best enhance children's learning (Klinger, Lee & Stephenson, p. 122-123). The TL also provides students with the connection between what their teachers want, where to find the information, how to synthesize that information, and how to present their learning. In addition, the trained TL maintains the physical library space to create a welcoming place of learning and sharing of knowledge for students (Bromley, 2011; Klinger, Lee & Stephenson, 2010; Valenza, 2010).

In her 2010 *School Library Manifesto*, Joyce Valenza states that the 21st century TL is a dynamic and enthusiastic technological leader who is not afraid to take risks and try new things. This TL is a staff collaborator who provides professional development, models the use of best teaching practices, and is an educational leader. "While managing facilities is part of what librarians do, they also function in roles that are critical today to the learning of students, teachers, and parents" (Bromley, 2011, p.4).

A large part of the "teacher" role is to help students access material via the internet and troubleshoot basic technological issues. Asselin, Branch and Oberg (2003) state that, in an acceptable school library program, "the teacher-librarian uses I.C.T. to support the development of information literacy skills across grade levels and curriculum. . . taught through cooperatively developed units" (p. 47-48). According to *Achieving Information Literacy*, "The major learning outcome for the school library program is to develop students who are information literate" (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, p. 4). Valenza (2010) details essential practices and necessary qualities of a TL in an attempt to answer the question: "In the 21st century, what does a school librarian do?" She admits that there is no textbook for the continually changing role of the TL and indicates that every TL needs to be prepared to keep up with changing technology so that they can lead the way in delivering what students need.

Taking on the role of a leader can be challenging. While some people may be considered "natural born leaders", it is true that if you are willing to do what it takes to become a better leader, you will succeed (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 102). Smith (2011) agrees that these skills can be taught; leadership training leads to self-confidence, which results in actual leadership behaviours. Dotson and Jones (2011) identified specific key leadership competencies for school librarians: having a vision for the future of the school (and its library), competency in program administration, the ability to mentor others and model best practices (especially with regard to the use of information and instructional technology), effective communication skills, understanding the need for staff development and advocacy for the position of the TL.

All of this knowledge and potential leadership doesn't come with just experience. A modern TL must be educated. Teacher-librarians should have the same level of education as other school leaders. In most schools and school districts, school leaders are expected to have Master's degrees (Oberg, 2006). Typically, TLs have additional postgraduate librarianship qualifications (Bramley-Moore, 2012; Klinger, Lee & Stephenson, 2010). TLs need training in order to be adequately prepared for their role as change agents and educational leaders.

Making the choice to leave the protection of the classroom and become a TL is not an easy one, and should only be made after much consideration. Hamilton's (1989) reflection is still relevant today:

> It must be a very difficult decision for many teachers to become teacher-librarians. Teacher-librarianship will never escape the rigours of restraint. It remains a "specialty" outside the mainstream. It suffers continual harassment in its search for status and position in the scheme of things. It is seldom given the power it needs to do the job that needs to be done. With all these constraints, it offers those who find its mission, and have the determination to stick with it, incredible satisfaction. (p. 10).

Seek the satisfaction.

The camera pans over the classroom once again. Through the windows we see that the sky has darkened outside and the classroom teacher is still at her desk with her laptop open, considering websites for her students to use for tomorrow's assignment. Another woman comes into the classroom. It is our heroine, the teacher-librarian. The two teachers discuss the merits of one of the websites for a few minutes and the teacher-librarian suggests collaborating the following day to further develop the subject unit. Before she leaves, the teacher-librarian puts a job application form into the hands of the classroom teacher, gives a "thumbs up" and exits. The classroom teacher looks at the papers and her smile widens. It is a posting for a teacher-librarian position at a nearby school. She is slowly nodding her head as we fade out.

What can school leaders do about… ?

Focus on the new teacher-librarian as she surveys the library a few days before school opens in September. She is smiling as she looks around the room, taking in the shelves of books and other print material, the bank of computers, tables for collaborative work, the comfy couches for relaxed reading and the overall ambience of the learning commons space.

Enter an English teacher who congratulates our newbie TL on being the successful applicant for the position and asks when the students will be able to access the school's computerized reading assessment tool. Our heroine attempts to log in on her office computer in order to access it herself. She cannot. Even if she could, she doesn't know how to input names into the program because it is specialized to the school and she has not been given login privileges or any training with the program.

Enter the school's business manager to discuss the purchasing budget, the vice principal to discuss the staff professional development committee, department heads to discuss resources and the custodian to discuss what hours the library will be open before and after school. Several other personnel interact with our heroine before the day is over, each with a new request or a reminder of how things were done previously.

While many of these ideas are new and will be part of her learning curve, our TL does know how to order books, help match students to reading material and how to encourage a climate of reading in the school. In addition, she is excited to find several databases are accessible to students from the school computers and she is familiar with many web tools and mobile device applications that can extend student learning.

Eagerly she unpacks a shipment of books in the workroom. Excitement is high while she surveys the titles and plans on how to display and promote these books physically and digitally, until she realizes that she does not know how to catalogue them using the unattainable computer cataloguing system, never mind prepare them for the shelf. Isn't there some kind of clear wrap that goes on the books? There wasn't a course about printing spine labels, either.

At the end of her first day, our heroine is still weakly smiling, but wonders where to begin. . . Fade out.

That was me. My first day in the library I was floating with joy, but quickly came back down to earth when I realized how unprepared I was! But I was lucky. My mentor (the school's previous TL) moved to another position in town, so she is just a phone call, text, or email away. I also have a school district network of experienced TLs – my equivalent of Iovine's "Girlfriends." Being enrolled in a Masters in Teacher-Librarianship enables me to correspond with many other TLs, and access current research on best teaching practices. But even with all of this history and support from my male and female Network of "TL Girlfriends," I STILL STRUGGLED DESPERATELY! Oberg (1991) wrote that "learning to be a teacher-librarian is a complex process that involves much more than academic preparation" (p. 1). Her words remain true even today.

I am not out of the woods yet. But as I lick my newbie wounds and clean up from my mistakes, I can help your first year be a little less traumatic. This section is designed to help you troubleshoot before you even step through the library doors. Although each school library has different needs, facilities, clientele and demands on a TLs time, I hope to cover "the basics" for you, or share a few new ideas that you could implement in your school library as a modern TL.

Gone is the quiet library. Gone is the full-time TL who has a full-time library technician or assistant. Gone is the little old lady who was older than your Grandma who loved books, but hated children touching them. The modern TLs areas of responsibility have been divided into the following categories: Managing Facilities, The Budget, The Collection, Supporting Classroom Instruction and Student Learning, and Promoting Students' Reading Interests and Enjoyment (Bramley-Moore, 2012; Bromley, 2011). Each section contains advice from my own experience and that of my "TL Girlfriends".

Whether your library is a large space already full of furniture, shelving and with an organized collection, or a bare multi-purpose room, we need to start with the essentials:

- Make sure you have computer login privileges, a user manual, a scheduled training session and keys to get into all rooms and storage areas.
- Ensure you have both wired and wireless Internet access. Copy down all codes and special login information then tape it to a desktop. Anyone can refer to these "cheat sheets" when needed.
- Make gradual changes to your physical space and don't worry if you have to change something back. I moved several "old" encyclopedias to the back workroom, intending to recycle them at the end of the year. A week later (really!) students began a research project and the teacher specifically wanted his class to use a print resource first before going to the Internet. Guess what I had to drag out?
- Have a "quick grab" table right at the front door. Fill it with newer titles and throw in a variety of other things - fiction and nonfiction, graphics, manga, etc. Students who are short on time can find something without stepping too far inside the doors.
- Think of your students' physical requirements. Do you need shorter shelves? How about furniture near the windows? Some of your students have limited mobility or different social or intellectual needs. Make sure they can get what they need in the library space and from the collection.

"Remember that the library is there for the users...watch how they use the library and listen to their compliments, complaints, and needs" (Doucett, 2011, p. 131). Act upon those things.

If you don't have a library technician, adult volunteers are invaluable. Volunteers can prepare labels and spine stickers, shelve materials, shelf read, create displays, and read with students. How to get them? Ask for help in the school's newsletter or on the website, post a message on your school sign, or ask your student volunteers if their parents could come and help out. I have three adult volunteers who come in together one morning a week - it is kind of a "social club". I provide the work, a treat and thank them profusely.

You do need to be careful not to have too much adult help. It sounds odd, but the union of library technical assistants may notice that your library could support a tech position. It is a tricky area. You need the volunteer help if you don't have an assistant, but if you do have an assistant, it is often easy for administrators to justify cutting TL time by hiring a technician. Just be discreet with your "hallelujahs" for having volunteer help.

A few dedicated students are worth their weight in gold. If you work in an elementary school, consider contacting the local high school for help; graduating students may need volunteer hours. I recommend not giving your student volunteers too much responsibility in the beginning. I was under the impression that my volunteers knew how to properly check in materials and return them to the shelves. It was wrong. Remember Julia Roberts speaking to the shop assistant who wouldn't help her in the movie *Pretty Woman*? "BIG mistake! Big. Huge" (Milchan, Reuther & Marshall, 1990). That kind of mistake. Not only did they ignore notifications on the computer that stated "currently NOT checking in materials" (or words to that effect), they actually had issues with alphabetical order. Significant issues. After a month or two, I finally realized my mistake. I am still correcting the errors now, six months later. A wise TL

Girlfriend told me to always have two volunteers for each circulation desk shift - one to use the machine and the other to read the notifications. Even with the need for precautions, I would not want to do the job of the TL without student volunteers around each day. Student volunteers bring energy and a passion for reading with them.

As a “thank you”, your students will appreciate a "service club" lanyard to wear while “on duty” and a sweet treat at the end of each shift. Your Library Club members will also love having their club photo in the yearbook and "first dibs" on new material.

Thinking about a budget can be overwhelming. Ask some questions:

- Is there a difference between the library budget and the student resources budget?
- Do you have to order textbooks from your library budget?
- Do you have a “club” budget to order those volunteer treats?
- What about book prizes for contests and school assembly recognition rewards?
- Are you issued a corporate credit card?
- Who does the ordering of library materials?
- Can you take staff and student requests into consideration?

Keep track of all expenditures. This can help you determine operating costs on a yearly basis.

The material available for your staff and students, both print and electronic, is ultimately your responsibility. Ordering material, organizing it, making it accessible and determining what to keep and discard (weeding) will keep you busy.

- Check your school’s collection policy for guidelines. Create one with the help of your staff, administration, parents and students if needed.
- Many districts have a central cataloging and book preparation policy. If yours does not, and you catalogue materials yourself, be sure to use conventional methods. Explore what other schools have done, and consider replicating the public library’s cataloguing system. A TL typically has a few weeks of non-fiction cataloging experience, whereas a trained cataloguing clerk has many years of experience. Catalogue as needed for your school’s library.
- If you have to prepare books for the shelf, make sure you have the proper supplies. See what the previous TL used and try to be consistent. Don't forget the big tape roll and the specialty stapler. A fine tipped permanent pen and a glue gun will come in handy too. Acid free glue is also a must, but don't order it in the colder months. The shipment may freeze on the truck.
- Use identification stickers suited to the level of your students. Coloured stickers (with large, single letters) attached to a large, plastic tub help primary students find the books they want. When using stickers, be mindful of struggling readers’ egos. I had an entire section of wonderful books labeled “Easy” that never left the middle school library. They began circulating once I removed the stickers and re-located the books to a more prominent location.
- Host a TL meeting at your school shortly after your first year on the job (or even earlier if you have a good idea of the collection). Begin the meeting by weeding a section according to the collection policy. Think about having a garage sale of these items at the end of the school year. Proceeds can fund next year’s Library Club. If you cannot bear to part with an item, have a "Save These Books" week and promote non-circulating titles that way.
- Print overdue notices regularly. It took me some time to realise this and students had books signed out for over five months!
- Accept the fact that you will lose some of your collection each year - up to 0.5% (Muller, 2011). A security gate may reduce loss to a certain degree, but if it is not already installed, consider if it would be cost-effective.

- Ways to gather missing materials include giving prizes at the end of the year to classes who have returned all materials, pushing collection bins through the halls during locker cleanout times and appealing to parents and teachers to turn in materials that they might find during spring cleaning.

Don't forget to read articles on Collection Development and collaborate with your TL Girlfriends on what they have in their school library collections.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Get over your guilt of being a non-enrolling teacher (Oberg, 1991). Many studies on school culture and improving student literacy have shown that having a TL in the school increases reading scores on standardized tests and inspires more pleasure reading (Krashen, 2011; Lance & Hofschire, 2011). Several factors contribute to a library program's well-being: collaboration with colleagues, connecting with students, and technology instruction.

Educators benefit from the insights, expertise, and collective efforts of a team of colleagues; collaboration is an essential element of professional practice (Dufour, 2007, para. 5).

- Listen, stay neutral, take notes and review them once a week for professional growth and progress (Doucette, 2011).
- Ask to be included in all department email lists, and attend team leader and department head meetings. Share resources with staff members regarding the subjects they teach and include them in the ordering process.
- "Nudge" towards collaboration; aim for slow changes and don't try to do too much too soon. Start with the English department and suggest working together on Literature Circles or short stories with younger classes. Demonstrate web tools that could replace poster board projects to Science and Social Study teachers.
- Refer to current research. There are several, heavily used "reading programs" in public schools that may be doing more harm than good when it comes to promoting reading for pleasure. Remember that changing ideas about a long running program needs gentle nudging rather than a full, frontal attack.
- Take time to speak at staff meetings and assemblies. Just a short presentation on how you can help deliver instruction, enhance learning, or assist students with digital technology and research skills may lead to collaborative opportunities.
- Collaborate with other TLs, whether it is face-to-face or online using email contact lists, blogs, wikis and nings; Join your province's TL specialist association and attend conferences geared to TLs.

Do what you can to make yourself indispensable to all staff and students. If cuts to the TL position are proposed, the school community will have more inclination to ensure that you and the library remain available if they are accustomed to relying on you.

Allow students to use the library for more than just book exchanges. Get some games, cards, puzzles and display their artwork on the walls. The school library is THEIR space.

- The library will be used if it is accessible before and after school, during breaks, and at lunch. Yes, your hours will be different from your colleagues and you won't always be able to spend the entire lunch break in the staffroom, so make sure you find other ways to connect with your colleagues.

- Literature Circles and Reader's Advisory are great ways to speak with kids about books. Make sure you know what your students are reading and develop a taste for their selections.
- Ask students to create library displays using what they've personally read and would recommend.
- Know your roots - many of the books, blogs and websites I use for recommendations are American. While I agree with most suggestions, I feel that some of the titles are too "U.S. East Coast" for my Canadian West Coast audience. Promote local authors whenever possible!
- Be a "book bully". I often approach students with a book and say "I think you should read this". Another favourite line is "Read thirty pages then bring it back if you don't like it. My feelings won't be hurt and we can find another book you will enjoy."
- Do what you can to make reading "cool". Get those edgy books and label them "mature content." They will be read and passed around.

Nine-three percent of communication is non-verbal. How we greet students and teachers as they enter the library matters because our reputation and the perceived quality and value of the library are intertwined. Actions speak louder than words (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 67). Smile...a lot.

Students must be taught "library literacy" (Doucett, 2011). Technology instruction must be built into regular operating procedures in a modern library as well as digital citizenship and internet safety.

- Integrate web technologies into library visits. Introduce a social bookmarking site at the end of a Literature Circle unit and encourage student book trailer creation.
- Stay current. Fontichiaro (2008) suggest setting up a blog feed to one place so all new postings from the blogs you (will) follow wait for you there. Know which databases are best for your students, and know how to use them for research purposes. Make sure YOU can find the things your students will be looking for.

You must be comfortable and up-to-date with technology. If your skills are rusty, take a course. A TL must break free of old stereotypes and don a new image of leadership as an agent of change. Bromley (2011) likens the TL to a spotted owl - both being at risk of extinction unless drastic measures are taken.

TLs cannot be silent members of the educational system. BE VOCAL about what you do, the expertise you provide, and the difference you make to student learning. Keep a record of your successes and be prepared to provide documented proof that students are actually benefiting from the services you provide. Prove that you are making a difference in their reading scores and digital literacy skills. Learn more about evidence-based practice and provide evidence of the impact your school library program has on student learning. Doucett (2011) states: the concept of "Librarian" needs to be rebranded: craft a new story about the job of librarian and then convey that story in an effective way (p. 30). Have a 30-second spiel ready and rehearsed to tell WHAT you do and HOW you make a difference in students' lives.

The TL is a Learning Coach, a Knowledge Broker and a Book Pusher. Today's TL knows what appeals to the school's population and knows how to get reading material into the hands, or onto the iPods, of students. This TL is striving to be Valenza's (2010) Manifesto hero.

Our camera pans once more across the library to see a busy library full of students reading, working on computers and at tables, sharing information on personal devices, playing cards and talking in small groups. There is another teacher chatting with our TL in front of a computer. Our heroine is sharing her digital knowledge and the teacher is nodding. As the teacher leaves the library, the camera closes in for a final shot on the busy TL. She is smiling.
Fade to black.

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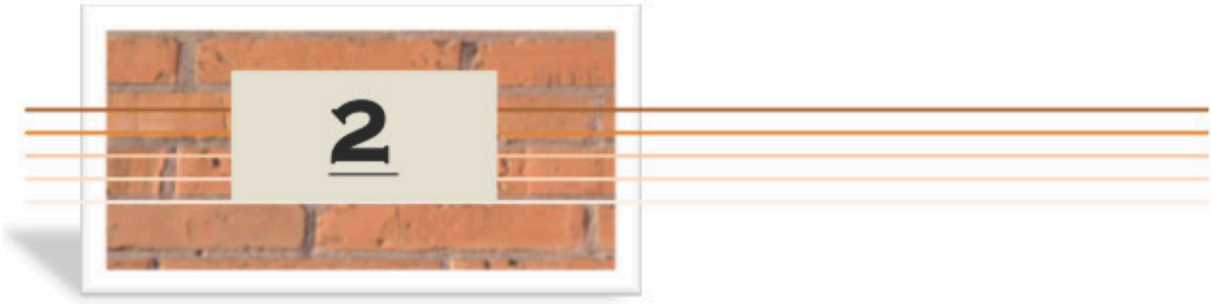

A Love Affair With Teacher-Librarianship

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Imagine if the staff and students of every school could have an instructional leader right in their building who would positively impact student learning, guide and support staff, and facilitate the development of a collaborative school culture? This leader would value and encourage multiple literacies beyond print such as media, digital, ethical, and visual. She would have the potential to work with every person in the building. I am referring to someone who possesses the pedagogy to develop a space and a program that will encourage students to think critically, to collaborate, to create, and to communicate. Who comes to mind? If anyone had asked me six years ago, my answer would not have been the same as it is today.

At the time, I could not have foreseen the journey that lay ahead of me. Happily teaching senior English and history, I felt no desire, and had no plans, to take any detours. Oddly enough, the tradition of a women's shopping trip to Edmonton every November significantly changed the direction of my life.

For many years, I organized a weekend shopping trip to Edmonton for women in my school division. Each year, 50 teachers, educational associates, principals, and even an assistant director enjoyed a weekend of fun, games, shopping, and visiting. Many of us did not work in the same schools and initially did not know each other well; however, over the years during the five-hour bus rides to and from Edmonton, and through our games and shopping tales of triumph, that changed.

So how do shopping trips lead to a completely new direction in one's career and a shift in pedagogy? On those bus trips, I often talked about books, the time spent in bookstores, and my love of story. I am seriously one of those people who actually hug books and get all dreamy-eyed when I talk about them! One of the people who often sat near me was an assistant director in our school division. Sometime later,

our division was looking for someone to take a position in a high school library. Knowing my passion for books, the assistant director put my name forward as a possible candidate. When the director approached me and asked if I would be interested in the position, my first reaction was to say no. I was quite happy where I was. However, I paused a moment and thought about what working in a library surrounded by books might mean, and I quickly asked for a day to consider the proposal. It was made clear to me that my role was to focus on working with teachers and students and not to shelve or to circulate books. I remember thinking, "Okay, I can do that, AND I will get to buy books!" I would be a liar if I did not admit my initial fascination for the position really revolved around buying books and talking to kids about books and, well, not much more than books!

After thoughtful consideration about the impact this would have on my family, I decided the opportunity was too exciting to pass up. Little did I know where this decision would lead. It was the beginning of a journey where I quickly realized two things: one, I was born to do this work; and two, if I wanted to keep doing it, I was going to need the education to back me up.

Knowing that I needed to have some kind of credibility and authority led me to begin my Masters of Education specializing in Teacher-Librarianship at the University of Alberta. Once I began my course work, a third truth became abundantly clear: I had greatly underestimated the depth of what I did not know. My world shifted and a love affair began.

Over these past years, I have come to realize that my transformation from a teacher-in-the-library (TITL) to a teacher-librarian has really become a love affair; for becoming and remaining a teacher-librarian requires passion and commitment. I can say for sure that teaching, in general, excites me, but I am thrilled about teacher-librarianship. Both the possibilities and challenges yet to be uncovered captivate me.

I have learned a great deal about what it takes to be a teacher-librarian and why this relationship is so important. It will enrich the practice of every TITL, benefit student learning, and build the capacity of a school. It has everything to with collaborating and nourishing relationships, becoming an instructional leader, developing a relevant collection unique to my community, integrating technology, and modeling lifelong learning . . . and even a little to do with my beloved books.

What do school leaders need to know...?

It has been my experience when positions in the library become available, the conversation at the staff meeting goes something like this, "If anyone is interested in taking on the library, come and speak to me." The work of the teacher-librarian is frequently misunderstood by principals (Hartzell, 2002). Many principals and teachers have never worked with a qualified teacher-librarian in a well-supported library program and are, therefore, unaware of what qualified teacher-librarians can bring to the position and how they can impact student learning (Klinger, Lee, Stephenson, Deluca, & Luu, 2009; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2005; Ofsted, 2006; Softlink International, 2011). Many see the library as a quiet place, and the position as one that involves, at most, showing students how to use the facility and how to conduct research, signing books in and out, and keeping the room tidy.

Qualified teacher-librarians impact student learning

In fact, the impact of a qualified teacher-librarian in a school library is the one area of teacher-librarianship for which there is no shortage of research. Studies have been repeated time and again in the United States (Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000; Lance et al., 2005; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2003) and more recently Canada

(Haycock, 2003; Klinger et al., 2009; Queen's University & People for Education, 2006), the UK (Ofsted, 2006), and Australia (Softlink International, 2011). Approximately 20 studies have been conducted across the United States, and each of the studies found qualified teacher-librarians can have an important impact in many areas and are associated with higher literacy levels. In a video interview, Keith Curry Lance noted that at this point, there is little value in repeating the studies as the results have been proven time and again (Library Research Service, 2010, Chapter 7, :57s).

The work of qualified teacher-librarians has not only been linked to improved student achievement, but also to greater reading enjoyment (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2008; Haycock, 2003; Queen's University & People for Education, 2006). The influence of a qualified teacher-librarian is not limited to increased reading enjoyment and literacy rates. Libraries are not the domains of the humanities, but as Haycock noted, "Several studies make it clear, however, that the positive impact of a school library and teacher-librarians extends beyond the humanities and social studies and into subject areas such as math and science" (p. 21). Teacher-librarians collaborating with classroom teachers to integrate information literacy into various subject areas help students to "learn more and produce better research products" (Haycock, p. 23).

Teacher-librarians need support to collaborate

The importance of collaboration between the teacher-librarian and the teaching staff is a fact grounded in research. Studies show this collaboration is essential to increased student learning (Asselin, 2004; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001). In fact, collaboration has the potential to significantly alter education in the 21st century as it supports the development of students' critical thinking through explicit teaching (Montiel-Overall, 2005). Haycock (2007) broadened the perspective and found that "Teacher-librarians need to be educated and trained in effective collaboration and develop professional and personal commitments to teacher partnerships" (p. 33).

However, the role and understanding of the principal is critical in collaboration. Unfortunately, as Hartzell (2002) noted, "Administrative training does little or nothing to enhance principals' awareness, let alone understanding, of the library media center and the media specialist" (p. 102). This problem continuously gets worse as these same principals become superintendents and professors in educational administration. For teacher-librarians, this lack of support can significantly reduce "meaningful interactions and collaboration between media specialists and teachers because they do not grasp their value" (p. 12). Principals are key to successful collaboration as they have the ability to coordinate teacher schedules and support flexible library schedules, to provide access to professional development, and through leadership, to develop a collaborative community within the school (Montiel-Overall, 2005). Studies have shown that when there is frequent collaboration between teachers and teacher-librarians and where this collaboration is valued by principals, "students are more likely to master ICT standards and more likely to earn advanced scores on state reading and language arts tests" (Lance, Rodney, & Schwarz, 2010, p. 35).

Teacher-librarians need division leadership and professional development

Asselin, Branch, and Oberg (2003) outlined the important role of district superintendents in all areas of school libraries, including the development and maintenance of a vision, advocacy for school libraries, ensuring there are qualified staff delivering the information literacy programs, and understanding the role of school libraries and teacher-librarians. They should know and understand the research regarding the impact of school libraries on student learning, and support teacher-librarians in professional development opportunities and their participation in a variety of relevant committees (instructional, curriculum, technology) (p. 54).

According to Asselin et al. (2003), divisions should also have a dedicated library coordinator who can provide direct leadership for teacher-librarians as well as assist with the hiring, evaluation and professional development of teacher-librarians, assist in the development of information literacy and other library programs, and act as a liaison between the school library staff and parents, board, and division staff (p. 55).

Various library documents across the country have been developed using the standards and guidelines from Asselin et al.'s (2003) *Achieving Information Literacy*, including the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's *Connections: Policy and Guidelines for School Libraries in Canada* (2008) as well as the Thompson's research report *School Libraries in Saskatchewan: An Advisory for School Boards* (2009). All of these documents identify a wide range of responsibilities to be performed by division level personnel, including:

- assisting principals and teacher-librarians to develop effective school library programs that support student learning;
- assisting teacher-librarians and teachers to design instructional activities in which learning resources are used to achieve provincial learning outcomes, as well as reading literacy and information literacy outcomes;
- providing professional development for teacher-librarians and school library staff within the school division; and
- providing information about the role and function of the school library to school division and school level administrators.

These roles are required in order to develop strong library media programs.

School library coordinators play an important role in school libraries. They are advocates for the program, they support those working in libraries both, qualified and unqualified, and they provide important understandings among those who have a vested interest in school libraries (Buckley, 2005). In her research, Buckley (2005) posited coordinators can provide significant savings to school divisions with their coordination of work, resources, and technology.

Teacher-Librarians are Instructional Leaders

Political agendas continue to influence educational reform, and the demands on teachers continue to escalate as more focus is placed on assessment and other initiatives by divisions and provinces. "Teachers are not prepared to teach this [information literacy] aspect of literacy either at the preservice or inservice level" (Asselin, 2004, p. 63). Teachers do not fully understand information literacy, leading to a lack of collaboration between teachers and teacher-librarians and the integration of information literacy into instruction (Asselin). Trained teacher-librarians are in a position to support teachers by providing professional development and collaboratively integrating instructional and multiple literacies throughout the curriculum (Montiel-Overall, 2005). The essential role of the teacher-librarian as instructional leader has been confirmed in studies completed by Lance (Lance et al., 2001) and his team of researchers in Colorado, Alaska, and Pennsylvania, as well as studies by other researchers in Massachusetts and Texas (Baughman, 2000). In 2009, the American Association of School Libraries included instructional leadership as the overarching umbrella under which teacher-librarians performed their duties (DiScala & Subramaniam, 2011).

Teacher-librarians collaborate, model, and integrate technology into the curriculum as well as lead in reading and curriculum development, integrating information literacy skills, and providing professional development to staff. We are teachers, instructional partners, information specialists, and program administrators (DiScala & Subramaniam, 2011). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

(NBPTS) stated, "accomplished library media specialists are visionary leaders in their schools and in the profession" (NBPTS, 2012, p. 21).

Teacher-librarians muLIST advocate

In today's educational climate, advocacy is an integral aspect of a teacher-librarian's position. "Advocacy links the evidence gathered with the education of the stakeholders to answer the essential question: How does the school library instructional program affect student achievement?" (Kramer & Diekman, 2010, p. 29). This evidence is most powerful when it is collected at the school level.

Research shows that one important method of advocacy is relationship-building between the teacher-librarian and members of the community in which she serves. During her study, Howard (2009) noted teacher-librarians with successful school library programs interacted at high levels with the learning community and were able to positively influence the instructional programs. Todd, Gordon, and Lu's (2010) research found teacher-librarians positively influenced teaching and learning through high quality and frequent collaborations as well as opportunities to cooperate and to coordinate with teachers.

In a study that attempted to determine why, in a time of budget cuts, a school division did not cut the teacher-librarian positions (as many other divisions were doing), researchers found stakeholders at all levels understood the role of the teacher-librarian and the value of the school library programs (Ewbank, 2011).

Oberg's (2006) research found that "teacher-librarians gain the respect and support of their principals in three key ways: by building their professional credibility, by communicating effectively with principals, and by working to advance school goals" (p. 15). Qualifications, Oberg noted, should be similar to that of other school leaders and they should have Master's degrees. A qualified teacher-librarian "brings to teaching and learning the core values of librarianship . . . as wells as the practical knowledge required to deal with issues such as censorship, cultural diversity, and Internet filtering" (p. 16).

The goal of advocacy should be to reflect what is truly most important: the impact of the program on student learning. Evidence-based practice is a powerful way in which teacher-librarians can "track changes within the school library program . . . [that] will change both teacher and learner and provide a sound foundation for the place of the school library program in school wide instruction" (Dickinson, 2005, p. 20). Providing school administrators with evidence about the outcomes of student learning is to speak a language they understand.

What can school leaders do about... ?

School and division leaders need to know that a qualified, trained teacher-librarian brings to the school library program a unique set of skills and knowledge that will help create a dynamic library program. The term teacher-librarian means something much different from teacher-in-the-library, and there is a wealth of research to mark its importance.

School leaders must understand the difference between teachers-in the-library (TITLs) and teacher-librarians. Understanding what a qualified teacher-librarian brings to the table and how that individual may best support students and staff is critical as educational leaders include school libraries in their plans to develop strong 21st-century schools.

TEACHER-LIBRARIANS IMPACT STUDENT LEARNING

I have been both a teacher-in-the-library and a teacher-librarian. As I reflect on my own practice, I can identify the growth and the change I have undergone. As a TITL, the world of teacher-librarianship was limited. It involved keeping the library in order, helping students find novels, and teaching students to find and cite sources. I knew part of my role was to collaborate, but I was not at all sure how to make that happen. I was definitely enthusiastic about my work, but enthusiasm doesn't guarantee student learning.

The truth is I had no knowledge about teacher-librarianship. No knowledge of how to build a strong library collection or a program that meets the needs of 21st-century learners. No knowledge of how I would facilitate technology integration. No knowledge of how I would assist teachers with inquiry learning. No knowledge of evidence-based practice. No knowledge of how to increase student achievement. No knowledge and no understanding about how much that lack of knowledge would impact my work.

Research shows that a qualified teacher-librarian in a properly staffed and funded school library has an impact on student learning. Lance et al. (2010) reminded us that impact is created by more than the basic presence of a teacher-librarian. Student learning is affected by specific activities such as taking on leadership roles, meeting with the principals, collaborating with teachers by planning, delivering and assessing instruction, and providing in-service training to teachers that boost student achievement.

There are many ways to show leadership in the school. The American Association of School Librarians (2012) suggested teacher-librarians should volunteer and become part of decision-making committees. As a member of our school's literacy team, I have attended professional development and this knowledge provides me an opportunity to work with my colleagues in a different capacity. This involvement helps others see me in a leadership role. As a leader, it is important to remain current with research, trends, best practices in literacy, instructional strategies, and technology. I must remain active in local and provincial associations, be committed to professional development, and model that dedication in my own practice to encourage other teachers.

Collaboration is an essential part of the role of the teacher-librarian. It is important for teacher-librarians to commit time and effort to build collaborative relationships. This can be an intimidating experience; however, my studies have provided me with insight, knowledge, and skills to allow me to be successful in developing partnerships. Collaboration means preparation—knowing the curriculum. Keeping in mind the word *nudging* is critical, so that in my enthusiasm, I don't steamroll over people who aren't ready. I constantly look for opportunities to work with teachers. At staff meetings, I share new resources, suggesting possibilities to collaborate. I listen to teachers who speak about their frustrations and determine how to present a possible plan. This often leads to collaborative teaching experiences.

Technology often offers a way into a classroom. Through my studies, I have become familiar with many technologies that are engaging and efficient. Technology, for many teachers, is one more thing for which they have no time, perhaps fear, or don't see a benefit. Technology can help streamline teacher practice or improve student learning. My role may range from simple website evaluation techniques to more integrated practice like online collaboration or "push" information techniques; from ethical use to synthesizing research and sharing it to have an impact in the real world.

My rallying cry this year is "Here is how I can help your students." My homework is complete, and I can show teachers how I increase student achievement. Pathfinders, up-to-date resources, and integrated technology options are at the ready. Luncheon tech time opportunities (brief, hands-on, and nonthreatening) will provide teachers with time to play. Databases and sites with quality educational offerings, trials, and tutorials also provide ways for me to support staff. I link sites, tools, and videos onto the pages of our school library website. Our school does not currently have a technology plan; however,

my role is to facilitate its development in the coming school year.

Hay, Henri, and Oberg (1998) noted collection development is a key role of the teacher-librarian. As a TITL, I would have noted collection development and readers' advisory as strengths (though I did not know to use those terms). How much I did not know! I purchased books from our local bookseller, Scholastic Canada, and from companies that sent preview boxes. I did not survey professional journals or other professional organizations. I did not look to databases (nor did I even know of any) or recommended resources from other provinces. I had no idea how to make a collection development plan (or that I should). I overspent my budget on fiction and underspent on nonfiction. I was not aware of how or where to find nonfiction materials at varying reading levels or that I should look beyond the catalogues that appeared on my desk. The materials I purchased were not always high quality, and I did not know how to ensure they were. Today, I have a five-year collection development plan. I know how to find recommended core collection materials. Today, I make purposeful decisions based on a long-range plan and not on the lobbying of a squeaky wheel. More importantly, I can defend that plan because it is built on an understanding of the recreational and informational needs of my school community

TEACHER-LIBRARIANS COLLABORATE

As I furthered my education, it was clear that I had been doing what people thought I should be doing: taking care of the library and teaching lessons about citing sources. The school community did not see me as an instructional leader. At the time, they were right; but now I have the knowledge to integrate technology, to collaborate with teachers, to use and integrate inquiry, and to understand how a high quality library program is built. It is part of my role to show teachers and administrators the difference between a teacher-in-the-library and a teacher-librarian through conversations and actions that take place in the library.

We've established that collaboration between teacher-librarians and teachers leads to improved student learning (Rodney et al., 2002). However, the support of principals is needed for collaboration. Unfortunately, while most principals would agree that collaboration is desirable, an expectation of collaboration, planning time, and flex scheduling are needed. Teachers have little preparation time and numerous pressing necessities. So, much of our collaboration happens over shared recess supervision, a quick talk in the hallway, or a bite of lunch. Collaboration requires time, commitment, and support. True collaboration "includes enhancing the capacity of the other partners for mutual benefit and common purpose" (SPARC BC, 2010, n.p.).

In my first library position, I did not know how to convince teachers to collaborate. I thought if I made it known I was willing, it was enough. At the time, I did not have as much to offer either. I was not as familiar with technology, Web 2.0 tools, and inquiry learning, or as knowledgeable about information literacy. I have learned to be patient but purposeful and prepared when I approach teachers. I offer many wide and varied opportunities. I attend division professional development and support teachers as they implement these practices. I want to create high quality learning experiences, but it does require planning time. This continues to be a goal. I have also learned you can never give up. Teachers who are resistant may take years to venture into that new territory; it's my job to be ready when they do.

The success of a school library program can be traced to decisions made by the school principal. As Hartzell (2002) noted, elements that lead to a quality library program with impact are in some way under the control of the principal including: library budget, full-time qualified librarian, extent of librarian collaboration with teachers, collection size, adequate support staff, extent of information literacy instruction integrated into the curriculum, collection currency, library usage, teacher-librarian's involvement in leadership roles, and hours of operation. Further, it is up to the principal to create an environment that "values and promotes student library use and adult interaction with the librarian" (Hartzell, 2002, p. 44).

Hartzell (2002) also noted principals decide who will participate in which committees in and out of the school and despite a willing teacher-librarian, it is the principal who decides the "extent to which the librarian has an opportunity to serve in a leadership capacity outside the library media center" (p. 44). I have begun this process by meeting with my principal before school starts in September to go over the library program. I work with my principal on family literacy activities, and I sit on the budget committee to represent the library's interests. Developing a closer working relationship and understanding with my principal is an important goal as I move forward. I will continue to include more frequent reports regarding my activities and work with staff and students. I am fortunate that my principal does value the library and its role, and he is very supportive, but I recognize that I have shortchanged both of us and our students and staff by not developing deeper understandings.

Teacher-librarians benefit from division leadership and professional development

Through my studies and my personal learning network, I have learned a great deal, however, I am frequently frustrated with the lack of direction from my division. Currently, different superintendents are in charge of various aspects of school libraries. Despite staggering evidence about the impact of quality library programs, my division has not sought to build high quality school library programs. Many of the libraries in our division are staffed by teacher-librarians or TITLs who work less than 50 percent time in the library. Those with no training are much as I was in the beginning. Unwittingly, they feed a cycle as principals see the TITL is not contributing to student learning and their work does not need to be done by a teacher, thus creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of obsolescence. These TITLs do their job with no support toward building capacity and understanding of the profession of teacher-librarianship. While I have a strong personal learning network, have completed Master's level course work, and participate in my special subject council/provincial association, I also have no support within my division. I feel much like an island. There are professional development opportunities that help broaden my knowledge as a professional teacher, but within my division there are no opportunities directly targeted to help me improve my library program or to assist me to collaborate with other professionals who also work in the school libraries in my division.

This lack of leadership from a division level almost ensures that TITLs will not consider the importance of becoming qualified. They do not know what they do not know. Some are told by their administrators that they are to take care of the library and the books; some are told to collaborate but don't have knowledge, understanding or skills in inquiry, problem-based learning, information literacy, digital literacy or technology, never mind a flexible schedule within which to operate. They may be underwhelmed by the role if they do not realize its potential, and if they do and they have no training or support, they are quite likely overwhelmed. Further, not having someone at division office with a knowledgeable background means there is no one to advocate on behalf of school libraries, inform administrators and superintendents about the role, or to assist teacher-librarians to create and to share work with shared goals.

Being an advocate for teacher-librarianship is difficult but necessary work. Each time budgets must be cut, teacher-librarian positions are often on the chopping block as there is little understanding about how we impact children and their learning. Teacher-librarians can do something about this. I have learned the hard way that trying to explain the value of a qualified teacher-librarian has little impact. When I taught high school English, I always taught students to "Show, don't tell!" Such is the case with teacher-librarianship. Evidence-based practice is how we can show rather than tell about our impact. As Todd (2007) stated, it will allow us to focus on "the knowledge, attitude, values, and skills that students develop because of school libraries" (p. 62). It compels us to focus on what we have helped students to learn. Being able to share actual data around outcomes and achievement with administration, parents, and boards makes a forceful statement about the value of the school library.

Principals often go on to be superintendents, directors, and perhaps beyond. Their own experience with a qualified teacher-librarian may be minimal, and they may still see the position as they experienced it. If my principal learns through me what is possible, perhaps he will become an advocate for strong school libraries, having seen what can be done. Monthly meetings and annual reports are good advocacy tools. My collection development plan helps me to justify my budget requests and gives a vision for the future of the library.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Each of us probably has fond memories of favourite teachers. Reflecting back, I can see that those I thought were extraordinary were those who were both knowledgeable and passionate about their subject area, masters of engagement, and creative with instruction. With these teachers, my studies came alive, and I was inspired to be a learner and eventually, to become a teacher. Those dispositions of the teachers I admired were those I tried also to emulate. As a high school English and history teacher, I felt comfortable that I embodied those dispositions; however, as a teacher-in-the-library, I did not.

I did not realize I did not possess all of the necessary dispositions to be effective in the school library. After all, if I possessed those as a teacher, I still had them, didn't I? Yes, as a teacher I did, but not as a teacher-librarian. I was not competent in those dispositions specific to teacher-librarianship such as intellectual freedom, advocacy, information literacy, and leadership (Bush & Jones, 2010). As I learned about curricula, instructional strategies, philosophy of school librarianship, information literacy, technology integration and leadership, self-censorship and intellectual freedom, and advocacy, and came to know the research that guides the practice, I developed dispositions.

The passion I have for school libraries has been the light that has guided me throughout the past five years of studying. I see the promise and the opportunities for students. I see specifically how what I have to offer will help them to be critical and creative thinkers, global collaborators, ethical users of technology, and innovative creators of content. I can help them learn to integrate technology into their lives in ways that will be effective and efficient. Qualified teacher-librarians are vigilant in maintaining and improving their knowledge and practice. They know they must be visionaries and cannot afford coasting, as student learning will suffer if they are not ahead of the curve. This is a professional responsibility, and it cannot be taken lightly.

When I began my love affair with teacher-librarianship, it was quite simply infatuation. It was not based on knowledge, deep understandings, practice, or evidence. Today, I am even more passionate, because this is a lifelong love that I value and want to nurture and grow. But it is not enough for me alone to be in this relationship. Administrators, teachers, boards, and superintendents must also embrace the library. Their love affair must be based on these same principles. They too must recognize the need for deep, enduring understandings and their role in ensuring life-long learning through the library and the role of the teacher-librarian.

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The Complex Role of the Teacher-Librarian

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Most people understand the role of a teacher: plan lessons, present ideas, promote curiosity, assess student achievement, and report to parents. Most people see the work of librarians in our local public libraries: scanning books at the circulation desk, quieting noisy patrons, re-shelving materials, leading literacy programming, inviting storytellers. So what does it mean when the two roles mesh into a school-based teacher-librarian? For most, it is unclear, even for those who work together in the same environment, under the same roof. What is the role of the teacher-librarian and why does this role often times need to be defined and defended?

Teaching: it is the profession that I dreamed about for as long as I could remember. There was never any doubt that I would become an elementary school teacher and encourage young people to be curious, active learners. I was inspired by many great teachers in my life, including my father who loved his work and allowed me to ask questions, visit his classroom and take part in special events and sports teams that he coached. This was the starting point of the professional journey that has brought me here today.

After convocating with a Bachelors of Elementary Education in 2003 from the University of Regina, I worked in Regina Public School division subbing and filling maternity leave and medical leave contracts. After a few years of struggling to find permanent work, the contract I had been hoping for was finally offered. I taught full time for three years in grades that seemed to change each fall, never teaching the same grade combination two years in a row. Despite the ever-changing teaching role, I knew that my passion was in an elementary school setting.

The role of the classroom teacher presented several challenges, one of which was the lack of preparedness for teaching multiple subjects. The daunting task of preparing lessons in eight or more subjects led me to feel inadequate and feelings of guilt began to overwhelm me as I realized that I couldn't do any single one of them justice. How could I possibly prepare my students for the realities of the world by only scratching the surface of their inquiring minds?

I had originally planned to enter into a Master's program five years into my career; however, the series of difficult years that followed convocation discouraged me from furthering my education. Several years passed without ever thinking back on the plan that I had once created. Within our school division, it is recommended that we transfer schools every 8-10 years. It seems unfair to be told when to move so I thought I would take that upon myself to decide. After entering my window of transfer from the only elementary school I had ever worked in, I began to think back on my plan to enter a Master's program and to look around at the variety of possible programs through the University of Regina. Unfortunately none of the programs offered seemed to fit my vision of instruction, and therefore I held back from enrolling.

With changing curriculum and the pressures of classroom teachers' demands, I began to consider a change larger than I had ever expected. I decided that I'd like to challenge myself with a change in teaching position, a new school and an expansion of my educational knowledge through a program that would open up doors of opportunity. I learned of a program that appealed to me in many ways and eventually applied to the University of Alberta's Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning Program (TLDL). With that, I also completed a transfer form that included checking the small box labeled "teacher-librarian." My professional life was about to change. I was accepted into the TL-DL program and received a position as a teacher-librarian shared between two schools in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

I became a teacher-librarian four years ago with only one goal in mind: to teach with a focus on literacy. This would be the job that I had yearned for, one of consistency and opportunities to focus on a single subject area. My previous experience with teacher-librarians was limited. I was truly unaware of how a teacher librarian could assist me in the classroom. As a result, I was not prepared for the diverse nature of teacher-librarianship.

Just a few short weeks into my new position, I began to realize that this job had the potential to be as diverse, complex and challenging as that of a classroom teacher. I was thankful that I had been accepted into the TLDL program and I soon began to discover what it would take to be successful in the new role. Each TLDL class along the way guided me in further understanding the varied roles of the teacher-librarian: literature expert, collaborator, technology leader and literacy teacher. It didn't take long for me to realize how classroom teachers could benefit from the expertise of the teacher-librarian. I began to see how collaboration could ease some of the pressures of the classroom teacher and lead to increased student learning opportunities. I was determined to be the teacher-librarian I had never experienced.

Throughout my four years in this position, I have been approached numerous times by new teachers who ask, "What is your job?" It worries me that new teachers continue to be unaware of the role of today's teacher-librarians and the possibilities that exist when we work together. I want to take it upon myself to educate the staff around me and support the role of teacher-librarians remaining in school divisions in Saskatchewan and throughout Canada.

The role of the teacher-librarian isnot widely understood by administration, teachers, students and even parents. I feel I need to advocate for teacher-librarians so that TLs can continue to be valuable resources for both teachers and students and for teacher-librarian positions to be retained in every school division. There has been a lot of talk about budget cuts in various school divisions and often times it is the teacher-librarian role that is extinguished. It is important for pre-service and current teachers, administration and

government to recognize the strong partnership that can exist between classroom teacher and teacher-librarian. They must know that we can support all areas of teaching and impact learning for all students. I strive every day to enhance awareness of this diverse position and advocate for teacher-librarians who are collaborative literacy leaders and technology integrators. They must know that teacher-librarians impact student achievement and instill a love of literacy and learning in their students, and create an understanding of information literacy as it presents itself in the 21st century. What is it that teacher-librarians do and what can we do to promote their value?

What do school leaders need to know...?

There are often misconceptions regarding the work of teacher-librarians in schools. Fellow colleagues, community members and even administrators have difficulty keeping up with the dynamic role. As technology rapidly changes, it has the potential to enhance our teaching styles. We must continue to change our practice to meet the ever-changing needs of our students as well. By fostering the desire of many professionals to teach more collaboratively, teacher-librarians are a resource that can enhance educational practices and provide multi-dimensional learning opportunities for fellow colleagues and students. If we look at how education has evolved and how teaching roles in schools have changed, we understand how advocating for the role of teacher-librarian is more valuable than ever.

Role of a 21st century teacher-librarian

Much research has been done to explore the complex, but essential role of the teacher-librarian in the 21st century. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL), along with American Library Association (ALA), have created several documents outlining the role of the teacher-librarian and standards essential to 21st century learners. The AASL (2007, 2010) believes that libraries are essential to the educational well-being of students because they provide learners with opportunities for not only reading, but also information literacy. Technology and resources are only a part of the process for learning; it is through the teacher librarian and her guidance in questioning and inquiry that true learning begins (AASL, 2009).

The AASL (2009) outlines five standards in the role of teacher-librarian, all of which contribute to the overall educational well being of students at any grade level: teaching for learning; literacy and reading; research and knowledge; advocacy and leadership; and program management and administration. Haycock (2001) believes that "those teacher-librarians who have a positive effect on student achievement and who enjoy the respect of teachers and administrators collaborate with classroom colleagues to integrate information literacy processes and strategies into instructional programs. These teacher-librarians are viewed as equal teaching partners and teacher leaders, providing a value-added function in the school" (p. 3).

A Canadian standards document, *Achieving information Literacy*, states that 21st century teacher-librarians and classroom teachers must work together to teach information literacy skills so students can:

- Access information effectively and efficiently
- Solve problems strategically
- Apply critical thinking skills
- Make responsible decisions
- Apply information accurately
- Create new information products
- Use effective and creative communication skills

- Use information appropriately and respectfully
- Develop independent reading and learning habits. (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003, p. 6)

Fontichiaro, Moreillon, and Abilock (2009) outline ten essential duties for teacher-librarians and teachers to achieve when collaborating.

- Foster the free exchange of ideas.
- Provide open access to unrestricted resources for intellectual growth and personal enrichment.
- Support multiple paths to understanding for individual learning styles.
- Design student-centered learning experiences.
- Nurture students as they grapple ethically with challenging ideas and concepts.
- Cultivate creative and critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making.
- Promote questioning and curiosity.
- Value experimentation and risk-taking.
- Learn through inquiry and self-reflection.
- Learn from students, peers, and other professionals. (p. 63)

Sykes (2001) believes that "teacher-librarians of the 21st century can take the lead in working through the developmental perspective of curriculum from key concepts to conceptual systems to disciplinary theories to interdisciplinary connections" (p. 6). "As learning becomes student directed rather than teacher directed, school libraries transform from collecting and accessing resources to places of connecting and creation" (p. 5).

Sources of misconceptions

Traditionally "the function of the librarian has always been to select the material that his constituents will require; to catalog it so that those who would use it can know what is available and where it is kept; and to preserve it so that both contemporary readers and those who will follow will be able to use it" (Lerner, 2009, p. 200). Teacher-librarians' duties consisted of book circulation, library maintenance and basic research instruction and because of several changes not only in schools, but also society in general, teachers and teacher librarians need to reform (Hughes-Hassell & Harada, 2007).

Hughes-Hassell and Harada (2007) agree that libraries have always been an important place for promoting learning, however, over time the role of the teacher-librarian has seen its share of changes. Changes in academic standards, accountability, diversity in student population, digital literacy and professional leadership all affect the role of the teacher-librarian and school media programs (p.xviii-xx). Information literacy became more common as more and more informational tools became available and teacher-librarians had to guide their learners through appropriate research methods. "Information literacy has progressed from the simple definition of using reference resources to find information. Multiple literacies, including digital, visual, textual, and technological, have now joined information literacy as crucial skills for this century" (AASL, 2007, p. 3). In the past, teacher-librarians have been seen as "staff members who assist those who foster student achievement, and not as line performers directly responsible for student—and certainly not for teacher or administrator— progress and success" (Hartzell, 2002, p. 95).

Technology shifts the role

McCracken (2001) believes that "rapid advances in technology increased the confusion over the library media specialist's role" (para. 2). As technology begins to play a larger role in the library setting, teacher-librarians had to make a shift in their approaches to teaching students research skills, taking students simply from research through reference books to moving beyond paper into a world of online

informational overload (McCracken, 2001). While technology becomes more complex and information became more readily available, educators began to realize that students required guidance and explicit instruction regarding information literacy - how to best approach the overwhelming nature of online research (AASL, 2007). According to AASL, with this major shift in research approaches, teacher-librarian roles need to expand from simply book expert and research teacher to multi-media information enthusiasts (2010).

The changes in technology bring about a major shift in literacy. Hughes-Hassell and Harada (2007) describe how digital print changes the way readers read and think. Online reading requires a variety of skills connected to traditional reading, but also relies on a more complex way of thinking in order to navigate through connected pages of text, interactive graphs and diagrams. Hughes-Hassell & Harada also state that "knowing how to access, understand, and use information, once thought to the be the realm of reading/language arts teachers, is important in all content areas" (p. 95) and according to Johnston et al. (2012), it is through the support of the teacher-librarian that these skills can be taught and transferred across all subjects (Johnson, Huber, Dupuis, O'Hair, Sandidge, 2012).

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Are the next generation of teachers prepared to collaborate with the teacher-librarians in their schools? Moore (2000) and Miller (2004) agree that teachers are unclear about the role of the teacher-librarian and often do not utilize the teacher-librarian as a support in their classrooms. Asselin and Naslund (2000) believes that this lack of understanding may stem from a greatly overlooked group of pre-service teachers (p. 72). Asselin and Doiron (2003) and Branch (2003) question the relationship between pre-service teachers and teacher-librarians, noting several potential reasons for this disconnect:

- lack of exposure in their own education
- very little mention of the role of teacher-librarian in post-secondary faculties of education
- no internship or work placements in school libraries during post-secondary
- little or no explicit training or discussion of the role of teacher-librarian

These factors cause pre-service teachers to underutilize the capacities that school libraries and teacher-librarians can provide. Asselin and Doiron (2003) studied the attitudes of pre-service teachers in connection with teacher-librarians and through pre- and post-test analysis, they discovered that connecting these pre-service teachers with teacher-librarians changed their initial perspectives. They gained insight into how this sort of collaboration can enhance student learning and allow for positive professional relationships to develop.

Because of a lack of teacher and teacher-librarian partnerships, "the Information Literacy Project was established in a large Canadian teacher education program to support the development of learner-centered, curriculum-based school library programs through the formation of partnerships between pre-service teachers and teacher-librarians" (Asselin & Naslund, 2000, p. 1). During this collaboration, pre-service teachers studied the role of the teacher-librarian and learned how to plan for effective, collaborative teaching. It is through continued efforts that these partnerships can exist.

ADMINISTRATION

There have been misconceptions over the years about the role of the teacher-librarian even from the administration within the school (Zmuda & Harada, 2008; Miller, 2004, Hartzell 2002; Dorrell & Lawson 1995). "A lack of knowledge about their contributions may well be the result of a lack of professional interchange between the principal and the library media specialist" and because of this, "the principal and the library media specialist often do not really know what each contributes to the instructional process"

(Dorrell & Lawson, 1995, p. 72). Dorell and Lawson concluded that "within the media center, principals put most emphasis on the importance of selecting materials, providing reference service to students, and generally running the library. Of lesser importance was curriculum planning and subject discipline instruction" (p. 79).

In a study conducted by Oberg, Hay and Henri (1999), principals and teacher librarians from seven countries were surveyed regarding administration support in libraries. Supportive tasks were addressed such as:

- advocating and facilitating the development of an information literate school community
- demonstrating support for collaboration between the teacher-librarian and teaching staff
- ensuring that the teacher-librarian has an appropriate allocation of support staff
- allocating adequate, flexible time for the teacher-librarian to administer the school library
- advocating and facilitating the development of an information literate school community
- informing new staff about the importance of collaborating with the teacher-librarian
- encouraging teachers to incorporate the learning and use of a range of information skills into their teaching programs and to assess process skills as well as content. (pp. 169-170)

From this survey, it was determined that each country had different beliefs about the involvement of administration supporting teacher-librarians, however, what remained consistent was the idea that the relationship between administration and teacher-librarians was significant to the overall well-being of staff and students within a school.

Hartzell (2002) believes that these misconceptions have been influenced by four main factors: personal experiences in school as a child, professional training, nature of the work of a teacher-librarian in the way that they benefit teachers and students but not necessarily administration, and lack of information available in literature regarding the role of the teacher-librarian. Hartzell (2002) also noted that "principals expect librarians to find for them the information they want when they want it, to assist teachers when they ask for assistance, and to help students find the materials they need to complete the assignments their teachers give them" (p. 93). "Principals who understand and appreciate the library are more likely to be library advocates-at least within the limits of their ability" (Hartzell, 2007, p. 34). Zmuda and Harada (2008) understand that specialists within a school are vital to improving student achievement and the administrator must allow teacher-librarians to take on a leadership role. "The administrator's job is to construct a meaningful role for this position in the architecture of the school leadership team" (p. 24).

Between the history of the role and it's ever-changing nature, where are we today? Despite the shift in the role of the teacher-librarian as information expert, the legacy of the stereotype still lingers. Some teacher-librarians have prepared for the shift into a role based on collaboration with classroom teachers, curriculum implementation and planning, and technology integration, while others have remained in the traditional role of bookkeeper (Pon, 2004; McCracken, 2001; Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003). Currently, teacher-librarians often have to advocate for one another and promote our roles in schools with our students, our colleagues and our administration. How can teacher-librarians be valued as essential professionals in schools?

While research defends the complexity of the role of teacher-librarian, one cannot understand it completely without spending a day in the life of one. Without firsthand experience or interaction with a teacher-librarian, it is difficult to truly understand the pressures and importance of the job. There is an ongoing fear of job loss because of budget cuts and with that comes a need to advocate. Teacher-librarians take on a variety of responsibilities that are valuable to teachers and students and it's time that administration and other education-based decision-makers begin to see how a teacher-librarians' contributions enhance student learning.

What can school leaders do about... ?

There are many concerns about the lack of awareness of the role of teacher-librarians in schools and school divisions Canada-wide. A simplistic understanding of the role of the teacher-librarian has many professionals worried that the job will become a career of the past (Zmuda & Harada, 2008). If provincial ministries, school division leaders and educational leaders don't understand the value of teacher-librarians and the complexity of the job, why would they attempt to maintain those positions in schools? In some provinces, ministry and school board associations claim to support the role, but do not provide the funding to staff school libraries with qualified teacher-librarians.

News articles are popping up internationally stating that budget cuts are resulting in a lack of funding for school libraries. James Logan High School in Union City, California had to close library doors because it was deemed as unimportant by the state (Riley, 2012). School districts in England are reducing funding for resources and librarians (Harris, 2010). Even within our own country, the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board decided to eliminate 39 library staff and disburse the library collections to classrooms (CBC News, 2011).

Several school districts across Canada have suffered the loss of teacher-librarians because of budget cuts. Victoria, British Columbia was one of those affected. "Government cuts were deep, and the District was making an effort to meet budgetary restrictions while having as little impact on students as possible. In their terms, that meant cutting non-classroom, rather than classroom positions" (Lindsay, 2004, p. 20). Due to these all-too-common budget cuts, teachers and students are missing out on teaching and learning opportunities that would enhance education and promote information readiness for the 21st century. "Stating it bluntly, it is not about salvaging jobs as much as it is about helping children to succeed" (Zmuda & Harada, 2008, p. 11).

In my school division, we haven't yet seen any cuts to teacher-librarian positions, but we have noticed a decline in library assistant/technician time. In my first year, I was allocated an assistant for one full day out of a five-day cycle. Her responsibilities included book exchanges, re-shelving, repairs, processing new resources, organizing shelves. Basically, her job entailed maintaining the physical space. At that particular school, I was responsible for placing orders, collaborating with teachers, teaching classes, covering prep for teachers, fundraising for library funds, and assisting with technology issues. My other school, however, didn't have an assistant, so I was in charge of it all. After one short year, the assistant was let go from my first school because of budget cuts. I was now expected to take on all duties for both schools. It took some adjusting and prioritizing of duties, as I assumed full responsibility to ensure that my two libraries continued to enhance the learning of over 500 students.

The first step in advocating for teacher-librarian positions is to fully understand what it is we do and need to do on a daily basis. How can others respect our position if we aren't fully aware of the ways in which we can most effectively enhance the educational success of our students? And without training, does a teacher in the library fully understand his/her role? Once we are confident in our role and understand our purpose, administration, teachers, students and the community will see just how important we are. "We really need to understand the other person, his or her job, and what he or she does to contribute to the organization's good. Only when we are armed with this knowledge can we accurately determine our role in relation to that other person and how our role interacts with his or hers" (Hartzell, 2002, p. 92). Haycock (2001) believes:

> There is no question that a critical new role dilemma for teacher-librarians is how to move advocacy based on evidence up the priority list. We need more action-based research projects in schools where TLs model the research process for teachers and students and collect evidence of their impact on student learning. (p. 4)

You don't have to go very far if you want to learn more about the ever-changing role of the teacher-librarian. There is a lot of valuable literature available to read about the role of the 21st century teacher-librarian. For example, Hughes-Hassell and Harada (2007) discuss the changes that have occurred in schools and how the teacher-librarian role is vital for student achievement. Courses offered by the University of Alberta Teacher-Librarian by Distance Learning program provide additional experiences that relate directly to the day-to-day responsibilities of teacher-librarians and what it means to be a professional teacher-librarian in terms of the values, philosophies and dispositions associated with the job. Online bloggers such as Buffy Hamilton and Joyce Valenza have dedicated their time to sharing their passion for libraries and teacher-librarians. They support the role and provide readers with tips for success in school libraries.

Teacher-librarians are responsible for maintaining the library collection and adding necessary resources as curricula is updated. Resource development is a vital task in all libraries and requires the teacher-librarian's expertise not only with curriculum connections, reviewing sources, and selection guidelines but also for an understanding of patrons' personal interests. Because library resources are not limited to print, teacher-librarians should be aware of the variety of electronic resources appropriate for their collections such as e-books, online databases, digital publications, etc. Some school districts provide teacher-librarians with guidelines for collection development.

When I moved into my two libraries four years ago, the shelves were filled with resources that needed a little TLC. Rows and rows of books were stuffed on to the units, covered in dust, many of which were older than I am and it was evident that the libraries were in need of deselection and selection of new resources. I have spent the past four years doing focused collection development by asking students about their interests, referring to curriculum resource lists and replacing torn versions of popular books. I follow book review journals and blogs and often ask staff for recommendations. I have noticed a significant increase in the number of items being circulated and the students are always excited to see the bins of new books.

It is difficult to combat the misconceptions that exist if we don't become directly involved with students and teachers. "Effective teacher-librarians collaborate with classroom colleagues as equal teaching partners" (Haycock, 2001, p. 4), however, many staff members are still resistant to the supports that exist. Teacher-librarians must be available to visit classrooms, schedule meetings with teachers, have a flexible timetable, and get to know the students' academic needs. Knowing what is being taught in classrooms allows teacher-librarians to make connections to curricular topics and help create dynamic lessons and learning experiences that fit with the instruction already taking place in the classroom.

The relationship with administration is essential when planning scheduling and timetabling. It is imperative that administration sees the value of collaboration and allows opportunities for this to happen within a schedule. Support from administration is key to providing the time for teacher-librarian to meet with teachers.

I still struggle to connect with teachers in my schools. When I offer support, they sometimes feel that collaboration requires more planning and prep time and I am often sent away. For the few teachers who have agreed to a collaborative partnership, we can see how the students flourish knowing that two teachers are supporting their learning and individualized instruction can take place when the planning,

teaching and assessing are shared. Collaboration requires open communication and once positive learning experiences are seen and heard by other teachers, they may be more receptive to working with me.
Inquiry is a teaching and learning process that allows students to wonder, actively explore information and present findings in a meaningful way. "Curricular inquiry circles offer an ideal opportunity for teachers and librarians to work together" (Harvey & Daniels, 2009, p. 169). Because inquiry can seem quite daunting at first, having the opportunity to work with a teacher-librarian can alleviate some of the pressures. One of the most motivating factors for teachers about inquiry is that it "can be used in all programs of study and in all grades" (Alberta Learning, 2004, p. 3). With the help of a teacher-librarian, students can learn how to ask appropriate questions, become critical thinkers and active researchers and share findings with others.

I have been involved with a few inquiry projects over the years and I can honestly say that it is because of a strong collaborative partnership that the students gained so much knowledge and skill in terms of research and sharing. It is challenging task on your own and the teachers I've worked with are thankful for the collaborative experience. Research topics can relate to a particular unit of study or can be completely open to the students' individual interests. I have seen such engagement when a student is studying topics of interest to them. Often times behaviors are kept under control and students take initiative in their own learning. Inquiry should be a part of every educator's planning and instruction.

Technology continues to change and enhance the way in which libraries function and serve patrons. Resources are not limited to books on shelves, but rather the plethora of opportunities and experiences beyond the walls of the library. Online encyclopedias, databases, blogs, wikis, podcasts, photos, and videos, can provide students and teachers with sources of information that may seem overwhelming. Who will teach students to be critical thinkers? Who will guide students through the process of finding the most accurate information? Through collaboration, classroom teachers and teacher-librarians can work together to provide their students with skills that support digital literacy.

Web 2.0 tools such as Glogster, Kidblog, Animoto and Flickr can play a vital role in teaching and learning, engaging students with visuals and allowing students to be creative and share their work to an authentic audience. These tools can support student learning through the stages of inquiry and share their successes virtually. Using these tools is a great way to share work with families and students in other locations. My students have created blogs that they use for free writing and parents love seeing their child's work published online, available for reading from home. Technology will not only engage many students, it will also provide students with alternative strategies for learning because it appeals to multiple intelligences.

Provincial government, school divisions or individual schools provide school libraries with a budget. Big or small, it is the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to manage that budget and make purchases for the school's collection. Along with the daily responsibilities of teaching and managing a library space, teacher-librarians are expected to make appropriate purchases while maintaining a suitable budget. Administration may play a role in dividing up funding. If administration sees the value of the school library, more funding may be allocated.

Because budgets may be minimal, teacher-librarians may seek out additional funds that will add to the original contribution from the province, district or school. "What are the implications and inherent pressures on teacher-librarians for fundraising for school collections?" (Haycock, 2001, p. 4). A large part of my time each fall is spent planning for annual fundraisers such as Scholastic Book Fairs, used book sales, and magazine subscription sales that will help supplement my library budget. Hours are spent booking the events, advertising, gathering materials and support personnel and running the events. While I understand the events not only promote literacy in my school and community, planning and running the fairs adds additional responsibility and planning to an already busy schedule.

Applying for grants can also be a solution to working with small budgets. Most agencies require lengthy proposals that state the need for funds, proposed literacy activities that require funding, lists of potential purchases on specific topics of diversity or curricular connections. Some agencies provide grants of monetary value, others provide books directly. Creating such proposals can be burdensome on teacher-librarians and alter the plans of the teachers who relied on the teacher-librarian for classroom collaboration.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Students now entering pre-service teacher education programs may lack the experience and insight into how to collaborate with a teacher-librarian to support student learning. If pre-service teachers have not had effective experiences with teacher-librarians throughout their educational past or have missed out on the opportunities for strong collaborative teaching partnerships, they are not likely to see value in these partnerships as they join the educational field.

It is my hope that as more and more teacher-librarians pursue further education in librarianship, they will share the information with other post-secondary institutions across Canada and bring programming to more local universities. We need to promote the role of teacher-librarian to pre-service teachers. I also hope that student teachers in schools have a chance to spend time with the teacher-librarian and experience a "day in the life." Through classroom collaboration, interns will have an opportunity to see the value in the partnership that can exist between their mentor teacher and the teacher-librarian. Even though my internship was only ten years ago, I can't even remember the name of the teacher-librarian in the school, nor can I remember a single interaction with that individual. Had that connection existed, I would have been better prepared to collaborate with my teacher-librarian when I was a classroom teacher, and better yet, gained some insight into what a teacher-librarian does to assist me with my current role.

The most effective way to promote and support the role of teacher-librarians in schools today is through advocacy and action. Teacher-librarians need to continue working hard every day to prove their worth to their colleagues and be leaders of collaboration and shared educational partnerships. By providing classroom teachers with guidance and support, the role will become more apparent and misconceptions from administration and other staff will dissolve when they witness firsthand the increase in student achievement. Our role is active and important. Conversations need to take place to support the effectiveness of education when instruction is collaborative, constructive, and valued by everyone involved. It must be made clear that student achievement is greater when the role of teacher-librarian is valued and supported and their collaboration is a part of every child's learning experience. I am truly lucky to be in a role that is so highly regarded by many. Teacher-librarians are in a position to advocate for the work they do every day to promote literacy and increase student achievement.

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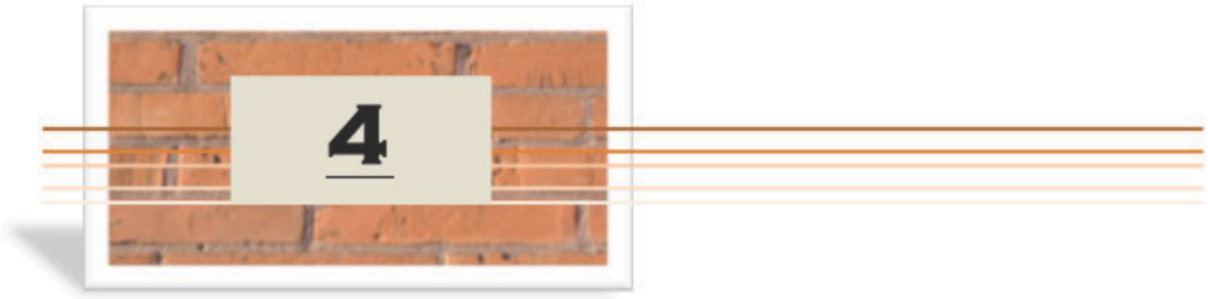
Teacher-Librarians and Their Spaces and Places

The school library goes by many names (media center and learning commons are two of the most popular terms right now), but regardless of what it is called, the school library and the school library program exist to provide the school community with access to recreational and informational resources that meet the diverse learning needs of students and teachers. As a physical space, the school library may undergo name changes and transformation, indeed many functions of the school library may occur outside the four walls of the physical space.

This section explores how qualified teacher-librarians are transforming their spaces and places to respond to the changing needs of their learning communities. What's in a name? Lisa Vanness begins to answer this question by looking at the many terms we use to talk about school libraries and goes on to examine the implications and suitability of the different ways we describe school libraries as a space. Vanness concludes that while a name change may not be neccessary, a basic understanding of these terms is required to appreciate the role and importance of the teacher-librarian. In the second chapter, Tamzen Kulyk explores how school libraries are embracing participatory culture and transforming into spaces that promote and facilitate participatory learning experiences through makerspaces and an inquiry approach to learning. The final chapter in this section promotes the idea that school libraries should not be restricted to the four walls of their existing space. April Hilland presents an exploration of public library programs and services from a teacher-librarian perspective. Focusing on collaboration, community outreach, and creative programming, Hilland explores the ways in which public libraries can influence and transform school library spaces and services.

Although school libraries should always remain at the heart of the school, the chapters in this section push us to think about ways in which school libraries can push the boundaries of traditional programs, services and promote new ways of thinking about school library spaces and places.



A Library by any Other Name

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Why should school leaders care… ?

A "student-centred library." No doubt, these words mean something to you. You picture books on the shelves, tables and chairs arranged for individual and small group work, students browsing and examining materials, a teacher-librarian helping students find books that match their interests and reading abilities. Students are able to find what they are interested in and then return to their regular classroom.

Now let's try the phrase "learning commons." What comes to mind? Not much? You're not alone. The phrase "learning commons" might bring up more images of the United Nations or university campuses than the school library as you know it, but "learning commons" is indeed the direction that school libraries are now moving. With the advent of pervasive technology in the 21st century and its implications for the school library, the concept of a student-centred library has evolved into a learning commons model. This chapter will examine the foundations of the student-centred library and why school leaders are adopting a learning commons model in their schools as a powerful structure and philosophy for contemporary school library programs.

My journey in understanding the school library as a learning commons has been a bumpy, multi-track road filled with detours and roundabouts. The assumptions with which I began are no longer part of my understandings and my learning has been informed by research and writing in the field of librarianship. I now understand the school library, or learning commons, to be not just a place where students stop in, putter around, and check out materials, but the place where deep learning occurs and students and staff become better equipped to engage, respond, create, and participate in the 21st century.

The end of my library learning journey was where it all came apart, and then all came back together again. I was just wrapping up my ninth and second-to-last course in the Teacher Librarianship by Distance Learning (TLDL) Masters in Education program at the University of Alberta when I ran across the term that stopped me in my tracks. "the student-centered library." What? Had I previously heard this term and forgotten about it? In nine courses, I could not remember stumbling across the term before. It

seemed that a student-centered library was something I inherently believed in, but I could not remember reading anything specific about student-centered libraries during my Masters program. Of course, pretty much everything we learned and discussed involved students, but few discussions revolved around what exactly a student-centred library would look like, feel like, and how it would function.

For me, the term "student-centred library" crystallized all I had learned thus far in the TL-DL program, and all I would pursue with passion in the future of elementary school libraries and my place within them. Thinking back on five years of readings and discussion forum posts, I realized that a student-centred library was always my common thread, my steady drumbeat, my rallying cry. The phrase "student-centred library" was the lens that placed all my learning in perspective, gave focus to my efforts, and inspired me to challenge traditional practices in the school library. Having had this earth-moving realization, I was inspired to investigate the elements of a student-centred library.

A few days into my research, I became stumped. Where were all the research studies and professional pieces of literature on student-centred school libraries? Had anyone even defined what a "student-centred library" was, generated theory on the topic, or researched a whole-picture concept in this area? I adjusted my spelling of "centred" to the Americanized "centered" and found more material to weed through, much focusing on university libraries, but very little that addressed school libraries. What I did not realize at the time was that the term "student-centred library" had undergone a transformation and is now incorporated into a learning commons model for elementary and secondary school libraries. In this chapter I pull together the literature that informs the concepts of the student-centred library and the learning commons.

With busy jobs and loads of responsibilities on their plates, administrators and school leaders may have missed the shift occurring in their school libraries. The library is no longer just a quiet space to study and check out books. Instead, the library has become the living brain of the school, where staff and students learn and demonstrate information literacy, students and teachers collaborate and inquire, and technology ramps up the learning exponentially. Much more than just a student-centered space, the school library has ever-thinning walls to allow for the unrestricted, bilateral flow of information and ideas. Pivotal to the success of the school library is not just the physical facility, but a teacher-librarian who understands and can facilitate a learning commons.

What do school leaders need to know...?

After stumbling across the term "student-centred library," I began searching through the research and professional literature for a better understanding of the term and encountered a barrage of names and nomenclature surrounding school libraries and the people who work in them. As I understood the matter, placing students at the centre of all decisions involving the library creates a fundamental shift in perspective in the daily operations, reasons for the library's existence, and the very role of the teacher-librarian. I expected to find a barrage of material examining this important viewpoint.

I was oddly disappointed. The most frequent use of the term "student-centred library" I found was in job postings for librarians and teacher-librarians (California State University, 2012; Green, 2012; Jobing.com, 2012) and general, promotional information for universities, public and private school libraries (Baltimore City Community College, n.d.; Fontoura, n.d.; Saint Xavier University, 2012; Virginia Association of School Librarians, 2012). While these initial search returns were all current, there was little written after the year 2000 in the academic world focusing on student-centred school libraries. Much material, however, can generally be found on student-centred learning (Andrews, 2010; Atkinson & Swaggerty, 2011; Clarke, 2012; Dewey, 2009; Garrett, 2008).

The antecedent of the term "student-centred" in conjunction with school libraries is summarized in the now-historic 1998 document *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* created by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT):

> The focus of school library media programs has moved from resources to students to creating a community of lifelong learners. Students and their learning remain at the core of library media programs and services, shaping the functions of school library media specialists. (p. v)

Information Power highlights three aspects of teacher-librarianship in a student-centred library: collaboration, leadership, and technology. The focus for implementing collaboration, leadership, and technology in *Information Power* is on the teacher-librarian, and not at all directed at the students. *Information Power* does not tell us how students can engage in collaboration, leadership, and technology to maximize their learning. Each of these three areas provides a pathway to make students more powerful in their learning, but the responsibility and method for pursuing collaboration, leadership, and technology was left up to individual teacher-librarians to negotiate. "School library media specialists must determine how to interpret these themes and incorporate them into the functions of their individual school media programs" (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 47). The 1998 document was important, however, as it encouraged a shift to student-centred libraries with an emphasis on learning. Almost twenty years later, the AASL offers a new set of guidelines that move the library from "a confined place to one with fluid boundaries that is layered by diverse needs and influenced by an interactive global community" (AASL, 2009, para. 1).

Collaboration, technology, and leadership have massive potential for students and their learning, not just for teacher-librarians on their quest to produce information literate students. As teacher-librarianship evolved into the 21st century, a model that combined student-centred pedagogy and information literacy was required. In a summary of their new guidelines, the AASL (2009) positions the school library as a learning community where both staff and students are becoming effective users of ideas and information, developing multiple literacies, collaborating, engaging in inquiry learning, and reading (para. 2). In addition, the guidelines call for at least one certified teacher-librarian with additional support staff as needed, "flexible and equitable access to physical and virtual collections of resources," a sufficient budget, a variety of media formats that support curriculum and library users' requirements and interests, and access to professional development for school staff (AASL, n.d., para. 3).

As the AASL documents show, the concept of the student-centered library has evolved from being focused narrowly on students and their learning, to being an open, equitable space for learning in the school community. In other words, school libraries have shifted from being student-centred to learning-centred.

What is a School Library Media Centre and a School Library Media Specialist?

A school library media centre is an alternative name for the school library that places greater emphasis on the multimedia options available in many schools (Singh, 2009). A school library media specialist is another name for teacher-librarian. Nancy Everhart, former President of the American Association of School Librarians, uses the phrases "school library media centre" and "school library media specialist" repeatedly and without discussion in her 1998 text *Evaluating the School Library Media Center*. These two terms are still in use (Dicksinson, Gavigan, & Pribesh, 2008; Harris, 2012; Morris, 2010), but are more predominant in publications from the United States than those from Canada. In the United States, some states require teacher-librarians to pass examinations to be certified school media specialists and work as a teacher-librarian. The exams and preparation materials use the language of "media specialist" and "media center," contributing to the enduring use of the terms (Dickinson, 2006; Wynne, 2008).

WHAT IS AN INFORMATION COMMONS?

Sometimes the term "information commons" is also used in conjunction with libraries, but this term and model have limitations and are more suited to academic libraries. In an information commons, the library acts as "an integrated library reference and technical service center" (Beatty, 2008, p. 9). What the information commons model ignores is that the library is not only a place to go and find information, but a place where deep and shared learning can be taking place. "The learning commons terminology clearly indicates to campus administration that the library is not merely a support unit; rather, it is an integral part of the student learning experience" (Hussong-Christian, Rempel, & Deitering, 2010, pp. 275-276). Conceptualizing the library as an information centre that is separate from where learning actually transpires creates a disconnection between the learner, learning and the library. In addition, in a climate where the world's information is "abundant, hardly scarce, hardly expensive, hardly worth warehousing," it makes no sense to have the library act as a separate, physical place to go to find information (Godin, 2011, para. 17).

WHAT IS A LEARNING COMMONS?

A learning commons has been discussed and defined most notably by Loertscher and Koechlin (2012a):

> A Learning Commons is a common, or shared, learning 'space' that is both physical and virtual. It is designed to move students beyond mere research practice, and group work to a greater level of engagement through exploration, experimentation, and collaboration. The Learning Commons is more than a room or a website; it allows users to create their own environments to improve learning. It's about changing school culture and about transforming the way learning and teaching occur. (p. 20)

A learning commons incorporates the collaboration, leadership, and technology advanced by *Information Power* and the multiple literacies, inquiry, and learning community encouraged by *Empowering Learners*, but also gives serious consideration to physical spaces:

> The learning commons model that has emerged encompasses the information commons but takes as its focus the student, rather than the library environment, information resources, and technology tools. As such, the focus is increasingly on services and programming rather than specific information tools or equipment. The learning commons affords a more robust conception of student success. (Hinchliffe & Wong, 2010, p. 214)

Skold (2012), in a review of the literature on virtual space and learning, found that virtual space requires its own pedagogy, unique learning tasks that develop virtual skills, and sensitivity towards the social aspect of virtual participation. In other words, filling a library with computers and eBooks is not enough. A shift from a traditional library program is required to include interactions with appropriately designed virtual spaces (Loertscher & Koechlin, 2012b).

As van Dyk (2013), director of the Libraries and Literacy Branch for the government of British Columbia, attests, a learning commons is about more than a physical environment and access to technology. "Just as a room full of books is not a library, a room full of books, comfy chairs and technology is not a learning commons" (van Dyk, 2013, para. 1). In an elementary and secondary educational setting, teacher-librarians must possess a thorough knowledge of the curriculum at every grade level, an understanding of childhood development, and a passion for literacy of all kinds. More importantly, they must also have the personal and professional dispositions to bring positive energy to their subject matter, be able to communicate and relate to students, and create a caring and nurturing environment (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 2). "The learning commons perspective puts students at the center

of considerations about what programs to offer rather than the library's information resources and services. This does not lessen the importance of traditional library and information commons tools and services but rather orients them toward the growth and development of students" (Hinchliffe & Wong, 2010, p. 221).

It should be noted, however, that I was unable to uncover any direct research on the learning commons as a holistic model at the elementary and secondary school level. While Loertscher & Koechlin (2012b) have put together a collection of research that supports certain elements of the learning commons model, peer-reviewed, empirical research is lacking thus far. The evidence for the ability of the learning commons to increase student engagement and achievement is anecdotal and requires further investigation.

What can school leaders do about... ?

What an uproar in the library. If you've missed the last twenty years of debates and discussions around what libraries and teacher-librarians should be called, not to worry. There is a pretty good chance that your school library will still be called the library, and the teacher-librarian will still be referred to as the librarian or teacher-librarian. However, your school may choose to adopt a different handle for the physical location and the person facilitating this space. It may be the teacher-librarian who decides a name change is in order, or it may be viewed by the school community that a re-branding is in order - it depends on the particular situation and history at each school site and district.

Whether you are calling your school library a media centre or a learning commons, the name should reflect the purpose and intent of the space. Do you want library users to implicitly understand that there are more media options than books available, do you want them to infer that there might also be movies, magazines, ebooks, video and board games, realia, and CDs available for perusal and circulation? Or do you want users to be reminded that the space is about learning and is an equitable access point for all participants, be they students, staff, or community members?

For example, if your school library has been a silent repository for books since the school opened sixty-odd years ago, renaming the space the "media centre" might help to subvert the lingering stereotypes and connotations of a museum-like shrine for books. A "school library media centre" brings with it the understanding of a variety of media formats, an appeal to multiple literacies, and recognizes various learning modalities. I, personally, would not choose "school library media centre" for a re-branding of the school library. Not only is this term a mouthful and unlikely to be actually used by anyone besides the teacher-librarian, the term suggests that the resources are the most important element of the school library. This does not fit with my understanding of student-centred libraries and the learning needs of students and staff.

No matter what term your school library and teacher-librarian go by, there are best practices that are the hallmarks of a 21st century school library. The facility should have a variety of materials available and be an equitable space for learning. "Canada's libraries recognize and energetically affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, or income" (Canadian Library Association, 2008, para. 2). Recognizing and affirming the dignity of the students and staff teacher-librarians serve is key to my understanding of student-centred libraries. Library users need to be able to physically access the resources available to them. This may seem like a simple idea, but many school libraries have books too high for students to reach. Physical barriers between users and resources should be eliminated whenever possible.

Ensuring the physical space of the school library is conducive to student needs and interests is a hallmark example of my understanding of student-centred libraries. As a primary-focused teacher, I try to look at physical spaces through the eyes of our youngest students. These eyes are usually about three and a half feet off the ground and see the world very differently from adults. Not only are perspectives and sightlines different, physical access to resources is perceived differently. If an easy fiction or non-fiction book is more than five feet up, the student is not only challenged to reach the material, they are receiving the message that those resources are not for them. In a study of children's book selections in school libraries, Reutzel & Gali (1998) found that 60% of books were selected from shelving at the children's eye level, 37% was selected from below, and only 3% was from above (p. 27). Larkin-Lieffers (2001) also found that student library users heavily preferred materials at or below eye level, with eye level for primary students being defined as between 105 and 116 cm (p. 10). To the youngest of school library users, books above their eye level may as well not even exist. The physical space of the library must be structured to meet the needs and abilities of the students, not just the need of the teacher-librarian to find somewhere to place materials.

Most school libraries have the majority of their books on shelves with spines facing out. Browsing for books means readers have to tilt their heads to one side and read book spines. This is awkward and difficult for primary students with emergent literacy skills, and also a skill in patience not valued by a 21st century generation used to linking through to desired information in seconds. "For patrons unfamiliar with authors and titles, trying to select one book from shelves of thousands of books, is like trying to select the best brick in a wall. They all look alike" (Rippel, 2003, p. 55). Using front-facing displays is not only best practice for the youngest of library users, it can increase circulation by up to 40% (Metropolitan Library System, 2008, p. 9). To make browsing even easier for primary students, some teacher-librarians create face-up displays on low tables or have tubs of materials on the floor for students to dig through. While the implications of five-year olds digging through tubs of materials gets the orderly, organizational side of me up in arms, my belief in a library that puts student learning front and centre quells objections to a bit of disorganization and rifling.

I began my research with the understanding that a student-centred library is one that places the students and their learning at the heart of all decisions involving the library. A student-centred library begins with the students, their interests, abilities, technology needs, social interactions, and learning styles. The teacher-librarian's role is to facilitate the space and programming that puts students and their learning at the heart of the library. What I have come to realize is that the term "student-centred library" obscures other important work the teacher-librarian performs and reinforces the dichotomy between staff and students.

As novelist and educator Frank McCourt (2002) stated, "if you're teaching and not learning then you're not teaching" (para. 8). In the school environment, teachers and administrators are also learners. We strive to encourage our students to be lifelong learners; teachers and administrators are always learning too. The school library is not just a space for students to be learning, it is also a space for teachers and community members to engage in lifelong learning and professional development. The library serves as a social and educational centre for the entire school community. Libraries in my local schools are often used for staff union meetings, pre-school visits and book exchanges, cultural events and performances for multiple classes, fundraising book fairs, Mother Goose literacy activities, debate clubs, grad-student researchers, and professional development. In my opinion, with all this action and participation taking place, the name that comes closer to the modern school library experience is a learning commons.

Similar to "school library media centre," the title of "learning commons" may be a term not used by anyone but the teacher-librarian to refer to the school library. The buzzword, however, carries with it some weight that I believe is valuable in re-conceptualizing the school library. Despite a probable lack of mass adoption, the term "learning commons" provides a schema for a modern and successful school library program that can be conceptually useful to teacher-librarians and those involved in school

libraries. For example, our local high school was recently moved into a new building. In a rare opportunity to be part of the architectural planning of the library space, the teacher-librarian did her homework and consulted frequently with the architect to ensure that the flexible learning needs of 21st century students were incorporated into the purpose and physical structure of the space:

> We have sixty computers designed to be a part of teaching spaces with two smart boards and sound systems plus sixty ipads on two carts. These are part of two "classroom" oriented spaces one in the wide open, the other in a lab that is part of the Learning Commons. We have comfortable chairs with flat arms that provide comfort for recreational reading but also discussion spaces that small groups may engage in with their digital devices. We have seven large tables that are moved to suit the teaching needs. There are large windows for good lighting. There is a small teaching area for about ten students that has a white board and access to a portable smart board. The area is meant to be flexible and changeable and I do move things around often. (M. Lunde, personal communication, February 18, 2013)

Other teacher-librarians, however, are not so quick to embrace the term "learning commons," even when their practice exemplifies most or all of the elements promoted by the learning commons model. Judith Comfort, Canada's Teacher Librarian of the Year for 2011, "proudly calls her space a library and is somewhat skeptical of the motives and use by the term 'learning commons'" (Crompton, 2013, p. 22). Comfort's skepticism may be due, in part, to the differences between school libraries in Canada and the United States.

In Canada, education is a provincial responsibility. Each provincial government is charged with the task of educating students and determining educational priorities. In British Columbia, there is no Ministry of Education document outlining the student to teacher-librarian ratio for schools, or whether schools need to have a teacher-librarian at all. While *Achieving Information Literacy,* a Canadian standards document, encourages library staffing ratios based on school populations, this document has no teeth and is a mere suggestion for increasingly cash-strapped school districts (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003).

In the United States, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science recommended that every school library be staffed by a qualified and certified teacher-librarian (Scholastic, 2008, p. 3-4). This recommendation became proposed legislation introduced in Congress, but has not yet passed. It should be noted, however, that US school library programs carry an assumption of qualified teacher-librarians or media specialists working in school libraries with many states requiring rigid certification, while Canada and its provinces have no such expectation. The works of Loertscher & Koechlin (2012a; 2012b), in touting the advantages of a learning commons, are based in the United States and carry with them the assumption of adequate and qualified staffing of school libraries. This is an assumption we cannot easily transfer to Canada.

Having a welcoming, student-centred library is impossible without the presence of a teacher-librarian. Places to sit, wireless internet, and unlimited resources are virtually useless to student learning if the students do not know how to effectively use the world of information at their fingertips. Last year, I was walking the halls of my elementary school after the last bell rang and came across a grade 6 student fiddling with his iPod. Always wanting to know what students are interested in, I asked him what he was viewing. He showed me Nyan Cat (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZZ7oFKsKzY), a ten hour, low-pixel, ridiculous looping video on YouTube of an animated flying cat. The main, and only, image is of a gray cat with a pink square body seemingly flying in front of a blue scrolling background, leaving behind a trail of rainbows. The accompanying music has repetitious themes six seconds in length, repeating a total song of 30 seconds ad nauseum. Although the music is reminiscent of a video game, the viewing experience is entirely passive.

I had a chuckle with the student and talked a bit more about why he liked the video and how he had come across the content, but walked away shaking my head. *When I was his age*, I thought, *what I wouldn't have done with an iPod, wireless internet, and relaxed supervision*. My adult self imagines that I would have been finding the answers to all my questions, exploiting my social networks, and drinking deep at the fountain of unlimited media. My 11-year-old self, however, quietly reminds me that I would not know what my iPod could be capable of, what world of wonders would only be a few clicks away, that my searches and interests would only be related to things I previously knew or cared about. While tools such as StumbleUpon (www.stumbleupon.com) and Reddit (en.reddit.com) might expose me to previously unknown content, my young self would probably not even be aware of such sites, nor how to set them up to maximize their value, match my interests, and be cognizant of my digital footprint. And who on my elementary school teaching staff would be available, interested, or responsible for helping me develop my information and media literacy skills? "Anybody can create a study hall or maintain a room of books, but a teacher-librarian with an open mindset, a solid grasp of the curriculum, expertise in digital literacy and facilitation, and collaboration skills to support knowledge creation is needed to perform the wizardry that truly creates a learning commons" (van Dyk, 2013).

What does this mean for school leaders ...?

Having started my journey with the concept of the student-centred library, delving into the Teacher-Librarian school library media centre, the information commons, and the learning commons, I am left with a stronger understanding and vision of school libraries. I still believe that the entire premise of the school library should be based on student needs and interests, but I now understand how, by extension, this includes supporting the learning needs of staff and community members.

While a re-conceptualization of school libraries may be necessary to convey the vibrant and vital learning occurring, I do not think a complete, across-the-board name change is in order. Dusty expectations and outdated stereotypes can quickly be overcome without an entire rebranding.

Teacher-librarians, school leaders, and administrators can reap many benefits from adopting the learning commons model, but I would emphasize that the vision of a learning commons cannot be achieved without the presence and dedication of a teacher-librarian. The writings on learning commons describe a quality school library media program, but this program cannot occur without the knowledge, skills, energy and enthusiasm of a staff member dedicated to achieving the learning commons vision: the teacher-librarian. With this understanding, the school library is, or can become, a student-centred, media-rich, inclusive learning environment. No matter what it's called.

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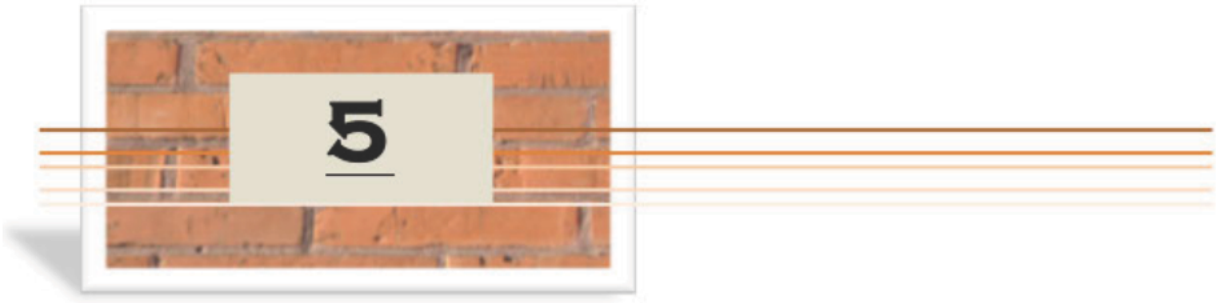

Making it Happen @ the Library

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Being married to a former engineer and computer scientist I was familiar with hackerspaces, collaborative workshops, and other MAKE initiatives and recognized the multitude of connections to learning. As a result, the maker movement and the appeal and interest for it in both public and school libraries were on my radar. In the summer of 2012, I found out what the buzz was all about when I lurked in on the Maker Camp. Maker Camp, which will run in the summer of 2013 as well, is a free and open virtual DIY camp hosted on Google+ and initiated by *Make* magazine.

Google+ is a social networking space that has a multitude of features built in such as hangouts and communities, as well as other sharing features that encourage collaboration and communication. A Google+ hangout facilitates group video chats, private or public online communities and are created and based on interest. Within these communities, or on your own personal Google+ space, you can communicate with others. The MAKEr camp utilized this powerful social networking platform to host their online camp. Each day a new project was introduced such as building a potato cannon, designing a homemade terrarium, or creating a stop-motion video.

Projects were introduced and demonstrated by an expert on the Google+ community and streamed live for young people to watch. For those too busy or living in a different time zone they could visit the MAKE Google+ page and watch the recorded session at a time that worked for them. A materials list for each project was provided in advance and if problems arose during the making and creating stage young people had an opportunity to ask questions via the chat feature or "hangout" with an expert. The afternoon was open for young people to hang out and share their new learning with the community or to ask questions of a knowledgeable counselor.

How young people learn is constantly evolving and there is no doubt that the Internet has changed how learning happens. Since the advent of the Internet in the early 1990's tremendous changes have occurred in our information and technology landscape. These changes continue to permeate throughout society, and the realm of education is no exception. Not only are our students comfortable with new media, they are creating, remixing, connecting, collaborating and communicating in a multitude of different ways as

was evident during the MAKEr camp. According to the 2013 Pew Research Center's report on Teens and Technology:

> 78% of teens have a cell phone and almost half (47%) own smartphones; and nine in ten (93%) teens have a computer or have access to one; and three in four teens access the Internet on cell phones, tablets, and other mobile devices. (Madden, Lenhart, & Duggan, 2013, p. 2)

Young people are interacting on their devices, tablets, and computers with new media, and using them to participate with their peers and the world in new ways. As a result, a "participatory culture is emerging as the culture absorbs and responds to the explosion of new media technologies that make it possible for consumers to archive, annotate, and recirculate media content in powerful new ways" (Jenkins, Puruchotma, Weigel, Clinton, & Robison, 2009, p. 8). Some of our students are engaging and communicating in innovative ways outside of the school, but we can't assume that all of our students know how to use these new media technologies for learning. Therefore, one of the tasks facing today is how to provide students with the opportunities, tools, and mentorship to learn the necessary skills to move beyond consuming to participating.

Another barrier that the education system needs to overcome is that the knowledge practices of youth have shifted and changed dramatically in the last ten years "whereas educational practices have largely remained the same" (Gwyer, Stubbings, & Walton, 2012, p. 22). A gap exists between the learning that is occurring in schools and what is happening outside of schools. Our current education system no longer reflects the world our students are living in so we must begin to challenge our traditional notions and ideologies around the purpose of education. The New London Group proposed:

> If it were possible to define generally the mission of education, it could be said that its fundamental purpose is to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, creative and economic life. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 9)

If we want our students to fully participate in society, we as teachers, administrators, and teacher-librarians must begin transforming and envisioning an educational system that reflects these new knowledge practices. Many of us are already transforming our schools and libraries to be learning commons that are "designed to move students beyond mere research, practice and group work to a greater level of engagement through exploration, experimentation, and collaboration" (Loertscher & Koechlin, 2012, p. 24). In these learning commons students are participating in many different ways such as online book clubs, blogging, representing their learning using an app on a tablet, creating a book trailer that is uploaded onto YouTube, or designing a website to document their learning. I already knew that some of my students were participating with new media, but what I witnessed during MAKEr camp was different.

I was blown away by the engagement, collaboration, communication, and enthusiasm displayed by young people all over the world. It was summer vacation and thousands of young people were actively participating in this learning community by creating, connecting, collaborating, and communicating with like-minded peers. What was it about this Maker camp that inspired and evoked such passion and engagement? The Google+ community provided an online platform for them to connect and to interact with like-minded peers in ways that were not otherwise possible. This is just one example of how our students are learning and participating outside the four walls of the classroom. At the heart of this learning, young people were engaged, participating, inquiring, co-constructing knowledge, learning and thinking deeply, and driving their own learning.

Being a part of this experience was a significant turning point for me as it encouraged me to re-examine what knowledge is, how learning occurs, and how they connect with participatory learning. I also had to consider my own pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. This marked the beginning of my

journey of discovering how I, as a teacher-librarian, could facilitate participatory learning at my school and in the library.

What do school leaders need to know...?

In the Industrial Age, knowledge was viewed as "fixed, authoritative, discipline-bound, obtained and owned by individuals, and regarded as 'the truth'" (Asselin & Doiron, 2008, p. 3). This view of knowledge positioned teachers as the gatekeepers and transmitters of information and the students as consumers. Unfortunately, this notion of knowledge is still upheld, despite the fact tremendous shifts in our information and communication landscape have altered how and with whom individuals share, create and communicate (Todd, 2008, p. 19). Some of these changes can be attributed to Web 2.0 as it has shifted the focus from information to people's active interactions with information, networking, and the construction of and sharing of ideas (Merchant, 2009, p. 108). These new media forms are shifting how young people learn and connect with each other (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 9) and necessitate a new role for education as they challenge the current beliefs and traditions of the purpose of education (Ito et al., 2008, p. 35).

Lankes (2012a) explains "knowledge is something innately human and intimately tied to the passions of the individual. Knowledge is dynamic, ever changing, and alive. . . . Knowledge is constructed in our libraries, our universities, our homes, our bars, and our cars" (p. 59). Therefore knowledge is socially and actively constructed by individuals and communities, and is a dynamic ongoing process that can occur anywhere and anytime (Dewey, 1927; Freire, 2000; Greene, 1988; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). This understanding of knowledge should impact how learning occurs in our schools and libraries.

Ito et al. (2013) have drawn from sociocultural, cultural historical, social constructivist, or situated approaches that emphasize how learning and development are infused within social relationships and cultural contexts. As a result, they have proposed an approach to education called connected learning. This approach to learning values equity, full participation, social connection.

The connected learning approach arose from three key findings from learning research: a) a disconnect between classroom and everyday learning; b) the meaningful nature of learning that is embedded in valued relationships, practice, and culture; and c) the need for learning contexts that bring together in-school and out-of-school learning and activity (Ito et al., 2013, p. 45). One of the core issues that emerged from Ito et al.'s research is that young people require more support to transfer and connect their new media experiences to more academic, civic, and production centered purposes (p. 25). New media literacies as defined by Jenkins et al. (2009) are a "set of cultural competencies and social skills that young people need in the new media landscape" (p. xiii). The skills are:

- Play - the capacity to experiment with the surroundings as a form of problem-solving. Performance - the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery.
- Simulation - the ability to interpret and to construct dynamic models of real-world processes. Appropriation - the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content.
- Multitasking - the ability to scan the environment and shift focus onto salient details. Distributed cognition - the ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities.
- Collective intelligence - the ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal.
- Judgment - the ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources.

- Transmedia navigation - the ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities.
- Networking - the ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information.
- Negotiation - the ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms. (p. xiii)

To create equitable learning opportunities for participating in the new media landscape it is more important to be familiar with the skills students require to participate meaningfully, than to know the latest trends in technology. As Jenkins et al. (2009) explained, "a focus on expanding access to new technologies carries us only so far if we do not also foster the skills and cultural knowledge necessary to deploy those tools towards our own ends" (p. 9). The skills, or new media literacies, all include social skills that can be fostered through collaborating and networking, and build on the traditional literacy and critical thinking skills already evident in our classrooms (p. xiii).

The social skills and cultural competencies, identified by Jenkins et al., that have emerged in the new media landscape can provide a framework for designing learning, can address the participatory gap, transparency problem, and the ethics challenges. These new media skills can be learned even with the absence of computers, are fundamental to students' participation in new media, and include skills for "working within social networks, pooling knowledge for collective intelligence, or negotiating across cultural differences" (p. 32). These new media literacies can be learned through a participatory culture and are skills all young people need to be equal participants in the future (p. 34).

A participatory culture is one with five essential conditions:

1. relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement,
2. strong support for creating and sharing creations with others,
3. some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices,
4. members who believe their contributions matter, and
5. members who feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least, they care about what other people think about what they have created). (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 3)

To enable full and equitable participation in the new media landscape we must consider the skills and competencies that are emerging, and embed them into the learning that needs to occur for students to participate meaningfully. Jenkins et al. (2009) found "[New media literacies] change the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to one of community involvement" (p. 7). Further, these literacies provide the foundation for students' participation in new media and, as a result, a participatory culture is "emerging as the culture absorbs and responds to the explosion of new media technologies" (p. 8). Forms of participatory culture include:

- Affiliations - memberships, formal and informal, in online communities centred around various forms of media, such as Friendster, Facebook, message boards, metagaming, game clans, or MySpace.
- Expressions – producing new creative forms, such as digital sampling, skinning and modding, fan videomaking, fan fiction writing, zines, and mash-ups.
- Collaborative problem-solving – working together in teams, formal and informal, to complete tasks and to develop new knowledge (such as through Wikipedia, alternative reality gaming, and spoiling).
- Circulations – shaping the flow of media (such as podcasting and blogging). (Jenkins et al., pp. xi-xii)

A participatory culture facilitates knowledge construction because it shifts the learning from consuming to producing, and from teacher to co-learner. As a result this empowers the learner to construct and contribute to their own learning (Cocciolo, 2009, p. 4). A participatory learning culture also supports a connected learning approach because connected learning "is realized when a young person pursues a personal interest or passion with the support of friends and caring adults, and is in turn able to link this learning and interest to academic achievement, career possibilities, or civic engagement" (Ito et al., 2013, p. 42).

Through the various forms of participatory cultures, young people are not only engaged but are learning skills and building knowledge. It is in these informal learning environments or "affinity spaces" that people are participating and engaging deeply (Gee, 2004). The education system plays a pivotal role in providing equitable learning opportunities for all by ensuring: a) opportunities for participation, b) a safe space to master skills, and c) an understanding of ethical norms (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 9).

We know our young people are already involved in various forms of participatory cultures outside of school, but it is typically privileged youth who have the supports at home that enable them to take advantage of the participatory learning opportunities available online (Ito et al., 2013, p. 25). Opportunity for participation is not about whether or not students have access to technology, but rather what they are doing with the new media. This is known as the "participation gap" (Jenkins et al., 2009). As our society becomes more digital it will become even more important to provide opportunities for young people to be able to participate and learn the necessary skills and cultural norms of new media. If our education system does recognize this issue there will be severe implications for social inequality (Hargittai & Walejko, 2008, p. 253). The reason is "when the public educational system lacks a proactive and well-resourced agenda for enriched and interest-driven learning, young people dependent on public institutions for learning are doubly disadvantaged" (Ito et al., p. 25).

Lankes (2012a) asserted the mission of libraries and librarians is to "improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities" (p. 58). Therefore, teacher-librarians are in an ideal position to facilitate and to lead in this transformation. School libraries are no longer just a place to go and get stuff. Rather, according to Todd (2008), the school library is a learning space or

> A knowledge commons that both intersects and bridges the digital and print terrain, and provides the intellectual tools across the multiple environments to foster creativity, to enable young people to develop their own personal knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, the world and themselves, to interpret and apply knowledge they interact with, and to foster the intellectual, social, and cultural growth of our young people in a 24/7 time-space environment. (p. 30)

Jenkins et al. (2009) identified the goal of a participatory culture "should be to encourage youth to develop the skills, knowledge, ethical frameworks, and self-confidence needed to be full participants in contemporary culture" (p. 9). School libraries, can be learning spaces in which the five essential conditions conducive to a participatory culture can be actualized. The teacher-librarian is perfectly situated to facilitate and to create participatory learning experiences that connect in-school and out-of-school learning that aligns with the working model of connected learning.

What can school leaders do about… ?

Libraries are about learning. Hamilton (2011) suggested the "possibilities of the library as a learning space disrupt the traditional concept of the library as a data warehouse, and instead, establish the library as a site of participatory culture" (p. 41). Lankes (2011) used the metaphor that libraries must move from grocery stores to kitchens. Grocery stores are places where you go to consume; a kitchen is where you go to combine the ingredients with your own talents and skills. "Libraries need to be kitchens—active, social places where you mix a rich set of ingredients (information, resources, talents) into an exciting new concoction that can be shared" (p. 65). When learning and knowledge construction become the central mission of the school library, the following indicators of a participatory culture will emerge:

- A culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.
- Strong support for creating and sharing one's creations.
- Some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices.
- Members feel their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connection with one another. (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 7)

Two ways in which a teacher-librarian can facilitate participatory learning experiences is through makerspaces and inquiry. Although there are numerous examples of participatory learning practices, the strongest examples are those that cultivate all of the principles of participatory learning identified by the New Media Literacies Group:

- Heightened motivation and new forms of engagement through meaningful play and experimentation
- An integrated learning system where connections between home, school community and world are enabled and encouraged
- Co-learning where educators and students pool their skills and knowledge and share in the tasks of teaching and learning
- Learning that feels relevant to students' identities and interests
- Opportunities for creating and solving problems using a variety of media, tools and practices (Project New Media Literacies, 2013, n.p.)

What is a makerspace?

The makerspace website defines a makerspace as a "gathering point for tools, projects, mentors, and expertise. A collection of tools does not define a Makerspace. Rather, we define it by what it enables: making" (Makerspace, n.d, para.1). Makerspaces are difficult to describe, as they evolve and form based on the passions and shared interests of the community, and as a result the activities and projects vary. Makerspaces can exist independently or within an organization such as a school, and are shaped by the goals and common interests of that community. A collaborative learning environment emerges when people come together to learn and to share their knowledge and skills around common interests such as: digital media, electronics, science and computers, or even crafting. It is in these spaces:

- play and exploration are fostered,
- informal learning opportunities are facilitated,
- peer to peer training is nurtured,

- conversations and partnerships are fostered within community, and
- a culture of creating is developed as opposed to consuming (Britton, 2012, p. 20)

A Makerspace in action

If you were to see and hear the makerspace at my school library over the lunch hour, you would see examples of the four principles of participation in action:

- Create: Students working on storyboards in preparation for creating a book trailer, or a Grade 5 student sharing her knowledge and expertise around designing and creating jewellery with polymer clay.
- Circulate: This might be a student creating an online tutorial on how to design a game using Scratch, a programming language developed by MIT Media, to create games, animations, stories, and much more.
- Collaborate: A shout of exclamation and a feeling of accomplishment from two students working together to manipulate the general purpose input/output (GPIO) on the Raspberry Pi with coding to control blinking LED lights.
- Connect: A table of students across the grade levels investigating how to set up the newly revised Minecraft for Pi edition (http://pi.minecraft.net/), or helping each other solve problems they encountered in the online game, Minecraft (Project New Media Literacies, 2013, n.p.)

There are many aspects of makerspaces that enable a participatory learning culture to occur "tinkering, collaborative learning, play, conversations for learning, intergenerational learning, experimentation, inquiry, the act of creation, and problem-solving—these are just some of the qualities that can happen in makerspaces and encourage participatory learning" (Spotlight on Digital Media and Learning, n.d.). A makerspace culture is closely linked to libraries because the central mission of libraries is to inspire and to enable lifelong learning and knowledge construction. Similarly, makerspaces are about innovation, learning, creating, collaborating, communicating, and community building. Just as libraries are not about the books, makerspaces are not about the fancy tools, such as 3D printers or other flashy new gadgets. The fundamental underpinnings of both libraries and makerspaces are about "people coming together to create and share resources and knowledge" (Britton, 2012, p. 20). The intersection of makerspaces in libraries is one way teacher-librarians are able to support and to adapt to the needs of the communities. New media plays a role in expanding the learning opportunities in makerspaces, whether it is through fine arts, multiple literacies, or digital multimedia. Some of the new media literacies that are exemplified and strengthened through makerspaces are: "play, simulation, appropriation, distributed cognition, and collective intelligence" (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 4).

In early 2012, I was intrigued about the upcoming release of the Raspberry Pi, a small but powerful computer and development board. When I discovered the tiny and cheap computer was designed with the intention of educating young people in the areas of computer programming and hardware, and I had an opportunity to work with one, I ordered two for my school library. Although they are the size of a credit card, they are easy to use, powerful, and affordable. Most importantly, they are a fantastic tool to enable students to learn the basics of programming and to stimulate an interest in engineering and electronics. These two small Raspberry Pi's were a part of the makerspace demonstration I shared with my students during library orientation to promote the new concept of a makerspace at my school library. In no way do I consider myself an expert, but I am willing to share my own experiences of initiating and facilitating a makerspace over the last year, and offer some advice on how to get started.

With the explosion of a DIY culture, digital media, open-source initiatives, and hackerspaces, people are making and creating in a multitude of different ways. Although I create and make a lot of digital works, I have recently taken up sewing, canning, and other DIY projects under the mentorship of my mom. Being a maker is about being curious, passionate, and innovative. I think you would be hard-pressed to find

someone that isn't a maker, therefore, this is an easy first step. Take time to discover your own interests and to find out who else is making and creating in your community.

To facilitate a makerspace in a library, the physical space may need to be recreated. If this is not possible, it might be as simple as having a designated area in your existing space that students can access. What is important is that these spaces are flexible and adaptable to enable collaboration and to foster creativity. There is no set list of tools or specific materials, and although high-tech tools such as 3D printers are associated with these spaces, they are not required. However, as projects and programs arise, certain materials may become necessary.

My K-8 school library is by no means a state of the art media centre, nor does it have any of the larger tools. We do have tables the crafting group utilizes and we have a bank of computers for students to access if they don't have their own devices. The school library has purchased two Raspberry Pi's and they are in their own designated area. Although there are many materials and tools that would be useful, such as soldering irons, we neither have the expertise to run them or any safety guidelines in place. Next year I hope to connect more with our local TechWorks, Saskatoon's makerspace, on a few projects so that students can have the opportunity to explore and to dabble with new tools that we can't afford and to tap into the expertise of the local community. Makerspaces aren't about fancy locations and tools, but rather about providing access and opportunities for connecting, creating and collaborating. They provide "creative time and, well, space for people of all ages to build prototypes, explore questions, fail and retry, bounce ideas off one another and build something together" (Hertz, 2012, para.8). Don't have the ideal space? Think outside of the box and remember that the community is at the heart of a makerspace, regardless of its location.

During my library orientation at the beginning of the year, I introduced the idea of a makerspace and shared my own interests with the Grades 5-8 classes at my school. Interested participants signed up and indicated what they were interested in pursuing and exploring, and they also identified areas in which they were willing to share their expertise. There were two common interests identified by the students: crafts and technology. There are approximately 20 students who attend makerspace once a week at my school library over the lunch hour. What happens each week is determined by the students. Find out what your students are interested in and have them lead sessions on areas they are passionate about or create tutorials to help others interested in learning. Start with the expertise in your own building and have the students initiate and determine next steps when they are ready.

Although the majority of what happens at my makerspace is shared through peer-to-peer expertise and conversations, there have been times that students have expressed a need for an expert. Students are encouraged to explore online tutorials or forums to explore and to inquire. Other times, they have identified experts outside of the school community to consult and to bring to the makerspace. Teachers on staff have been supportive and have volunteered their time and expertise as well. I am continuously networking and have tapped into the knowledge of experts such as computer scientists, engineers, and artists on many occasions to support and further the learning and conversations occurring. Makerspaces are dynamic spaces and after a year of dabbling and getting to know the students, I would like to further pursue a partnership with Techworks and may consider having a monthly workshop on the weekend. Take it one day at a time and let the learning be socially embedded and interest-driven.

One way to facilitate knowledge creation is through access. For centuries, access has played a pivotal role for librarians as "access is getting a person to a conversation or some artifact of a conversation" (Lankes, 2011, p. 67). My role is not about being an expert, but rather about creating the opportunities and conversations for learning. To extend these conversations beyond our lunch time meetings, I created a Google+ community, a Pinterest page, and a blog. Students can access and create a Google+ community that students participate in, as well as a Pinterest page for members to pin new ideas to, and a blog to share projects. These can all be found on our page on the school libguide. Although we are still in the

preliminary stages of a makerspace and what we are doing doesn't seem revolutionary, the engagement, participation, and conversations are evidence enough for me to understand that connected and participatory learning has taken root. I look forward to continuing to cultivate these learning opportunities and I am excited to see where the journey will take us in the future.

My role within the makerspace is establishing relationships in the form of a coach, mentor. and co-learner and to model and teach the skills and literacies that young people will need to participate in the new media landscape. The mission of the Maker Education Initiative and movement is to "create more opportunities for young people to make, and, by making, build confidence, foster creativity, and spark interest in science, technology, engineering, math, the arts-and learning as a whole" (Makerspace Education Initiative, n.d.). Teacher-librarians can lead in this movement and shift the learning culture to be participatory and social through collaborative opportunities and networking through makerspaces.

There are many makerspaces in schools and libraries that have been successful and continue to be an inspiration to me. Look to them for support, ideas, and motivation.

1. YouMedia in Chicago: Youth powered 21st century learning (http://vimeo.com/6214459).
2. The Library as Incubator Project in Madison Wisconsin: A stellar example of ways in which libraries can strengthen partnerships in their community based on their belief that the library is a place to connect and to create (http://www.libraryasincubatorproject.org/).
3. Michigan Makers : An after school program (http://michiganmakers.weebly.com/).
4. Westport Public Library: After hosting a successful maker faire, this library decided to create a permanent makerspace in the library (http://www.westportlibrary.org/services/maker-space)
5. The Labs @ Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: Digital media lab and mentorship program for creating and expressing using digital media (http://www.clpgh.org/teens/events/programs/thelabs/)

SCHOOL LIBRARIES, PARTICIPATORY LEARNING, AND INQUIRY

The role of the teacher-librarian as an instructional partner and information specialist is essential to the school ecosystem and student learning as "understanding knowledge, how it works, how it is dynamic and relational, not static or hierarchical, changes how librarians facilitate learning and knowledge creation" (Lankes, 2012b, p. 10). Therefore, another way to facilitate participatory learning is through an inquiry approach to instruction. Inquiry is "a way of learning new skills and knowledge for understanding and creating" (Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2012, p. 2). Teacher-librarians as instructional partners and leaders can facilitate this process through guided inquiry (Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2007). This approach "enables students to gain a depth of understanding and a personal perspective through a wide range of sources of information" (Kuhlthau et al., 2012, p. 3). When teacher-librarians, as instructional partners, collaborate, co-teach, and plan robust inquiry units, this changes the culture of the school into a collaborative inquiry community (Kuhlthau et al., 2012, p. xiii). Therefore, school libraries play a pivotal role in enabling students to transform information into knowledge and understanding, while encouraging conversations and heightened levels of participation.

Participatory culture changes the focus of learning from "one of individual expression to one of community involvement" (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 4) and can be fostered through an inquiry approach to instruction. The principles of inquiry emphasize it is an active, social, and continuous learning process that enables students to make sense of the world around them. In the inquiry process, teachers and teacher-librarians become co-designers of learning as students choose what and how they learn. In their role as an instructional partner, teacher-librarians collaborate with other teachers in their school and co-teach and plan inquiry with the end in mind. Most often, they are intentional about where the learning is going, but the students are ultimately in control when they are given opportunities to build their knowledge. The role of the teacher and teacher-librarian in the inquiry process is that of a facilitator as they cultivate learning experiences that engage and stimulate curiosity, and inspire innovation, discovery,

and creativity. An inquiry learning environment provides an ideal platform for teacher-librarians to foster the new media skills and competencies necessary for students to participate and to contribute meaningfully to society.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

My journey in understanding how I, as a teacher-librarian, can facilitate participatory learning experiences at my school and in my library is not over. There is no end to my journey as my knowledge and experiences will continue to influence my understanding of participatory cultures, connected learning and new media. The more I uncover, the more it challenges my prior knowledge and leads to more questions to explore. These are new topics, and as a result there isn't a large body of research available. But for those who have experienced and witnessed participatory culture and learning in action it is evident that changes are ahead.

Rather than looking at the changes in education as challenging, we can harness and gain momentum with the "unprecedented opportunities in making interest-driven, engaging, and meaningful learning more accessible to more young people" (Ito et al., 2013). We can do so by facilitating participatory learning and cultivating participatory cultures. When we embrace these changes we will be able to encourage participation across multiple mediums, and see the future as an opportunity to design and facilitate the development of knowledge construction.

Collectively, teachers, administrators, and teacher-librarians should begin transforming and envisioning an educational system that supports the social and cultural skills and competencies required to participate in a knowledge-based society (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 107). To meet the needs of our students, we must have a vision of learning that reflects our connected and complex knowledge society.

Teacher-librarians play a pivotal role in actualizing pedagogical frameworks, such as connected learning, and creating and facilitating participatory learning environments. "School libraries are powerful agents of learning, central to engaging students in the transformation of information into deep knowledge and understanding, and providing them with life skills to continue living, learning and working in an information- and technology-intense world" (Todd, n.d, p. 2). Libraries are constantly evolving and changing and will continue to throughout time. I believe teacher-librarians are innovators and lifelong learners, but I also know change and choices are individual decisions. Therefore, we are at a crossroad. Loertscher (2012) explained:

> As teacher-librarians we can embrace new and innovative ideas or allow them to grow up around us, excluding us, ignoring us, or we can embrace, join, encourage, and move to the center of both serious academics and the exciting movements in disruptive education. (p. 46)

The choice is ours. Join me in this journey.

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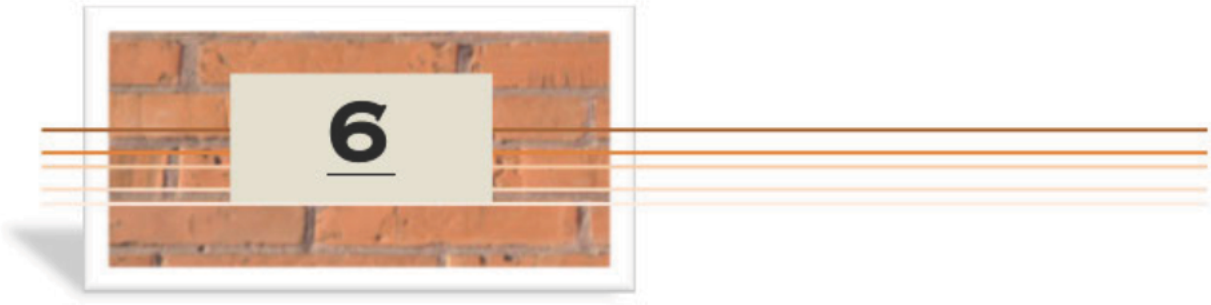

Beyond Our Walls: What Teacher-Librarians Can Learn From Public Libraries

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Why should school leaders care… ?

> *Hang up your "shhh," stop fussing over the coffee cups, welcome students in with wide open arms along with their mess and Facebook. Give them new tools so that they can find, evaluate, and create. Teach them how be ethical and productive citizens. Teach them how to communicate responsibly and publish to the world. Creativity can be messy and loud. Get over it. Welcome to the learning commons. (Cicchetti, 2009, p.1)*

I may have the horned rim glasses, I own a pencil skirt, and as habit from my years in ballet, I have been known to wear my hair in a bun occasionally, but that is where I depart from the stereotypical librarian. My blog readers know me as the passionate librarian, Facebook followers recognize my lil' miss library updates, and my staff, students, and school parents know me as Mrs. Hilland, the librarian who is forever kicking off her shoes to lead a Glee Club practice, bursting into song during book exchange, and spends her Friday afternoons recording YouTube videos of the Christmas concert choreography with the Fine Arts teacher all taking place in the library. I have found my niche and am a proud advocate of the school library and a loud-mouth promoter of innovative library programming. Am I a full-time teacher-librarian? No, but since this is my passion, I am very good at finding ways to be in and stay in the library no matter what teaching position I find myself in because I believe in the influence of a powerful library program. No matter how it gets done!

It's not an easy life being a new teacher, let alone a novice teacher-librarian. The first three years of my teaching career ended with a lay-off notice given to all teachers with the least seniority and another new library to which to acquaint myself with. Finally, the year came where I escaped the clutches of the lay-

off notice. I was returning to a school library for the second year in a row and had been offered the position of District Teacher-Librarian. This meant not only would I be returning to a school library with which I was familiar, I would also be taking over the District Resource Library and be afforded the opportunity to mentor other teacher-librarians. I was ecstatic! I, quite literally, had an impromptu dance party in my library……yes, just me, alone in the library. Think what you may.

That year I began the challenging yet invigorating work to transform my two libraries into learning commons. One thing I had been eager to do was to rethink how the traditional library was organized. Often the Dewey Decimal system would fragment topics of study or interest and be overwhelming to the budding researcher. Additionally those shelves of books didn't connect to the online resources that our learners were craving. I began connecting books organized by theme, not Dewey Decimal, in order to bring a more holistic approach to finding information sources. By the end of that school year I had a dozen theme bins mostly connecting directly to units that my colleagues would be working on. With the promise of a class set of iPads and several iPod touches, I enlisted the help of a fellow inquiry enthusiast and we added QR codes to each of the bins linking to both teacher and student resources.

At my District Resource Library, my visionary predecessor had already begun work on theme bins so I continued expanding upon her work as well as redefining the space from a hushed and hallowed space to a vibrant, creative, noisy, and productive venue. A bright mural was painted, kites were hung from the ceiling, displays of puppets and medieval armor decked the book shelves. A critic commented that it looked more like a bookstore or children's library than an adult space and I responded to that with a hearty "thank you!" What does an "adult" library look like? Does it need to look a certain way?

Libraries need to be shaped by the needs of the patrons and founded in best practice and I believe in finding programming inspiration from a variety of sources: bookstores, community centres, museums, playgrounds and of course, public libraries. Little did I know, this belief would become a reality when my husband, a newly inducted RCMP constable, was posted to a rural Northern community. I took a leave of absence from my district, saying goodbye to my beloved libraries, staff, and students. I packed up my daughter, our house, and my boxes of teaching resources and began a new adventure.

Upon finding out that I would be leaving my positions, I was faced with the realization I was now a free-range teacher-librarian without a library. What was a girl to do? I turned to the local public library, threw myself at their mercy and took an entry level position of Library Aide and later, consultant. Working in a public library, nearing the end of my formal studies in teacher-librarianship, I could seethe purpose of libraries from a whole new perspective. Both public and school libraries have similar elements in their mandates and serve a shared population; however, many public libraries shrugged off the stereotype of a hushed book repository while school libraries, most likely due to their lack of professional teacher-librarian staffing, are just now in the process of reinventing themselves as learning commons.

As part of my own initiation into the public library sector, I have spent hours poring over blogs, discussion forums, and articles on creative public library programming and, as it turns out, school libraries can learn a few things from public libraries. This chapter is an exploration of the "other" side of libraries with a thoughtful commentary on how many public libraries are providing exceptionally creative programming and services that could be adapted to the K-12 school library model to really engage our school communities. I have looked to other school library or learning common models for inspiration. I also think there is much value in the exploration of public library programs to ask ourselves, how can we adapt this for school libraries to create such an innovative, indispensable space and program? Inquiry, innovation, and information is at the heart of education. Shouldn't our school libraries, which embody those very things, be the heart of a school?

What do school leaders need to know...?

Libraries have transformed from hushed and hallowed institutions (Worpole, 2004) that housed the answers to life's greatest mysteries and histories to a vibrant hub resembling a remix of a bookstore, playground, and coffee shop (Elmborg, 2011). The 21st century has brought about significant changes in libraries today (Ribble, 2011; Worpole, 2004). Out of the box planning, programming, and partnerships have vaulted the library's image and services into the 21st century (Worpole, 2004). With the inception and mainstreaming of the Internet, critics challenged that libraries were no longer relevant (Elmborg, 2011; Flood, 2013) to a society who can access virtually any information from the comfort of their own home (Worpole, 2004). Libraries saw that challenge as a call to action (Grant, 2011) and transformed their collection, practices, services, and space to accommodate this new informational landscape (Worpole, 2004). The Saskatoon Public Library had the honour of being named the most well-used library in Canada (Frankel, 1995). Zenon Zuzak, assistant chief librarian, attributed their success to "responsive staff, commitment to collection development, strong programming, and knowledge of and connection to the community" (Frankel, 1995, p. 1). The developments in the 21st century have placed additional responsibilities and demands that shape the way librarians develop their services (Myers, 2009).

With the downturn in the Canadian and US economies, the transformation of public libraries required innovation and creativity (American Library Association, 2010; Jamali, Jubb, Nicholas & Rowlands, 2010). Diess (2004) defines innovations as "things that change the way we can do what we want to do; they have added value to our lives" (p. 18) and creativity as the process in which innovations are developed out of ideas (Diess, 2004, p. 18). In the case of libraries, Diess (2004) articulates that innovations come in the form of services rather than products, stressing that it is our goal to facilitate the work of our users in ways that are "useful to them" (p. 19). In an increasingly self service consumer-driven culture (Elmborg, 2011; Grant, 2011; Rooney-Browne & McMenemy, 2010), libraries have answered the call of the consumer by innovating the way they organize information (Diess, 2004). In Arizona, a public survey led to the complete demolition of the Dewey Decimal system when director Harry Courtright found that the majority of his patrons who responded to the survey would visit the library specifically to browse without having a specific title in mind (Lynch & Mulero, 2007). Courtright recognized that the needs of patrons have changed throughout the generations and that libraries need to respond to those changes (Lynch & Mulero, 2007). With users requesting a browsing experience, the Perry Branch Library moved from the traditional Dewey Decimal classification system to a bookstore-style display system, based on Book Industry Standards and Communications, which houses and displays books based on interest (Fister, 2009). The public response was overwhelmingly supportive with the new user-friendly customer-centric approach. Many other libraries have followed suit, either completely abandoning Dewey or using a hybrid approach, using the finer nuances of Dewey to retain a more precise organization within the broader categories (Fister, 2009).

Physical space

The changes to the collection organization also prompted dramatic shifts in how libraries design their spaces (Dahlkild, 2011; Worpole, 2004). While collections have been reorganized, they have also moved to accommodate a variety of spaces to support a variety of library usage, increase the "accessibility of information" and the "creation of the public sphere" (Dahlkild, 2011, p. 11). Library space includes,

> The perceived physical space (how patrons view the space) and the equally important intuitive space; that is to say, what the dynamic of the interactions in the space will be affects how the

> space, its contents, or it's habitation will influence users in their daily lives. (Feinberg & Keller, 2010, p. 35)

In planning public library space one must consider "how architectural and design features can influence learning and usage patterns; listening to, interpreting, and incorporating ideas from the staff and community" (Feinberg & Keller, 2010, p. 35). Designs and plans must come from a variety of influences including elements from museums, parks, recreational and childcare facilities (Feinberg & Keller, p. 37). For example, elements of a childcare facility have been incorporated into the Brossard Public Library, near Montreal, parenting books and a comfortable chair for breastfeeding are included in their children's section (Lusignan & Tran, 2010). Also in that section a visitor would find an *arbre a suces* or pacifier tree on which toddlers can offer up their pacifier when they are ready to quit to trade for a brand new picture book (Lusignan & Tran, 2010). After the offering children can snuggle up on various soft chairs/cushions or hide away in the wooden playhouse nearby to read (Lusignan & Tran, 2010).

Large spaces with high ceilings and creative book shelving open up sight lines to allow for areas to encourage like-minded individuals to gather or meet by chance to build relationships or collaborate with one another (Scott, 2011). Other libraries are even more innovative and build libratories, spaces dedicated to the Do-It-Yourselfer, to draw a crowd (Bagley, 2012). One especially "hot" library trend right now is the acquisition of the 3D printer which allows patrons to print a 3D replication of an invention or creation (Lankes, 2013). Abram (2013), argues that the maker movement "can make a library collection even more relevant and connect a wide variety of users to their own success scenario and pathway" (para. 1). After all, facilitating the public to better their lives fits squarely within the mandate of the public library (Scott, 2011).

MANAGING CHANGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

As much as print resources have historically been the iconic image of the library, the 21st century has brought "rapid transformation of data, information and knowledge into digital form" (Tam & Robertson, 2002, p. 369). The result has been "significant changes in the ways in which documents and information are input, stored, organized, accessed and retrieved" (Tam & Robertson, p. 369). Tam and Robertson postulate that changes in the economy and society have made lifelong learning a "universal right" and a "prerequisite for success" (p. 370). Those two facts translate into the need to respond to the diverse demands of the patrons need for support and training to access these digital resources (Wijetunge, 2000; American Library Association, 2010). As resources shift away from print towards digital, libraries have responded by acquiring usage rights and training to support the sharing of quality online information in the form of databases, websites, and online periodicals (Bertot, Jaeger, Wahl, and Sigler, 2011; Tenopir & Read, 2000). Remote users of these services have also been included in the structure of the virtual library as many libraries offer real time online chat features for patron inquiries (Hoag & Chichanowicz, 2001) as well as Second Life libraries (Stimpson, 2009)

SERVICES FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE

Most likely, a child's first experience of a library will occur in a public library for parent/tot story time (Branch & de Groot, 2009, para 1). Once the child is of school-age, the majority of library-related experiences will be at their school during operational hours.

Now, in most libraries, story time is a staple program; but, Brossard Public Library has taken it a step further. The youngest patrons and their parents can access story time in both of Canada's official languages, over the phone through dial-a-story, or even schedule a one-on-one with a children's librarian for an hour (Lusignan and Tran, 2010). Read-aloud programsin libraries have also been supplemented with puppetry, songs, radio programs, and author visits to inspire the very young (Frankel, 1995).

Storytime supports the development of comprehension, language development and phonological awareness in pre-school and school-age children (Hughes-Hassell, Agosto, and Xiaoning, 2007). Changes in the workforce mean that many families have one or two working parents who work traditional Monday-Friday, 9-5 work hours who are not able to attend Story Times planned on the same schedule. Many libraries have strategically adjusted their programming to accommodate the needs of these families and the changes have proven successful allowing the children to share the experience of Story Time with their parents rather than babysitters, nannies, or daycare (Hughes-Hassell et al., 2007).

Many school-age students enjoy the benefit of having access to their own school library during school hours and being able to participate in extra-curricular public library programming on evenings, weekends, and during school holidays. Commonly found are the summer reading clubs in which children can attend book clubs, scheduled events, and drop-in programs as an incentive to keep up with their reading during the summer months (Henschel, 2011). However, there is a growing trend to expand children's view of the public library with creative programming such as the Zombie Prom (Henschel, 2011). Gaming and movie nights for tweens, teens, and adults are also gaining popularity as connections to multiple literacies and increase in library usage are being recognized (Buckley, 2012; Czarnecki, 2010; Levine, 2006; Myers, 2009). The definition of literacy in the 21st century has expanded to include the acts of constructing and communicating meaning across a wide variety of platforms above and beyond accessing and comprehending information is traditional text resources (Myers, 2009).

Continuing on with the theme of user-centric services, many libraries are taking an over- the-counter approach to programming (Casey, 2006; Henschel, 2011; Scott, 2011) meaning that many of the programs reflect the library's role in the community it serves. The Pelham Library in Ontario is described as "more of a community centre" by its public services coordinator, Elaine Anderson (Henschel, para 2). At Pelham Public Library, users have access to programs that include meditation, card making, email, Facebook, Bridge, and zombie apocalypse survival (Henschel, 2011).

In uncertain economic times, where budget cuts and changing needs of patrons constantly keep librarians on their toes, countless public libraries have indeed survived the transition from the 20th to the 21st century and more importantly have thrived in this new landscape (American Library Association, 2010). Public libraries have truly transformed into spaces comfortable and usable for all public members. They have done so through creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and a strong sense of play. In contrast, school libraries in many districts are closing, have out-dated technologies/collections, or most commonly, are operating without a teacher-librarian. If the above-mentioned innovations have worked for public libraries, what can teacher-librarians take and adapt for our libraries?

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Public and school libraries are tied together by much more than shared demographics. School libraries and public libraries both operate under the philosophy of supporting life-long learning and although they follow different mandates, they have more in common with one another than not. The purpose of this chapter is to show my peers in education what is happening on the other side of libraries and how much of it can be adapted to aid school libraries in the 21st century.

School libraries are not meant to be insular, isolated, or completely self-sufficient. John Donne wrote, "no man is an island", which could also be applied to school libraries; however, I have seen such libraries, that exist isolated in their very own dimension, regardless of what the rest of the school or community is doing. Often, those libraries sit dark and empty relying on scheduled book exchanges to

keep them running. Libraries by their very nature reach out to embrace the world in its entirety, not existing in their own parallel universe to the community whose youth it serves. All you have to do is look to your stacks to see the proof of diversity of needs and interests we serve. As teachers, we want our students to be participating members of society once they leave our school building, but why wait until then? We should be taking a holistic approach to preparing our students for "real life" rather than how to succeed in a sheltered microcosm. I would further argue that if we expect students to be active participants in society, we need to follow them out there and model the very behaviour we seek to foster!

I am not talking about big corporate partnerships that would require you to rename your school library after a fashionable sparkling water. I'm talking about partnering with public libraries, other school libraries, local special interest groups, theatre troupes, arts councils, media, local businesses and societies. Partnerships with any of these groups could be mutually beneficial by increasing usage, pooling resources, and of course the satisfaction of working with a others who have a shared purpose.

Teacher-Librarians Working Together

Recent experience in the public library sector has allowed me to witness public libraries working together. The cooperation, collaboration, and partnership between libraries is especially important for small rural libraries such as mine. With our avid fan base visiting our stacks three or four times per week, it is quickly brought to our attention when our collection cannot keep up with our patrons' voracious appetites for reading: therefore, we rely on Inter-Library Loans and floating collections to meet our patrons needs. As a rural library, we often find it difficult to lure authors and performers out to our little town for one or two shows, thus we collaborate with other small rural libraries in the region to coordinate special visits.

I was very fortunate to have spent the last five years working as a teacher-librarian in a district with a very motivated, passionate teacher-librarian constituency who meet monthly to plan an annual Book Fest as a district event; but I would like to strive to have that relationship serve as a foundation for additional opportunities. Here are some recommendations for teacher-librarian to teacher-librarian collaboration opportunities:

- roaming teacher-librarians! Switch libraries for a few blocks to take advantage of each other's strengths and varying interests. Are you a book talk guru? Switch with the local IT genius and either swap classes or use release time to watch another professional in action.
- libraries in the same school district usually have access to the same resources. Why not a central portal to pool resources/units and link to one another's catalogues?
- floating collections: draw up an agreement, have each library purchase a "special" collection and float the collections between multiple schools. You will always have a guaranteed "new and exciting" display for your students. This would be an especially great way to gauge interest in a particular genre with your school population.
- Interlibrary loan: yes, I know Teacher-Librarians don't have time for this; however, maybe there is funding to support this type of initiative between two schools close by or two very small schools with limited budgets?
- support one another's plunge into social media. I follow a colleague's Facebook group and she follows mine. We often "borrow" one another's status updates and links.
- create something FANTASTIC! The British Columbia Teacher Librarian Association created an InfoLit task force and created the BCTLA "Points of Inquiry"(http://bctf.ca/bctla/pub/index.html) model adapted from an article by Barbara Stripling.
- join a provincial specialist association, the Canadian Library Association, anything! Just get out there and connect with your peers!

Public librarians and Teacher-Librarians UNITE

Public libraries see collaboration as increased access to potential patrons. In Colorado, Douglas County libraries have seven branches that work collaboratively with the local school district and its teacher-librarians. Guest speakers from the public library frequent the school library to provide information on public library programming; furthermore, the public library also screens and trains age 55+ citizens to serve as storytellers in the schools in their Spellbinders program. The school district and Douglas County Libraries agreement to share the cost of a database subscription increasing the usage of the shared resources by 800% (Vincelette & Queen, 2012). Between the two groups of professionals, the Library-Palooza mini conference was born offering joint professional development opportunities for public librarians and teacher-librarians.

Additional recommended opportunities for partnerships and collaboration:

- cooperation between device loaning and joint material loaning
- shared reading celebrations
- shared book talks
- collaboration on joint information portal (think one-stop-shop for public and school library online resources for staff and students)
- cross-promotion of programming
- class field trips for public library tours and programs
- collaboration on summer reading lists corresponding to public library programming
- school/public library liaison to facilitate and plan collaborative projects
- sharing of educational tools such as the British Columbia's Teacher Librarian's Association Points of Inquiry for public library to use and support
- cooperation in public library homework help centre
- floating collection of special interest books
- connecting library search engines to include public library catalogue
- assignment/topic "alerts" from schools sent to public libraries
- shared pathfinders for topics
- partnership for work experience students

Partnerships with the arts and heritage communities

I'm a networker by nature, but the more time I spend in the public library system, the more potential I see for networking as a teacher-librarian. Working as a full-time teacher, I networked with fellow teacher-librarians, educators, administrators and had quite an extensive network I could call upon to collaborate on projects. However, I see how truly limited I was when I kept my networking with the arts and heritage communities in my own personal life and left it out of my professional life. Being in a small town, you get to know everyone and a friend may very well turn out to be the chair on the local Arts council or director of programming for the historic site. This makes networking very easy to do and coordinate but does it have to be any harder in a larger town? No. In fact, the more networking and collaborating you do, you'll find your own city seeming smaller and more intricately linked than ever before. Here are some opportunities and ideas for working with your local Arts council or heritage site:

- floating displays or resources from galleries (http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/newsatlib/080417/davis.html), museums (http://scclibnews.blogspot.ca/), and historic sites
- joint projects with explicit curricular connections
- cross-promotion of resources and programming

- artist in residence who splits their time between schools and public venues
- joint committees for recommending resources for the library
- tours, programs, and field trips
- cooperation to provide outreach to rural schools or to children with barriers to access community resources

The Kingston Frontenac Public library in Kingston, Ontario, in partnership with the local museum, art gallery, and hockey hall of fame, offers patrons the opportunity to "check out" a museum pass which allows a family of four to gain admission to all of these attractions, free of charge while they have the pass on their account.

Another example comes from Kathleen de la Pena McCook, a teacher-librarian and high school film instructor in Colorado who has struck out into the community seeking partnerships and community involvement in the film course run out of the school library. Not only are community members invited and welcome at class meetings but the students and instructor submit film reviews to the local papers for publication. McCook states that the inclusion of community members in high school programs fosters "quality interaction between the community and youth during non-traditional learning times" and allows for learning to take place within diverse age groups (Lutz, 2001, p. 23).

Staffing

Let's be real here. There is a large discrepancy between the staffing in public libraries and the staffing in school libraries. While shrinking budgets have been universal among libraries, it is only the school libraries that are operating without trained librarians across Canada. Even the rural public library, where I am currently working, there has a trained librarian staffed full-time. In school libraries, it is rare to find a school library open full time and even rarer to have that library staffed with a teacher with specialized library training. If school libraries want to keep relevant in the 21st century they must be staffed with professionals comfortable with managing a rapidly changing "transformation of data" and "knowledge management" (Robertson & Tam, 2002, p. 369). Set the standards high for your school library with the expectation of a trained professional or a professional willing to pursue training to ensure he or she can meet your high expectations for excellence in the library.

Resource Management and Organization

The organization and delivery of information has dramatically transformed in the last ten years. Let me share my own experience with you to illustrate my point. During my university schooling, from 1997-2003, I studied English and Education. The majority of my research was done using my required textbooks and articles photocopied from the university library. Five years later, I began my studies for my Med, where I have acquired all of the information I needed for my research and projects either within my required textbooks (print and electronic) or from the university library online databases. What does that tell us about how people are finding their academic information now? Yes, school libraries are still participating in research using print resources and yes, I do believe there is nothing like cracking the spine of a fresh print copy, but as more quality digital resources come available the print non-fiction section just can't keep up. Increasingly our print resources are being browsed and read out of interest while the research is happening online.

My last year in an elementary school was a busy one. I was running two libraries, one elementary and the district resource centre, and teaching Fine Arts. Most of my year was spent amalgamating another school's resources into my own library but as the 60+ boxes of resources dwindled, I allowed myself to play with the idea of revamping and organizing our collection. As I was running two libraries simultaneously, I did not have time to strip away the Dewey Decimal system, but I had fun playing

around with a hybrid model. My goal was to create inquiry stations within the stacks beginning with the small step of themed-bins structured around units taught by my colleagues. A fellow teacher worked with me to create QR codes for staff and students linking additional digital resources to that bin. While many public libraries are using the Book Industry Standards and Communications which are used by many bookstores, some school libraries have answered the call for a more user-friendly, patron oriented library and have created an innovative system of categorizing books, named Metis (http://metisinnovations.com/), for easy and intuitive browsing. Some additional recommendations for resource management and organization are as follows:

- If you are hesitant to ditch Dewey, whet your appetite for innovation with theme bins working within the Dewey Decimal classification system.
- Take a professional development day to visit public libraries and bookstores which have alternative classification systems: see how it feels and talk to patrons
- Intrigued but nervous? Try a small section in the teachers' resources or in your fiction section.
- Public libraries reached out to their patrons before making changes to their library. Reach out to yours. What do your students and staff like about how your materials are organized and what are their concerns? Remember, change will only be received well if you get your staff and students onside with you!

PROGRAMMING

Creative and fun programming does not have to diverge from the curriculum and can be incorporated into inquiry projects. Here are a few examples of inspiring programming I have found in public libraries and how I think they could be adapted for school libraries:

- public libraries have responded to the zombie apocalypse phenomenon: zombie proms and apocalypse survival workshops are in full swing. What about connecting with your classroom teachers for an inquiry project on how to survive a zombie apocalypse? Combine orienteering/mapping/physical education (zombie run anyone?) with studying local plant life for surviving an apocalypse? Think of the creative writing opportunities as well!
- reader's advisory takes on new meaning when you introduce "blind dates" with books. With only a brief description, written like an online dating advertisement, patrons choose a book without judging it by its cover. I see this as a great way to revitalize students' interests in the books whose jackets are out of date. Challenge students to create their own "blind date" book to share with friends. One innovative teacher-librarian even had a "speed dating" session between her students and books!
- Banned Books week isn't only for the brave and fearless public librarians. I know many teacher-librarians just as brave who fiercely support the reading of banned books. More often than not, I see displays in secondary libraries so why not in elementary schools? Children of all ages learn can about intellectual freedom while tying in to learning outcomes in the curriculum.
- in our public library we have book clubs run by volunteers. I understand first-hand how busy a teacher librarian's schedule is and we just don't have the time to do everything. So reach out and invite passionate community members in to offer additional programming when you have other projects on the go.
- public libraries frequently bring special guest speakers and performances in to highlight themes and serve patron interests. As the teacher-librarian, ensure your library is the hub of activity in your school. Make sure the presentations your staff are requesting are booked into your library!
- when the public library I grew up loving was moved and rebuilt, the designers were obviously forward thinkers. A quiet study room was built while café-like seating and tables were set up to encourage group meetings and collaboration. How does your space reflect the programs you want to have in place? Rethink your library space and how it contributes to programming. Libraries are

vibrant, thriving hubs of school and public communities. Configure your space to match the usage you want to see.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

All too often libraries, both school and public, are associated with only one of the media forms we work with: books. As books become less utilized over time, there is a misconception that professionals who work with them also become less important. This misconception is integral for us to understand as we move forward in our roles as teacher-librarians because it affects our profession profoundly (Thorlakson, 2012). Public and school libraries have different mandates but the similarities within those goals make the two institutions interconnected. Campbell (2002) said, "allowing school libraries to be dismantled has a downstream impact on public and post-secondary libraries and provides ammunition to those who believe libraries are no longer necessary in our society" (p. 258). The interconnectedness referred to in the above statement, I would argue, shows both types of libraries can thrive in the 21st century by making creativity and innovation a priority and by learning from one another. Working in partnerships and reaching out to the community will identify gaps in service and all stakeholders can work towards meeting all of the needs of the community by working together to fill those service gaps instead of replicating services. As I currently find myself with one foot in each side of this profession, I have seen the similarities and differences between the two types of libraries and see how moving forward by connecting and learning from one another is a sure fire way for both institutions to survive and thrive.

I understand it is difficult being part of a community which is always under threat from dwindling budgets and your time is limited and valuable; but, looking to outside sources of inspiration, cooperation, collaboration and even funding will create a library program which thrives in this new landscape. Don't count on your captive audience for primary story time or intermediate research projects. Be patron-centric, innovative, creative, daring, caring, bold, and LOUD!

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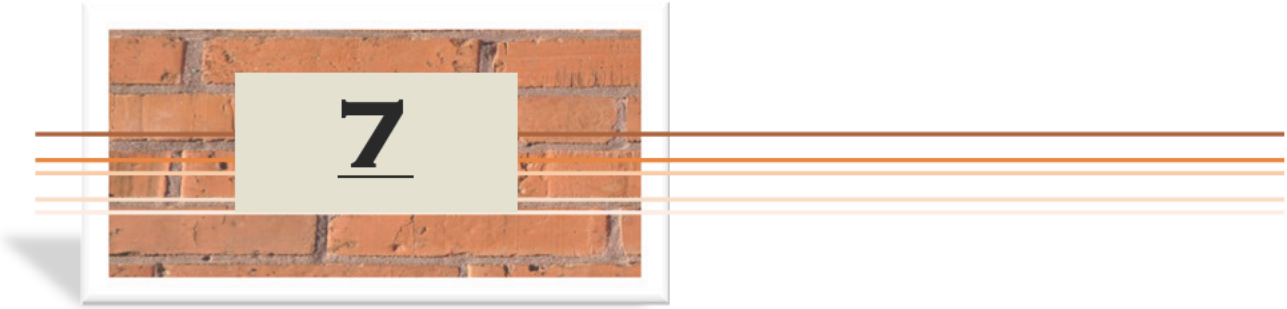
Teacher-Librarians Becoming and Being Instructional Partners

As instructional partners, teacher-librarians seek to collaborate with teaching colleagues, students, parents, and other members of the learning community. This collaborative role of the teacher-librarian is integral for the success of the school library program and requires teachers to see the teacher-librarian as an important member of the school teaching team. This section of *Becoming and Being* focuses on this instructional partner role of the teacher-librarian and explores the ways in which teacher-librarians present themselves as instructional partners in their schools.

The section begins with Hali Hamel's chapter on inquiry-based learning and the role of the teacher-librarian in promoting and supporting school based inquiry. Hamel contends that teacher-librarians are ideally suited to serve as leaders for school-based inquiry because they are experienced in a number of areas that are critical to successful inquiry-based learning. As instructional partners, teacher-librarians teach information literacy, develop quality collections, facilitate collaboration, and lead staff professional development. This chapter elaborates on the ways in which teacher-librarians as instructional partners help to create lifelong independent learners through inquiry-based instruction. In the second chapter in this section, Kirsten Morozov explores the topic of collaboration through the lens of Montiel-Overall's model of teacher-librarian/teacher collaboration. Morozov provides examples of and ideas for teacher-librarians to build collaborative relationships and highlights the importance of leadership, administrative support, and professional development in the collaborative process. The third chapter in this section looks specifically at the role of the teacher-librarian in a specific school environment. Kristie Oxley examines where the teacher-librarian as instructional partner fits into the Montesorri School environment. In this chapter, Oxley provides us with an introduction to the Montesorri philosophy and examines the intersections between Montesorri and school library programs. The chapter concludes with a list of suggestions for educational leaders interested in supporting Montessori education through an active school library program. The final chapter in this section again examines the role of the teacher-librarian in supporting a specific program. Kimberly Scheideman's chapter serves as an introduction to historical thinking as a teaching strategy. Beyond a basic overview, Scheideman identifies the role the teacher-librarian can take in supporting the implementation and sustainability of this pedagogical approach to teaching history and argues that the teacher-librarian offers another option for building capacity for this approach to social studies education.

From inquiry-based learning to collaboration to Montessori education to historical thinking, the chapters in this third section highlight the diverse ways in which Canadian teacher-librarians are acting as instructional partners in their schools.



Teacher-Librarians as Inquiry Learning Leaders

Hali Hamel

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Why should school leaders care... ?

> "In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists" - Eric Hoffer, philosopher

There is little doubt that today's learners are facing an uncertain future. Advancements in technology have created a connected world where the only constant seems to be change. The educational system is struggling with the question of how to best prepare students for a world that we may not even be able to imagine. Inquiry provides opportunities for students to gain transferable skills that will serve them well in this uncertain future.

Inquiry-based learning focuses on the learning process and skills required to be a successful learner. This resource-based approach to researching and learning requires a shift to teacher facilitation, an opportunity for teacher modelling, and an emphasis on collaboration. Teacher-librarians - trained in information literacy, research skills, resource selection, and critical thinking - are ideally positioned to lead the implementation of inquiry learning. This chapter explores the value of inquiry-based learning and the important role of the teacher-librarian in this process.

Inquiry is Valuable

Alberta Learning's *Focus on Inquiry* (2004) document defines inquiry-based learning as "a process where students are involved in their learning, formulate questions, investigate widely, and then build new understandings, meanings and knowledge" (p. 1).

Inquiry fosters critical and independent thinking skills and develops students who are capable of asking deep questions, evaluating sources, solving problems, collaborating, and sharing their knowledge. Students are engaged in the learning process and take responsibility for their learning. Their learning is authentic, while meeting or exceeding curriculum outcomes. Metacognitive skills are also practiced, providing opportunities for students to focus and reflect on *how* they learn. This metacognition is particularly beneficial as it can be transferred to other learning situations.

Beyond these benefits, inquiry also provides opportunities for differentiated instruction and a variety of adaptations and/or modifications. It meets learners where they are, something that is crucial in increasingly diverse classrooms.

Inquiry-based learning has always had the benefit of being a learner-centered approach that leads to deeper understanding. However, the realities of the 21st century make inquiry-based learning even more valuable for our students. The American Association of School Librarians' *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (2007) emphasizes the value of inquiry through their Common Beliefs:

> Inquiry provides a framework for learning. To become independent learners, students must gain not only the skills but also the disposition to use those skills, along with an understanding of their own responsibilities and self-assessment strategies. Combined, these four elements build a learner who can thrive in a complex information environment. (p. 2)

Today's learners do not need to learn facts, they need to learn how to find information and evaluate it critically. They also need opportunities to participate in learning opportunities beyond the classroom walls. More than ever before, transferable skills gained in the inquiry process, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration, will best serve our students in the future.

As the inquiry model became infused into curriculums across Saskatchewan, I have watched many teachers either struggle with or ignore the inquiry-based outcomes. Inquiry requires a shift in teaching that many teachers feel unprepared for - the move away from being "the expert" towards being a facilitator is not a simple adjustment. I believe that teacher-librarians possess the skills and knowledge required to support this teaching and learning style.

Too often, teachers may feel overwhelmed at the prospect of teaching both course content and information literacy skills. Teacher-librarians have experience in teaching the information literacy and critical thinking skills that are fostered through inquiry. Teacher-Librarians are also experienced in research, database use, and resource selection. A TLs ability to model all of these behaviours to both students and teachers makes us a key member of the inquiry team.

Many inquiry projects include the use of technology for finding information, creating evidence of learning, and/or sharing this new knowledge. There is little doubt that 21st century learners are comfortable in the world of technology, but it is crucial that we do not mistake their comfort with technology for their ability to use it appropriately for educational purposes. As the definition of literacy grows to include a scope far wider than basic print, the teacher-librarian is required to become an expert on numerous literacies such as visual literacy, media literacy, and digital literacy. TLs are prepared to assist both teachers and students as they learn how to gain the most out of technology.

Students are often encouraged to work collaboratively on inquiry projects, and successful collaboration can be modelled by teachers and teacher-librarians who work together on these projects. Collaboration also allows for both the classroom teacher and the teacher-librarian to be conferencing with and supporting students throughout the process. Teachers and teacher-librarians can also collaboratively assess student learning through inquiry. The role of libraries in inquiry is obvious, but the role of teacher-

librarians needs to be recognized as a critical piece in creating a successful inquiry-based learning environment.

The truth is that, as a student, I am not sure how I would have reacted to an inquiry-based learning environment. I knew how to "play school", and I thrived in an environment of regurgitation and a clear right/wrong approach to school. Asking me to find the big question, determine the importance, critically evaluate viewpoints, and push to the "so what" continues to be a really challenging experience for me. However, I see the value these skills have in our information-rich and ever-changing world. I know that we only truly learn through doing, and I believe that with support and experience all students can be successful in an inquiry-based learning environment.

As I watch my co-workers struggle with the philosophical shift to inquiry-based learning, I see a real opportunity to showcase the value and skills of teacher-librarians. I know that the collaboration of classroom teachers and teacher-librarians can provide students with excellent role models and exciting learning opportunities - the type of opportunities that foster the *learner* in all of them. Serving as a leader in inquiry learning is the best way for teacher-librarians to demonstrate how crucial we are in a 21st century learning environment.

What do school leaders need to know...?

The value of inquiry: What the research has to say...

Inquiry is a based on the constructivist approach to learning; combining the work of educational theorists such as John Dewey, Jerome Bruner, Lev Vygotsky, and Jean Piaget (Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2007). Some constructivist ideas that can be found in inquiry-based learning include the idea that learning is an active process that involves engaging in the process and reflecting on the experience (Dewey, 1933), the belief that students construct new knowledge based on what they already know, and an approach to learning which involves collaboration and facilitation based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978).

The information search process (ISP) is often cited as a basis of inquiry development. ISP was developed by Carol C. Kuhlthau from two decades of research (Kuhlthau et al., 2007, p. 32). This holistic model focuses on both the cognitive and emotional aspects of learning as the learners moves through the stages of initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, and presentation (Kuhlthau, et al., pp. 34-35).

Inquiry Models

There are many different models for inquiry, used to guide both teachers and students through the process (Alberta Learning, 2004; Kuhlthau et al., 2007; Stripling & Hughes-Hassell, 2003). Although there are differences among models, commonalities of inquiry models include a focus on student-driven questions and the process of moving through the phases of questioning, discovering, evaluating, sharing, and reflecting. With inquiry, the emphasis is on both the process and the product.

Focus on Inquiry (Alberta Learning, 2004), a document created to guide inquiry in Alberta, identifies reflection as central to the inquiry process. The model provides a common language for teachers and learners and recognizes the emotional aspect of learning (p. 8). Teachers are encouraged to use the model as a scaffold or instruction, but also to remember that inquiry is nonlinear and requires flexibility (p. 7-9).

The model below (see Figure 1) provides a visual representation of the stages of the inquiry process, demonstrating how *Reflecting on the Process* permeates all the other steps. Participants are encouraged to develop their metacognative skills while they move through *Planning*, *Retrieving*, *Processing*, *Creating*, *Sharing*, and *Evaluating*.

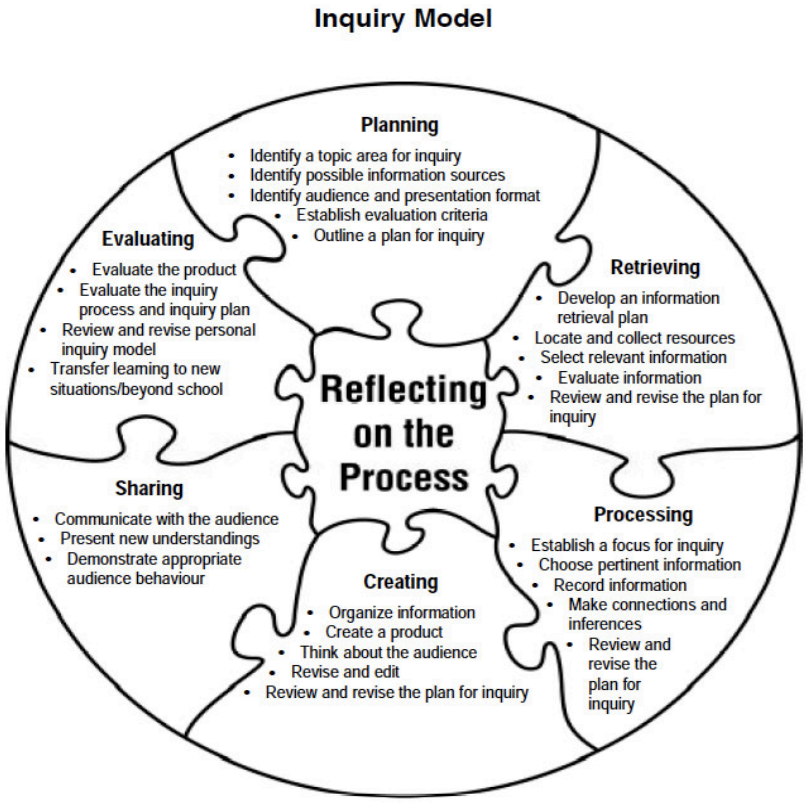

Figure 1. Inquiry Model © Alberta Education. *Focus on Inquiry; A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-based Learning.* 2004 http://education.alberta.ca/media/313361/focusoninquiry.pdf (March 2013)

A second model, *Guided Inquiry* is a model based on Kuhlthau's Information Search Process (ISP). Students experience a variety of emotions as they move through the stages of initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, presentation, and assessment. From this model, the Guided Inquiry Design Model was created. It gives students the time and guidance necessary to create meaningful and personal inquiry questions (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2012, p. xiii). Prior to determining their inquiry question, students are introduced to topics that stimulate curiosity. They are then exposed to resources that build knowledge and introduce new ideas. Once they have a clear question, students gather information, construct meaning, communicate ideas, and share their insights with others. Although reflection and assessment occur throughout the process, there are also final evaluations and reflections by both the students and the teachers (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2012, p. 1-6).

Another model often referenced in inquiry research is the Stripling Model of Inquiry. As students experience the stages of Connect, Wonder, Investigate, Construct, Express, and Reflect, they are using their natural wonder to learn about the world. (Stripling & Hughes-Hassell, 2003, p. 4).

The benefits of inquiry-based learning are many: "The research base is clear: inquiry-oriented classrooms cultivate motivation and engagement, deeper conceptual and strategic understanding, higher-level thinking , productive habits of mind, and positive attitudes toward future learning, no matter the subject area" (Wilhelm, 2007, p. 16).

Guided Inquiry also encourages engagement and deep understanding for all students:

> Guided Inquiry creates an environment that motivates students to learn by providing opportunities for them to construct their own meaning and develop deep understanding. This approach engages all students, not just those who have already shown that they are academically inclined" (Kuhlthau, et al., 2007, p. 6).

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education adopted an inquiry stance in all of their renewed curricula. They determined "It is important that teachers and students learn within meaningful contexts that relate to their lives, communities, and world. Teachers and students need to identify big ideas and questions for deeper understanding central to the area of study" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 9).

Inquiry is often recommended as an ideal method for teaching the skills that 21st century students require (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Kuhlthau, 2003; Kuhlthau, et al., 2007; Yoshina & Harada, 2006). In our increasingly global and technological society, students need to learn transferable literacy skills such as how to locate, evaluate, and use information (Kuhlthau et al., 2007). The American Association of School Librarians' *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (2007) emphasizes the value of inquiry in teaching 21st century standard skills such as questioning, critical thinking, constructing understanding, creating new knowledge, and sharing knowledge.

METACOGNITION IS KEY TO INQUIRY

The emphasis on metacognition in inquiry is what makes the learning skills transferable and personal:

> The core purpose of the Reflecting on the Process component in the Inquiry Model is to involve students in their own learning by developing their metacognitive skills. This component is key in each and every phase of the inquiry process, is integral to the success of inquiry-based learning activities, and is actively practised throughout the inquiry process. (Alberta Learning, 2004, p. 41)

As students complete the Guided Inquiry process, they are reflecting on their learning processes in every step. The ability to understand how to learn is essential not only for the world of school and work, but also for daily life in the information age (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2012, p. 158). The evidence seems clear that inquiry-based learning is an excellent way to help students reach deep understanding and be prepared to learn beyond the school environment. Now it is time to explore the role of the teacher-librarian in inquiry learning.

Teacher-librarians need to be viewed as education leaders who are crucial to the educational direction of the school, and school principals are a key player in ensuring that teacher-librarians are viewed as educational leaders. (Everhart, 2007; Hartzell, 2002). Principals can improve the impact teacher-librarians can have by providing necessary leadership tools such as flexible schedules, clerical support, and adequate technology and funding (Everhart).

The professional and personal competencies required of 21st century teacher-librarians, as outlined by The Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada and the Canadian School Library Association (1999), demonstrate the capability of teacher-librarians to be learning leaders. The professional competencies include leadership abilities, collaboration skills, curriculum knowledge, expertise in evaluation of resources, and understanding student needs. The personal competencies describe the teacher-librarian to be a flexible and collaborative leader who is an effective communicator and team-player that is committed to lifelong learning (pp. 90-93). As students confront growing amounts of print and electronic information, the teacher-librarian becomes central to learning (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003).

One step in creating a culture of inquiry is ensuring the library and the teacher-librarian become key players in the process (Harada, 2004; Kuhlthau, 2003; Stripling, 2008a). The library, with proper support, moves beyond being a place where resources are housed:

> In an inquiry environment, the library media center is more than a physical collection of resources. It is a place where questions can be raised and problems posed. It is a portal to the knowledge banks of the world. It is a learning center where students develop the skills to manage an ever-increasing volume of information. The library media center is the epicenter, the heartbeat, of the school. (Harada, 2004, p. 10)

In order to move beyond the resources, teacher-librarians need to facilitate learning by using a variety of teaching practices. Through inquiry, teacher-librarians need to provide direct instruction, modeling, interaction, guided practice, independent practice, feedback and continual assessment (Harada, p. 78).

Kuhlthau, et al. (2012) emphasize the vital role teacher-librarians play in the inquiry process. They place a teacher-librarian on the core learning team that includes a classroom teacher, a content expert, and a teacher-librarian. In the Guided Inquiry model, the teacher-librarian in an indispensable member of the team and is often viewed as the leader of inquiry in the school. It is important to note that the role of the teacher-librarian is far more than just the resource provider:

> Inquiry goes beyond providing resources and locating information. Collaboration in Inquiry involves planning, teaching, and evaluating student learning across the curriculum and providing an instructional team with the teacher as expert in the content and context and the teacher-librarian as expert in the resources and process. (Kuhlthau, 2003, p. 5)

Stripling (2008b) believes the teacher-librarian has a number of roles in implementing successful inquiry-based learning. She breaks the roles down into four categories:

- Collaboration: Teachers and teacher-librarians need to work together to restructure the curriculum for an inquiry focus and support students during inquiry.
- Teaching: Teacher-librarians need to establish a learner-centered environment, support student learning and reflection, and incorporate the AASL *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* into the learning experience.
- Collection Development: Teacher-librarians provide the necessary resources that are crucial for inquiry. These physical and virtual resources should support the curriculum while emphasizing opposing viewpoints and multiple perspectives. They can also advocate for accessible technology and guide students in the use of technology for learning.
- Leadership and Professional Development: Teacher-librarians need to experience inquiry in their own learning, provide professional development opportunities that support inquiry implementation, and take a leadership role in the school community. (Stripling, 2008b, p. 2)

These four roles place the teacher-librarian in a crucial role as a leader and facilitator of inquiry learning in the school.

There is plenty of evidence that inquiry-based learning is valuable and effective. Stripling and Hughes-Hassell (2003) effectively summarizes the power of inquiry: “inquiry places students at the heart of learning by empowering them to follow their sense of wonder into new discoveries and insights about the way the world works" (p. 4). The evidence also emphasizes the critical role the teacher-librarian plays in creating valuable inquiry opportunities for students.

What can school leaders do about… ?

In 2010, teachers in Saskatchewan were tasked with the wide-scale implementation of a renewed curricula. One of the renewals included the use of inquiry learning to help students find deeper understanding with effective questions. I was among the many teachers who were unfamiliar with what inquiry involved, and I was very uncertain as to how to integrate it into my teaching practice. An afternoon workshop and a professional development day session did not seem adequate preparation for using a model that seemed so different to my familiar classroom experiences.

My staff had many questions, including "How am I supposed to know everything about every topic the kids research?" and "Do they only learn about what they are interested in?" These questions were valid and revealing; many teachers were intimidated by inquiry because it seemed too broad and too unstructured. This uncertainty has not disappeared: three years after implementation, many teachers have not yet had students participate in any form of inquiry learning in their classroom.

Teachers need more than one-shot professional development when they are looking to change their teaching style in such a drastic way. They need the opportunity to work through the process with someone who is trained in information literacy and experienced with the facilitation style of teaching. Teacher-librarians can fulfill this role, and they need the opportunity to be leaders in implementing inquiry-based learning in our schools.

Throughout this section, we are going to hear from Susan Smith, a fictional teacher who represents the views of many teachers attempting to implement inquiry into their classroom.

I'm Susan Smith, a Grade 4 teacher in rural Saskatchewan. I have been teaching for twenty-two years and I have always tried to integrate new approaches and methods into my classroom teaching. However, I have to say that I am intimidated by the inquiry piece in our renewed curriculum. I like a structured classroom, and I always know exactly where we are going with each lesson. From what I have heard and read, it sounds like inquiry just allows the students to learn whatever they want about whatever they are interested in! How is that going to cover the curricular outcomes? I just don't think it will work in my classroom.

In order to create a culture of inquiry, a number of things need to happen. It is crucial that everyone understands the basics of inquiry, the teacher-librarian is a learning leader, and there is a focus on 21st-century learning standards. For inquiry to be successfully implemented, there are some basic understandings that all staff members must have. A common understanding and language makes for a more positive experience. It is important to follow a model of inquiry, determine the big question, facilitate inquiry, and focus on metacognition.

A model of inquiry is important for keeping students and teachers informed and on track. No matter what model you follow, commonalities of inquiry models include a focus on student-driven questions and the process of moving through the phases of questioning, discovering, evaluating, sharing, and reflecting. With inquiry, the emphasis is on both the process and the product.

In the previous section, a number of inquiry models were outlined:

- Alberta Learning's *Focus on Inquiry* Model: Reflecting on the Process is placed in the center of this model, and all stages of inquiry include reflection on learning.

- Stripling's Model of Inquiry: This is a recursive model where students move through the six phases to construct knowledge.
- Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari's Guiding Inquiry Model: Students are given time and guidance from an learning team as they work through the inquiry process.
- Jeffrey Wilhelm's Guiding Questions: Teachers reframe curriculum standards into guiding questions that direct the inquiry process.

Questions are the driving force behind inquiry. The *Focus on Inquiry* model and Stripling's Model of Inquiry have teachers guiding students to create good questions about a specific topic; these student-generated questions will guide the inquiry process (Alberta Learning, 2004; Stripling & Hughes-Hassell, 2003). In the Guided Inquiry model , students develop their own guiding questions only after they have been immersed in information and have built significant background knowledge on the topic (Kuhlthau, et al., 2012). Wilhelm (2007) encourages teachers to reframe curriculum standards into guiding questions for each unit of study.

Whichever model is used, it is important for the inquiry questions to be open-ended, engaging, challenging, and meaningful. Students are often encouraged to think of the real-world application of their learning and focus all learning around that one guiding question (Wilhelm, 2007). Selecting or assisting students in finding the right question is crucial in making sure students will be engaged in the entire inquiry process.

The role of the teacher and teacher-librarian is one of facilitator or guide. You cannot simply send students off to research their topic and expect them to come back with all of the relevant information synthesized into a final product; students need to be guided in every step of the process:

> Students need considerable guidance and intervention throughout the research process to construct a personal understanding. Without guidance, they tend to approach the process as a simple collecting and presenting assignment that leads to copying and pasting with little real learning. With guidance, they are able to construct new knowledge in the stages of the ISP [Informational Search Process] and gain personal understanding and transferable skills. (Kuhlthau, et al., 2012, p. 20)

It is crucial that students see each step of the process modeled by a teacher or teacher-librarian. Students also need opportunities to conference with teachers throughout the process; allowing for individualized instruction and support. As recommended in Saskatchewan Learning English Language Arts' outcomes, students may first experience this process in a whole-class inquiry, but then move to small group and/or individual inquiries as they gain experience and knowledge of the process.

The real benefit of inquiry learning is the transferable skills that are learned. When there is a focus on the process instead of the product, students become aware of the 'how' and not just the 'what' of learning. This process can be transferred over to any question a student has. When we focus on metacognition, we consider each student's thinking process, as well as their feelings about learning:

> Metacognitive skills are part of the 'learning to learn' skills that are transferable to new learning situations, in school and out of school...Understanding and dealing with thoughts and feelings makes inquiry-based learning a powerful learning experience for students and teachers. (Alberta Learning, 2004, p. 3)

Teachers need to model this behaviour and allow plenty of time for students to reflect on their learning experience. As students write and talk about the process, they will begin to understand how they learn and how to deal with frustrations and challenges that may arise.

Okay, I think I understand most of this, at least in theory! We need to pick a model, create good questions, and I need to guide my students' learning and reflection. I really haven't placed any focus on metacognition or learning-to-learn; I will need to practice this myself so that I will be able to model it for students.

I'm relieved to see that students won't just be learning about whatever they want, but I am still a bit unclear as to why the research projects I have always done aren't good enough. I still need to see this in practice to really understand how different it is.

Teacher-librarians are crucial to the successful implementation of inquiry-based learning. As a collaborator, teacher, resource specialist, collection-developer, researcher, and mentor, teacher-librarians participate in every stage of the inquiry process. Administrators can set teacher-librarians up for success by including them in leadership discussions, creating flexible schedules that allow for collaboration, highlighting the skills of the teacher-librarian in professional development opportunities, and encouraging all staff to participate in inquiry collaboration.

If a school is interested in creating a culture of inquiry, school policies and learning goals need to reflect this. Teacher-librarians need to be part of these discussions, as they are key to the successful implementation of inquiry-based learning. Hartzel (2002) explains how valuable a teacher-librarian's presence can be in school decision making:

> Willing and knowledgeable school library media specialists can make significant contributions to building-level effectiveness beyond providing information as requested and teaching research skills to students. If recognized as having something to offer, library media specialists can help address challenges across a wide spectrum, including such areas as helping administration and faculty respond to reform initiatives, reduce the odds of losing at-risk students, facilitate and strengthen induction of new teachers, and improve community relations. (p. 104)

Although there are examples of successful collaborations within a fixed-schedule program, flexible scheduling greatly increases the effectiveness of inquiry-based learning opportunities. Providing time for collaboration in the school day allows for the teacher-librarian to be most effective (Everhart, 2007, p. 57) and shows that an inquiry approach is valued and supported by administration (Kuhlthau, et al., 2007, p. 55). Flexible scheduling allows both for planning time and for co-teaching opportunities in a variety of classrooms.

Teachers are not always aware of what kind of support and assistance a teacher-librarian can provide. It is important for administrators to provide opportunities for the teacher-librarian to demonstrate their skills to the staff. Teacher-librarians can lead staff professional-development sessions on implementing the inquiry process in classrooms. It is much easier to work collaboratively when everyone is speaking the same language. There are a number of skills and abilities a trained teacher-librarian brings to the inquiry process. Here are of the major roles they can play:

- Collaborator:
    - experienced in collaborating, co-planning, and co-teaching
    - serves as the central communication point for all involved parties
- Teacher:
    - teaches students how to locate, evaluate, and use information from a variety of sources
    - provides expertise on information literacy skills and social networking technologies
- Collection Developer:
    - serves as a resource specialist; with a broad knowledge of school, online, and community resources
    - enables access to both in-school and out-of-school resources

    - creates digital libraries of online resources to supplement in-school resources
- Leader and Professional Development Provider:
    - coordinates inquiry projects; both drawing people in and keeping them on track
    - provides training on the phases of inquiry
    - models how to effectively facilitate learning

To best implement inquiry learning, both teachers and teacher-librarians need to be included in the process. The skills that each member brings to the table are important in supporting student learning. This partnership ensures that both the curriculum objectives are met and the information literacy skills are taught, creating a powerful learning environment for students (Kuhlthau, et al., 2007, p. 10).

In order to provide these powerful learning opportunities for all students, administrators should encourage teachers to participate in this collaborative relationship. If teachers know that they are expected to provide inquiry-based learning opportunities for their students, they will likely value the expertise the teacher-librarian can offer. Administrative support for a constructive and collaborative approach is critical for creating a culture of Guided Inquiry (Kuhlthau, et al., 2007).

Now that I have had a chance to meet with our teacher-librarian, I am feeling much less apprehensive about inquiry. I am amazed by how much support is available to me! We have used some in-school planning time to meet, and I know our principal is supportive of our approach. We have put a lot of hours into collecting resources and planning mini-lessons for each stage, but I believe it will be well worth it.

I am actually getting excited about introducing our new unit to my class. Instead of having them all fill in a research grid about an endangered animal, we are going to focus on the question "How do humans affect animal populations? ". Rather than just learning some animal facts, they will be questioning the effects of human behaviour and debating whether these actions can be justified. I can see how much my students will grow by learning from their own questions. The reality that often there will not always be a simple yes or no answer to our questions is frustrating, but also kind of freeing!

I know that I will need to learn to facilitate instead of relying on direct instruction, but I plan to follow the modeling of our teacher-librarian for this approach. I am also counting on her to lead the way in instructing us how to set up a classroom blog! I know my content and how to teach researching skills, but she will certainly be the expert on the technology front! I know I am going to learn lots in the coming days!

Focus on 21st-century learning standards

There is little doubt that students in today's classrooms are different than the students who were there a generation ago. These students are 'digital natives' who have grown up with Google, texting, and video games. They read differently, they multi-task, and they seem to have an insatiable thirst for social networks. They are also more accepting of diversity, they value intelligence and independence, and they prefer collaboration when learning (Abram, 2007).

Although these students are constantly flooded with information, they often do not know how to use it effectively. Students need inquiry-based learning opportunities in order to be prepared for life in the 21st century:

> A new configuration of teaching and learning is called for, one that develops innovative thinkers who can locate, evaluate, and use information wisely for the workplace, citizenship, and daily living. The result is higher levels of information literacy that go beyond fact finding to constructing deep understanding for lifelong learning. (Kuhlthau, et al., 2007, p. 150)

I've never really thought about how different the skills my students today need are compared to the skills my students needed twenty years ago. Even though they are young, they still need to be prepared to be successful in real life. I love the idea of creating learners instead of learned. Students need to learn these information literacy skills so that they can be successful in a world full of information! We are wrong to assume that students automatically know how to use technology for learning.

As we work on our inquiry unit, I can see how much guidance these kids need. We are teaching them to become more effective searchers, both online and with non-fiction books. In the past, I often just found the information for them; how was that helping them be successful outside of that project? Now we are moving on to sharing our learning through podcasts and our classroom blog. We are using tools to enhance their learning, and that is very powerful!

As you can see from the inquiry plan, there are many people involved in successfully implementing inquiry-based learning in a school. Administration sets the tone by valuing inquiry and setting up others for success. The teacher-librarian leads inquiry learning by creating collaborative relationships, training teachers, teaching information literacy skills, and modelling facilitation. Teachers are crucial players who open their classroom to this model of learning and serve as content experts and learning facilitators. Students, of course, bring the inquiry process to life with their questions, their engagement, their deep thinking, and their reflections.

Once all members are on board, successful inquiry can take place. Of course there will be bumps and stumbles, but it is all part of the learning process. Your students will benefit from the relevant, engaging learning environment that will exist in your school.

I am so pleased that I faced my fears and embraced inquiry learning. I can't believe the great work my students created. They went far beyond basic facts and became really passionate about their topics. They were so proud to share their learning on the blog...a far cry from hunting down research reports shoved in the back of desks!!! I am also impressed with how inquiry helped them consider how they learn. Their journal entries were thoughtful, and this metacognition can easily be transferred to other learning experiences. I certainly couldn't have done it myself....I may never have tried it if I hadn't had the support of my teacher-librarian to take my first steps! Of course I am still far from an inquiry expert, but I look forward to trying more of this style of teaching in the future....I expect the kids will be asking for it too!

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Inquiry-based learning is an effective way of teaching valuable 21st-century learning skills to our students. Rather than memorizing facts and regurgitating information, inquiry provides them with the opportunity to learn transferable skills that they can apply to a variety of tasks. Creating a culture of inquiry in a school is not a simple task. In order to provide adequate support for teachers, the teacher-librarian needs to be a learning leader who supports all stages of the inquiry process.

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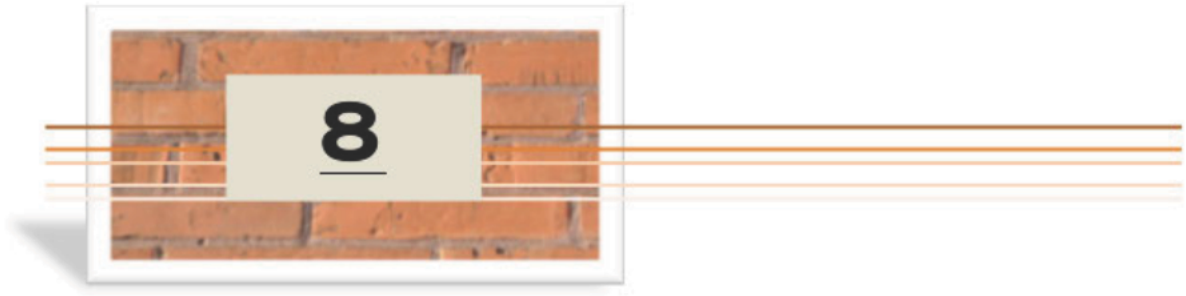

Teacher-Librarian and Teacher Collaboration

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Why should school leaders care… ?

It's 8:19 am on a Monday morning and I'm sitting in a classroom in a kindergarten to grade 12 urban International Baccalaureate (IB) World School in Vancouver, Canada, where, over the years, I have taught from kindergarten to grade 12 as a classroom and subject teacher, and now I am the teacher-librarian. I have my laptop open in front of me ready to take attendance and make announcements as our grade 11 homeroom students trickle into the space. As they do so, I have a quick chat with my homeroom-teaching partner in an attempt to plan what we will do with the group during our 20 minute advisory the following day. This is but my first, albeit limited, crack at collaboration for the day.

Later that same day, I will be working with students who are starting the year-long process of writing an independent 4,000 word Extended Essay on an academic inquiry, outside of their regular classes. I've worked with most of these kids over several years, and therefore they already know how to use our databases, cite sources, and evaluate information, so I won't spend too much time on these topics, except for with individual students who need a refresher. Today I will have them assess thesis question samples, and introduce them to personal learning networks and online organizational research tools. Some of them, after the thesis activity, are now trying to tweak their historical investigation thesis, even though really this is meant to be Extended Essay time.

At break, while quickly checking my email, I read that the grade six teachers, an effective teaching team, are collaborating yet again on a unit. I will offer my help with collecting resources, developing a pathfinder, and assisting students with the research process. After passing a colleague in the hallway, I remember that I want to try to repeat a collaboration from the previous year. I need the grade nine Science and English teachers to agree to have their students do that genetics research paper again. How else can I ensure the latest crop of grade nines are given training on resource evaluation this year? Just in case, I should develop an alternate suggestion for the grade nine teacher-collaboration meeting scheduled for tomorrow. I don't want those students missing out on learning those skills or they won't be ready for

the literature review portion of their grades nine to ten Personal Projects, nor for their Extended Essay in grades 11 to 12.

Lunch is also a whirlwind, and then I head off to work with the second group of grade 11s during the final block in our seven-hour school day. After school, as I continue to help staff and students, and work on more administrative duties, I receive an e-mail from one of our two part-time Primary Years Programme (PYP) teacher-librarians. She would like the teacher-librarians to meet for lunch. They are frustrated with the level of collaboration in the PYP and want to brainstorm some ideas about working together.

Coordinating, cooperating, collaborating - meetings and more meetings. I reflect on all of this on my commute home.

I know that deep, integrated collaboration needs to be a priority for a variety of reasons. The International Baccalaureate Organization requires us to be a collaborative teaching organization. Furthermore, collaboration increases my sense of community by giving me the opportunity to work with interesting people who are passionate about teaching. Collaboration is also a chance to make others in the school be much more aware of the importance and usefulness of teacher-librarians in education.

Most importantly, however, I recognize the need to deliver the best education possible to students that will ready them for a modern, global world where collaboration with others is increasingly seen as a necessity in the workplace, in volunteer situations, and in one's personal life. Therefore, I should work collaboratively with teachers to develop information literate students in a relevant and meaningful way. I need to meld my unique information literacy expertise with teachers' subject and student knowledge.

And so, we come to the crux of this chapter, which is: how can a teacher-librarian collaborate to teach the evolving concept of information literacy to all students in a school in order to help them become inquiring critical-thinkers with an international mindset?

In an attempt to answer this question, I will make many more collaborative efforts tomorrow, next week and next term. But I am frustrated at times that many of my attempts are at a very surface level - what Montiel-Overall (2005) calls "coordination". I often feel like I am only able to hand out disparate little pieces of me. What do I need to know about collaboration and how can I share this with my teachers? How can I develop and sustain collaboration over time? And how do I link this all to the essential work of helping students become information literate adults so that they can be successful in their post-secondary education, and their work and family life?

What do school leaders need to know...?

What is collaboration and why is it important?

Collaboration's ultimate purpose, in an educational setting, is to improve student outcomes (Zmuda & Harada, 2008), and it has been shown to do so in a variety of studies (Chu, Chow, Tse, & Kuhlthau, 2008; Harada, 2002; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2005; Montiel-Overall, 2008; Schmoker, 2004; Todd, 2006). For instance, a study by Todd (2006) showed that a collaboratively created library-based research project offered integrative knowledge development, moving students beyond the mere descriptive gathering of facts to the depth of knowledge and understanding that comes with critical thinking opportunities.

While there are a number of definitions and models of collaboration, Montiel-Overall's (2005) explanation is that:

> Collaboration is a trusting, working relationship between two or more equal participants involved in *shared thinking, shared planning,* and *shared creation of innovative integrated instruction.* Through a shared vision and shared objectives, student learning opportunities are created that integrate subject content and library curriculum by co-planning, co-implementing, and co-evaluating students' progress throughout the instructional process in order to improve student learning in all areas of instruction. (p. 32)

Because it is important to be able to systematically evaluate collaborative efforts (Farmer, 2007), a model of what collaboration looks like is helpful for this purpose. Montiel-Overall's (2005; 2010) has four increasingly collaborative levels starting with coordination, which requires minimal communication between teachers and the teacher-librarian, and might involve e.g. scheduling an opportunity for a class to be in the school library learning commons. The next level, cooperation, may involve shared responsibilities, but limited shared thinking. Next integrated instruction involves the definition of collaboration described in the previous paragraph. Finally, in integrated curriculum, Montiel-Overall's definition of collaboration continues to apply, but across an entire school or district.

With modern communication technologies, the integrated curriculum level can even be done across continents (Laferrière, Law, & Montané, 2012), assisting in the development of international-mindedness. As Montiel-Overall (2012) points out, international-mindedness (or global citizenship) is important because "students need to understand the connectedness of local and world economies, ecologies, and technologies" (p. 8). These understandings become possible because collaboration allows for teachers and teacher-librarians to better develop critical thinking, inquiry-based learning opportunities (Montiel-Overall, p. 10).

International-mindedness is further supported by Montiel-Overall's (2007) cultural model of information literacy, which looks at how information is not objective, but based on the sociocultural contexts of individuals. Her cultural model of information literacy includes collaboration with not only faculty, but also with families and members of the broader community, providing additional perspectives. Based on a sociocultural world view, participation by those who "hold diverse perspectives is encouraged and their unique individual cultural differences are seen as a way of expanding conceptual development of all group members" and "a collaborative environment *equalizes the playing field* by developing mutual understanding" (Montiel-Overall, 2005, p. 26).

Collaboration is an opportunity for teacher-librarians to include information literacy in meaningful and flexible ways in the curriculum through critical thinking and inquiry. Herring (2011, p. 4) defines information literacy as "a critical and reflective ability to exploit the current information environment and to adapt to new information environments" (p. 4). According to Montiel-Overall (2007), "in a cultural model of information literacy, the culture of librarianship focuses on problem-solving, inquiry, and thinking critically" (p. 55). She states further that the focus of information literacy "is upon inquiry about information and culture" (p. 52) and it "is not a fixed skill. Rather, it is a flexible concept that evolves over time through sociocultural influences" (p. 53).

Finally, if there is effective collaboration amongst teaching staff, teachers can better transmit the skill and attitudes, which are a benefit even beyond schooling, of collaboration to students. This modeling can show children that "when collaborative endeavors reach their maximum capacity, individuals engage in intellectually challenging endeavors where they jointly create something that is greater than what either could create alone" (Montiel-Overall, 2005, p. 29).

WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR COLLABORATION TO HAPPEN?

Collaboration and the leadership of teacher-librarians who engage in it is a key professional disposition (Bush & Jones, 2010) and should be a major role of the teacher-librarian (Todd, 2012). Teacher-librarians struggle, however, with the fact that, while collaboration is often seen as important in many schools by faculty, it is often not actually put into practice due to a number of barriers (Jenni & Mauriel, 2004; Montiel-Overall & Jones, 2011).

There are a number of conditions required to break down these barriers to promote effective collaboration. Various researchers have proposed themes, dispositions, factors, and components that support collaboration. These include: the leadership and relational characteristics of the teacher-librarian; administrative support, and school culture and environment; and teacher training (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012; Bush & Jones, 2010; Farmer, 2007; Frazier, 2010; Haycock, 2007; Howard, 2010; Jenni & Mauriel, 2004; Kimmel, 2011; Montiel-Overall, 2007; Montiel-Overall, 2008; Montiel-Overall, 2010; Montiel-Overall & Hernandez, 2012; Zmuda & Harada, 2008).

Teacher-librarians should be informal and instructional members of a school or district's leadership team in order to put appropriate conditions in place for collaborations (Zmuda & Harada, 2008). This would include both the design and assessment of student learning (Zmuda & Harada, 2008), especially since teacher-librarians have been noted to be particularly strong with making connections (Kimmel, 2012).

Leadership requires the ability to be collegial, and to communicate and build trusting relationships, both socially and professionally (Montiel-Overall, 2008; Zmuda & Harada, 2008). It has been found that the development of such relationships is necessary for collaboration to occur (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012) and for "deep thinking around ideas" (Montiel-Overall, 2010, p. 41). A trusting relationship becomes even more important for reducing self-consciousness issues of team teaching, for minimizing the stress that comes with control and responsibility issues (Branch, 2005), and for handling the challenges of collaborating "with new teachers, or working with teachers with different content backgrounds" (Montiel-Overall, 2010, p. 48).

Collaborations are often brewed in the staffroom (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012) with casual conversation (Kimmel, 2012), although with so many competing demands for teachers' time, opportunities to chat with colleagues can be very limited. Here, the support of administrators, such as principals, is key (Laferrière, Law, & Montané, 2012; Montiel-Overall, 2008; Morris & Packard, 2007). Administrators can design scheduling to better allow for collaborations, as lack of time is often declared a major barrier to teachers working together. In our school at the grades K-5 level, the library schedule was fixed and teachers viewed it as prep time: the teacher-librarians worked with administration to created more flexibility in this schedule (Peñafiel, personal communication, January 17, 2013; Smith, personal communication, January 17, 2013).

Administrators have additional roles to play in the support of collaboration. For instance, they should also have a collaborative working style, promoting an overall school culture of collaboration (Howard, 2010), and ensure that they transmit the importance of joint planning to faculty (Montiel-Overall, 2008). Additionally, administrators can advocate for the design of appropriate architectural layouts (Jenni & Mauriel, 2004), such as collaborative spaces for teachers to gather (Haycock, 2007; Montiel-Overall, 2010). Teacher-librarians should further exercise their own form of leadership through excellent communication with principals/administrators and by facilitating the ability of principals/administrators to support collaboration (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012; Farmer, 2007).
Opportunities for professional development designed to support teacher-librarian collaboration are also an important condition (Montiel-Overall & Hernández, 2012). Because many teachers come out of teacher education programs without exposure to what teacher-librarians can do, some teachers do not view library-time as a co-teaching opportunity (Smith, personal communication, January 17, 2013). These

teachers may also not be invested in what the teacher-librarian is doing with the students, considering such activities to be stand-alone (Peñafiel, personal communication, January 17, 2013; Smith, personal communication, January 17, 2013). There are often misunderstandings or stereotypes about the role played by teacher-librarians, which reduces some teachers' willingness to collaborate with teacher-librarians (Kimmel, 2011; Montiel-Overall, 2009). Professional development can work to dispel these erroneous notions of teacher-librarianship, as well as disseminate other important characteristics of effective collaboration, such as an integrated curriculum and an emphasis on being child-centred (Montiel-Overall, 2008).

What can school leaders do about… ?

What is it I need to do then, on a practical level, to reach Montiel-Overall's (2005) higher levels of collaboration in my practice in order to teach information literacy? The research tells me that in order to encourage others to collaborate with me, I first need to show leadership (Branch & Oberg, 2001). What does this mean in the context of teacher-librarianship?

Teacher-librarians as leaders

As leaders, teacher-librarians must be willing to take risks and reach out to others. Teacher-librarians often have more collaborative experience than their colleagues, and hence can take the lead in making others comfortable and ensure that teaching partners understand that they are there not to judge but to help, as there can be fear and self-consciousness associated with collaborating (Branch, 2005).

Leadership is also shown within a school by being actively involved in the school community, both pedagogically and socially (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012; Montiel-Overall, 2008), and by functioning as a change agent (Haycock, 2007). Some examples of my own involvement in non-librarian-specific school activity that others might also recognize as part of developing leadership in their own lives include: participating in policy-development committees; being a homeroom teacher; supervising students camps; helping plan and participating in an overseas trip; interviewing potential teaching and administrative staff; contributing to the design of a new building; participating in the evaluation processes of our school conducted by outside agencies; assisting colleagues with their applications for master's programs; running workshops for staff; attending meetings of various kinds on a regular basis; regularly writing articles for our school's magazine; running co-curricular clubs; and participating in various school-wide events. Sometimes I find that what I am doing is so diverse that it is watering down what should be the foci of my job, but realize that is part and parcel of participating in a school community.

Making connections beyond the school's walls will not only further develop my personal learning network but will allow me to participate more with both teachers and teacher-librarians, through, for instance, our local independent school associations. And, although not a public school teacher, I do belong to the British Columbia Teacher-Librarian Association, and I am a member of the Canadian Library Association. I do have a built-in connection to those internationally through the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), of which I should be taking advantage.

Teacher-librarian collaborative qualities

A Teacher-librarian should also be flexible, energetic, enthusiastic, accommodating, someone who takes initiative, innovative, confident, friendly, open to new ideas and sharing of responsibilities, willing to

listen, patient, willing to act as a mentor, and able to communicate effectively (Montiel-Overall, 2006; Montiel-Overall, 2008; Haycock, 2007).

Many of these qualities promote trusting relationships with staff too, which are also key for collaboration. Even so, developing these relationships can be challenging. Lunchtime, for instance, can be an important venue for connecting with colleagues, both socially and professionally (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012). It is, however, often also the best time for me to work with students for both reading promotion and information literacy, and hence I've tried to balance out these demands on my time by setting aside one lunch period in the week to spend in the staffroom. This time, however, is still often truncated to managing only to scarf down my lunch before running out the door because students have requested my help.

Also, in order for teachers to trust me as a collaborative partner, I must demonstrate expertise by being familiar with various curricula so that I can better see the possibilities for resources and learning integration (Montiel-Overall, 2008). I "have a unique position as an instructional partner who integrates learning through all curricula and engages with students throughout their tenure in a school" (Bush & Jones, 2010). Fortunately, I have been a classroom or subject teacher in a number of grades spanning kindergarten to grade 12, either before or during my times as a teacher-librarian. Even though some of these were out of my comfort zone, leaving me cursing under my breath at times, I appreciate having this background as excellent preparation for teacher-librarianship. This breadth of experience gives me a better sense of the needs of the various programs, allowing me to connect more readily to teachers in various grades and subjects.

Being a leader, however, also requires the ability to reflect and critique not only my programming (Beile, 2007), but also myself, via evidence-based practice (Todd, 2012). The evidence currently shows that my curricular knowledge is still inadequate: sometimes it feels as though it will take my entire lifetime to become an expert in the variety of subject curriculums spanning multiple grades for which I am responsible. I want to spend more time familiarizing myself with curriculum documents, and observing and working closely with the subject teacher(s) to better understand the subject language and models (Meyer, 2010) and better accommodate their teaching styles. To that end, I have "joined" many of their online Edmodo classroom spaces, for instance. I am also attempting to update our information literacy scope and sequence, in collaboration with our technology learning specialist, using resources such as the BCTLA's Points of Inquiry and the ISTE NETS, in order to reflect changes in both International Baccalaureate and Education Ministry curriculum outcomes, which is also helping increase my familiarity with such diverse curricula.

Making Collaborative Connections

Recently, as I became more familiar with different subjects, I have been thinking about how to more effectively integrate information literacy into grade 11 curriculum. I have been running information literacy workshops, which I find less than effective because they are stand-alone, in an attempt to facilitate the grade 11's Extended Essay over the next year into grade 12. The possibilities came to me when, during our workshops, the students decided to use their time with me and the skills I was teaching them to work on their looming historical investigations rather than on their more distantly-due Extended Essay. As a result, I showed them links to various historical listservs during my accessing resources workshop. I have also been considering how I could introduce elements of these workshops into the "Group 4" project, which is an interdisciplinary collaboration amongst students taking different science courses.

Because I also remind these students how the Dewey Decimal System works, and introduce them to the Library of Congress classifications so they can take advantage of their local university community cards, it occurs to me that this could be better done in the context of our Theory of Knowledge course, which is

meant to tie the various grade 11-12 courses in the IB to each other (Tilke, 2011). In this case, we could explore knowledge organization (Tilke, 2011) and introduce the debates around these classification systems as being, for instance, too Western/American-centric. My workshops around bias in resources and academic honesty could also be tied to Theory of Knowledge this way, in terms of, for instance, exploring how other cultures credit (or do not) resources and why or why not. Such exploration through Theory of Knowledge inquiries would contribute to the development of international-mindedness and critical thinking, and the understanding that "information is not neutral but is understood by knowing who created it and why, what it is used for and why, whom it benefits and why" (Montiel-Overall, 2007, Table 2).

Administrative and School Culture Support

Teacher-librarians, however, cannot develop leadership behaviours, and curricular knowledge and integration in a vacuum. Assistance from school (and district) administrators, as well as the qualities of the overarching school culture, provide a necessary support system and environment for collaboration.

Ideally, teacher-librarians and administrators, such as principals (and in our case, division directors and IB Programme Coordinators) work together to "provide skilled leadership and are supported by sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time" (Haycock, 2007, p. 31). Such leadership should focus on a school's mission statement: using this, collaborative accomplishments can be evaluated and stakeholders can believe that work being done is worthwhile (Zmuda & Harada, 2008). Howard (2010) encourages the introduction of "school reform initiatives that support collaboration" (p. 10). Our school adopted the programs of the IB, which require collaboration amongst faculty members.

In order for administrators to provide teacher-librarians with the necessary support for collaboration, teacher-librarians need to communicate with administrators about what their role is and what they are doing (Farmer, 2007). Therefore, evidence-based practice (Todd, 2012) for collaboration dictates that teacher-librarians share, for instance: lesson plans; samples of student work and student achievement; and work done as part of collaboratively created events, products, and policies. Farmer (2007) suggests that administrators be invited to experience collaborative activities.

Such evidence helps administrators promote the teacher-librarian as both a leader and a learning specialist who works with classroom teachers as well as other learning specialists (Zmuda & Harada, 2008). Administrators also need to ensure that collaborative leadership groups in the school, such as learning specialists, are seen as "legitimate leaders" (Haycock, 2007, p. 27). As described by Bartsch (2013), our school is developing a distributed leadership model based on a lattice framework, where Programme and Continuum Coordinators, and Learning Specialists provide structure and support for teachers and students. This group is,

> Characterized by collective leadership and direct communication. Roles are woven together and job descriptions overlapping, which can often be messy, but as in a lattice, this tension actually strengthens the whole. No one works in isolation, and mutual respect and collaboration is essential. Accountability is inherent. (Bartsch, p. 23)

Administrators should formally and informally support collaboration. Recently, our Diploma Programme Coordinator and I went over plans for a new unit organizer design for our online curriculum mapping system. He agreed to include prompts in the organizer that require the teacher using it to consider how to they can collaborate with learning specialists (of which I am one) and others, as well as to consider conducting collaborative reflections.

Scheduling

Administrators can also provide other ways to encourage collaboration, such as ensuring scheduling is conducive to teachers working together. Firstly, flexible rather than fixed schedules for teacher-librarians contributes to collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2008), as does the provision of support staff which allows the teacher-librarian to leave the library space in order to attend meetings and teach (Frazier, 2010). It must be made clear as well to teachers that library time not is not seen as a prep, but as a chance to co-teach for the benefit of students, especially when students can witness the critical thinking that occurs when teachers and the teacher-librarian share ideas and dialogue (Kilker, 2012).

Furthermore, time must be allocated to teachers to meet (Howard, 2010). In our school, we have planning afternoons every six weeks, which can include vertical, grade-level, and special-events planning. Furthermore, our Middle Years Programme Coordinator worked with our Division Director to schedule teaching in such a way to allow as many teachers as possible to participate in grade-level meetings on a weekly basis. I am often able to participate in these, and the time allows for the organization of cross-curricular learning activities.

We also have the flexibility to adjust our schedules to allow for special events, such as our Glocal (global/local) week, where teachers, students, and special guests run workshops around a particular issue of glocal significance, such as poverty. As a teacher-librarian, I have participated to some degree or another in them, depending on the year, from simpler support such as helping find resources, to Montiel-Overall's level D of collaboration with full participation in the planning and execution of this multi-grade event. Our grades K-five librarians reach level D, for instance, through an annual Arts and Literacy Day event.

Spaces

Schools also need to have the appropriate spaces to encourage collaboration (Haycock, 2007; Jenni & Mauriel, 2004; Montiel-Overall, 2010). Teacher meeting places need to be easy to access and comfortable, ideally with food available to share (Montiel-Overall, 2008). Furthermore, the centrality of the school library/learning commons, is important (Montiel-Overall, 2008) as it "as a communal space for building knowledge societies" (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 12). Our staff and spaces (including library/learning commons spaces) will soon be spread over three buildings spanning a city block and a half, which, like our two-separate lunch periods, poses something of a challenge for meeting together and viewing the library/learning commons as a central place. Fortunately, in our newest building, the learning commons will in fact be very central. Regardless, I must work to ensure that the library/learning commons is at least a central concept, if not always physical space, in the minds of staff and students.

Culture

A collaborative school culture is one that is collegial, child-centred, has a family-like setting and is open to differences (including in teaching styles) in worldviews (Montiel-Overall, 2008). The "capacity to accommodate diverse world views" (Montiel-Overall, 2005, pp. 26- 27) also contributes to international-mindedness, and is promoted by the IB. According to the cultural model of information literacy, community knowledge is "a starting point for thinking about information, analyzing problems, and engaging with conflicting information" (Montiel-Overall, 2007, p. 62). Hence, there should be a school culture of encouraging community participation in some collaborations since this same model sees "teaching and learning as participation among communities of learners [teachers, students, parents, community members] who share expertise and learn from each other through observation and social interaction" (Montiel-Overall, 2007, p. 60). Therefore, as a teacher-librarian, I need to find ways to take advantage of our broader community knowledge, such as developing a database on community expertise, and inviting families to participate in some inquiries, along with their children.

Further afield, administrators also need to support a culture of working with other professionals elsewhere by providing the wherewithal for the opportunity to connect, such as funding for the requisite technology (Laferrière, Law, & Montané, 2012), and by supporting faculty attempts to make such connections. Collaborative activities outside of the walls of the school have been found to have "facilitated professional cross-fertilization" (Laferrière, Law, & Montané, 2012, p. 158). The confidence and experience gained in these collaborative endeavours can then be applied within a school as well.

Professional development

Administrators must promote and support teacher and teacher-librarian professional development toward a collaborative school culture (Farmer, 2007). Teacher-librarians must also participate in the education of teachers, on an ongoing basis, away from outdated stereotypes of teacher-librarians and toward how teacher-librarians can collaborate with them, as teachers are rarely exposed to professional literature on this topic (Kimmel, 2011; Montiel-Overall, 2010). It has been shown that there can be a significant increase in collaborative behaviours when there are regularly scheduled workshops where examples of collaborative planning and execution of lessons are shared, and that teach how collaboration is best accomplished (Montiel-Overall & Hernandez, 2012). Collaboration can be a frustrating process and so staff might prematurely give up on it. Teachers need to know that it is necessary to first build relationships, that there will be differences in world-views that will need resolving, and that even minor outcomes during the collaborative process, such as agreeing to a meeting place, helps move collaboration along to the later stages of deep thinking and, hopefully, to agreement (Montiel-Overall, 2010).

A culture of "mutual respect, understanding, and trust" and ability to compromise (Haycock, 2007, p. 28) could also be developed during these sessions. Faculty buy-in to collaboration is necessary, and so professional development opportunities should also include training in inquiry, critical thinking, and constructivist teaching so that the point of collaboration becomes clearer. Furthermore, the proven benefits of collaboration should be shared, such as improvements in student learning, teaching techniques, more and better inquiry and greater "use of learning resources" (Haycock, 2007, p. 28).

If I were to facilitate such workshops, some examples of collaboration that I could provide to staff include lower levels of collaboration, such as suggesting ideas to the grade nine social studies teacher on how to refresh his revolutions unit using graphic novels, or working with grade seven teachers at Montiel-Overall's (2005) cooperative level on a variety of information literacy workshops tied to what is being done in class. An example of proper collaboration (Montiel-Overall, 2005) might be the grade nine science/English research papers where I worked with the teachers throughout the entire assignment. I taught the students how to evaluate resources so they could write a literature review and an annotated bibliography, and assessed this portion of the papers and conferenced with each student. Additionally, I worked with the teachers to spot instances of plagiarism and address them appropriately.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Collaboration requires a number of important elements, which are rather intricately entwined: each cannot suffice on its own. The leadership of teacher-librarians, supported by administrators and an appropriate school culture, and the facilitation of professional development around collaboration for teachers by both the teacher-librarian and administrators, is necessary to implement effective, high-level collaboration to teach information literacy skills and attitudes in a meaningful, integrated manner to all students in a school. This is a key way in which teacher-librarians, working with others in education both locally and globally, help ensure that students gain what is necessary in order to fully participate in an increasingly global society, which requires people to think about the world around them critically and through an international lens.

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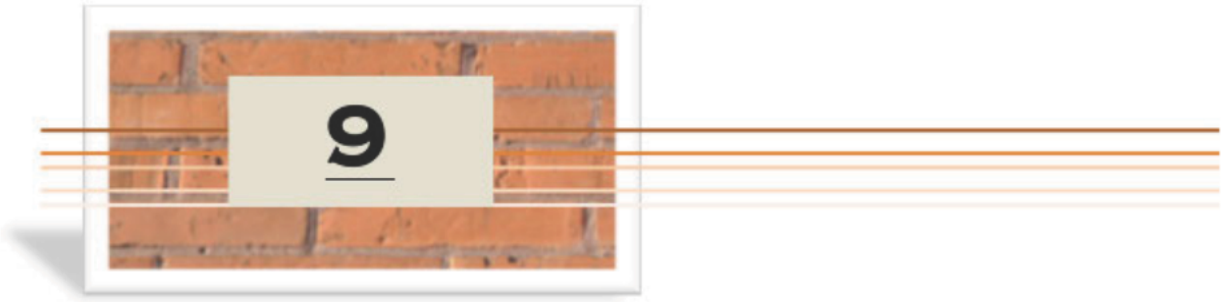

The Role of the School Library in Supporting Montessori Education

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Is it a cliché to say that public education is changing? From one-room schoolhouses filled with chalk and slate to modern urban institutions with increasingly diverse student populations, there's been so much growth over the last 100 years that the only constant seems to be change. Like a mighty river, public education has wound its way from humble beginnings, at times roiling and bubbling, eroding old ideas, other times stagnating or overflowing to a state of virtual flood watch.

Yet, there are constants in the swirling eddies of educational change; diverse student populations; caring parents; hard working teachers that dedicate themselves to their practice; the hope for a new generation that will surpass the one that came before. Constants in the form of institutions such as Montessori education and school libraries.

This chapter explores the convergence of the old and the new. Montessori education is undeniably old; it celebrated its 100th birthday in 2007. Yet Montessori education, in my opinion, continues to be one of the most effective educational methods the world has ever seen. Montessori education not only delivers a curriculum whose breadth, scope and challenge rival even the best modern practices, it does so while keeping the child at the heart of things. The school library is an equally well established institution. School library roots can be traced back to the 8th century in England, and have a long history of supporting the school curriculum (Clyde, 1999). Rather than resting on their laurels, dedicated teacher-librarians are revitalizing school libraries, turning them into learning spaces that match the demands of the modern user. These 21st century school library programs run by professional and passionate teacher-librarians pride themselves in the ways they empower students by connecting them with the resources and skills they will need to thrive in the 21st century world.

When Montessori and 21st century school library programs converge, the educational experience becomes enhanced. While the Montessori classroom sets the stage for learning, a 21st century school

library is needed to take that learning to the next level. This chapter will explore how a 21st century school library program and a trained, passionate teacher-librarian can support the Montessori program in elementary schools.

My journey

I hate to admit it, but my first attraction to Montessori education was less than auspicious. I graduated from Simon Fraser University's (SFU) Professional Development Program at a time when school districts weren't doing much hiring. I was lucky to be hired as a teacher-on-call, however, as my time in this capacity dragged on, I began to yearn for my own classroom. As luck would have it, my younger son's elementary school was informed that they would become home to part of the district's Montessori program of choice. I was curious about the Montessori program. All I had ever heard about it previously was that Montessori equaled advanced placement and that Montessori students were given reams of homework each week! Thinking that I would inspire students to greatness and, admittedly, knowing that becoming trained in a program of choice was a good way to get my own classroom, I decided to go back to school. I enrolled in Western Montessori Teacher's College, a small, independent institution in a suburb of Vancouver, B.C. I soon realized that Montessori is not synonymous with advanced placement, nor does it include mandatory homework; these discoveries made Montessori education even more attractive. By the time I graduated, I was already working in a public Montessori classroom in a dual track school (one which gives parents the choice between mainstream and Montessori). I've spent the last 6 years working in and out of Montessori classrooms.

My Journey to the 21st Century School Library

As so often happens in public education, after my first 3 years as a Montessori teacher I was forced to adapt my role. While still full time, my fragmented assignment saw me sharing classes with two different teachers, in both mainstream and Montessori classes, as well as working in the resource department. At the same time, due to budget shortfalls, our school found itself in the position of having one too many classes for the current teacher-librarian to see each week. I volunteered to take my own students into the library in exchange for taking a prep block during my resource day. My time in the library with my students brought back fond memories of the library as a sanctuary and as a gateway to the world. When the teacher-librarian put in her notice to teach in Japan, I enrolled in the Master of Education in Teacher-Librarianship program through the University of Alberta.

September 2012 found me back in a Montessori classroom full time and near the end of my Master's journey. Recently, I started to formalize a thought that had been floating semi-formed through my ruminating mind since the first days of my Master's program: that the two loves of my professional life, Montessori and teacher-librarianship, didn't have to be mutually exclusive. Perhaps it is redundant to state that a Montessori program needs the support of a teacher-librarian and a 21st century school library program, since that could be said of all school programs. However, the needs of the Montessori program necessitate a closer look at how the 21st century school library program can support it.

What do school leaders need to know…?

Over 100 years ago, Maria Montessori developed an educational philosophy that focused on developing the whole child. Montessori education is best understood in contrast to educational theory at the turn of the 20th century, which put forward that "the purpose of schools is to transmit knowledge, skills and standards of good conduct that have been worked out in the past to new generations in order to prepare

the young for future responsibilities" (Powell, 2000, p. 44). Montessori education, conversely, developed as a child-centric philosophy similar to constructivist theory, which advocates that "children [construct] knowledge, rather than simply taking it on like an empty vessel" (Lillard, 2007, p. 12). It places the "onus on students to construct personal meanings and interpretations" (Powell, 2000, p. 45) out of the information they come in contact with. The teacher becomes a facilitator within this educational framework instead of the expert from whom all knowledge flows.

Upon walking into a 21st century Montessori classroom, an observer would find students busily engaged in self-chosen activities. These children, whose ages span three years, might be working independently or with others. Materials would line child-level shelves and would be organized in curriculum groupings such as sensorial, mathematics or language. Everything within the classroom would be for children to touch and explore. Perhaps the observer has visited a 9-12 year old class and observes one child building the Roman arch before turning attention to a pair of students actively involved in researching the geologic composition of the Earth. Two students sit at the Peace Table, sorting through a conflict. The teacher has just finished giving another student a lesson on dividing using the Golden Bead material and will take a moment to survey the classroom before consulting her notes on who needs a lesson or who has requested help.

There are many aspects to the Montessori classroom. The following expands on five essential elements.

Montessori education is child-centered

The Montessori method provides individualized education by meeting students where they are and helping gently guide them through constructing their own knowledge. Montessori stated that, "There was no method to be seen, what was seen was the child…. The first thing to be done, therefore, is to discover the true nature of the child and then assist him in his normal development" (Hainstock, 1997, p.77). Montessori believed that children underwent fairly consistent stages of development from infancy to adulthood. She called these stages "planes of development." There are four planes of development, each spanning six years: birth to age 6; from 6 years old to 12 years old; from 12 years old to 18 years old; and, from 18 years old to 24 years old (Lillard, 1996, p. 7). The Montessori classroom usually consists of age groupings which span three years, although some public schools have spans of two years. The structure of multi-age groupings within a six-year growth-practice matrix enable students to progress at their own developmental rates and refine skills as necessary.

Montessori education values student's interests

Within a Montessori classroom, free choice of activities within the prepared environment stimulates the student's internal motivation to learn. The "prepared environment" is an important part of Montessori education. Hainstock (1997) states that:

> With the realization that children absorb unconsciously from their environment, it became necessary to provide a seemingly perfect learning environment for developing children. The structured environment for learning involves use of a wide range of didactic apparatus, varied activities reflecting all aspects of the child's development, with everything being aesthetically pleasing and geared to the child's size, needs, and interests. (p. 80)

Montessori classrooms are organized according to planes of development. Montessori theorized that each plane of development was characterized by sensitive periods or "time frames involved in the child's development of a definitive ability" (Lillard, 1996, p. 25). These sensitive periods come about as an "intellectual response to the environment" (Lillard, 1996, p. 25) and not out of instinct. For example, Montessori observed that very young children are sensitive to oral language. During this time, a child will effortlessly learn one or more languages through simple exposure, provided oral language is part of the child's environment. The classroom becomes a prepared environment when the Montessori teacher fills it with materials that appeal to the child's "intrinsic motivators … (and) ability for spontaneous learning" (Helfrich, 2011, p. 135).

Montessori education teaches discipline through productive work

Montessori works by offering freedom within carefully defined limits. Montessori (1964) believed that "discipline must come through liberty … we call an individual disciplined when he is master of himself, and can, therefore, regulate his own conduct when it shall be necessary to follow some rule of life" (p. 86). In a Montessori classroom, the prepared environment is structured in a way that facilitates freedom and independence. Students are free to choose the materials they work with or activities they engage in, provided the activity brings about the positive development of the child. Montessori believed that it was "necessary rigorously to avoid the arrest of spontaneous movement and the imposition of arbitrary tasks," (Montessori, 1964, p. 88) because in so doing the teacher might inadvertently interrupt a positive development in the child. That is not to say that there are no limits in a Montessori classroom. "The liberty of the child should have as its limit the collective interest" (Montessori, 1964, p. 87), therefore, all actions that are deemed destructive or socially unacceptable should be addressed and an alternative taught.

When a child's "desire for concentrated work" (Lillard, 1996, p. 42) has been met, the child then becomes "normalized." This is not to say that the child was previously abnormal, but rather that the child's normal or natural development is progressing as facilitated by the ability to work productively. The "normalized child … expresses his true nature in complete harmony with his environment; loving order and constructive activity; precociously intelligent, self-disciplined, and joyfully sympathetic to others" (Hainstock, 1997, p. 108). This child is happy to work on self-chosen activities or to help others and is internally motivated, freed from extrinsic rewards or punishments.

Montessori education is active

Montessori education employs hands-on learning. Most casual observers of a Montessori classroom first notice all the materials available for student use. Helfrich (2011) calls these materials "materialized abstractions… (which are) materials that represent and help refine abstract knowledge" (p. 166). In a Montessori classroom, students work with engaging materials that turn complex, abstract concepts into hands-on activities from which future abstraction can be derived. Sometimes these hands-on materials help to consolidate concepts already encountered by students, as is the case with the sensorial materials in the 3 to 6 year old class. Other times the hands-on materials introduce a new topic, and student

exploration spurs the formation of new learning. Either way, students develop a greater conceptual understanding of complex topics as they work with the materials.

Montessori education values the spirit

Montessori believed that "establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war" (Montessori, n.d.). To this end, she infused cosmic education and peace into the curriculum. Cosmic education emphasizes the connections between all beings and environments in the universe. As children understand these connections, they begin to see our interdependence, with each other and with all forms of life in the universe. Cosmic education involves the delivery of the five 'great lessons' to students:

1. The Creation of the Universe and Coming into Being of Earth
2. The Coming of Life
3. The Coming of Human Beings
4. The Story of Communication in Signs
5. The Story of Numbers (Lillard, 2007, p. 130-134)

These lessons take the form of impressionistic stories which present an over-arching view of the universe. Students use their powers of imagination to interact with these stories and base their further inquiries within this framework. Each inquiry reinforces the emphasis on interdependence, teaching that the care or harm visited upon others or the Earth visits us in return.

The peace curriculum is an extension of cosmic education; peace is promoted daily in the classroom through respectful interactions, an emphasis on co-operation instead of competition, and peace materials placed within the prepared environment.

What can school leaders do about... ?

Upon walking into a 21st century school library, an observer would see that it is alive with purposeful activity. Collection materials, including books, magazines, and models, line the shelves. Computer stations top some tables, while other tables are left clear and ready for collaborative work or information literacy instruction. Everything within the school library is available for students to use and the teacher-librarian has gone to great lengths to ensure accessibility. A solitary child in a cozy alcove might be reading a novel or an e-reader while two others pour over a picture book on the carpet. A group of children, collaborating on an inquiry around penguins, work with the teacher-librarian to define their information needs and select items from databases. Two children quickly dash in to borrow an iPad, which they will use to Skype with geologists at the local university.

The 21st century school library is the informational hub of the school. It should provide students with access to a collection that provides information in a myriad of forms and contexts; it should provide access to informational technologies (both hardware and software); it should be staffed by a professional teacher-librarian who is well-versed in teaching inquiry and information literacy skills; and it should provide opportunities for collaboration between students and their peers, as well as foster collaboration between educators. The following section expands on how these 21st century school library functions support Montessori education.

Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada, a benchmark document for Canadian School Libraries, puts forward a vision of school libraries in Canada as a

"resource centre, filled with our literature and a wealth of national and international information resources, which acts as a national endowment for all our children and youth" (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003, p. 3). The Canadian Library Association's (2000) *Statement on Effective School Library Programs in Canada* document, further supports these aims:

> The role and responsibility of the school library lies in the development of resource-based programs that will ensure that all the young people in our schools have the opportunity to learn the skills that will enable them to become competent users of information. The school library also houses and provides access to resources in a variety of formats and in sufficient breadth and number to meet the demands of the curriculum and the varied capabilities and interests of the students. These materials provide the essential support for resource-based teaching and learning. (para. 2)

While books remain central, the 21st century school library collection must be comprised of multiple forms of information. In *The Collection Program in Schools* Bishop (2007) lists 34 separate formats of items that could be included in the school library collection, such as:

- informational and fictitious books and ebooks
- video and audio recordings including CDs and DVDs
- models, maps and globes, realia and other general kits
- graphic materials such as posters, charts and art prints
- newspapers, e-journals and periodicals
- databases and selected websites (p. 69-105)

In addition, the 21st century school library should provide access to:

- downloadable ebooks and audiobooks, as well as mobile computing devices and ebook readers (Valenza, 2010)
- an "array of tools" and blogs, wikis, websites or pathfinders developed and maintained by the teacher-librarian (Valenza, 2010)
- online databases, possibly including some specially selected ones that require a subscription fee (Clyde, 2001, p. 41; Falk, 2005, p. 492)
- Web 2.0 publishing tools and social media sites (Valenza, 2010)
- primary sources such as artifacts and past ephemera (incidental, daily items)
- "sufficient connectivity (and) electrical access" to support access to all technology tools and applications (Perez, 2010, p. 73)

The 21st century school library within a Montessori school should be the informational centre, providing students with access to materials that may not be contained within the classroom's prepared environment. These items can be used to extend independent learning begun in the classroom or perhaps stimulate new learning and exploration. Educational leaders can ensure greater school library support of the Montessori program by ensuring that the collection is made up of a myriad of formats of information. This multi-modal make-up of the collection will facilitate a continuation of the active learning on which Montessori is based.

The 21st century school library supports the Montessori program through the way it organizes its collection. Duffy (2005) states that accessibility of information is of paramount importance, yet it is lacking in the prepared environment of the classroom when students can't locate informational items quickly and efficiently. Having access to a 21st century school library program also means having access to their catalogue records, which streamlines the process of locating items within the physical library and the digital holdings.

Duffy (2005) states that in a Montessori classroom "all learning takes place through manipulation and use of Montessori materials, on the one hand, and open-ended research to expand and extend that knowledge, on the other hand" (para. 19). The 21st century school library program can support the Montessori program by teaching inquiry as the process for open-ended research.

Inquiry is different than performing research alone. Inquiry is a method teachers and teacher-librarians employ that allows students to pursue personally relevant learning. Inquiry has its roots in constructivist theory, as it "builds understanding by engaging students in stimulating encounters with information and ideas. Students learn by constructing their own understandings of these experiences and by building on what they already know to form a personal perspective of the world" (Kuhlthau, 2003, para. 17). Multiple kinds of "learning can be accomplished through inquiry: information literacy, learning how to learn, curriculum content, literacy competence and social skills," (Kuhlthau, 2010, p. 6) making inquiry a blanket strategy under which fit many 21st century educational components.

Gordon and Todd (2013) state that during an inquiry,

> Instruction and guidance are provided in the form of strategic interventions that enable students to activate prior knowledge and experiences, build background knowledge, select a viable topic, explore a wide variety of information sources, formulate a focus, collect, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information, and present a learning outcome that represents new understandings in innovative, meaningful and creative ways. This approach to learning across the curriculum is known as Guided Inquiry. (p. 2-3)

Alberta Learning's (2004) *Focus on Inquiry* document presents a circular model of inquiry, emphasizing the recursive, reflective and cyclical nature of the process. The stages are:

1. planning
2. retrieving
3. processing
4. creating
5. sharing
6. evaluating

The teacher or teacher-librarian guides students through the numerous tasks contained in each step, and insists that students reflect on their work at each stage, recording strategies that could be used in subsequent inquiries (Alberta Education, 2004).

The 21st century teacher-librarian can support the Montessori program by teaching inquiry skills. The nature of Montessori education means that students work on different activities at different times. As such, the 21st century teacher-librarian is indispensable in his or her capacity of teaching the 'just-in-time' inquiry lessons as they are needed to support student learning.

In addition, the 21st century teacher-librarian can teach information literacy lessons to students as they work through their inquiry projects. Information literacy is a vital part of inquiry; it involves finding and evaluating reliable sources of information and using that information ethically. With increased accessibility to web based research materials, students need strategies to help them determine:

1. the applicability of information to an inquiry purpose
2. the reliability of the material contained within a site
3. the credentials of authors and the identity of intended audiences
4. potential bias within material

Regardless of the information source, students also need to be taught how to use these sources in ethical ways. The 21st century teacher-librarian can teach information literacy lessons around proper note taking, avoiding plagiarism and digital citizenship. These information literacy skills are required across all curriculum areas and therefore collaboration between the 21st century teacher-librarian and the classroom teacher is necessary to ensure that students get a consistent message about ethical use of information.

Collaboration is a key component of 21st century education. While educators may wonder which skills students will need in the future, the ability to collaborate productively with a group of peers continues to be of paramount importance in the workplace. This importance is reflected in "British Columbia's Education Plan", which states that "to better prepare students for the future there will be more emphasis on key competencies like... teamwork and collaboration" (BC Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 4) in the classroom. In addition, British Columbian education is moving towards the creation of cross-curricular competencies that will guide classroom practice. In the draft document, "Defining Cross-Curricular Competencies", social awareness and responsibility is listed as a key competency:

> Social awareness and responsibility is the ability to cooperate and collaborate with others, empathize with and appreciate the perspective of others, and create and maintain healthy relationships within one's family, community, and society. (BC Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 8)

Collaboration is also a fundamental part of Montessori education. Students are able to move throughout the classroom, choosing who they will work with based on the needs of the current learning situation. Within these collaborations, which also occur during cross-curricular inquiries which reflect Montessori holistic education, students learn indispensable life skills necessary for integrating into society in the future. Providing open opportunities for collaboration between students is only one part of the puzzle. Twenty-first century teacher-librarians need to work with their schools to create a culture of collaboration among staff.

Collaboration is an essential 21st century skill. Bush and Jones (2010) define collaboration as " a purposive professional relationship that develops when two or more educators bring their unique perspectives together to create something new, something beyond the capacity of any of the parties" (p. 83). Montiel-Overall (2006) adds to this definition by stating that "through a shared vision and shared objectives, student learning opportunities are created that integrate subject content and information literacy through jointly planning, implementing, and evaluating student progress throughout the instructional process in order to improve teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum" (p. 28).

Collaboration between Montessori educators and teacher-librarians is integral to creating increased student learning. Montiel-Overall is clear that true collaboration needs to go beyond that of co-ordinating the school library and classroom schedules or even providing materials. It needs to include these elements of shared planning, teaching and evaluation. To reach the higher levels of collaboration within the Montessori school, the classroom teacher and teacher-librarian need to share their goals for and observations of students; they need to discuss how they will structure both the prepared environments of classroom and library; and they need to explicitly plan what inquiry and information literacy skills need to be taught and how. The integration between school library and classroom should be seamless, with each education professional working towards a common goal.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SCHOOL LEADERS...?

Adding a 21st century school library program to a Montessori program represents an opportunity to create something stronger than Montessori alone. While Montessori remains a brilliant method of education, the addition of a school library program is necessary to ensure that the brilliance matches the demands of the 21st century.

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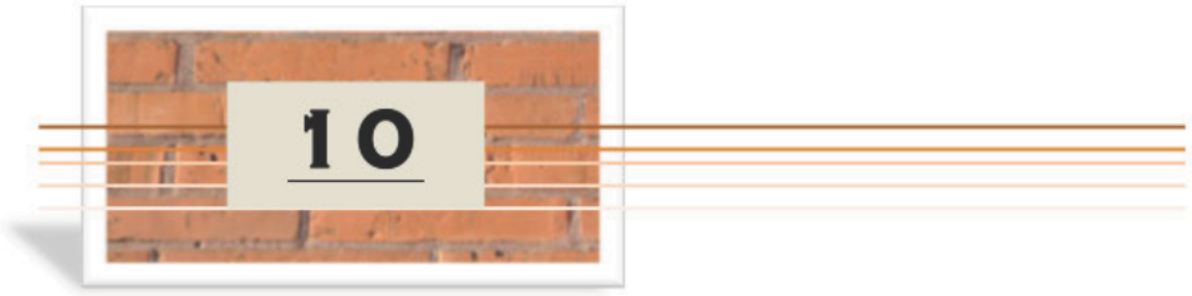

Historical Thinking: 21st Century Social Studies and the Teacher-Librarian

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Why should school leaders care... ?

As a student, social studies was never one of my favorite subjects. I rarely understood the material and relied on memorizing every fact and detail long enough to survive the various assessments we had to endure as students. My retention of content was brief.

As an elementary generalist, I was required to take a few undergraduate level social science courses. I focused on American history in two of the courses, but again, my retention of information was brief. The course on how to teach social studies was more useful; it focused more on using the provincial program of studies, creating lessons and performing assessments.

So how does someone who was not particularly strong in social studies end up primarily teaching social studies? I think this is quite common, particularly at the beginning of most teaching careers. Often we don't have the luxury of choosing positions we prefer or were trained for, but rather take positions we can manage in order to get our foot in the door of a highly competitive and limited job market.

My story is probably a familiar one. I was working in a relatively new school in a split grade level class. The student population was about 400 and the junior high consisted of three classes (one grade seven, one grade eight and one grade nine). Due to staffing and student population changes, I was chosen to be the junior high social studies teacher the following year. I was selected based on my previous experience teaching junior high social studies, but I knew this was a role for which I was not adequately prepared for. I enrolled in professional development opportunities to address my areas of need.

In 2008, I registered for a session offered by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC). The ERLC was seeking participants who were interested in learning how to teach historical thinking in the

context of a program of studies that was oriented around social studies. Dr. Carla Peck, currently an Associate Professor at the University of Alberta, was leading the sessions. Participants learned about the "historical thinking concepts" and helped to develop lessons and resources for the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking Project, which has since been retitled The Historical Thinking Project (HTP) (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, n.d.). Participants committed to five full days of professional development workshop sessions which were scheduled throughout the academic year. The mornings involved professional development on the historical thinking concepts at the core of the HTP, and in the afternoons participants worked on tasks or projects related to the concepts. This format was based on research that indicated professional development followed by supported implementation was necessary to achieve long-term changes in pedagogical approaches (Peck, 2012). I participated in the project for the two years it was offered through the ERLC.

The Historical Thinking Concepts were very confusing to me when I began this project. I was challenged by my lack of historical knowledge, the traditional ways I had experienced social studies as a student, and my unfamiliarity with historical thinking. I knew historical thinking was in the "Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12 Program of Studies" (Alberta Education, 2007), but I did not understand what it was as a cognitive strategy, how to teach using it, nor how to assess it.

The historical thinking concepts have completely changed my pedagogical approach in social studies. When trying to move from teacher-directed learning to student-centred learning, these concepts have given me the tools necessary to guide students to approach historical topics in a more historian-like manner. My understanding of historical events is much clearer as a result, and with the use of consistent language related to critical historical literacies, I can more clearly relate these historical events to contemporary issues. Just like there are skills and process in scientific discovery, historical thinking provides skills and processes to understand historical topics as an historian would. Teachers and students need the skills and processes to facilitate active learning of social studies. These are not competencies which develop naturally; they need to be purposefully taught to students.

Teacher-librarians are in an ideal position to support the implementation of such cognitive strategies and pedagogical approaches. While the historical thinking concepts are relatively new and result from a blend of theory and practice (Seixas & Morton, 2013), there are a growing number of resources to support professional development and implementation for the teacher wishing to know more about this approach to teaching history. The teacher-librarian can unify the professional development, implementation and collection development to support the teacher. These concepts, while accessible for a generalist teacher, take time to learn and implement. As research has proven, supported implementation through various approaches such as collaboration, co-teaching, resource development and observation is necessary for promoting enduring changes to pedagogical practices (Shires, 2005; Koechlin & Zwaan, 2007; Gilmore-See, 2010; Howard, 2010).

What do school leaders need to know...?

The Alberta Social Studies Program of Studies (2005-2007) identifies historical thinking as one of the key thinking strategies for understanding social studies. Historical thinking problematizes historical topics and their relevance to contemporary society and personal identity (Bain, 2005). As a result, historical thinking moves us to challenge assumptions we may hold about the past. "It helps students become well-informed citizens who approach issues with an inquiring mind and exercise sound judgment when presented with new information or a perspective different from their own" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 9). Wineburg (1999; 2001) suggests it humanizes us in ways few other curricula can. Not only does historical thinking give us a way to studying the past, it allows us to navigate connections to a past

which is both familiar and strange, and a past we feel both proximity to and distance from (Wineburg, 1999, p. 490). In other words, while some aspects of the past may be consistent with contemporary society, other pieces are completely foreign, and therefore unimaginable. When we study historical events and people, we need to be cognizant of the historical contexts in which these events occurred and people lived and exercise caution in our application of understandings about the past to contemporary issues (Wineburg, 1999, p. 493). In the classroom, it is important to model and teach the historian-like skills and attitudes that will allow students to "bracket" their contemporary worldview, enabling them to question and investigate historical narratives as objectively as possible (VanSledright, 2002; Seixas & Peck, 2004; Monteil-Overall, 2012). Students should learn to develop understandings about the beliefs, values, and other relevant aspects of the society at that time (Seixas & Peck, 2004), which are consistent with what Montiel-Overall (2012) refers to as developing "cultural competence" (p. 9). Although the term "cultural competence" relates to contemporary society, the concept could be applied to examining societies of different eras. Monteil-Overall (2012) describes a framework for helping students become culturally competent (pp. 5-8) which has the potential to help students examine cultures which are foreign to us due to the passing of time. Such awareness helps us understand contemporary society better, one which Wineburg (2001) describes as so connected to, yet so distant from, its past.

Even more noteworthy is the practical value of teaching historical thinking. Historical thinking transcends social studies; it is relevant to all historical topics we encounter both in the educational setting and beyond (Centre for Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012). Those who posses historical thinking competencies critically analyze both historical events and contemporary issues which are rooted in the past, using criteria and competencies specifically related to historical issues (Seixas & Peck, 2004; Monteil-Overall, 2012). Seixas and Peck (2004) suggest these competencies drive us to question any historical narrative we encounter (fictional or nonfictional), whether it be movies, books, textbooks, documentaries, classroom teachers and other expert-like sources (p. 109). We are compelled to ask who shaped the account, the purpose behind it, the sources used, if there are other corroborating/differing accounts, and ultimately, what we believe based on our own analysis (Seixas & Peck, p. 109). In short, the historical thinking competencies push us to question and understand rather than simply presume the narratives we encounter are definitive. If we want students to achieve true understanding (Stipling, 2007; Harada, 2010), the process must be an active one "that is an amalgam of the 'world' to be understood and the mental processes and dispositions that enable understanding" (Stipling, 2007, p. 37).

In 2005, Alberta Learning began restructuring the *Social Studies Program of Studies* resulting in more of an inquiry based approach toward teaching and learning social studies. The historical thinking competencies identified in The Historical Thinking Project support this model (Seixas & Morton, 2013). However, as Wineburg (1999) states, historical thinking does not develop naturally. It is through the purposeful integration of critical historical cognitive strategies that students develop this cognitive domain.

What can school leaders do about... ?

One approach for developing the historical thinking dimension of the AB Program of Studies is through the six historical thinking concepts outlined in The Historical Thinking Project (HTP) (see the HTP website for online explanations and support for teaching the HTCs). This project was founded with the intention of changing the way we teach and learn social studies (Center for the Study of Historical Consciousness, n.d.). It is based on international research which aligns how we learn with how history/social studies is delivered in the classroom. The intention is to move from the memorization of a set of dates and historical facts toward more historian-like competencies. Such competencies give our

students the ability to become more active and informed citizens; citizens who actively de-construct the past as a means to understand both their identity and place in society.

Wineburg (1999) suggests students' "existing beliefs [shape] the information...encountered, so that the new [conforms] to the shape of the already known" (p. 492). The historical thinking concepts are a means to challenging these natural tendencies. For both the teacher and the student, it is liberating to know that there is not one right answer, but rather a process which involves critical historical literacies to arrive at a well-developed/supported answer. An understanding of past events and use of the historical thinking concepts provides a bridge to the past, helping us to identify the importance of events and how the pieces fit together (Seixas & Peck, 2004, p. 111).

I have witnessed my students engagement and enjoyment increase as a result of using the HTCs. Students enter my classroom with pre-existing perceptions of the past, and at times, do make connections as to what that means to them in their lives now and in the future. Sometimes students' connections are insightful, but often there are misconceptions and misunderstandings which need to be explored. Frequently these misconceptions are the result of assuming a document or resource written in an authoritative voice, such as a textbook or a newspaper article, is a narrative of the truth rather than just one interpretation of the past. In order to be active participants in a global society it is crucial for students to develop processes of examining primary and secondary sources, evaluating causes which led up to particular events and what the consequences of those actions were, what changed as a result and what remained the same, whose perspectives are presented in the evidence we use and how much of the story we know or do not know. Students need to know the facts related to our past, but equally important is the ability to put those pieces together in an historically critical manner in order to make sense of the pieces we are working with as related to the context in which it took place.

Elements of historical thinking

The HTCs provide the tools and processes to explore the past we teach our students about. These concepts invite students to become active participants in the discovery of our past and how it relates to who we are today. The historical thinking concepts employed in the Historical Thinking Project consist of; historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives, and the ethical dimension (Seixas & Morton, 2013). These concepts are taught by integrating the HT concepts into existing and new lesson plans. The HT concepts are best introduced one at a time and with a progression from less challenging concepts, such as historical significance and evidence, to more complex concepts such as the historical perspectives and ethical dimensions. Purposeful selection of the concept used within a lesson is necessary to invite the historical competencies which best reveal the historical understandings sought in the lesson. As students develop competencies with the HT concepts, use of multiple HT concepts can be used simultaneously when examining an historical event or person. What does this look like in the classroom when effectively implemented? Students are actively engaged with primary sources, asking critical questions about evidence, constructing their own historical narratives through a guided exploration and use of sources, questioning techniques, perspectives, etc. In contrast, "traditional" history teaching involves students focusing on learning a master (dominant) narrative full of dates, places and names that are to be memorized for a test, reading textbook entries and answering content questions without critically analyzing them and without making connections to the information. "Traditional" history teaching tells students about the past; the HT concepts invite students to construct an understanding of the past and how it relates to contemporary society. The understandings students develop are what allow them to transfer learning about the past to living in the present and future. The first step in guiding students to approach history using the historical thinking concepts is to understand each of the concepts. The teacher-librarian can support the implementation of the HT concepts through professional development for teachers, collection development to support historical thinking lessons and collaboration with teachers in the planning and

delivery of historical thinking lessons. As the HTP continues to evolve, the teacher-librarian can continue to support the integration of new developments and understandings to the delivery of history education.

Historical Significance: When we consider what the past is, it is everything that has ever happened to everyone. This makes it impossible to ever know all of the past, let alone include it in the historical narratives that we constructed. For students to even begin learning about the past, they need to have an understanding of historical significance. What makes one topic more important than another? They need to understand that what is important to one person may not be more important to another. Further, what was important in one historical context may not be important in another. So how do we decide what to teach and learn about from the past? Seixas and Morton (2013) "believe that students should take responsibility for understanding how and why particular historical events, people, and developments are significant enough for them to learn about" (p. 14). They need to realize the neither the textbook nor the teacher is the authority on what is significant, but rather present one interpretation of significant events. Using criteria for assessing an event, person or development's historical significance, students can make decisions about whether historical phenomena are significant. The criteria include an assessment of change in terms of; durability (the longevity of a change), profundity (the depth/intensity of change), and quantity (how many people were affected by the change). Additionally, students can consider what the historical phenomenon reveals about an issue (historical or contemporary), and how its significance has been constructed through narrative over time (which will vary given the groups involved and the era in which it takes place) (Seixas & Morton, 2013, pp. 15-31).

Evidence: The traces which remain from the past help us to construct historical narratives. The process of selecting traces, analyzing them (or making inferences), and finally interpreting them (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 46), is necessary to understand history. It is not as simple as identifying primary and secondary sources. The approach to these sources needs to be analytical to ensure we are using relevant sources and asking the right questions to support educated inferences and subsequent interpretations. Students "may rely uncritically on those whom they take to be experts, express generalized skepticism, or be able to articulate criteria for distinguishing reliable from unreliable authorities" (Seixas & Peck, 2004, p. 111). To be competent with using evidence, students must be able to identify primary and secondary sources, make inferences, use sources as evidence through strong questioning strategies, source their evidence (who created, when, why, influencing values and/or worldviews, etc.), evaluate the context of the source, and corroborate with other evidence (Seixas & Morton, 2013, pp. 43-49).

Continuity and Change: Often when we think of history, we think of a sequence of dates and events along a continuum of time. To facilitate an understanding of the context in which historical phenomena occurred, it is important to note not only what has changed, but what has not changed - what has remained the same? Students can be helped to understand that the rate of change varies, as does the direction it takes (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 76). An understanding of progress and decline (changes for betterment or erosion of conditions) and periodization help students to understand the contributions each event made to humanity (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 75-76). Chronologies provide us with a means of studying the past, and the end product becomes understanding the continuities and changes which occur simultaneously during these timelines. Continuities and changes are not independent of one another; rather they coexist and influence each other. These continuities and changes are also what create that proximity and distance from the past. When students are skilled with this cognitive strategy, they can identify change when it appears there is only continuity, and they can identify continuity in the midst of obvious change (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 82).

Cause and Consequence: This historical cognitive strategy involves asking why something happened and what the consequences were. The complexity of this strategy is the numerous elements which propel an event to fruition, and the multiple consequences that result. If one uses the analogy of dominoes set up in an intricate design, the immediate preceding domino to the event we are looking at is often obvious to students. The complexity is developing the skill to look at all the network of previous dominoes that led

to that domino immediately preceding the event. Similarly, the immediate result can be equally easy to identify, but what about the long-term consequences? The dominoes of society are pieces such as "social, political, cultural, and economic conditions [as well as] the ways in which conditions, opposition, and unforeseen reactions can thwart the actors' intentions, resulting in unintended consequences" (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 104). Also part of this historical thinking concept is the ability to identify the importance of each influence in relation to others. Finally, it is important for students to understand each event in history was not inevitable, nor are future events (Seixas & Morton, p. 114). This gives relevance to the past in the sense that we can analyze an era we are more removed from to provide insights which may be useful in contemporary society.

Historical Perspectives: To better understand the actors of historical times, the ability to develop competencies in revealing the historical perspectives that existed during that time is essential. Worldviews are complex and involve numerous elements (beliefs, values, geography, time, society, economy, and knowledge are seven elements we study in grade 8 social studies in Alberta). Worldviews evolve over time, so the worldview we hold today is different from that of our ancestors. The challenge is to avoid presentism, where we apply our worldview to historical events and people we are studying. Wineburg (1999) suggests "we bracket what we know in order to understand the thinking of people in the past" (p. 492). Or as I suggest to my students, we need to step out of our worldview and try immerse ourselves in the worldview that existed at that time when we explore historical topics. We need to understand the historical context, how people thought and felt, and realize there are diverse perspectives within that era (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 136).

The Ethical Dimension: One of the most powerful, yet most challenging, historical thinking concepts is the ethical dimension. What we learn about the morality of humanity as witnessed in historical events can help us make ethical choices in contemporary and future societies. When we explore the past, those who construct the narratives either implicitly or explicitly reveal ethical judgments (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 168). Again, we need to consider the historical context and exercise caution in imposing our worldview on events from the past. As is often the case, ethical wrongs of the past need to be addressed in the present or in the future. Understanding the ethical dimension can advise us of our responsibilities and responses (Seixas & Morton, 2013, p. 168) in the future.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

In 2006, the Historica Foundation, a national organization leading in the "promotion and improvement of history education in Canada" (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, p. 4), partnered with the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness (CSHS), University of British Columbia's centre for supporting research on "historical consciousness and history education" (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, p. 4). As the result of a symposium funded by Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canadian Council on Learning, "historians, history education scholars and teachers convened to map the contours of a project which would capture state-of-the-art international research on teaching and learning history and make it a potent force in Canadian classrooms" (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, p. 4). A foundational Framework document was developed and suggested the HTCs as a foundation for developing historical thinking.

Success of the efforts to flesh out the Framework is evident in the results which have emerged since that meeting:

- The Historical Thinking Project: Promoting Critical Thinking in the 21st Century (http://historicalthinking.ca). The HTP is a nation-wide project with a website to support its development and reach. As a participant of the Alberta portion of this project, I received professional development to support understanding of HTCs, created lesson and assessment materials which my colleague and I piloted in our own classrooms, resulting in a selection of student exemplars - many of which are now found on this site. These are teacher created resources based on the professional development participants received, intended to support not only the understanding of the HTCs, but the implementation and, ultimately, pedagogical shifts in the delivery of history education. Contributions in the form of lesson plans and other educator resources to the HTP website are ongoing.
- The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2): TC2 is a consortium which provides resources and training to support the implementation of critical thinking, which is currently a focus of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI). Mike Denos and Roland Case, members of the TC2 team, wrote *Tools for Historical Understanding: Teaching about Historical Thinking*. This resource blends two cognitive strategies (critical and historical thinking) facilitating the understanding of thinking using historical criteria, and provides lesson plans and blackline masters to support implementation of historical thinking in the classroom.
- Since 2006, annual national meetings have been convened, bringing together "representatives from provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education, major history and social studies textbook publishers, Historica and Canadian Heritage personnel directly involved in the project, teachers who had been leading the pilot districts, and history education scholars from across Canada" (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, p. 4). In these meetings Project members and supporters explore educational change, focusing on curriculum revision, resource development, professional development, and assessment (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, p. 4). A sampling of the outcomes achieved as a result of these meetings includes:

    - Curriculum Development: The adoption of HT concepts and/or language in several curriculum documents in the Northwest Territories, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario College of Teachers, New Brunswick, and Ontario.
    - Student and Teacher Resources: A number of resources such as textbooks, supplementary resources approved for use in classrooms, videos and posters were created which integrated the HT concepts and/or language.
    - Professional Development: Intensive training offered through The [Historical Thinking] Summer Institute, a six-day course on historical thinking and workshops continue to raise awareness and develop competencies in teaching/utilizing HT concepts.
    - Networking: Sustainability of the project has been established through a networking of stakeholders via annual meetings and conferences, history education organizations, faculties of education, and history consultants. (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, pp. 6-9)

At the 2012 annual meeting, participants discussed and explored "next steps" to plot the future of the project. Possibilities for the future involve developing a scope and sequence beginning in elementary grades, assessment frameworks, differentiation, evidence-based tasks, increased links to international projects and initiatives related to this type of work and continued regularly scheduled meetings (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012, pp. 17-18).

While some may have believe that the Internet access to information is the answer to educational woes regarding access to resources (Walsh, 2008), in actuality it illuminated the gaps in students' ability to navigate the plethora of information available as a result of this new technology. The teacher-librarian offers expertise in various literacies and research competencies (Howard, 2010; Montiel-Overall, 2012). Such expertise supports the development of historical thinking competencies through inquiry

based approaches (Montiel-Overall, 2012). Central to this are primary and secondary sources, many of which are available in digital form and efforts to expand those available continues (Shires, 2005). Students' lack of experience often hinders their ability to locate high-quality reliable resources and to critically assess them (Seixas & Peck, 2004, p. 111). Shires notes students lack the skills to examine conflicting pieces of evidence, often relying on ineffective means of identifying the "correct" perspective (i.e. class vote). Walsh (2008) notes a study administered by the British Library and JISC, an organization which specializes in digital technology for education and research, found that young people are not becoming more competent at research just because they have more access to information via the Internet; they often search quickly, taking little time to evaluate the credibility and quality of the sites they are using for their research, they lack effective understandings of research needs and strategies, and they use natural language rather than effective key words in their searches. The result, consistent with Wineburg's findings (1999), is that students find stories about the past and accept them without thinking about them critically.

As troubling is the lack of teachers' abilities to effectively use technology in the teaching of historical literacies. Shires (2005) notes research in educational literature which indicates social studies teachers need support in the form of training and workshops to successfully integrate technology. Furthermore, they need guidance in re-designing lessons to utilize these technologies effectively (Gilmore-See, 2010). The teacher-librarian works with teachers to create inquiry based lessons which integrate these cognitive strategies, technology and appropriate assessments (Koechlin, & Zwaan, 2007; Howard, 2010). Such support needs to be on going due to the overwhelming number of new resources which continue to emerge. The teacher-librarian can sift through these resources and identify quality digital and print resources which support programming, and provide the necessary support for effective utilization (Howard, 2010).

The fact that historical thinking is a cognitive strategy found in the current Alberta social studies program of studies' front matter is reason enough for supporting the understanding and implementation of it in any historical lesson. However, the HTCs are permeating many other facets of history education (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2012). The HTCs are the result of international research and are being used by an increasing number of curriculum and resource developers (Peck & Seixas, 2008). While these concepts are found in documents and resources, the process of how to teach them is not always indicated. Even when processes are provided, often the resources necessary to weave these cognitive strategies into lessons are not readily available. "Considerable time is required to assemble and arrange resources to teach using this approach. Also, the act of practicing history in the classroom can make heavy specialized subject-matter and subsequent pedagogical demands" (VanSeldright, 2002, pp. 149-150). While certainly not the only challenges to implementation, these are ones that can be overcome with the proper leadership and support (Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, 2008).

The main reason social studies teachers would want to utilize inquiry-based historical thinking lessons is ultimately the impact these experiences can have on student learning. Research has demonstrated that elementary students are able to engage in these thinking competencies (VanSeldright, 2002). The goal of social studies is to use knowledge about the past to inform our present and future. According to VanSeldright, traditional accountability measures focus on students' ability to recall the past, but fail to assess how they apply those understandings to their world. To enhance historical understandings, VanSeldright identifies numerous empirical research findings which support active participation in doing history as a historian would. VanSeldright noted several conditional successes, specifically:

- increased competencies in recognizing primary and secondary sources
- increased capacity to cross-reference, check and corroborate resources
- enhanced critical reading and analysis of historical evidence
- awareness of issues related to reliability, inferences, perspectives, drawing conclusions and building arguments

- realization that not all questions related to historical events can be answered
- the development of a common language related to historical inquiry. (p. 149)

More important than this, however, is the increase in student engagement as a result of this process. VanSeldright (2002) noted the students "reported becoming enthusiastic about studying a subject they previously cared little for and excited about a way of learning they did not know existed" (p. 150). The implications of The Historical Thinking Project are best explored in the same avenues as identified previously; curriculum development, resources, professional development and networking.

Curriculum Development: Whether the documents guiding education refer to historical thinking in general or to the HT concepts specifically, historical literacies are necessary to support effective history education. Teacher-librarians are in the position to work with teachers to facilitate the understandings necessary to teach history education and to interpret curricular objectives (Howard, 2010).

Resources: Teacher-librarians need to be aware of these historical thinking literacies when choosing teacher resources and building collections. Resources which have integrated the HT concepts and support the development of specific competencies are necessary to support active and engaging historical inquiry. A culturally diverse library collection can allow students to experience cultures which are different from their own and encourage positive attitudes toward "other" culture groups (Agosto & Hughes-Hassell, 2007, p. 155). Just as we stock our science rooms with the tools and supplies needed for scientific inquiry, we need to stock our library with artifacts, primary and secondary sources, collections which present multiple perspectives on historical topics, and access to electronic sources and/or memberships which give us access to the primary and secondary sources we cannot hold on site.

Professional Development: Whether professional development is provided on-site or through external providers, Teacher-librarians need to work with teachers to unpack the HT concepts and support their implementation in the classroom. It takes time to develop the depth of understanding which allows these HT concepts to become habits of mind and ultimately a natural part of pedagogical approaches. Support through co-planning, co-teaching, collection of resources, professional readings, and professional dialogue are necessary for sustainability of pedagogical changes (Yukawa, Harada, & Suthers, 2007; Fontichiaro, 2010; Gilmore-See, 2010). Without support, it is easy to revert to traditional methods of delivering history education.

Networking: A community of support is desirable both for the teacher-librarian and for the classroom teacher. Change takes time and shifting from traditional approaches of history education to more active, inquiry-based approaches should be seen as a long-term goal. Networks such as colleagues, consortiums, organizations and professional learning communities can provide support for process, and often offer numerous resources and lesson ideas which support the transition (Fontichiaro, 2010; Gilmore-See, 2010) from traditional to inquiry-based approaches in history education.

Using the HT concepts changes history education for both the teacher and the students. My experience has been that using the HT concepts to develop historical thinking competencies is not only more engaging for the students, it is more engaging for the teacher. These concepts allow for a more fluent bridging of the past into the present, ultimately connecting the relevance of the past to the identities of students today. Students no longer have to ask why we study the past; the relevance of it unfolds as a result of students' engagement with the past through the use of the Historical Thinking concepts. The HT concepts not only impact student learning, they impact citizenship. The HT concepts teach students the competencies to be citizens who realize there are numerous perspectives for every event in time, historical or contemporary. Such insights are powerful in a global society, as the perspectives are more diverse than ever before. Historical thinking allows us to not only study the past, but give us insights on how to evaluate the significance of current and future events and people, hypothesize consequences of

contemporary and future actions, evaluate the changes and constants of our society, and consider the evidence we are using to inform our choices.

School leaders need to care about supporting the implementation of Historical Thinking Concepts because the HTCs impact not only how students learn in school, but how they participate as citizens in society. A pedagogical shift which involves moving the focus from content delivery to the development of skills and processes is one which requires support. The teacher-librarian can provide that support in various forms, in a manner which meets the needs of the teaching and learning community. By supporting the role of the teacher-librarian, school leaders are supporting a change which teaches students skills necessary to be successful in this information era where facts about the past continue to become more accessible.

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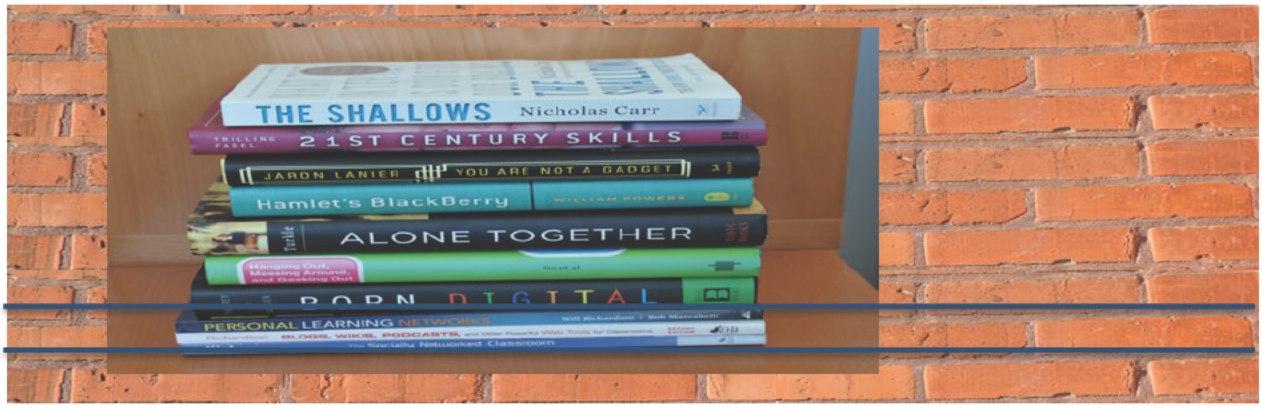
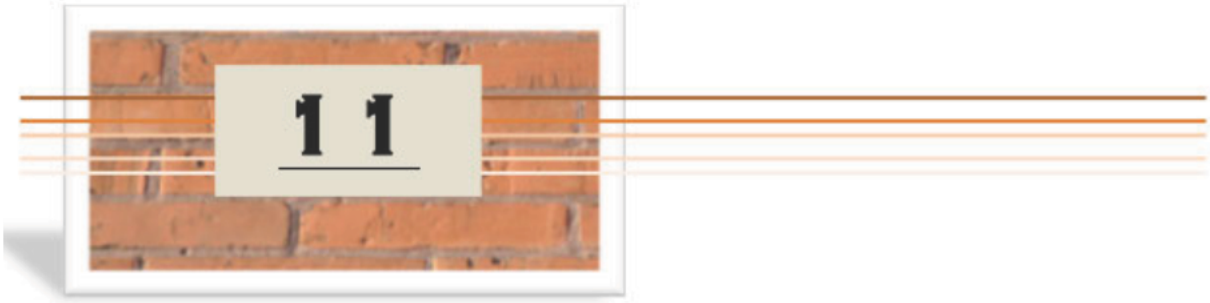


Teacher-Librarians Becoming and Being Technology Leaders

As technology leaders in their schools, teacher-librarians have a critical role to play in modeling and supporting the effective integration of technology into schools. From providing professional development opportunities for their colleagues to developing and teaching inquiry units infused with technology to curating content to support student research, teacher-librarians are technology leaders who are at the forefront of the use of technology in schools.

This section of *Becoming and Being* highlights some of the ways in which teacher-librarians are technology leaders in schools and school librarians. The section begins with Laurie Hnatiuk's chapter which serves as an introduction and overview of how teachers and teacher-librarians are integrating technology in schools. Hnatiuk introduces us to the Technological, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, looks specifically at how teacher-librarians are instructional leaders in the area of technology integration, and highlights how qualified teacher-librarians can use their unique knowledge and skills to overcome those barriers. After this general introduction to teacher-librarians as technology leaders, the section continues with a specific example of how one teacher-librarian developed a virtual library space to curate content for the teachers and students at her school. Kelly Reierson's chapter provides examples and ideas for developing an interactive online space that benefits the school community and supports student work. In the final chapter, Lissa Bonnell Davies explores the research that suggests that using cloud-based technology tools increases student engagement, motivation and achievement, as well as the research about the challenges teachers face as they try to integrate technology. She share both her personal story and her school's journey towards integrating technology and discusses the role the teacher-librarian can play and specific steps administrators can take to support staff in learning how to use technology in the classroom and to become lifelong learners of technology.

Technology is an integral part of any school and school library. As these chapters point out, as a technology leader, a qualified teacher-librarian plays a critical role in supporting and promoting the effective use of technology in schools.



Teacher-Librarians as Technology Leaders

Laurie Hnatiuk

hna2140@sasktel.net

Why should school leaders care... ?

From: Oluve Lernin<oluvelernin@schoolmail.ca>
Subject: Visit
Sent date: 01/11/2012 10:23:23 AM
To: Tek Wanabee<oluvelernin@schoolmail.ca>

Hi Tek,

Thank you for inviting me into your classroom this morning. Everyone was so engaged and eager to show me their own blogs and to explain to me how they have been blogging over the past six weeks. It was great to connect with all of your students and talk about their learning! Brodie was beaming from ear to ear as she told me how her parents and others were commenting on her blog. Your enthusiasm and eagerness to use technology is what I would like to see throughout our school. I would like to meet with you to hear your thoughts and ideas. Let's set a date soon.

Oluve Lernin
Principal

From: Tek Wanabee<tekwanabee@schoolmail.ca>
Subject: Visit
Sent date: 01/11/2012 11:50:20 AM
To: Oluve Lernin<oluvelernin@schoolmail.ca>
cc: Ima Leeder< imaleeder@schoolmail.ca>

Hi Oluve,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule—the kids were so excited to show you their blogs. I would love the opportunity to talk about our blogs and other learning we have done integrating technology—it has not always been easy. I want to learn more, but there is so much out there and I am not sure where to start. I have to admit that I did not take this project on alone. Ima was instrumental in collaborating with me on this unit, as well as in working with the kids. We should include her in the meeting. Are you free at lunch on Wed.? I also have prep the same day after lunch. Let me know and thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,
Tek Wanabee
Classroom teacher

From: Ima Leeder<imaleeder@schoolmail.ca>
Subject: Meeting
Sent date: 01/11/2012 12:21:20 PM
To: Oluve Lernin<oluvelernin@schoolmail.ca>;Tek Wanabee<tekwanabee@schoolmail.ca>

Greetings,

Thank you for including me in your email and the proposed meeting. I would love the opportunity to sit down with both of you to discuss ways we could integrate technology into our classrooms and our professional lives. Both of you have heard me talk about the Web 2.0 course from my Master's program that transformed my teaching and thinking regarding the use of technology. I am excited to have the opportunity to discuss with you ways to build inquiry-based learning and to integrate technology. Working with others to improve teaching and learning is what I do! I am really looking forward to discussing this further.

Take care,
Ima Leeder
Teacher-Librarian

As educators, we can probably relate to these emails and the interaction between Oluve, Tek, and Ima. Whether it is an email, working with students, or talking with other teachers, we all have conversations about technology and not all of those emails and conversations are as upbeat and positive as the examples above. There are plenty of times when those conversations deal with the frustrations and fear of the unknown that can occur when integrating technology into our practice. Perhaps your connection to Tek, Oluve, or Ima goes a little deeper—maybe you are Tek, Oluve, or Ima and you are not sure of your next steps.

Teachers such as Tek exist everywhere. They have seen their students engaged when given the chance to use technology and realize that technology is a part of their students' everyday world. They recognize the

need to ensure their students are capable of using technology effectively, efficiently, and ethically. Students are now part of a global village and are no longer limited to collaborating, creating, and communicating within their classroom. Using technology and Web 2.0 tools, students have the opportunity to work with anyone, anywhere, and at any time. Although it may seem that students use technology ubiquitously, studies have shown that students are not always so knowledgeable and perceptive when using technology (Coiro, 2005; Heil, 2005; McKenzie, 2009). Today's teachers need to be able to assist students in this connected world.

Technology integration for many teachers can be overwhelming and there are numerous barriers identified as to why teachers are not integrating technology, from knowledge and skills, to attitudes and beliefs (Creighton, 2012; Hew & Brush, 2007). In the past, teachers were the keepers of knowledge, dispensing the information at a pace that was comfortable for them. This shift from being the distributor of the information to being a guide, to helping students create, collaborate, and communicate information is new and often out of a teacher's comfort zone. Many teachers have a hard time keeping up and think that they need to know all the latest tools. They do not feel qualified or do not have the confidence to troubleshoot when something goes awry. Many are not familiar with the tools to set up blogs with their students or Skype with an expert in an area students are studying. How do teachers like Tek find support and learn to help their students?

Like Oluve, effective administrators want to improve student learning. They can do so by providing the support and guidance to nudge their staff to integrate technology and by sharing a plan that uses best practices based upon research. Studies have shown that administrators who use technology play an important role influencing teachers to adopt technology (Anderson & Dexter, 2005; Dawson & Rakes, 2003; Neufeld, Dong, & Higgins, 2007; Shannon, 2009; Slowinski, 2003; Stuart, Mills & Remus, 2009). Administrators must also ensure that technology integration includes sound pedagogy, assessment, and connections to the curriculum. School administrators may not be leaders in all three areas in terms of technology and may need assistance to move their staff forward. They also have to deal with information technology (IT) barriers such as infrastructure in addition to the educational component. Who is available to help them learn, plan, and lead their staff?

There is another individual in the scenario, often underutilized, who should play a vital role to help students, teachers, administration, and the community. A qualified teacher-librarian has unique training and can assist students, teachers, administrators and the community. A qualified teacher-librarian has taken courses in technology integration and leadership using an inquiry approach to learning, and continuously works to stay ahead of the curve in regards to best instructional practices and the use of the latest tools. The teacher-librarian is an expert on the skills needed to use any tool and often views technology as a tool to create, to collaborate, and to share new learning within the classroom and beyond its four walls. Even with this knowledge and various skills, how do teacher-librarians effectively work as an instructional leader to support the integration of technology instruction in order to meet the needs of the 21st century learner?

Tek, Ima, and Oluve are about to embark on a journey together to benefit their students, staff, and community. In order to make a difference, they will need to delve into the research to see what has been done in the past and to understand what is happening today. After gaining background knowledge by reviewing the research and best practices, they will need to collaborate in order to develop a plan that will best suit their school as they prepare for the future. Along the way, there will be barriers to overcome and successes to celebrate.

This is their story. Please consider yourself invited to join the trio as they look at the research and determine their next steps as school leaders to use technology to transform their school and to serve as a model for others.

From: Ima Leeder<imaleeder@schoolmail.co>
Subject: Research
Sent date: 01/19/2012 9:04:36 PM
To: Oluve Lernin<oluvelernin@schoolmail.ca>; Tek Wanabee<tekwanabee@schoolmail.ca>

Greetings,

I know how busy the two of you are, so I took the liberty of putting together some research about integrating technology. I started by defining technology integration so we could build a common language. From there, I thought it would be important to identify the barriers, the strategies to overcome these barriers, and the role teacher-librarians have integrating technology. I put all the research in Google Docs (http://bit.ly/WWt8ap) to make it easier for us to collaborate.

Take care,
Ima Leeder
Teacher-Librarian

What do school leaders need to know...?

For our purposes, the definition of technology integration will be "improving the effectiveness and efficiency of learning in educational contexts" (Makki & Makki, 2012, p. 276), where educational contexts can range from using technology by educators for student lessons to students using technology as a learning tool (Smaldino, Lowther, & Russell, 2008).

Technology use in our classrooms is evolving. School divisions and individual schools are investing large sums of money to become 21st century schools, however, the presence of the technology does not necessarily mean that teaching practices improve (Creighton, 2012; Inan & Lowther, 2010; Kopcha, 2012; Lim & Chai, 2008; Lowther, Inan, Strahl, & Ross, 2008; Smeets, 2005). There is also little empirical evidence to suggest that simply having access to technology will increase student achievement and quality of instruction (Inan & Lowther, 2010). Educators need to be knowledgeable about research and to seek colleagues who specialize in technology integration. Teacher-librarians are considered leaders in technology by teachers and administrators and can lead educators to overcome the barriers and to implement the strategies for technology integration (Branch-Mueller & de Groot, 2011; Everhart, Mardis, & Johnston, 2011; Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2010).

Personal teaching barriers

Buabeng-Andoh (2012) stated that if teachers did not believe that technology would fulfill the needs of their students, they were less likely to use it in the classroom. Mumtaz (2000) stated, "teachers who have positive attitudes towards ICT itself will be positively disposed towards using it in the classroom" (p. 328). Teacher-librarians, who model, collaborate, and provide the right technology tool for teachers, can affect teachers' beliefs. With the support of the teacher-librarian, teachers can overcome barriers like negative attitudes and beliefs around technology. Those who shared their learning using various Web 2.0 tools were now "important teaching partners because of their new and 'special skills'" (Branch-Mueller & de Groot, 2011, p. 34).

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING BARRIERS

Time is one barrier to integration for teachers (Granger, Morbey, Lotherington, Owston, & Wideman, 2009). One strategy to alleviate this barrier is to collaborate with other teachers (Dexter & Anderson, 2002; Lim & Khine, 2006). An integral role of the teacher-librarian is that of a collaborator (Asselin, 2005; Everhart, et al., 2011; Oberg, 2003; Small, Snyder & Parker, 2009). Teacher-librarians are adept at using technology to collaborate with teachers, removing or reducing the barrier of lack of time (Baumbach, 2009; Everhart, et al., 2011).

Another common barrier is teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills, and pedagogy to use technology effectively (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012; Creighton, 2012; Hughes, 2005; Inan & Lowther, 2010). Frameworks such as TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) (see Figure 1) allow teachers to see how curricular content knowledge, pedagogy knowledge, and technology knowledge interact with one another (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). For every teacher, the use of technology will be different because of the uniqueness of the curricular content and the pedagogies used to teach specific curricula (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Qualified teacher-librarians are versed in different technologies and pedagogies for different grade levels and can assist teachers to match technologies to appropriate curricular content and pedagogies, one of the first steps when applying TPACK (Koehler & Mishra, 2009).

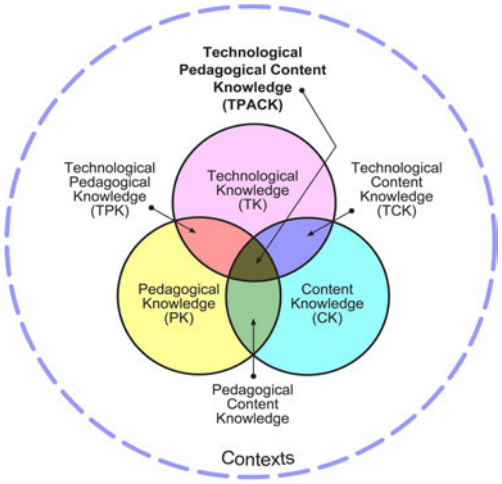


Figure 1: TPACK.

In order for teachers to buy into using technology in the classroom, administrators must model and have a vision for the school (Creighton, 2012; Hew & Brush, 2007; Kopcha, 2012). Teacher-librarians have guiding documents on technology integration such as:

- *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (AASL, 2007)
- *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs* (AASL, 2009), and
- ISTE *National Educational Technology Standards* (ISTE, 2012)

Technology leadership has a direct impact for teachers' use of technology (Anderson & Dexter, 2005; Dawson & Rakes, 2003; Neufeld et al., 2007) and yet there is no research to tell us how future administrators are being prepared to be technology leaders or to lead technology in their schools (Schrum, Galizio, & Ledesma, 2011). Administrators need to be involved with technology to improve their own skills, and must model using technology within their schools (Stuart, et al., 2009). However, many administrators do not have the technology content knowledge or the technology pedagogy knowledge

from the TPACK framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2009) because it was never part of their leadership training (Stuart et al., 2009).

Research has shown that successful technology integration includes a shared vision and professional development that is appropriate to the needs of the students and the staff (Hughes, 2005; Rogers, 2003; Schrum, et al., 2011). In order for administrators to be effective technology leaders, tool usage can no longer be enough. Administrators need professional development to lead the change (McLeod, Bathon, & Richardson, 2011).

In the meantime, administrators in many provinces have access to qualified teacher-librarians. A number of studies focus on the role technology plays in leadership of teacher-librarians (Branch-Mueller & deGroot, 2011; Everhart et al., 2011; Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2010; Vansickle, 2000). Over the course of two years, Small et al. (2009-2010) completed a three-part study and reported that principals who saw their teacher-librarians as technology leaders believed the teacher-librarian had an impact on both students and staff in terms of technology use. Other findings suggest that administration and colleagues who perceive their teacher-librarians as leaders in technology integration are more likely to assess their own teaching of ICT as excellent and, therefore, presumably offer better instruction (Francis & Lance, 2011).

It is essential that administrators see the teacher-librarian as an instructional leader. Teacher-librarians' perceptions of their instructional practices and use of integrating ICT in schools were significantly higher when the administrator had favourable perceptions of the library program. This stresses the importance of teacher-librarians' leadership skills, and the significance of the collaborative relationship between the teacher-librarian and the administrator (Oberg, 2006).The leadership and involvement from teacher-librarians at the classroom and school level helps move schools forward (Everhart, et al., 2011; Shannon, 2009).

When everyone within our schools is technology literate, individuals will use technology proficiently, know the affordances of technology, and make decisions around the effective use of technology (Davies, 2011). Teacher-librarians are in the unique position to provide the necessary skills and thinking for effective and efficient technology integration so everyone can be a productive 21st-century citizen (Hughes-Hassell & Harada, 2007).

From: "Superintendent Makinme Prowd"
Subject: Tech Integration
Sent date: 01/31/2013 9:23:23 AM
To: Oluve Lernin; Tek Wanabee; Ima Leeder

Good morning,

I have been following the work your school has been doing in terms of becoming aware of the barriers regarding technology integration. More importantly, I am pleased with your focus on strategies and solutions to overcome the barriers, and your recognition that everyone is on a continuum and honouring growth in all as you move towards the goal of everyone becoming technology literate. In order to integrate technology successfully, a vision needs to be shared and implemented. We are working on doing this at the division level, but this is a work in progress. I look forward with interest to see how you create and implement your vision of 21st-century learning.

Sincerely,
Superintendent Makinme Prowd

What can school leaders do about... ?

Many divisions/districts have the best intentions to integrate technology, but may not have the knowledge and/or the budget to create a plan that goes beyond providing the infrastructure and hardware. This is where grassroots projects are leading the way—individuals like Ima, Tek and Oluve begin to create and to implement their own vision. So how do you go beyond the theory and actually begin to make a difference in a school?

Everyone wants to work smarter not harder, so beginning steps need to include checking the expectations of 21st-century learners in your province and identifying how these expectations align with the vision and/or plans that may already exist within your district/division. Teacher-librarians are familiar with many guidelines that use strong pedagogy to integrate technology and can collate the salient points from provincial, division, and school documents. From here, you will want to establish a working committee within your building to look at what will work with your school's specific context. Looking at all provincial, division, and school visions will help you create a direction for your school. Once you set the direction of where you want to go, you will need to establish a technology baseline of staff and perhaps your students and community.

Start small. Check the comfort level of the staff by creating a survey, which is a simple and effective way to gauge where people are in a nonthreatening manner. This survey should not only include different technology devices and tools but also ways technology can be integrated using strong pedagogy. Surveys can be adapted so students and the community can be included and everyone is involved and has the opportunity to learn. Once you have an idea of where your staff is on a continuum, your committee can begin to create an action plan aligned with your school vision and catered to meet the unique needs of your school (Hughes, 2005; Rogers, 2003; Schrum et al., 2011).

Every school will be different, but it is necessary to have the support of the administration and your teacher-librarian (Oberg, 2006). If your administrator is a newcomer to technology, your qualified teacher-librarian can lead the way—teacher-librarians are tech savvy, work with everyone in the school, and have a variety of pedagogical skills to work with a variety of students (Branch-Mueller & de Groot, 2011; Everhart et al., 2011; Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2010). The rest of your team should represent all stakeholders within your community, which is critical to ensure buy-in and long-term support.

Your action plan should have clear timelines and include ways to gather evidence and data throughout the process in order to see if you need to revise and/or to create new goals. Regular, but brief, meetings to share the data and current research by the committee ensure that everyone is on track and supported. It is also important to share and to celebrate both successes and the courage of risk-taking.

Administrators: Supporting the team

Your administrator is instrumental in the implementation of change in a school, but creating a vision and subsequent action plans is a challenge given budget restraints and the lack of pedagogical knowledge to use technology in a transformative way rather than a flavour-of-the-month engagement tool. Administrators traditionally have not had the necessary professional development to understand the complexities of sound technology integration focusing on the pedagogy and not just the infrastructure and the hardware (Schrum et al., 2011). This is why it is critical for administrators and teacher-librarians to develop a strong collaborative relationship (Oberg, 2006). Qualified teacher-librarians have the knowledge, technology and leadership skills to create, to implement, and to lead a technology integration

plan (Branch-Mueller & de Groot 2011; Everhart et al., 2011; Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2010; Vansickle, 2000).

Working together, your administrator and the teacher-librarian can develop a preliminary action plan using the provincial and district documents, as well as your school strategic plan. This preliminary draft can then go to your working committee for revision. The partnership between the principal and the teacher-librarian provides a working model of collaboration for your staff, allows your administrator to develop skills and knowledge regarding technology integration, and reinforces the value of the role of your qualified teacher-librarian. For your teacher-librarian, this provides opportunities to gain your administrator's support by sharing the long-term vision of your library program and collection, explaining how it connects to your school plan and, finally, determining how these library program goals will be evaluated (Oberg, 2006; Smith, 2012).

Part of your action plan to integrate technology must include professional development. Involve those early adopters, staff who are always willing to try new ideas and take risks (Rogers, 2003). Provide them with professional development to empower them to become leaders within your school. Investing in teachers will pay forward the learning and create a culture of learners and leaders within your building who use sound pedagogy with technology. George Couros (2013), a Division Principal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Alberta, reiterated this belief on his blog by stating, "When we put money into our staff members, the rate of return goes up immediately" (para 2). Research supports the idea that teacher-librarians can be strong leaders in technology integration, modeling and providing professional development that fosters a culture of leadership and collaboration within your buildings (Branch-Mueller & de Groot, 2011; Everhart et al., 2011; Johnston, 2012).

As the leader of your school, you too must invest the time to model and to lead your staff in the use of technology. Modeling and leading helps set the tone that integrating technology is an expected practice. Guskey (2002), a leading researcher in understanding methods of professional development, stated:

> Support coupled with pressure is essential for continuing educational improvement. Support allows those engaged in the difficult process of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures. Pressure is often necessary to initiate change among those whose self-impetus for change is not great (Airasian, 1987; Huberman & Crandall, 1983), and it provides the encouragement, motivation, and occasional nudging that many practitioners require to persist in the challenging tasks that are intrinsic to all change efforts. (p. 388)

Administrators can provide the gift of time. Research has indicated that many teachers are not familiar with technology and do not feel they have the confidence to use technology in the classroom (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012; Creighton, 2013, Hughes, 2005; Inan & Lowther, 2010). Ensure flexible schedules for teacher-librarians so they can collaborate with teachers on lessons and units using inquiry and/or the TPACK framework: identifying curricular outcomes (CK), deciding appropriate instructional strategies (PK), and integrating the technology (TP). Having the opportunity to collaborate and to watch teacher-librarians model technology integrated with sound pedagogy sets the foundation of strong instructional practices for the future.

Administrators also need to ensure that the existing infrastructure and technology can support your created vision. Aligning and taking action by upgrading and purchasing the necessary equipment to implement the vision demonstrates that the initiative is one of importance and reinforce the expected practice of integrating technology. When the infrastructure is in place and the hardware maintained, an environment of support exists and allows your teacher-librarian to work with teachers focusing on students and instruction rather than troubleshooting and fixing problems.

Teachers: The first line of implementation and instruction

Instructional practices of teachers are shifting from technology as the content, to technology as a tool that enhances teaching and learning (Fullan, 2013). With access to information 24/7, learning has evolved—our students are no longer dependent upon teachers as deliverers of content but are now able to become independent learners in their areas of passion. As a result, many provincial curricula are moving towards an inquiry stance and include skills of creative and critical thinking, collaborating, and communicating, which are necessary in our globally connected world.

Inquiry learning provides necessary opportunities to integrate technology. Qualified teacher-librarians are experts in inquiry and technology integration, ideally situated to collaborate with teachers as they redesign learning tasks to empower students to have ownership of their learning. Through this collaboration, students are developing and asking higher-level questions, sharing their ideas and reflections on blogs, asking the world to provide them with feedback, and co-creating knowledge. Teacher-librarians are leading the way for students to investigate using resources beyond the walls of their school by Skyping with experts to ask questions and clarifying their thinking. Teachers are going beyond the content of specific subjects, including the big idea of the topic, and providing opportunities for students to make a difference and to create their own civic action plans through products such as infographics or posting public service announcement videos on YouTube. The key is focusing on the uses of technology in completing authentic tasks and sharing their learning beyond the bulletin board to a global audience, where feedback can be immediate and exponential.

However, this transformation needs support. Teachers do not always have the necessary knowledge, skills, and pedagogy to use technology efficiently and effectively (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012; Creighton, 2013, Hughes, 2005; Inan & Lowther, 2010). Teacher-librarians are in the perfect position to show teachers ways that technology use can make their lives easier and build their confidence (Liaw, Huang, & Chen, 2007). Teacher-librarians can introduce specific tools that will match content and pedagogical needs after observations and or modeling themselves. Sharing productivity tools such as cloud storage, social bookmarking, and RSS feeds are technology tools that teachers can utilize to become more effective and efficient. This can be then modeled for students, so they too can be more effective and efficient and carry this forward in their out of school lives.

There are a number of ways that teacher-librarians can share technology with teachers to build their confidence:

- Begin a Lunch and Learn club showcasing one tool, demonstrating how it can be used, and giving teachers time to play.
- Use those informal chats to talk about how a technology tool is making your life easier.
- Provide screencasts so teachers can see a new tool being used or use as a review.
- Capture and curate exemplars.
- Create social bookmarking sites for your school and then help teachers set up their own as they see a world beyond “favourites”.
- Create a RSS reader for staff using a school email, give everyone access, and then help teachers set up their own RSS readers.
- Start a SWAT team (**S**tudents **W**illing to **A**ssist with **T**echnology) club so students and teachers can troubleshoot problems efficiently.

Teacher-librarian: The instructional leader

Mahatma Gandhi's belief, "Be the change you seek in the world," are words teacher-librarians strive towards in all aspects of their role, especially when it comes to technology integration. Teacher-librarians model their own learning, allowing others to see firsthand the trials and tribulations of learning and integrating technology into teaching. Teacher-librarians also model the process of using technology to develop strong essential questions, and to investigate and seek answers in a multitude of ways. Teacher-librarians openly synthesize their learning, share and reflect on feedback only to revise and begin again, demonstrating this process to the teachers on their staff.

A teacher-librarian helps to expand learning beyond the four walls of the classroom to learning that is global; showing teachers, students, and even parents, effective ways to use technology and social media to create a more engaged and authentic learning experience. These experiences can lead to the development of a strong Personal Learning Network (PLN) using tools such as Twitter, Google Docs, and attending webinars, an integral part of learning in the 21st century. Developing a PLN goes beyond adding links and reading feeds and blogs; it includes professional involvement by actively participating with educators focusing on student learning and improving instruction. By belonging locally, nationally and globally to professional associations, your teacher-librarian is aware and involved in current trends and issues. One of the greatest gifts your teacher-librarian can pass along is sharing the process of creating a PLN and showing how it assists with instruction and learning.

As strong instructional leaders, teacher-librarians are knowledgeable in all areas of the curriculum, are aware of what is happening in classrooms, and are able to make technology connections between the learning in the classroom and the world, bridging the two together.

Teacher-librarians focus on empowering others to be in charge of their own learning by:

- providing parent tech nights to build that culture of learning for everyone;
- having the tech tool of the month in newsletters outlining what it is, what it does, and why it is a powerful learning tool;
- having online book clubs;
- allowing student reviews on Destiny and having students create book trailers to introduce authors at conferences; and
- building relationships in and out of the library, providing opportunities so others can lead.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Simply put, educators need to work together to understand what strong technology integration is and then make it an expectation. Ideally, technology integration would be in the forefront of the curricula, not hidden or nonexistent as it is in some provinces and territories. Right now, the organization Canadians for 21st Century Learning & Innovation has created a unifying vision, publishing a document outlining what exists currently in Canada and a framework to support teaching practices and incorporating learning technologies into Canada's educational systems. This document could begin conversations and create a vision for our 21st century learners for those provinces without existing plans.

Integrating technology in schools for teaching and learning is an ongoing conversation. Often, it appears that technology is the elephant in the room. Learning in the 21st century means being technology literate.

Integrating technology is a shift in pedagogy and therefore must include professional learning for both existing and pre-service teachers. Qualified teacher-librarians can support this learning, but first a qualified teacher-librarian has to exist in schools.

Like the Indian fable of the *Seven Blind Mice*, in which seven blind men stumble upon an elephant and each tries to describe it through the section that they can touch, leading to a wildly disparate view of the whole, educators often see only parts of technology—either tools or hardware. Qualified teacher-librarians see the *elephant* in the room. They know by modeling, leading, and collaborating, they empower others to understand that "in the 21st century, technology is *the* key to thinking about and knowing about the world" (Prensky, 2013, p. 23).

From: "Superintendent Prowd"
Subject: Recognition
Sent date: 05/05/2013 9:23:23 AM
To: Oluve Lernin; Tek Wanabee; Ima Leeder

Good morning,

I just want to offer my congratulations again for the forward thinking your school has done this past year by integrating technology into your school. I look forward to your school presenation at our next discussion meeting. I know others can learn from your experiences. Thank you for modeling and sharing your leadership on behalf of our students and staff.

Sincerely,
Superintendent Makinme Prowd

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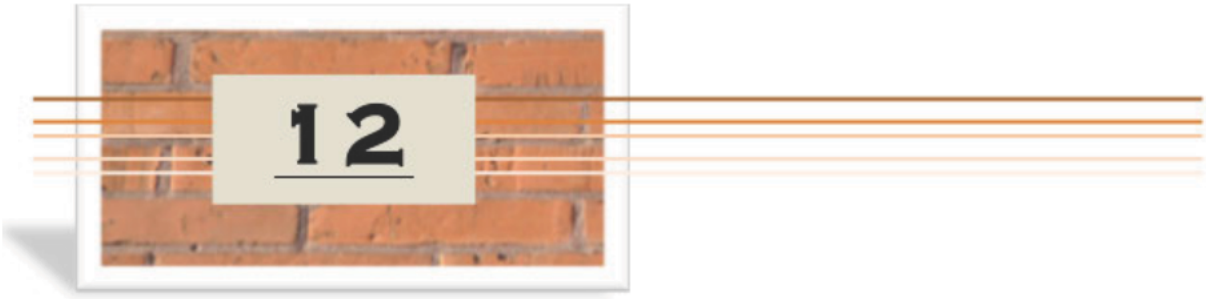

Building a Participatory Virtual Library

Kelly Reierson

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Why should school leaders care about ...?

Imagine teachers and students being able to access library resources simultaneously from anywhere, at anytime. Imagine students not having to wait until the school library opens to get the next book in their favorite series. Imagine not having to take a class to the library but instead the library and its resources are carried in every student's back pocket.

A few years ago, this imagining might have seemed like something out of a Ray Bradbury novel, but today it can and should be a reality for our 21st century learners. Technology has changed both how we work and how we learn. The current world of work is no longer about assembly lines and mass production; it is about collaboration, creation, communication and critical thinking (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2004). The graduates of 21st century schools need to prepare for this technological, inter-connected world. Our students are already connecting globally in their daily lives with social networking tools (Alberta Education, 2011). As part of a digitally connected world, our students are no longer just consumers of information, but producers as well. It is imperative that schools prepare them to engage ethically with information. Therefore, the notion of a library as a static, silent space where students go to study and do research is a thing of the past. I am not saying that physical library space isn't needed. Indeed, students and staff need a physical library now more than ever, to help students develop the literacy and critical thinking skills they need in this information rich world (ISTE, 2007), however, our schools need to provide something more.

Don't be frightened by the title of this chapter. Virtual libraries and participatory culture are both new terms and may be unfamiliar to you. After reading this chapter, I hope that you will have a better understanding of how physical and virtual school libraries can support the development of skills necessary for students to active digital citizens. The terms digital library and virtual library have been used interchangeably In 1998, the Digital Library Federation described digital libraries as

> Organizations that provide the resources, including the specialized staff, to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities. (para. 1)

For the purpose of this paper, virtual libraries will be used to describe a collection of curated digital resources made available to users through one website. Virtual libraries may or may not be concerned with the entire information lifecycle (especially the cataloguing and preservation of digital information). Now on to my learning journey with virtual libraries and participatory culture.

A few years ago, my principal asked me to take on the role of teacher-librarian to help bring the library space into the 21st century and meet the learning needs of our students. When I first took over, the library was a dead space. Students who did come to the library only did so to do quiet studying. Private study carrels lined the walls and large obtrusive shelves packed with books that were outdated and, for the most part, unused took up the majority of the library space. Staff seldom brought classes to the library but, when they did, the nine desktop computers could not accommodate the digital research that students needed to do and instead, teachers were taking their classes to the computer lab. The library space was not meeting the needs of either our students or staff. Evolving the physical library to a the 21st century involved moving furniture, becoming wireless, adding technology devices like laptops, netbooks and eReaders for students to check out, and building a digital collection of resources. It involved getting rid of the tall shelves that blocked the light, opening up the space so students and teachers could collaborate. It involved having access to a qualified teacher-librarian who built relationships with teachers to ensure information literacy skills were being taught through the library program. It involved having the teacher-librarian working with teachers to ensure that the resources in the library supported their curricular needs. It involved inviting students to help build a library collection that met their needs as well. With these changes, the library's physical space became an extension of the classroom--a place where students were engaged in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creation.

The next step was to provide anytime, anywhere access to the library. Our physical library, available only during school hours or when a teacher and the teacher-librarian were collaborating, was not enough to meet their needs. In fact, the library can only hold two classes at a time and it was difficult to meet the learning needs of the teachers and 1500 students. Therefore, a virtual school library was created to help provide better access. This digital space, where students could access the resources 24/7, provided the anytime, anywhere learning that our students (and teachers) were demanding.

Building the virtual library for my school was a time consuming process. The first phase was the hosting of our online resources, teacher-created assignments, and research pathfinders. Teachers gave me assignments to post for students. The virtual library had a book blog for students to follow and make contributions and research pathfinders and tutorials for students to support specific assignments. The virtual library provided access to databases and eBooks, and the statistics indicated that students accessed the resources on a regular basis for class work. Our fiction collection expanded when we added digital books that students could check out and download to their personal devices. However, I still wondered whether this digital space was a place that was preparing our students for a world of work that is "about networking, question-posing, critical assessment of information and media, collaborative teamwork, and creating new knowledge and ideas" (Jacobsen, 2013, para. 5)?

Looking at the students, and how they were using technology helped me see what was missing. Most, if not all, of the students I teach use social media as a form of communication so they can collaborate on projects. As well, when I was doing research for a paper on multimodal literacies and saw how students were interacting, playing with text, and creating content using Web 2.0 tools, I found myself seeing more clearly what our school virtual library was missing. There was no student voice, collaborative teamwork or networking taking place. I wanted to move that digital space from a one dimensional place where students go to access resources to a space where students co-create knowledge through collaboration utilizing social media to enhance learning and using Web 2.0 tools to create and communicate beyond the walls of the classroom and library. At the same time, I realized that in order to engage students in this digital space I needed to involve the teachers as well.

Knowing that young adults are immersed in this information-rich participatory world, I decided to explore why it is necessary for schools to have digital gathering spaces; not just as a place to house content, but a place for collaboration, creation, communication and critical thinking (Jenkins, Clinton, Puroshotma, Robison, Weigel, 2008). How can the teacher-librarian foster this participatory culture of students and create a digital, interactive space. How can the teacher-librarian through the creation and management of a virtual library support teachers in meeting the needs of our 21st century students?

What do school leaders need to know...?

The concept of a participatory virtual library is a relatively new phenomenon, there is very little research on what users need and want in a high school setting. However, examining studies of academic and public library services can provide insight of what users want in a virtual library environment. Research indicates that patrons in public and academic libraries want the virtual library to be different from the physical library. Yes, they want access to research and eBook resources, but they also are asking for the digital space to provide learning opportunities, access to new technology, chat and social networking for communities in a safe environment, and an opportunity for users to add content, (Chow et al., 2012; Cote, Kraemer, Nahl & Ashford, 2012; McShane, 2011; Pan & Xaioyaun, 2009; Ram, 2010). This makes sense in a high school setting as well because, not only are more students seeking information and reading materials online, they are also spending more time online taking advantage of the affordances of the participatory space that cloud computing and Web 2.0 technologies provides.

Standards for the 21st-Century Learner (AASL, 2007), the ISTE NETS (ISTE, 2007), Alberta Education (2012) and other standards and documents from the English-speaking world highlight that in order to participate in our world people need to be able to create, collaborate, communicate, and think critically with digital technologies. Studies show that there is a disconnect between what students have access to and are able to do inside and outside of the school (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009; Patterson, 2009; Vasudevan & Wissman, 2011). Lack of teacher knowledge on technology tools, insufficient time for students to play and explore in this Internet playground are just a few of the reasons for this disconnect. A virtual school library can help bridge this disconnect (Ohler, 2010; Vasudevan & Wissman, 2011).

The original intent of virtual libraries was to provide patrons with anytime, anywhere, anyplace access to library resources (Borgman, 1999). It makes sense that libraries create virtual libraries, considering that a recent Pew research report indicated that at least 77% of teens have cell phones and 42% of teachers ask students to use his/her cell phone to look up information while at school (Pew Research Centre, 2011; 2012). As well, recent studies show that eBook reading is also on the rise indicating that there is a need for school libraries to provide customized eBook content (Rainie & Duggan, 2012). With the guidance of

a trained teacher-librarian, these customized online collections of resources can support student learning and the work teachers are doing in the classroom.

Due to the increase in student and teacher owned mobile devices, there is a need to have virtual libraries that students can access from the computer that they carry in his/her pocket. Today "cell phones are becoming particularly popular learning tools, and are now as common to these teachers' classrooms as computer carts" (Pew, 2011, p. 4). However, this immediate access to a growing wealth of information has not necessarily transferred into better selection of information and teachers have growing concerns that students are not able to critically evaluate this content. This inability to critically evaluate and dig deep to select the best information for their learning need is noted by Todd (2008) who states that students continue to "show little improvement in information literacy capabilities such as evaluating the relevance, accuracy and authority of information, and developing effective search strategies" (p. 24). A virtual library that has a trained teacher-librarian gathering and curating digital resources and collaborating with teachers on research content can help guide students in this research task. As well as containing research materials, the virtual library supplies pathfinders for assignments, screen capture tutorials for students and staff to access, podcasts of lectures, and eBooks that students and staff can check out. The possibilities for resources housed on the virtual library are endless. However, this access to resources is only one piece of the virtual library.

Teacher-librarians, teachers and administrators need to recognize that the Internet playground means that the "literacy education provided in the past by parents and teachers will no longer equip people for success in the altered world in which we live" (Asselin & Doiron, 2008, p.1). Participatory culture has become a reality in our digital world, and we need to be aware of it and teach students how to participate meaningfully.

In *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*, Jenkins et al. (2006) defines participatory culture as one:

1. With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
2. With strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others
3. With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
4. Where members believe that their contributions matter
5. Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another. (p. 7)

However, there exists what Jenkins refers to as a 'participation gap' or unequal access to understandings about and opportunities to more fully participate in the spaces, conversations, and practices that social media presents." This is where the virtual school library can provide space for collaboration, content creation, and access to social media to support students who are suffering from this participation gap. Students can participate in blogs on the library site, post to Twitter, have discussions and share ideas on the library social networking page and even contribute to content that is accessible to all under the guidance of a qualified teacher-librarian. The work that students are doing in the classroom is supported and expanded in the virtual library that houses blogs and sets up study groups in social networking sites.

In addition to being able to participate fully in the digital world we inhabit, research indicates that student involvement in this participatory culture increases learning and achievement. Research shows that the ability to share one's work with a wider world is one of the benefits of cloud technology (MacBride & Luehmann, 2008; McGrail & Davis, 2011). Having a space to share this work with a larger audience is one of the affordances that a participatory virtual library allows our students. Through blogging in the virtual library, student engagement, participation and interaction can increase (MacBride & Luehmann, 2008). As well, Figg and McCartney (2010) found that the use of digital storytelling increased students' motivation to write. Similarly Black's (2005) research shows that English Language Learners' achievement increases while writing on fan fiction sites. These studies suggest that the benefits that a

participatory virtual library can provide are numerous, as it is a platform that allows students to showcase their work and includes creation tools like blogs, fan fiction sites, and Web 2.0 tools such as digital storytelling and video-production sites.

We often talk in education about making learning engaging and connected to the real world. Subramaniam, Ahn, Fleischmann & Druin (2012) state that a library's digital space can "emerge as an ideal hybrid space to bridge formal classroom learning with the broader world" (p. 163). As Losh and Jenkins (2012) highlight:

> Young people are developing programming abilities through engaging with game modding sites (Taylor and Witkowski 2010); research and writing skills through Wikipedia (Forte and Bruckman 2006); math skills through participation in fantasy fan communities around Japanese anime, manga, and cosplay (costume play) (Black 2008); historical research through discussions around games like Civilization III (Squire 2011) and writing skills by producing fan fiction and receiving feedback on their work (Jenkins 2006). (p. 18)

However, there is a disparity between the benefits of these online social networking experiences. Students are not all getting the "mentorship that might allow them to meaningfully link these activities to other kinds of educational opportunities" (Losh & Jenkins, 2012, p. 18). A virtual library that has a trained teacher-librarian to mentor and allows for user participation is the ideal place to model and mentor students on digital citizenship. The library becomes "learner centered and focused on scaffolding students' ability to read, write, and create content through social interaction in physical and digital learning spaces as well as multiple forms of media" (Hamilton, 2011, p. 41).

Not only can this participatory virtual library be a bridge between classroom learning and the socially networked world our students are living in, it can also, with the leadership of a qualified teacher-librarian, become a space for learning new technologies and tools with teachers. Many teachers report that lack of knowledge in web tools stops them from using these technology tools in the classroom (Alberta Education, 2011; Patterson, 2009). In partnership with a teacher-librarian, the virtual library can provide just in time learning opportunities for teachers by providing a digital place for Personal Learning Networks (PLN), connecting teachers with resources and experts, and supporting teachers as they work to integrate technology. One such site is Joyce Valenza's (2013) Springfield High School site. On this site, both teachers and students have access to her LibGuides which provide anytime, anywhere tutorials on Web 2.0 tools and building PLNs.

Virtual libraries allow students and teachers to connect and interact, access resources free from the constraints of time, space and place. Today's qualified teacher-librarians expect more from their libraries by adapting, innovating and most importantly investing in their students' learning. A participatory virtual library can build and strengthen the learning community of the school when it becomes more than a read only environment, when the teacher-librarians invites the school community of learners (teachers and students) to contribute, collaborate, create and connect within the digital library space.

What Can School Leaders Do ...?

Examining the research on technologies for teaching and learning, participatory culture and virtual libraries helped hone my vision of a virtual library space that allows for not just knowledge acquisition and storage but also knowledge creation and sharing. I was ready to move the virtual library from a *Me* space to a *We* space.

What should this digital space look like, feel like, and do? I want a digital space that is co-created by the users and truly participatory. One that includes student and teacher creations and provides social media access (for example, blogs, Twitter, YouTube and Google+) to support discussion around issues about which students are passionate (Jenkins, et al., 2006; Hamilton, 2011). The school library's digital presence needed to become a place that teaches students how to be proactive and productive digital citizens, a place for sharing social bookmarks, and where students and teachers collaborate and create research pathfinders together. Students then would have a place to share their work with a wider audience, enabling them to receive formative feedback to improve their writing and push their thinking. Teachers would have a space to share meaningful professional learning with just in time and at their own pace learning, not just-in-case, one-size-fits-all professional development.

Taking the steps to bring forth this vision requires much more than just having an idea. It involves having the support of the school administration and demonstrating those dispositions of actions listed by the American Association of School Libraries (2007) of the 21st century learner such as:

- displaying initiative and engagement by posing questions and investigating
- maintaining openness to new ideas by considering divergent opinions, changing opinions or conclusions when evidence supports the change
- demonstrating leadership and confidence by presenting ideas to others (pp. 3-6)

As well, it involves building a relationship with teachers so that they become comfortable in collaborating and learning alongside the teacher-librarian. Acting on these dispositions and modeling the learning with staff and students as the virtual library emerged into a participatory environment helped bring some of the vision to life.

When I began building the virtual library, teachers appreciated the affordances that it gave students, supporting my request to spend the money necessary to make the school wireless. This allowed students and staff to have access to the virtual library through any mobile device including cell phones, providing a library in every back pocket. Teachers then began giving me assignments to post on the library site. All departments, from Biology (http://library.strathconaschool.ca/pathfinders/biology-pathfinders), to English(http://library.strathconaschool.ca/pathfinders/literary-criticism) and even Physical Education (http://library.strathconaschool.ca/pathfinders/physical-education-pathfinders) have a space in the virtual library. Teachers were also invited to help select the databases and eBooks that would support the work they were doing in the classroom. Soon the library pathfinders and assignment pages were filling up. Still, I was doing most of the work and therefore the majority of the learning. This was not yet the participatory virtual library I had envisioned.

It was one collaborative partnership that helped show other staff members the rich potential of an engaging and participatory virtual library. Ron, a teacher in the Social Studies department, and I had previously built a collaborative relationship when working on an inquiry unit. Although he himself was not a technology user, he saw the potential of technology to engage and motivate his digitally savvy students. Together, we created a project that required his Social 30 (grade 12) students to use Web 2.0 tools to build online comics on the causes of World War I. Every student was on task, completed the assignment and was eager to share his/her work. As the projects were completed, I posted them on the library website. Students viewed the projects and made comments on the creations. Students would then read the comments and sometimes go back and make changes based on those comments. The results showed me the importance of creating this participatory culture for our students as I saw how their learning was deepened and enriched by the response of others to their work. Students from his other classes began asking if they could also create something for the library site. Teachers also began approaching me to do similar projects with their classes.

Still, not all teachers are at the point where they are willing to have students involved in creating digital content. However, I helped several departments create collaborative sites for their staff where teachers

added content for other teachers. For instance, Career and Life Management (CALM) is a course that several teachers from different departments teach. It is quite difficult for all of those teachers to get together. Through the CALM share site that was created and linked to the virtual library, teachers share resources, collaborate on assignments and even showcase exemplars of student work. We now have a community of teachers from different departments working together easily for the first time. They are building and sharing content through the virtual library.

In order to help teachers develop their own participatory culture skills, it was essential to build teachers' capacity with technology tools. Research tells us that high school students are immersed in technology outside of the classroom, but many of our teachers are intimidated by technology (Cooper, 2012; Ollis, 2011) and they would like support in implementing the use of Web 2.0 tools (Ollis, 2011). This led me to wonder, how can I as the teacher-librarian use the virtual school library to support teachers' technology learning?

When I was taking a summer course on Web 2.0 tools I realized the importance of building teacher capacity in integrating technology into classroom experiences. It was in this course that I really got to experience how people could best use technology to enhance their learning. The graduate students in the course looked at emerging technologies and explored how to use these tools in educational settings. Each week we would play with a new Web 2.0 tool, looking at not only how the tool worked but also how staff and students might use the tool. This playing did not by any means make me an expert. It did, however, give me a starting place to work with my own staff to build teacher capacity on integrating technology in the classroom.

I started by working with teachers who I will refer to as early adopters (Sahin, 2006). These teachers, like Ron, are willing to learn and take risks when it comes to integrating technology into their classes. This led to many of those hallway-conversations and short professional development sessions around technology. When I worked on building resources for teachers' assignments, I would introduce teachers to a Web 2.0 tool that I thought might engage students and at the same time, support their learning. Teachers sometimes invited me to introduce a new tool to their students, and I found that the teacher was usually learning right alongside the students. The school library offered more formal professional development sessions on technology but attendance was sporadic. School lunchtime activities and the day-to-day business of teaching got in the way. I considered ways in which the virtual library could support my attempts to offer meaningful and relevant technology professional development to my teachers.

Around this same time my school district became a Google Apps district. Google Apps for Education include applications that go far beyond Gmail. Students can access Google Docs, a cloud based tool for creating word documents, spreadsheets and forms, Google Presentation, and more. Students cannot only create content using Google Apps; they can share these creations with their teachers and their peers to gather feedback. As well, they can collaborate on the same piece of work in real time. I have had up to 10 students collaborating on the same piece of work using Google Apps, and the learning has increased exponentially. I have also run a paperless English 10 class, with all assignments created in Google Apps and 'handed in' by simply sharing them with me. The level of engagement in this class exceeded my expectations. The best part was that no one could 'lose' his or her homework! As I worked with students using Google Apps, I realized its potential for also engaging with teachers.

As I learned more about the collaboration possible in the cloud, I began to look at how I could build a place for staff to collaborate and build knowledge using these tools. As one of my projects for a course I took in the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program, I was able to experiment with Google sites and created a knowledge-building collaborative space for my staff. The understandings that I had developed from my previous Web 2.0 course allowed me to approach the task of building a website (which before would have been a huge and frightening task) with a sense of play and exploration. I was

able to allow myself to make mistakes, to try new ideas, and to build a site that met the needs of my staff, especially those who work better on their own and with no time restrictions.

Now, *Strathcona Teachers Learning in the Cloud* (https://sites.google.com/site/thefutureisinthecloud/) is a part of the virtual school library and is a just-in-time, anytime PD for teachers. It has links to Web 2.0 tools, tutorials on how to use the toolsand examples of student work and assignments that teachers could use. However, even though I introduced the space to teachers at staff meetings and department meetings it remained a space for individual teachers to access, and has not become that collaborative sharing space that I envisioned. I needed to go back to my administrator and the drawing board. It was looking back to the Web 2.0 class that held the answer.

I realized that what was missing was a specific time and the opportunity for face-to-face professional development. Many teachers expressed interest, but perhaps it was unrealistic to expect them to use the site to build these skills on their own time. Once that personal face-to-face learning had taken place, then teachers could use the site as a follow up to solidify and expand their skills. I approached my administration (have I mentioned how important that administration support is?) to see if I could have part of a Professional Learning Day to introduce some of these tools to teachers. Becoming a Google Apps school provided me with the opportunity. I provided a full day workshop with staff on Google Apps and helped each department set up a collaborative Google site. For some departments this site has become a place to collaborate on tests, share resources and assignments; for others it has become a place for department meeting agendas. Teachers are building the same 21st century skills that we want to ensure our students are using. They are using the technology to connect, collaborate and create. Teachers have access to cross-curricular sites that have been created for the virtual library to build skills such as one this one on Digital Storytelling in the Classroom (https://sites.google.com/site/scona054/home). Staff can also collaborate and share ideas on these collaborative sites. Introducing the tools and sites through Professional Development days rather than in five minutes in a staff or department meeting or through email has given teachers time to play and explore. They can then go back and get that just-in-time support through the site.

The virtual library has become a space for teachers to explore, practice, share and build on their skills in technology learning and teaching. They have been invited into the virtual library and they have come, moving the library from a *Me* to a *We* place.

When I took the Web 2.0 course, I wrote a blog post about how the one-dimensional aspect of my virtual library space was not meeting the needs of my networked, participatory students. Outside of school time, students are spending hours using the Internet to create content (Cash, 2010, Cooper, 2012, Jenkins et al, 2006, Pew Research, 2011, Prensky 2009, Warlick, 2007, Watkins, 2009). Students were creating content for teachers using web tools, but there was no place for them to share this content with the school community. I needed to open the door of the virtual library and let students in. Instead of being outside observers, students can be content creators and knowledge sharers.

By letting students in, the virtual library becomes that "avenue for questioning, information sharing, reflection, networked learning, and exploration to connect not only with each other but with experts in the world outside" (Hamilton, 2011, p. 41). Creekview High School Library has embraced the participatory culture and invited students in using digital tools. The work that Hamilton has done to create a meaningful virtual school library has inspired me in the work that I do as the teacher-librarian at my school. Hamilton has created a digital environment that harnesses the multitude of cloud computing and social media tools:

> To allow [Creekview High School] students to not only scaffold their learning but also to "express their insights on world issues. They may be Skyping with author Allan Stratton about the HIV epidemic in Africa, participating in a blogathon to help others in need, or sharing a presentation about the conflict in Sudan through video via the library YouTube channel. (p. 41)

Seeing what Hamilton did with her students led me to approach our leadership teacher about a possible collaboration using the library to facilitate awareness for and interest in issues that are important to our students and the world. Every year our school leadership team runs a global initiative. Providing students with the opportunity to became aware of and use online resources, the students researched and wrote blog posts on global issues. Discussions and student comments through these blogs led to the school population deciding to focus on the issue of water.

Once the students decided on the initiative, a student run was created. Students used social media to communicate and collaborate. As well, students created promotional videos that were uploaded to the school's YouTube channel. It was amazing to see the students so engaged in learning and wanting to share their ideas with the world. Our students, when given the opportunity to communicate, connect and collaborate through the resources made available through the school's virtual library, were learning and demonstrating those 21st century skills that students need to be productive citizens (Alberta Education, 2012).

At the same time, Ron approached me again and asked if there was a way that we could somehow build a digital textbook for Social 10 using the online library resources. He hoped that rather than relying on a recently-purchased but already out-of-date textbook, his students could have a text that could be continuously updated and revised as time passed. In other words, we would create a living space with real time data linked to the library's databases, YouTube videos, blogs, and other Web-based media. I created a Google site, shared it with Ron and showed him how to add content. We then showed his class the site and explained our goal of having an online resource that his class would help build to support their learning. They were invited to the site and showed how to add content. Each student created a blog on a global issue of his or her choice, linked it to the site and other students began commenting on issues that they were interested in. Eventually all students were adding to the content on the site and rich discussions were taking place. What started as a simple question - can we use the library and its resources to build a digital textbook for Social 10 that is relevant and current, turned into helping build a space that is truly participatory.

The virtual library site has now become a living space where students are creating meaningful content. Students have been invited into the virtual library and they have come, moving it from a *Me* space to a *We* place.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SCHOOL LEADERS...?

I believe that a virtual school library is a place that can help prepare our students for a world of work that is "about networking, question-posing, critical assessment of information and media, collaborative teamwork, and creating new knowledge and ideas" (Jacobsen, 2013, para. 5).

I wish I could say that the Scona virtual library is complete so that those leaders who do decide to follow through on building this needed digital space for staff and students can see the finish line. However, in order to become a true participatory space where students and teachers co-create knowledge through collaboration, the virtual library never stops evolving. After all, a participatory virtual library is about more than just knowledge acquisition; it is about knowledge building and, therefor, that is an infinite process.

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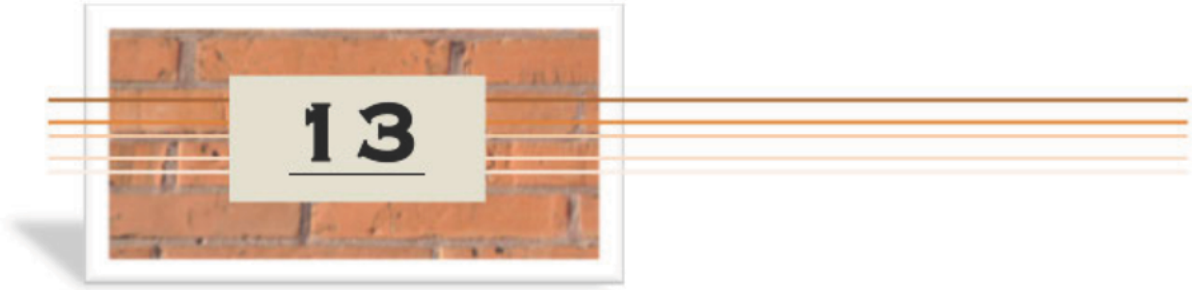

Building Capacity for Technology in Teachers

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Why should school leaders care... ?

It used to be, once upon a time, that we taught students in desks, in rows, with the technology of the day: chalkboard and chalk. It used to be that teachers knew it all and told students what they should know. It used to be, students looked up encyclopedias and books in the card catalogue to get their information. That's what it used to be... before the tsunami of Web 2.0 swept away the used-to-bes. Technology has changed the game, the players, and indeed the playing field of education. The way we teach and learn will never be the same

Teaching with technology is no longer an option in this brave new world. Twenty-first century literacies are upon us and are needed by our students in order to be successful citizens of our increasingly technological world (Alberta Education, 2012). While digital literacy is only one component, using technology for teaching and learning allows for what the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2012) calls the 4 Cs: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. Our students are already using some of these skills outside of the classroom, on Facebook, YouTube, and other social networking sites. Teachers need to embrace technology in order to engage and motivate our students while building their capacity to be critical and ethical users and creators of information. The teacher-librarian is a key player in developing teacher capacity. How does the teacher-librarian play this role? I believe it is in 'being the change', in modeling an open learning disposition, in creating a safe environment for teachers to explore technology, and by collaborating with them to discover new ways to incorporate technology.

When I began my Masters of Education degree in Teacher-Librarianship, my school was just beginning to move towards using technology for teaching and learning. I was passionate about inquiry, literacy and learning, and had the disposition of an eager learner, always willing to try something new. Our retiring teacher-librarian and our principal felt that I would be a good fit for the library program, and so I stepped

into the role. “Take a course or two,” my mentor suggested. So began my wild and wonderful journey that exponentially multiplied my ideas of what it means to be truly literate.

When I considered digital literacy, I felt I was on top of it. I was computer savvy. After all, I could email, create documents and use Google to search for information. It was not until I took a class in something called Web 2.0 that I began to dimly understand the sea change that was happening to our society. I can honestly say that this class changed my life, and through me, the lives of the staff and students that I work with. Technology gave me a new lens through which to see the world, and broadened that world considerably. Social media gave me the opportunity to connect with other educators around the world, building a Personal Learning Network that allowed me to explore and build new ideas around teaching. I now use Web 2.0 in my daily life, both personally and professionally: blogs, wikis, RSS, Animoto, Prezi, Google Apps, and more. I have moved from considering myself computer savvy, to seeing myself as an engaged, life-long learner as I navigate the ever-evolving world of technology.

My administration was keen on integrating technology in daily teaching and learning and, as teacher-librarian, I was part of the team that looked at ways to support teachers who were interested in using technology. However, some teachers were uncertain and unsure of what/how/when to use it. How could they teach with technology when they didn’t feel like they were the ‘experts’ in the use of these tools? How could they keep up with the barrage of new Web 2.0 tools, social media, apps, and mobile devices that their students were using effortlessly in their lives outside of school? Administration focused on developing the infrastructure for technology use, however research has shown that availability of technology does not always translate into teachers using it for teaching and learning with students (Alberta Teacher's Association, 2011; Granger, Morbey, Lotherington, Owston & Wideman, 2002; Murgatroyd & Couture, 2010; Windschitl & Sahl, 2002). The infrastructure is necessary, but not sufficient for teachers to actually *use* the technology with students.

None of our staff were innovators, the first ones to adopt a new technology. Some of our staff were early adopters, eager to forge ahead and use new technology. Most of our staff were from the early majority. They waited for others to try the system first, and needed support in learning how to use new technology. Then we had a few late majority and laggards, who were resistant to technology. They were comfortable with the old, and struggled to understand the reasoning behind the adoption of technology (Sahin, 2006). Because technology use for teaching and learning was mandated by our administration, all staff were required to use it, regardless of their place on the continuum of innovation.

The answer to increasing teacher capacity was not one-shot professional development; the solution was in fostering a change in disposition towards teaching and learning. The teacher-librarian can lead teachers to approach learning in a different way: open and excited about learning, playing with new ideas, and taking risks. One of the key ways I, as the teacher-librarian, supported staff in this paradigm shift was to ‘Be the Change’. I modeled an inquiry-based attitude, an openness and excitement about being a lifelong learner. I also worked with those teachers who were willing to learn one or two tools, and nudged them towards technology. I became the ‘soft place’ for the late majority and laggard teachers to land, someone they could trust to support them while they fumbled their way towards using tools that they did not quite understand. I became an expert on the research surrounding the reasons behind using technology to increase student learning and achievement, and I shared the research with my colleagues to better help them understand not only the ‘how’, but the ‘why’ of using Web 2.0 and technology tools.

What do school leaders need to know...?

> ...If Rip van Winkle awoke today, he wouldn't recognize or understand the work in an architect's office where the drawings are done by AutoCAD, in a mechanic's garage where computers run diagnostic tests, or at a retail counter where sales are made and tracked by computer. All of these places and interactions would be radically different from the world the Rip fell asleep in, but if Mr. van Winkle walked into a classroom where students were sitting in rows listening to teachers lecture by the blackboard, then Rip would finally feel right at home. As Web 2.0 technologies reshape nearly every aspect of modern life, their adoption has been relatively slow within the classroom. (Reich, 2008, p. 14)

Our very society is changing. Social networking is driving elections and revolutions (Watkins, 2009). The digital revolution is changing our society much in the same way that the Industrial Revolution changed the fabric of 18th century society. The Internet pervades our daily lives in both our work and our play (Pew Research, 2011). Indeed, brain research shows that we are physically changing due to our increased screen time (Carr, 2010, Prensky, 2009). For many, the Internet has become the new pen or pencil. In this brave new technological world, our students are engaged and networked 'digital natives', who spend hours online, viewing and creating content, and connecting with each other (Cash, 2010; Cooper, 2012; Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison, & Weigre, 2006; Pew Research, 2011; Prensky, 2001, 2009; Watkins, 2009). Ninety-five percent of teens are online daily (Pew Research, 2011), yet often, when they come to school, their access to and use of technology is put on hold for the seven hours they spend in our classrooms (Atkinson & Swaggerty, 2011). We need to include technology in our instruction in order to motivate, engage and increase the achievement of these networked students.

Looking forward, many governments, including Alberta's, are highlighting key competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, digital literacy and collaboration that are required by today's learners (Alberta Education, 2010; British Columbia Education, 2011; Manitoba Education and Training, 1998; Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010). Included in this idea is the concept of considering the learner as a knowledge producer instead of a knowledge consumer (Murgatroyd & Couture, 2010), and technology plays a key role in this transformation. The following graphic highlights Alberta Education's vision of the 21st century learner: who is an engaged, ethical and entrepreneurial.

Further support for integrating technology into content areas and pedagogical practice is found in the TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). In this model, the Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) intersection not only acknowledges that the subject area influences the types of technology used, but it also recognizes that technology transforms the subject area (Harris, Mishra & Koehler, 2009). In support of these new dimensions, Web 2.0 tools fit with the move towards student-centered, collaborative and constructivist teaching, as these tools facilitate interaction and communication among students (Kingsley & Brinkerhoff, 2011). Proponents say schools should be responding by increasing the use of technology in the classroom to motivate, engage and increase student achievement. Does the research support this idea?

Research and anecdotal evidence suggest that using Web 2.0 tools increase student motivation and engagement in writing (Ballast, Stephens, & Radcliffe, 2008; Figg & McCartney, 2010; MacBride & Luehmann, 2008; McGrail & Davis, 2011). Most writing has only one audience, the teacher. The ability of Web 2.0 tools to share one's work with a wider world beyond the teacher is one of the benefits frequently stated by proponents of technology. For example, writing on a blog can be used with any

subject area, and students are far more engaged in editing and revising their work when it is for a wider audience. Blogs allow for the possibility of immediate feedback from the teacher, their classmates and beyond (MacBride & Luehmann, 2008; McGrail & Davis, 2011). With both blogging and digital storytelling, regular and at-risk students show increased engagement in writing tasks and output of work (Ballast et al., 2008; Figg & McCartney, 2010). One teacher participant in a study on using digital storytelling with research projects stated, "...students would beg, and I mean genuinely beg…to work on their research project" (Atkinson & Swaggerty, 2011, p. 106).

Using Web 2.0 tools increases achievement

All teaching should be directed towards the goal of increasing student understanding in a way that can be demonstrated. As the use of Web 2.0 tools has been shown to increase motivation and engagement, it should follow that it will also increase student achievement, and indeed studies that show increased motivation and engagement also report increased achievement. Using Web 2.0 tools leads to increases in vocabulary, critical literacy skills, understanding of language, and writing skills (Figg, McCartney & Gonsoulin, 2009; Figg & McCartney, 2010; Malhiwsky, 2010; McGrail & Davis, 2011). Students also report that using Web 2.0 tools enhances the course material; "Seeing and hearing are better than just reading, it gives the subject more life" (Malhiwsky, 2010, p. 69). The question then becomes, not WHY should we, but HOW can we effectively integrate and use Web 2.0 tools in education?

Effective use of Web 2.0 tools in education begins with the teacher. Teachers report that lack of training in technology tools impedes their ability to use them effectively, and comfort level with technology is the most significant indicator of integrating technology with curriculum (Alberta Teachers Association, 2011; Wood, Mueller, Willoughby, Specht, & Deyoung, 2005). Other factors that come into play when considering teachers' adoption of technology are: their personal use of technology and beliefs about its use for teaching and learning, the expectations of the school/district, the level of professional development available for teachers, time to integrate and plan the uses of technology, and a supportive, collaborative atmosphere among staff. (Alberta Teacher's Association, 2011; Granger, et al., 2002; Murgatroyd & Couture; 2010; Windschitl & Sahl, 2002).

How can the teacher-librarian support teachers in developing the use of technology in their lived curriculum? As well as addressing the above factors, teacher-librarians can provide the just-in-time and informal learning, the atmosphere that encourages innovation, and be a supportive colleague, all of which have a high impact on changing teachers' practices in terms of integrating technology (Granger et al., 2003; Kitchenham, 2009; National Education Association, 2008; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Ollis, 2011; Wood et al., 2005).

Training and beliefs about technology for teaching and learning

The teacher-librarian is ideally situated to be a leader in the training of staff to use Web 2.0 tools. The dispositions of 21st century teacher-librarians include understanding the roles technology can play in teaching and learning, and the critical contributions that teacher-librarians make to a school include cooperative planning and inservicing staff (Branch & Oberg, 2001; de Groot & Branch, 2011). These dispositions of being a life-long learner add to teacher's understanding and awareness of the research about using technology to teach and learn.

Often, professional development is focused on changing teachers' beliefs in order to change their practice. Guskey's (2002) research shows that teachers' beliefs change *after* their practices have changed and the value for student learning becomes clear. Similarly, comfort level with technology rises with the use of technology (Granger et al., 2003). When this understanding is combined with the realization that

the expectations of the district/school have an impact, it highlights that it is essential for administrators to have the *expectation* that teachers will use technology. Not unsurprisingly, the tools most frequently used by teachers are technology tools which are mandated by administration, such as digital marking, reporting and learning management systems (Alberta Teacher's Association, 2011). Often, when change is mandated by administrators, teachers feel some resistance, especially if the task requires skills with which they are unfamiliar or unsure. Including the collaborative and communicative skills of a teacher-librarian to work with staff can help administrators to diffuse tension and reassure staff that they will have support as they begin their learning (Granger et al., 2003; Kitchenham, 2006; Wood et al., 2005).

Developing a risk-taking attitude towards technology is essential to building technology skills (Vannetta & Fordham, 2004). Teacher-librarians model these risk-taking behaviours for staff, and provide non-judgmental support for staff members who are unsure of themselves in regard to technology (de Groot & Branch, 2011; Branch & Oberg, 2001). This modeling, combined with hands-on support, has been shown to lead to increased technology use among staff (Truman, 2009). As well, teacher-librarians are proactive in reaching out to staff in order to support them as they integrate technology into teaching and learning (Lamb & Johnson, 2008). One-shot professional development is not enough to achieve positive outcomes with technology. Giving teachers time to play with technology and the collaborative support needed to discover how to use technology to facilitate student learning is key to successful implementation (Murgatroyd & Couture, 2010; Vannetta & Fordham, 2004; Windschitl & Sahl, 2002). Finding this time for each teacher to integrate technology into his or her teaching style is difficult. A teacher-librarian with a flexible schedule has the time and opportunity to collaborate and assist teachers as they strive to understand the abundant ways Web 2.0 tools can be used in a variety of subjects.

Teacher-librarians have a host of dispositions including: collaboration, understanding of curricula, effective communication, flexibility, risk-taking, evaluation of resources, understanding of technology tools for teaching and learning, and placing a priority on helping staff with the implementation of change (Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada & Canadian School Library Association, 1998; Bush & Jones, 2010; Valenza, 2011). These dispositions make the teacher-librarian an essential role model and support for teachers as they dive into the sea of Web 2.0.

What can school leaders do about... ?

In the 70's, Alvin Toffler (1971) coined the term 'future shock'. His definition of the term was 'a personal perception of too much change in a short period of time' ("Future shock", n.d. para 1). Over time, it has come to mean specifically, "A condition of distress and disorientation brought on by the inability to cope with rapid societal and technological change" ("Future shock", 2013, para 1). Forty-three years later, future shock is well entrenched in our culture, and shows no sign of stopping. Rather, it often seems to be accelerating. The digital divide between youth who are living an online, connected life and those of us who are educating them can seem overwhelming. My introduction to the world of Web 2.0 began with a large dose of future shock. My experiences in overcoming the perception of being overwhelmed to an enjoying the ride helped me to understand and support other staff as they struggled to incorporate technology into their professional lives.

One teacher-librarian's journey

As stated previously, I began my inquiry into Web 2.0 thinking I was pretty savvy with technology, which to me meant emailing and creating Word documents and PowerPoints. However, within the first few days of a Masters course in using Web 2.0 tools for teaching and learning, I was overwhelmed and

bewildered. My previous experiences using technology were just not going to cut it. Blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, photo sharing, social networking, they all seemed so interesting, but at the same time, so BIG. How was I ever going to become an expert?

I finally realized I needed to change my thinking when my professor likened Web 2.0 to a never-ending tidal wave...there is always going to be a new tool just around the corner. This is when I GOT it! I had been using the paradigm most frequently seen in education; focusing on *what* you learn and how *well* you learn it. I finally understood that I needed to begin with learning *how to learn*. As new tools replace 'old' ones, as new technology replaces the technology of yesterday (literally yesterday!), I needed to have a disposition of openness and excitement around learning new ideas, one that is modeled by most of our students when it comes to technology, as they spend hours online exploring new ways to create content and connect (Atkinson & Swaggerty, 2011; Cash, 2010; Cooper, 2012; Jenkins et al., 2006; Pew Research, 2011; Prensky, 2001, 2009; Watkins, 2009). Creating and living this disposition has led me to become an early adopter; a lifelong learner about using technology for teaching and learning, following blogs, Twitter hashtags, and educational technology news.

Yet many teachers seem to be stuck in the same mindset I had been originally; overwhelmed and struggling to understand both how to use these tools and why these technologies should be integrated into their teaching (Alberta Teacher's Association, 2011; Wood et al., 2005). In my online Web 2.0 course, I was required to explore and blog about one Web 2.0 tool per week, and then discuss with classmates the possible educational uses of the tool.

An interesting spin off was the development of an online Professional Learning Network (PLN) that I use and engage in to this day. Through conversation and collaboration with other Masters' students, I built relationships with others who were interested in using technology with students. Learning how to follow blogs using RSS feeds gave me access to the ideas of leading thinkers from around the world, such as David Warlick, Alan November, Joyce Valenza, and more. Developing a Twitter presence allowed me to interact with educators in my district, province, country and internationally. I was able to ask questions in a safe space and get ideas, links and support from the global community of educators. By developing my own PLN, I could share my learning with staff and help them build their own PLNs.

My technology learning was now supported by my PLN. This, along with the high expectations of the Masters Web 2.0 course that demanded that I take the time to play and explore and challenged me to meet assignment due dates led me to be successful. Does this sound familiar? Is this not what we strive to build in our classrooms? If this is the model for creating successful learning environments for students, then this is the model we need to create for teaching staff as well.

Bringing technology into teaching and learning: One school's story

This was the model that was followed at the school where I began my journey as a teacher-librarian and Technology Ninja three years ago. Shortly after I took my course, our principal purchased a Smartboard for my classroom, a class set of laptops and signed our school up to become part of a pilot project in the district that was focused on using a protected portal for teachers, students and parents to use for teaching and learning. This portal allowed staff and students to create blogs, sites, documents and presentations and share them with each other. Administration set clear expectations that staff would use the technology and the portal site in their teaching. Teachers were given professional development opportunities and were put in collaborative grade group teams to support each other and brainstorm ways in which they could use this technology in their classrooms.

My Web 2.0 course gave me an early adopter disposition and, as a direct result, I was given the first Smartboard in our school to use in my kindergarten class (the other half of my teacher-librarian position). Together, my kindergarten students and I explored the varied uses of the Smartboard, increasing all of our capacity for learning. The interactive capability of the Smartboard was perfect for little people who learn through movement and doing. We started every day with an interactive calendar and morning message that allowed students to manipulate objects and data including letters, numbers and shapes. One of our favourite activities was using interactive CVC dice, which students touched to spin and create words. Other teachers came and saw what we were doing and began to think of how Smartboards could be used in transformative ways in their classrooms. Soon, all the teachers began clamoring for one, even the laggards on staff. Our administrator had used Roger's Theory of Innovation (Rogers, 2003) to her advantage, changing teachers' perception of the value of Smartboards for teaching and learning.

My administrator began with the early adopters, those eager to try a new technology, who then shared their excitement with the early majority, those who wait for others to learn and try out new ideas. The early majority in turn joined the others to become mentors for the late majority and laggards, those who were resistant to technology. At the same time, teachers were also expected and *required* to use technology. At the beginning of the process, as the teacher-librarian, I became the go-to person for helping staff to use the Smart Notebook software to develop lessons to support curricular objectives. With a disposition to help others and to make their urgency my urgency, that support took place just in time, when teachers needed it, using my flexible schedule. Soon, all staff became confident in using Smartboards, and they began to share with each other, allowing all of us to build and grow our expertise.

While staff had been given professional development around using other Web 2.0 technologies, the day-to-day reality of teaching often pushed practicing that professional development to the back burner, and they did not retain all the information they had been given. Teachers require ongoing support and the opportunity to practice, practice, practice (Guskey, 2002). Without this opportunity, they do not remember the minutiae of how to set up a site, insert images, share documents, etcetera. This is similar to how our students learn skills best when they are taught in context. This is where my Web 2.0 experience came into play. Not that I was an expert on any of the above (although I was using technology on a regular basis, so was far more familiar with all the techniques), but I did have a good understanding of the research around educational technology and a newfound fearless approach to learning. Adopting the attitude of 'Hmmm, how can we....' instead of "I don't know how..." or the dreaded mating call of the computer technician, 'I know all, and you don't," allowed staff to approach me without feeling that they were being judged. My role as a teacher-librarian with a flexible schedule allows me the freedom to collaborate and work with groups of students and staff on an as-needed basis. For example, I am available to work with the grade 6 teachers to build and co-teach an inquiry unit on government for four or five weeks, and then move to working with the grade three teachers on an unit about global citizenship. As well, I further support teachers by providing what I call 'drive-by PD,' talking with them about technology while on supervision, passing in the hallway and even in the bathroom.

All well and good, you say, but how did this impact students? My teachers reported the same outcomes that the research suggests; student motivation and engagement in curricular subjects increased when using technology (Atkinson & Swaggerty, 2011, Ballast et al., 2008; Figg & McCartney, 2010). Teachers collaborated with me as the teacher-librarian in the use of the TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) when deciding what technology, if any, to use with students. They began with the curricular objective (CK), considered the pedagogy they wished to use to teach it (PK), and then looked at appropriate technologies (TK) to teach/practice/present the concept

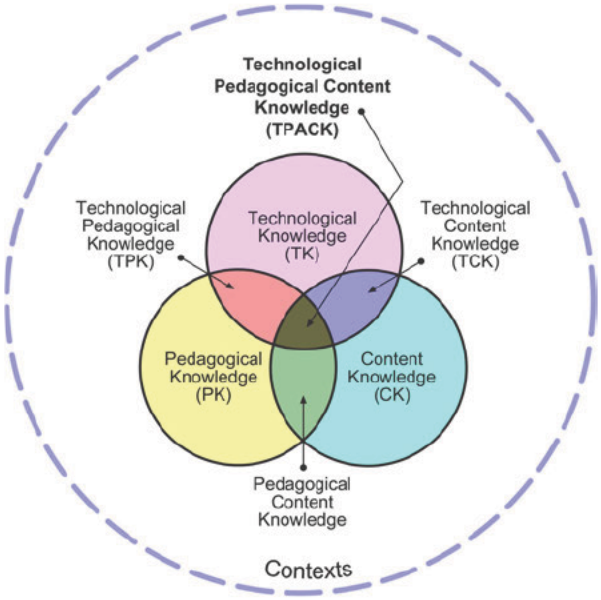

Figure 1: TPACK.

As students began creating content, sharing and providing formative assessment for each other and showcasing their learning using wikis, blogs, podcasts, presentation tools, digital storytelling and more, teachers reported that student achievement rose. As students progressed over the three years, they became more adept at using technology in a variety of ways, and built 21st century skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. Students began to:

1. Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge
2. Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge
3. Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society
4. Pursue personal and aesthetic growth. (AASL, 2009, p. 12)

What does this mean for school leaders...?

- Make the technology available. Consider what infrastructure you need to have in order to reach your school's vision of technology use and ensure that it is in place and working well. If the technology is not working, then teachers will get frustrated and revert to their previous habits.
- Set clear expectations that teachers need to use the technology available.
- Discover where your staff is on the Continuum of Innovation (Rogers, 2003). Be aware that just like students, teachers are at different levels of understanding and use of technology.
- Provide professional development around the hardware and software of your chosen devices, as well as in using Web 2.0 tools. Differentiate your professional development to match your staff's needs.
- Provide your qualified teacher-librarian a flexible schedule in order for him/her to be able to provide on-going support to staff as they move forward in their technological learning. While one-time professional development is necessary, it is not sufficient for teachers to provide mastery, just as one lesson is not sufficient for students to develop mastery of a concept.

- Provide your qualified teacher-librarian time to develop tutorial screencasts, how-to sites and build a list of Web 2.0 tools that teachers can investigate. These should be able to be accessed on your digital library site in order to provide anytime, anywhere, at your own pace learning for staff.
- Encourage an atmosphere of risk-taking. Celebrate mistakes as well as accomplishments, building the understanding that we will make mistakes and that some endeavors will not succeed in the way that we envision. 21st century learning thrives upon risk-taking and accepting that mistake making and failures are an essential part of the learning process (Fogarty, n.d.).
- Provide time for staff to plan together, or to share their plans using the affordances of technology
- Encourage staff to become part of an online professional learning network through social media such as as RSS feeds and Twitter. Your teacher-librarian should have a list of blogs and Twitter hashtags for teachers to follow on the digital library site.
- Celebrate and share successes

You will notice the teacher-librarian has a large role in the above-mentioned steps. A primary goal for teacher-librarians is

> To ensure that learners are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the technological society of the 21st century...(and)...to play a leading role in weaving such skills throughout the curriculum so that all members of the school community are effective users of ideas and information. (Everhart, Mardis and Johnston, 2010, p. 2)

In order to achieve this goal, a qualified teacher-librarian is a leader who:

- promotes critical thinking by connecting learners with the world of information in various formats
- stays abreast of emerging technologies and formats
- adapts to and models new skills, new technologies, and new understandings of the learning process
- integrates the use of state-of-the-art technologies as a means for effective and creative learning (AASL, 2009, p. 23)

Teacher-librarians are uniquely placed to serve as a technology leader within the school community. As one school principal I know put it, "The teacher-librarian's department is the entire school. As department head the teacher-librarian works with each staff and student in the building." (H. Van Ginhoven, 2013). A qualified teacher-librarian will have taken the time to build collaborative relationships with all staff members, and will have worked with students from all grade levels through a dynamic library program. In addition, teacher-librarians are experienced in developing professional development for staff, working with committees both in the school and district, and in technology integration (Perez, 2010).

In fact, Starkman (2007) suggests that it is "...the attitude and skill of the librarians that determines how smoothly and productively the transition to the 21st century classroom goes" (p. 24). The ideas of attitude and skill can be combined into the term *dispositions*, defined earlier in this chapter. A qualified teacher-librarian will demonstrate the 21st century dispositions of communication, collaboration, flexibility, digital literacy, and leadership (Jensen, 2012) in addition to an open and fearless approach to learning, a 'How can we?" instead of a "We can't" attitude.

Today I am the teacher-librarian for one morning a week and a classroom teacher for the rest of the week, in a school that has not had a qualified teacher-librarian for many years. Although most classrooms have Smartboards, the computer lab is filled with second-hand desktops and there is one weak wireless access point. Is this a case for hand wringing and lamentation? Not at all! The prerequisites for successful integration of technology and 21st century skills exist: a principal who believes in developing 21st century skills in staff and students through the use of technology and building a strong library program, funding for the infrastructure of wireless access and devices provided by a successful fundraiser, and a

teacher-librarian (me!) who demonstrates the dispositions of a 21st century learner and the skills of a qualified teacher-librarian (AASL, 2009).

Mindful of our district's foray into Google Apps, the administration sent me and two other teachers who are early adopters to professional development focused on Google Apps for Education, which have been adopted by our district. Given the district and school expectation that all teachers will use Google Apps, this gives me an entry point for working with teachers. I am preparing a Google site that will provide anytime, anywhere, at your own pace learning for staff, as well as working with the other lead teachers to develop professional development plan.

So the journey towards building a 21st century school culture will begin again with another school and staff learning to go beyond the used-to-bes and moving into the future. And me? I'll be modeling a disposition of fearless learning, presenting professional development to staff, and finding and sharing the research showing how students will benefit. I will be enthusiastically collaborating with teachers on ways to use Web 2.0 tools and Google Apps with their students. Last, but not least, I will be providing a safe place for teachers to ask questions and share the messiness of technology learning, whether it's in the staffroom, on supervision, and yes, even in the bathroom.

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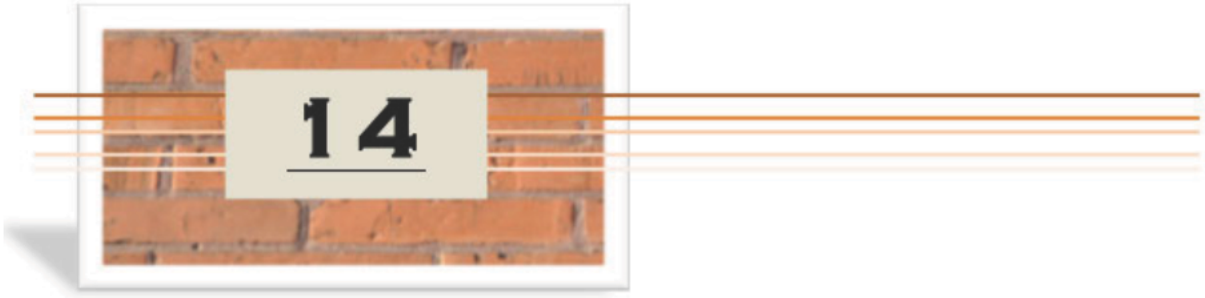
Teacher-Librarians Becoming and Being Literacy Leaders

As literacy leaders in their schools and districts, teacher-librarians have a critical role to play in the development of readers in their communities. Going beyond teaching reading and writing skills, teacher-librarians are key to building positive reading cultures in their schools, reading cultures which foster a lifelong love of reading for information and pleasure. Teacher-librarians not only support their students' reading habits, they provide ongoing professional development, mentorship, and support to their teaching colleagues, who may need assistance choosing books for their classroom libraries or even finding just the right book to read themselves during a school-wide silent reading time. As literacy leaders, teacher-librarians are integral members of a school's reading life, and the chapters in this section of *Becoming and Being* highlight the many ways in which teacher-librarians shape children's and teachers' school-based reading experiences.

Terri Hayes sets the stage for this section by sharing the origins of her interest in reading cultures in schools and highlights many essential components of a successful and positive school-wide reading culture. She concludes by suggesting that schools should be striving for a thriving school library program, with passionate, knowledgeable staff, so that all students develop a love of reading. The following three chapters in this section all zoom in on particular aspects of the teacher-librarian's role as literacy leader in schools. Melissa Blackwood introduces us to the concept of free voluntary reading (FVR) and provides conclusive evidence that FVR in schools has a demonstrable effect on children's reading and writing interest and ability. The chapter explores the benefits of FVR, its impact on English language learners, and provides examples of effective FVR programs in schools. Stacey Miller's chapter focuses on boys and reading and provides a background understanding of the patterns of boys' reading engagement, habits and achievements. She goes on to provide practical solutions for increasing boys' engagement in reading in school settings with the ultimate goal of instilling a lifelong love of reading in today's boys. This section on literacy leadership for teacher-librarians concludes with Metthea Maddern's chapter on a reading program that emphasizes the importance of effective reading comprehension instruction. Maddern introduces us to Adrienne Gear's *Reading Power* programs and provides practicing teacher-librarians and classroom teachers with suggestions for implementing *Reading Power* in schools. Although *Reading Power* is often focused on classroom reading instruction, this chapter emphasizes the important role teacher-librarians and school libraries should play when *Reading Power* is used in a school. Together, these four chapters highlight the diversity of experiences and opportunities that teacher-librarians have to promote and support children's reading experiences in schools and school libraries.



Cultivating a Reading Culture: Sowing the Seeds of Success for Every Student

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Why should school leaders care... ?

> *Reading is essential to the well-being and happiness of an individual, and that person's capacity to act as a citizen in a democracy. Hence, a culture in which reading is promoted for all citizens is essential to the general good of our society. A reading culture begins with the youngest members of society because a love of books begins far before a child can read words on a page. (Aldana, 2012, para. 1)*

The seeds of my interest in reading and reading cultures were sown long before I became a teacher. I grew up on a dairy farm in rural New Brunswick. My parents were hard-working people, neither of whom had finished high school. We didn't have a lot of money for extras, and so books were in short supply in our home. I clearly remember the one children's book we did have: *Goodnight Moon*, by Margaret Wise Brown. Every night, when he came in from milking the cows, my father would collapse onto the rickety cot we kept in the corner of the kitchen, invite me to snuggle up beside him, and read: "In the great green room there was a telephone, and a red balloon, and a picture of the cow jumping over the moon..." (Wise Brown, 1947, pp. 1-3). Five decades later, I can still recite that book word for word.

My first school was a two-room schoolhouse, with an outhouse. Although it didn't have many amenities, it was there that I learned to read. I was so enthralled by my new-found ability, I would rush to finish my lessons so that I could push a chair up to the bookshelf at the back of the class and teeter on tiptoes to explore what seemed to me to be an absolute plethora of books, but which was, I now realize, about 20 or 30 well-used books donated by local families.

When I began grade 4, our two-room schoolhouse was closed, and all of us country kids were bussed to a brand-new school in a neighbouring town. I was excited to find that this new school had indoor plumbing and hot running water; but imagine my absolute delight when I discovered that it also contained a library with thousands of books. It didn't take me long to befriend the librarian, and soon I was helping her shelve books during my lunchtime and recess, whilst making mental lists of all the volumes I wanted to read. Thus began my love-affair with books. From my small corner of New Brunswick, books allowed me to travel to exotic places, to learn about animals and ideas I never would have encountered otherwise, and to fly away to imaginary worlds.

By grade 6, I had read almost every book in the school library. Mr. Doug Crowley, my sixth grade teacher, invited me to travel with him twice-a-month to the giant public library in the city of Saint John, where we would choose books for our class. I must have walked around that edifice with my mouth-wide-open! I'd never seen so many books in one place. I owe Mr. Crowley a huge debt of gratitude for recognizing my insatiable hunger for books, and going well beyond what anyone would expect to feed my appetite for words. It should come as no surprise that I chose teaching as my vocation. As a teacher, I have always made reading instruction and promotion an important part of my classroom practice. I've spent years building up a classroom library and rotating the books on a regular basis, reading aloud to my students and providing them with time to read for pleasure during the school day.

However, disturbing changes were subtly beginning to appear. Over the past decade, a burgeoning curriculum and increased accountability measures have caused many teachers to decrease or eliminate the amount of time allocated for free voluntary reading. In fact, I have heard of administrators suggesting to teachers that providing silent reading time during the school day is not a good use of instructional hours. This trend is confirmed by research. For example, Torgerson et al. (2007) found that in most schools, by grade 4, emphasis on reading instruction and promotion had shifted to an emphasis on curriculum content. In addition, as budget strings are tightened, many schools have cut school library staff and hours, and collection budgets thereby eliminating essential programs designed to promote a culture of reading.

I watched these changes from afar, comfortable in my cozy little classroom where reading was a regular and rewarding part of each school day. It was not until the hours of my own school library were cut back to two days a week that I awoke from my stupor and realized that if I wanted to see change, that change would have to begin with me. I promptly applied to the teacher-librarianship program at the University of Alberta, and began to see a new the potential and importance of the school library as the literacy hub of the school.

As I near the end of my university studies, I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to create a culture of reading in our school. My own love of reading has opened so many doors, allowed me to imagine so many possibilities, and has been one of the keys to my own personal and professional success. I owe it to each and every one of my students to ensure that these same opportunities are available to them.

Of course, my reasons for establishing a reading culture are very personal. But are they supported by research? I want this initiative to be a success! For this reason, I invite you to continue this journey with me as I examine what the research says about establishing a reading culture; explore some ideas for increasing student motivation to read that have been effective in other schools; and consider the implications of this research for schools throughout Canada and the world.

What do school leaders need to know...?

There are many and varied reasons why societies in general, and schools in particular, should want to cultivate a reading culture. First and foremost, the more time children spend reading, the more proficient they will become at reading. This applies to all students, including those with learning disabilities and English language learners (ELLs) (Day, Omura & Hiramatsu, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Lee, 2007; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; Sideridis & Scanlon, 2006; Strommen & Mates, 2004). According to Wolf (2007), the ability to become a proficient reader "develops steadily over time through practice, and through more and more reading" (p. 118). Stairs and Stairs-Burgos (2010) concur, adding that "the amount of time children spend **leisure** reading is correlated with reading achievement" (p. 42, emphasis added). But why is reading proficiency important?

As school leaders and educational practitioners, most of us realize intuitively that proficient reading is an essential component of academic success. In fact, studies have confirmed that reading proficiency in children as young as primary school is an excellent predictor of future success not only in secondary school, but in post-secondary studies as well (Fuchs, Fuchs & Kazdan, 1999; Griswold, 2006; Valleley & Shriver, 2003). Krashen (2004) reminds us that in addition to improving reading scores, free voluntary reading improves students' general knowledge, as well as vocabulary development, grammar test performance, writing and oral/aural language ability and possibly even spelling aptitude. Therefore, promoting a culture of reading in schools should result in a positive effect on all students' reading ability, as well as their academic performance across the curriculum. But of course, there are more benefits to reading than just academic success.

Demands of modern life: work, recreation and social participation, require the ability to read proficiently. Krashen (2004) believes that "many people clearly don't read and write well enough to handle the complex literacy demands of modern society" (p. *x*). In this digital age where information is available at the click of a mouse, knowing how to read and comprehend, in a variety of formats, is more important than ever before. Establishing a reading culture helps to prepare students for the world they will enter as adults.

As many of us have experienced, reading is also a pleasurable activity that can have a transformative effect on our lives. Reading can help us to glean new information, to solve problems, to see situations from others' perspectives, to recognise that we are not alone, and to consider possibilities never before imagined. American journalist, Anna Quindlen (1998) writes that:

> In books I have traveled, not only to other worlds, but into my own. I learned who I was and who I wanted to be, what I might aspire to, and what I might dare to dream about my world and myself. (p. 6)

Indeed, brain imaging confirms that the very act of reading creates fundamental changes to our brain and the way we think and process information. Wolf (2007) points out that "the experience of reading is not so much an end in itself as it is our best vehicle to a transformed mind, and, literally and figuratively, to a changed brain" (p. 18).

I hope that you, like me, are convinced that establishing a reading culture in schools is as important in the 21st Century as it was fifty years ago when I was a child. How then, do we establish a reading culture? Like so many things, committing to a new initiative is only the first step. Ensuring that what we are doing is supported by research is vital to the success of the initiative, and improved student outcomes. Research

illustrates a number of factors that must be in evidence in order to ensure the successful cultivation of a reading culture. Some of the key components are discussed below.

Daniels, Marcos and Steres (2011) discuss a middle school in which the principal spearheaded the reading culture initiative. Clearly, strong administrative support is essential for success in developing a reading culture. However, busy administrators often don't have the time required to initiate and sustain a reading culture over the long term. Where available, the teacher-librarian is the individual best positioned to cultivate a reading culture (Haycock, 2003; La Marca, 2003). In fact, the American Association of School Librarians (2010) urges teacher-librarians to "take a leadership role in organizing and promoting literacy projects and events that engage learners and motivate them to become lifelong readers" (para. 6). Of course, this does not have to be done single-handedly. Makatche and Oberlin (2011), two teacher-librarians who write about successfully establishing a reading culture in their school, formed a committee of teachers, parents and students to ensure stakeholder voice and participation. On the other hand, in the absence of school-wide leadership, one cannot underestimate the power of one teacher establishing a reading culture in their classroom as a model for the rest of the school.

It is important that the school community understand what a reading culture is, why it is important, and what they can do to promote it. Makatche and Oberlin (2011) note that "building a culture of reading in a school requires the participation of the entire school community—students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and patrons. To be successful, the whole community must be on board with books" (p. 14). Minton (1980) examined a school where the initiative failed after one year because teachers did not understand why and what they should be doing. She concluded that "if a faculty is to support a new program, it needs to have a stake in that program by being part of the decision-making, adoption process" (p. 501). Providing professional development for teachers, information sessions for parents, and opportunities for all stakeholders to get involved will reap long-term benefits.

Several authors point out the importance of students seeing adults, both at home and at school, reading (Chambers, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Makatche & Oberlin, 2011). Furthermore, several studies found that having teachers read at the same time as students led to more on-task reading for longer periods of time by students (Methe & Hintze, 2003; Wheldall & Entwhistle, 1988). Adult modeling of reading behaviour sends the message that reading is an important activity, and provides students with role models. In addition, when students are surrounded by adults who read regularly, they have more people with whom to discuss their reading, and more people who can provide advice and recommendations on books they might enjoy. Chambers (1991) reminds us that "without enabling adults who are thoughtful readers to give you guidance, it is all but impossible to become a thoughtful literary reader yourself" (p. 88).

For most students, having motivation to read is the first step in their journey to becoming lifelong readers. As Figure 1.0 illustrates, motivation is the starting point in creating a self-perpetuating reading habit. Motivation is important for all students, but perhaps even more so for those with learning disabilities (Bouffard & Couture, 2003; Melekoglu, 2011; Williams, Hedrick & Tushinski, 2008).

Schools must take steps to avoid common practices that de-motivate students to read. Requiring students to create a diorama, complete a comprehension quiz, or prepare a book report when they finish reading a book is not going to encourage most students to read more books. In addition, Worthy (1996) points out that "teachers who require students to report on the books they read for pleasure may be sending a subtle message that reading is not worth doing for its own sake" (p. 490).

Motivation should not be confused with extrinsic rewards for reading. Several researchers have found that providing incentives for reading had either negligible or negative impact on students (Edmunds & Tancock, 2003; Guthrie, Alverson & Poundstone, 1999; McQuillan, 1997). In fact, Guthrie, Alverson and Poundstone caution that those:

> Children who read primarily for rewards and recognition tend to stop their reading when they receive the reward. As a result, they do not see themselves as enjoying books or reading for pleasure, but rather as being successful at getting rewards. (p. 11)

If our goal is to create lifelong readers, then clearly the motivators we provide need to be meaningful over the long term.

Allowing students to choose their own reading materials has been shown to be a key component in student motivation to read, and in establishing a reading culture (Daniels, Marcos & Steres, 2011; Krashen, 2004; Lee, 2007; Mackey, 2003; Worthy, 1996). Worthy (1996) states what should be obvious when she writes that "the way to hook students on reading is to let them read books that interest them" (p. 488). It can be tempting to censor what students read, allowing only those materials that adults consider "good literature." Krashen (2004), on the other hand, suggests that:

> Perhaps the most powerful way of encouraging children to read is to expose them to light reading, a kind of reading that schools pretend does not exist, and a kind of reading that many children, for economic or ideological reasons, are deprived of. (p. 92)

Teaching students how to select books that appeal to them will have a greater long-term impact than telling them what they should be reading.

In general, students are more inclined to read when they have convenient access to a wide variety of reading materials. McQuillan and Au (2001) point out that "evidence indicates that the presence of more reading materials in the classroom and in school is associated with greater reading frequency and achievement" (p. 228). Of course, the school library plays a critical role in providing convenient access to a wide variety of reading materials. Evidence suggests that the number of individual and whole-class visits to the school library is positively correlated with reading frequency and academic achievement (Lance, 2002; McQuillan & Au, 2001).

Several researchers point out the importance of having well-equipped classroom libraries (Krashen, 2004; McQuillan & Au, 2001; Worthy 1996). In schools where the cost of purchasing books for each classroom may not be within budget, the teacher-librarian can be instrumental in creating grade-appropriate mobile book carts that can be interchanged between classes throughout the school year. Haycock (2003) cautions that "classroom collections should not be seen as a substitute for centralized school libraries" (p. 29).
Providing access to a variety of text formats is equally important. There is ample evidence to suggest that audiobooks, eBooks and interactive editions increase student motivation and engagement, as well as providing tools that make the text more accessible for special needs students (Esteves & Whitten, 2011; Fasimpaur, 2004; Larson, 2010). The needs of ELLs must also be considered. Providing dual-language and heritage language books, as well as books that reflect the cultures represented in the school population, provide motivation to read, boost literacy skills and promote self-esteem (Bishop, 2007; Blair, Brasfield, Crenshaw, & Mosely 2011). Blair, Brasfield, Crenshaw and Mosely affirm that "it is important to have reading materials available in all the home languages represented by the ELLs in the school" (p. 35).

Children need time at school every day to read for pleasure (Chambers, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Williams, Hedrick & Tushinski, 2008). This is even more important for disadvantaged children, who may not have access to reading opportunities elsewhere (Williams, Hedrick & Tushinski, 2008). How much time should be provided for reading? Most researchers suggest that the amount of reading time provided should be adjusted as students develop the ability to sustain their reading focus for longer periods (Chambers, 1991; Krashen, 2011; Minton, 1980). While some schools take a school-wide approach to reading, such as in Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), other schools leave timing up to individual classroom teachers. While there is one study suggesting that a school-wide reading time may not be effective (Minton, 1980),

what seems to be most important is that opportunity to read is a predictable, daily, scheduled activity, not just an option students can pursue after they've finished their assigned work: a practice which disadvantages those students who are already at risk.

Research also suggests that social interaction and feedback around a text encourage engaged reading practice (Bryan, Fawson & Reutzel, 2003; Cole, 2002-2003; Gunning, 2000). Harvey and Daniels (2009) remind us that "when they finish a book, real readers usually *talk about it* - with anyone they can find" (p. 200). Providing opportunities for students to discuss their reading, in authentic, meaningful ways, goes a long way toward creating lifelong readers.

When considering environments that promote a reading culture, one must evaluate both the variety and quality of literacy experiences, and the physical environment in which they take place. Cole (2002-2003) found that:

> A wide variety of reading experiences can foster engaged reading-SSR [Sustained Silent Reading], buddy reading, choral reading, teacher-led small groups, storytimes, read-alouds, and so on. You never know what style of reading practice might motivate a child to read more and comprehend better. (p. 335)

Teachers and teacher-librarians need to ensure that they employ a broad repertoire of strategies that encourage reading. Tanner (2008) reminds us that "the physical environment influences student attitudes and behavior" and that "where students learn is as important as many aspects of the curriculum" (p. 446). Minton's (1980) study found that many students did not read because there was no comfortable place to do so. She concluded that it is "unrealistic to expect teachers and students to read when there is no place to sit comfortably" (p. 502). Providing a variety of quiet, comfortable, student-friendly reading areas, in both classrooms and the school library, can go a long way toward encouraging a lifelong reading habit.

Research provides much food for thought. However, in the end, it is what happens in schools and classrooms that matters most. There are many educators who have successfully merged research with practice, cultivating an incredible garden of reading. It is their wisdom and experience that I would like to share next.

What can school leaders do about... ?

Come walk with me as I guide you through the halls of Any School, Anywhere, an establishment that has successfully cultivated a reading culture. Although it's lunchtime, you'll notice that the school library doors are open. Peek inside and you'll see some students curled up in beanbag chairs, others lying on the floor, and a few huddled together, all immersed in what they are reading. That's Johnny over there, a struggling reader, creating a bulletin board display featuring Lincoln Peirce, his favorite author. Sally's on the computer, putting the finishing touches on a book trailer for the book she's just finished reading. That group of middle-school students talking animatedly are discussing *The Alchemist*, the latest selection in their self-directed graphic novel book club. Yasmine is checking out some dual-language books at the counter: she's got quite a stack, doesn't she? The lady over there, frantically pulling props out of the filing cabinet? That's the teacher-librarian, preparing for a book talk.

Ahh, there's the bell. Watch what happens next. There are students in the hall, reading comic books; the custodian's reading today's newspaper; the school secretary's got her nose in her latest romance novel; that child brought his e-reader from home; those boys on the computer are using an online reading program. Every single person in the building is reading. You'll find the principal down the hall, sharing a

joke book with the kindergarten students. Can't you just sense that everyone in this school values reading? It shouldn't come as a surprise that the reading scores of these students have steadily improved since their school established a reading culture. Interestingly, their scores in Math, Social Studies and Science have also gone up. Other, more subtle changes have occurred as well. Teachers will tell you that the students are more motivated and engaged. Behaviour issues have diminished. As you can see, there are any number of activities that can be initiated that motivate students to read, and that are the hallmarks of a reading culture. These may include:

Reader's advisory

Reader's advisory includes those activities designed to provide reading recommendations to others. Ideally, everyone in the school: students, teachers, the teacher-librarian, and possibly even parents and parent volunteers, would be involved in reader's advisory. The beauty of reader's advisory is that you have to have read a book yourself before you can endorse it. Below are a few ideas to get the reader's advisory ball rolling:

Book trailers

Book trailers (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4g3x5O-ETg&feature=youtu.be) provide just enough information about a book to tantalize potential readers, but not so much that they feel like they've already read the book. Book trailers are relatively easy and fun to create using programs like iMovie, Movie Maker, or Web 2.0 tools like Animoto. Having students create book trailers about the books they've read is an excellent and enticing way to integrate technology and Language Arts. Bates (2012-2013) suggests that "the most powerful place to upload book trailers is your own school library's webpage....Having trailers on the school library website allows today's students to know that school libraries are evolving, changing, and refusing to become stagnant" (p. 76).

Book talks

Similar to book trailers, book talks are designed to introduce students to books they may not have noticed or considered. Ellen Thompson (n.d.), an elementary teacher and avid book-talker, writes that "these talks fuel my students' desire to read in class, at home, and over the summer. The positive outgrowth of book talks is that my students read because they want to, not because I ask them to" (para. 1). Follos (2006) recommends that the teacher-librarian also provide book talks to staff on a regular basis, to ensure that they are aware of resources in the school library collection. Book talks can be student-generated and high-tech. Miller (2013) blogs about student-generated book talks that were video-recorded and linked to a quick response (QR) code. These QR codes were displayed throughout the halls of the school, and on the backs of the books that were reviewed, so that anyone with a smartphone could scan the codes and view the book talks.

Figure 1: Scan this QR code to access Shannon Miller's blog on using student book talks and QR codes to provide readers' advisory

Bulletin boards

The much maligned bulletin board can gain a new lease on life as a centre of reader's advisory that even the youngest students in the school can participate in. My grade 1 students love to recommend books to their peers, and so we reserve one of our classroom bulletin boards just for that purpose. Scanning the book cover onto a simple template provides beginning readers with a visual means to identify the book, and scaffolds beginning readers.

Book displays

School libraries could learn a lesson from book retailers when it comes to "marketing" the books in their collection and attracting readers. The traditional tall library stacks, with books displayed spine out, do little to attract potential readers. Display books front-facing whenever possible (Aschenbeck, 2009). Many books are ignored because they are either too high or too low for students to see: changing their position or using lower shelves can make a big difference.

Students themselves can be a source of creative, engaging book displays. One of the most fruitful initiatives our school undertook was asking our struggling and reluctant readers in grades 5 and 6 to create book displays for younger students. Working in groups of two to three, each group chose a theme for their display, and was then charged with finding, reading and evaluating children's books related to that theme. On their assigned week, the group created a display of their recommended books in the school library. In this way, our reluctant readers had a strong incentive to read, and our younger students were the beneficiaries of a year-long series of fun and inventive book displays.

Digital reader's advisory

Many of us are using social cataloging sites like LibraryThing, Shelfari or Goodreads to write reviews of books we've read, to read recommendations from others, and to create lists of books we want to read next. Teaching students how to use these tools to provide and receive reader's advisory can be a powerful means to promote a lifelong reading habit. The added bonus is that using these tools creates an authentic reason for students to write about the books they've read. A colleague of mine encouraged her grade 4 students to write and submit reviews to Goodreads: they were thrilled when the author of a book they had reviewed responded to them. Many school libraries establish their own social cataloging account, where library staff and patrons can post reviews and recommendations. Creating a hyperlink on the school library website means students can easily access these recommendations from both home and school.

Reading aloud

The best compliment I've ever had as a teacher was when one of my students exclaimed, "Ms. Hayes, I **love** how you do all the voices when you read to us." Reading aloud to students provides them with fluent models for reading, piques their interest in reading and introduces them to a variety of genres. Many teachers read aloud to the whole class, but Reutzel (2001) suggests that "reading books aloud to children in small groups or one-to-one - especially for children who are not normally read to at home-enriches oral language development, broadens conceptual backgrounds, and accelerates reading acquisition" (p. 24). What a wonderful opportunity to enlist parent volunteers or senior citizens in the community to read aloud to individual students!

Many educators recognize the value of reading aloud to promote writing skills (Calkins, 1994; Ray, 2005). In my class, I often choose read-alouds to demonstrate a particular aspect of the writer's craft that I want to highlight for my students: descriptive words, for example, or introductory paragraphs that grab the reader's attention. Ray (2005) concurs, writing that "I believe reading aloud is probably the single most important teaching tool I have at my disposal, particularly for the teaching of writing" (p. 1). Read-alouds also open the door to dialogue. In an examination of one classroom in which daily read aloud and discussion took place, Worthy, Chamberlain, Peterson, Sharp, and Pei-Yu (2012) concluded that reading aloud, when combined with opportunity for conversation about what had been read, could "provide spaces for students to meaningfully use language; develop and share ideas, opinions and feelings; and

learn to listen actively as they develop an appreciation for multiple perspectives" (p. 320). Reading aloud is often associated with primary grades, but research supports reading aloud to all age groups (Beers, 1996; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Rief, 2000). Reading aloud to older students motivates them to read, and supports those students who struggle to read and comprehend complex material independently.

Book clubs and literature circles

Literature circles and book clubs are wonderful tools that promote reading and critical thinking and that provide opportunity for discussion. Whether conducted in class or in the library, allowing students' input into book selection is important (Allen, 2000; Hill, 2009; Miller 2009).

Literature circles have traditionally been associated with role sheets that students must complete after each reading session. However, many experts are now suggesting that role sheets are overused, often hindering opportunities for lively discussion (Brownlie, 2005; Harvey & Daniels, 2009). Harvey and Daniels (2009) recommend that teachers encourage more authentic activities, by showing students how to use "Post-its, journals, bookmarks, or drawings to harvest their responses as they read" (p. 200) and that, rather than book reports, students be encouraged to write critical book reviews and to create tableaux, reader's theatre, dramatizations and song lyrics in response to what they read.

Written conversations are yet another form of book club response. Daniels (2006) writes that "you can have a written conversation while sitting side by side in real time, passing notes back and forth, or in letter form, where writers send "mail" for readers to answer when they get time" (p. 15). Some libraries have taken this idea even further, forming online book clubs, where participants share their written responses to the books they're reading using a platform like Moodle or Desire2Learn. This approach has many advantages: it encourages students to write for an authentic audience; it provides anytime, anywhere access to a book discussion; and it affirms modern students' affinity for social networking.

Programs and events

Schools and school libraries should be organizing programs and events that encourage and celebrate reading on a regular basis. The following are a few ideas to get you started:

Children's choice book awards

Providing students with access to the books being nominated for children's choice book awards, and encouraging them to participate in the voting, can provide a great incentive for students to read, and may encourage them to explore unfamiliar genres. In fact, Crow (2010) suggests that "children's choice award programs have proven to be effective weapons in the battle to get and keep children reading" (p. 12). Many provinces or regions in Canada have reader's choice award programs, such as the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award program in Atlantic Canada, the Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award, the Golden Eagle Children's Choice Book Award (http://www.goldeneaglebookaward.com/) in southern Alberta, or British Columbia's Chocolate Lily Young Readers' Choice Awards. These programs have the added attraction of motivating students to read books written by Canadian authors.

Mock medals

Although national and international children's book award programs such as the Caldecott Medal, the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award, or the Newbery Medal do not allow children to vote, they do provide opportunity to host mock awards at the school level. Children enjoy comparing their results with those of the experts. Mock awards not only increase circulation of the nominated books, but award winning books in general. I've noticed my students intentionally seeking out books with a Caldecott Medal sticker on the cover after being made aware of the award.

Author visits

I will never forget the day I neglected to throw my daughter's school uniform in the dryer. You see, children's author and illustrator Duncan Ball was visiting her class that day, and she was anxious to get to school. However, her school uniform was lying in a soggy ball at the bottom of the washing machine. While chiding me that I was going to make her late for school, Shannon stood impatiently in the laundry room, watching the dryer do its thing. When she finally arrived at school, Ball teasingly asked her why she was late, and Shannon recounted the tale of her negligent mother. Ball promptly drew a hilarious caricature on a huge sheet of poster paper of Shannon staring into the dryer, watching her uniform spin 'round and 'round, which he then signed and gave to her. It still hangs in her living room 15 years later. The fact that it continues to hold pride-of-place in her home is testament to the huge impact author visits can have on children. Ruder (2004) concurs, adding that "by bringing an author into your school, you link a real person to the name beneath a book title, creating a new interest in reading both in and out of school" (p. 62). If hosting an author is not within your budget or ability to organize, consider having an author visit your library via Skype or video conferencing. The Skype an Author Network (http://skypeanauthor.wetpaint.com/) is a good source of authors who are available for Skype classroom visits.

Summer reading programs

As many of us notice with dismay in September, students forget at least some of their learning over the summer holidays. Low income students and ELLs are most at risk, often dropping several reading levels (Kim, 2003). In an effort to combat this trend, many schools have developed summer reading programs. Research confirms that providing access to books over the summer, and gentle encouragement to read, can result in not only maintaining current reading levels, but in some cases, improving on them (Higgins, 2011; Kim, 2003; Shu-Yuan, Lin & Krashen, 2007). Ensuring access to books is especially important to low-income families, who may not have the means to purchase books for summer reading. Collaboration between schools and public libraries to facilitate this access to books can generate positive results for everyone involved. My school invites a public librarian to visit each class in June, promoting their summer reading program and giving each student an application form for a public library card. Atwell (2007) discusses how she delivers lessons to her students every June on how and where to find good books over the summer, and posts lists of potential books to read on the school library website.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Most schools recognize the connection between strong reading skills and the success of their students. Many of us focus on daily reading instruction, and reading remediation if that fails. Some well-meaning schools spend thousands of dollars each year on pre-packaged, rewards-based reading programs. However, we often overlook the simplest and most effective strategy for turning students into lifelong readers: provision of time, materials, modeling and motivation to independently read whatever they choose on a daily basis.

How does your school's reading culture grow? Are the seeds planted and nurtured by the entire staff, who understand and are working toward the common goal of cultivating lifelong readers? Good soil is the medium in which seeds flourish. A well-funded school library, with a collection that addresses the curricular and pleasure-reading needs of the school community, provides the soil in which a reading culture can grow. However, the presence of soil alone does not guarantee a garden. It takes a knowledgeable, caring and enthusiastic gardener to plant the seeds and coax them into fruition. This is the role of a qualified and passionate teacher-librarian. Ideally, every school in Canada and around the world should be striving toward a robust school library program that nurtures and cultivates a year-round garden of reading. Our students deserve no less.

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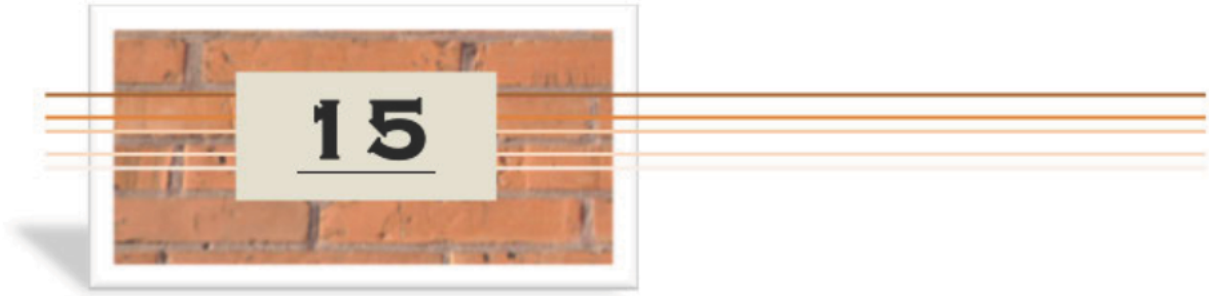

Free Voluntary Reading and the Role of the School Library

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Why should school leaders care... ?

[Free voluntary reading] is one of the most powerful tools we have in language education…[free voluntary reading] is the missing ingredient in first language 'language arts' as well as intermediate second and foreign language instruction." (Krashen, 2004, p. 1)

Reading within schools has evolved over the centuries. In todays' educational system, teaching and learning techniques have been modified and changed to reflect recent research and trends. As educators, we become cognizant of successful pedagogical methods, techniques, and tools through experience and professional advice. What have educators learned through this process? Change can be beneficial for everyone and teacher leaders are at the pinnacle of these changes.

Reading strategies and models follow this pattern of change. Reading does not have to be structured, rigid, forced, drab, and demanded; and it should not be. Reading should be free, flexible, voluntary, pleasurable, and desired. In my search for a model that is both enjoyable and educational, free voluntary reading filled the void (FVR will be used interchangeably with "free voluntary reading" throughout this chapter). FVR is a form of recreational reading. It refers to reading for pure pleasure, without any "strings" attached. "Strings" may include questions from the teacher, assignments, mandatory completion, and pre-selected material. There are no expectations with this recreational reading method. A student can choose any piece of literature from any genre, using varying formats and reading levels.

This learning model for reading has proven to be effective on multiple levels. There are many researchers and studies that support this type of reading in schools. For example, Krashen (2001) found that sustained silent reading is successful for developing reading comprehension. Through his research,

Krashen became a strong advocate of this type of reading and often focuses on sustained silent reading in his research. In addition, studies verify that sustained silent reading benefits writing (Hsu & Lee, 2007), writing fluency (Mason, 2007), spelling, vocabulary, and grammar (Krashen, 2004). FVR should be integrated into schools at all levels because it creates a positive reading environment that supports reading, while fostering language and literacy acquisition. An additional advantage is the simplicity of this activity. It can be incorporated into any school with very little effort.

Literacy and information studies are great passions of mine. Once I experienced the role of a teacher-librarian in the school library, I knew I found my niche. I aspired to receive further education and professional development in this area, and the Master of Education program in Teacher-Librarianship fulfilled this desire. It was during this prime educational time that I became increasingly aware of the current developments in research and practice. I felt that many of my students either loved reading or intensely disliked it, there was not a lot of middle ground. I felt too many of my students disliked reading. I possessed a growing desire to discover a more effective way to increase reading engagement. Hence, my interest in reading programs and my quest for a new method to teach and promote learning.

My passion for exploring the beliefs of free voluntary reading evolved upon further reflection of my personal and professional experiences with reading and reading instruction, along with my involvement in the Masters of Education in Teacher-Librarianship program with the University of Alberta. I recognized that the methods I integrated in my teaching to engage my students to read were perhaps not always the best methods. With an understanding of free voluntary reading, and the research by Krashen, I began to make sense of the pieces of this puzzle. I realized why I had not enjoyed reading during certain periods of my life. Fortunately, this was not due to the fact that I did not like to read. Rather, it was simply the fact that I wasn't interested in what I was reading. In addition, there were always attachments to the reading, such as forced rigid assignments, and expectations from my teachers. I was not given the time to read for pleasure in school. Unfortunately, reading always involved required literature. Then, I realized I was implementing and requiring the same from students in my classroom.

When I began teaching as an elementary teacher, I worked as a replacement teacher for several years. From this experience, I had the fantastic opportunity to participate in many different classrooms with a variety of routines, teaching styles, instructional practices, diverse sets of students, and different school contexts. I examined what worked, what did not, and what could be improved upon. With respect to reading, there were multiple learning methods, such as novel studies, class read alouds, literature circles, buddy reading, guided reading, sustained silent reading, and take-home reading. Many of these methods contain very beneficial elements, however, their effectiveness was not equal. Emphasis was frequently placed on novel studies, followed by supplemental writing activities. In recent years, this has been recognized as an archaic ineffective method with little benefit for reading development in children (Mason, 2004; Smith, 2006). The question is, why are so many educators still devoting so much time to, and continuing to emphasize, these types of reading instruction, when we know they may not be the best practice?

To become engaged readers, students do not have to read specific literature that is assigned by teachers, followed by an in-depth analysis of every chapter or lengthy assignments that take the enjoyment away from the reading experience. Readers can be engaged through reading their own choice of books and interacting with other students and building a reading culture and community in other ways.

Learning about Krashen's recommended FVR method, and research supporting the benefits of its implementation in schools, resonated with me. I feel that many educators, including teachers, teacher-librarians, school leaders, and administrators are not aware of this topic. Educators can foster students' literacy and reading achievement through FVR. Reading for pleasure and interest has multiple benefits and can in fact be more beneficial to our students than we give it credit for. Every educator should be

aware of the techniques, methods, and pedagogy related to free voluntary reading. Who better to take the lead on promoting and sharing the undeniable benefits of FVR than the school leaders?

WHAT DO SCHOOL LEADERS NEED TO KNOW...?

It wasn't until I started reading and found books they wouldn't let us read in school that I discovered you could be insane and happy and have a good life without being like everybody else.— John Waters (1946-)

In order to make a positive difference in reading instruction today, teacher-librarians and informed school leaders need to achieve a familiarity, become knowledgeable, and gain an understanding of the educational research behind the ideals of free voluntary reading (FVR). This literature review explores the benefits FVR has on students, the impact on English language learners, and the effective FVR programs inside and outside of school to ensure reading is a lifelong engagement.

Krashen (2004) proclaims there is a literacy crisis and "many people clearly don't read and write well enough to handle the complex literacy demands of modern society" (p. x). His primary suggestion for overcoming this crisis is reading, particularly free voluntary reading. Krashen's theory has not developed without cause, there is extensive research in this area to support this literary practice. If reading professionals and relative research are in favour of the FVR method, why are schools and educators insisting on implementing prescribed, pre-packaged programs, representing the complete opposite of FVR? Change in the right direction can start with school leaders supporting the integration of FVR in their schools.

For eighty years, research in free voluntary reading has consistently demonstrated beneficial results in reading achievement and positive reading attitude. Heise's (1931) research was one of the first studies implementing a free reading program which allowed 30 minutes of free reading in the classroom for participating students in Grades 4 to 8. In 1932, La Brent and Heller (1939) observed students in Grades 10 through 12 who were involved in an individualized reading program without assigned readings or assignments, offering voluntary discussions after reading. Both early studies showed improvement in reading achievement and the amount of reading, supporting FVR as an effective reading program.

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, there have been numerous studies concerning FVR, sometimes referred to as: sustained silent reading, recreational reading, free reading, and reading for pleasure. Reflecting on supporting research is a crucial step to acknowledging FVR's importance. The benefits gained from these various FVR methods are thematic throughout the research, including: increased reading interest, reading achievement, amount of reading, superior language and literacy development, reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, grammar, spelling, writing proficiency, and reading enjoyment. Krashen (2004) found a positive correlation between overall student performance and FVR. Additional educational studies achieved similar results finding those who read more, know more (West & Stanovich, 1991; Filback & Krashen, 2002).

Sustained silent reading (SSR) is the primary method of FVR found in schools. Studies show that students read productively during these sessions (Von Sprecken & Krashen, 1999; Cohen, 1999; Herda & Ramos, 2001). SSR resulted in an increase in the amount of reading and reading enjoyment among students (Chua, 2008; Jensen & Jensen, 2002). Clearly, this underutilized practice is advantageous when implemented in schools and it is impacting the reading success and pleasure with our students. In addition to advancing aspects of reading, when free voluntary reading is integrated into a student's educational

program, FVR was found to reduce anxiety and writers' block experiences during writing as well as improve writing performance (Lee, 2005).

Free voluntary reading is proven to stimulate positive effects in second language learners, such as reading comprehension, attitude toward reading and literature, and grammatical structure comprehension (Elley, 1991; Mason & Krashen, 1997). Additionally, the implementation of free reading as a regular practice formulates FVR as a predictor, affecting writing performance in English as a foreign language studies, and reducing writer's block in a foreign or second language (Lee, 2005). Cho and Choi (2008) studied the combination of English language read-alouds and free reading in the form of SSR with sixth graders in Korea. They discovered that this combination increased reading interest and English language development. The progress of the students demonstrated that formal instruction is not always needed; significant language development can come from listening to stories and free reading in a second language. Evidence demonstrates that students learning a second language, or additional languages, can greatly benefit from FVR (Cho and Choi, 2008; Elley, 1991; Lee, 2005; Mason & Krashen, 1997). The elements of FVR stimulate the language development in the learner in a non-invasive manner that instills enjoyment and pleasure in reading, during the possible frustrating moments while learning a new language.

In the 1980s and 90s, several studies analysed SSR and the process of integration in schools. These educational studies unveiled the long term achievement gains of SSR (Sadoski, 1980; Weisendanger & Birlem, 1984). Different approaches to SSR researched by Manning & Manning (1984) presented that grouping students together with their peers to interact throughout the silent reading session resulted in higher reading achievement scores when compared to groups with silent reading only, silent reading with teacher/student conferences, and a control group.

Another set of studies analyzed reading behaviour in an attractive literary center with regular free choice time. These studies found a significant increase in reading as a student-selected activity when these factors were in place (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986). Additionally, a wide selection of books at various reading levels is necessary for SSR success (Ozburn, 1995). Independent reading time remains important for middle school students (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). The positive effect for students goes beyond test achievement results, it affects students' attitudes towards reading. Ivey and Broaddus' (2001) research demonstrated that independent reading time was a desired activity, when 63% of the 1,765 students labeled it as their favourite activity in class.

When examining programs which offer student choice in the reading material, it is possible to find programs that possess similar aspects of FVR, yet garner different results. For example, the Accelerated Reader (AR) program allows students to choose their reading material, however this program is not congruent with the principles of FVR. To begin, the optional reading material is assigned by the AR program, students are not free to make any selection of choice in the library. Secondly, AR provides rewards for finishing the accompanying tests, both of which are not supported by the principles of FVR. Krashen (2002) and McQuillan (1997) both concluded these extra tests and rewards do not add extra benefit when compared to supplying access to material of high quality and interest, in combination with providing the school time to read them. It is important to carefully consider all elements of these reading programs before deciding what is best for students.

It is within a school leader's control to decide whether FVR is supported and implemented in their school. However, once the school bell rings and students leave for the day or for school holidays, it is difficult to know if these reading practices are being carried over to their independent time at home. Unfortunately, FVR is not commonly seen outside of the school environment (Everhart, Angelos, & McGriff, 2002), perhaps this is due to the slow establishment of FVR in the school environment. Without introduction in the school context, how will it mobilize to the home environment?

It is difficult to ignore the challenges facing students who are not capable of reading outside of the school environment. These obstacles are primarily due to lack of access to reading materials. As well, the environment may not be supportive of reading (Fisher, 2004). A lack of balance in educational opportunities and outcomes exist when school is over for the summer holiday (Alexander, Entwise, & Olson, 2001; Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay & Greathouse, 1996). Summer Reading, sometimes referred to as extensive reading (Lu & Gordon, 2008), is a beneficial activity to establish in schools to overcome these challenges. FVR and its advantages should be kept in mind when implementing this program. In many cases, the traditional reading methods are instilled, such as reading assignments, in-depth book studies, assigned book lists with a focus on classic titles as well as preference given to fiction rather than non-fiction titles. A study examining summer reading lists created for adolescent readers, found only 18% of the literature titles were young adult books (Williams, 2002). This isn't offering children material of interest or free choice. Lu and Gordon (2008), in their study of summer reading found that students appreciated the free choice in their reading and felt it enriched their reading experience. Furthermore, teachers felt that students read more with this program.

It is reassuring to recognize that students who participate in FVR programs read more on their own than students who do not partake in these programs (Pilgreen & Krashen, 1993). Free voluntary reading possesses a great importance and role in our schools. With acceptance of free voluntary reading's affective nature, school leaders can be instrumental in creating learners, readers, and writers, ensuring reading success and enjoyment that will last a lifetime.

What can school leaders do about... ?

I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage. — Roald Dahl

Too often we hear children protesting about reading, declaring it boring, and a chore. I am bothered whenever I hear these comments spoken by my students. Reading is supposed to be an enjoyable and relaxing pursuit, one that develops children's imagination and takes them to another world. This was certainly not the case for at least one of my Grade 3 students. As he protested to me "why do we have to read books, I hate reading, it is so boring", I can remember the thoughts flowing through my mind, "how could this child hate reading, reading is relaxing, there are so many subjects to choose, he just needs to give books a good chance." When I heard him sharing his disdain for reading, I asked myself: what can I do? As an educator, I decided it was my responsibility to help develop a fondness for reading in this child. By talking to this student, I discovered that he did not "hate reading", rather he hated *what* he was reading and *why* he was reading. When I sat down with him and discussed why he disliked reading, he explained that nothing he read interested him and he always felt reading was work. Then I thought, well why does he see reading as work? Has he not read for fun? I realized in this moment I was doing this student a disservice and impeding his learning and his enjoyment. Reading in school, and my classroom, was typically accompanied by expectations, and where is the joy in that? I decided to make it my goal to instill a love of reading in every child I teach.

People are naturally repelled by an activity they are forced to complete. Reading in school often generates an association with work, which removes the pleasure and interest. In order to instill a genuine love of reading in a reluctant reader, educators and school leaders must do something. My research provided me with a solution to this dilemma: incorporate free voluntary reading (FVR) into my reading program. Free voluntary reading is a reading method which can easily be incorporated into any child's

life, inside and outside of school. Whether it occurs in the classroom, in the library, in the school halls, on the playground, on the bus, or at home, the beauty of FVR is that it can occur in just about any location.

A crucial aspect to fostering an environment prepared to stimulate FVR is *access*. Students need to have access to literature at home, in the classroom, and in the school and public library. Worthy and McKool (1996) interviewed students who "hated to read." They found about 80% of these students did not have access to interesting reading materials. When a variety of books is provided in the classroom or library, during these free reading periods, students are more likely to read than when they are expected to bring their own reading materials from home (Von Sprecken & Krashen, 1998).

In addition to access, the physical environment and atmosphere of the reading space must have desirable features such as being comfortable and welcoming (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987; Miller, 2009; Morrow, 1983). A reading area with comfortable chairs, pillows, rugs, lamps, adjustable lighting, and a plethora of interesting reading material is sure to entice even the most reluctant readers. In this environment, the students are allowed to read wherever they like; on a chair, on the floor, standing, with a friend, in the quiet, or listening to music, it is their choice. Who could resist this welcoming reading space?

The promotion of books in school must be recognized as an important factor (Krashen, 2004). Displaying reading materials in an attractive manner will entice students to explore new and different genres. Teacher-librarians can capture students' attention with book displays focused on themes and subject areas of interest. When the materials are front and centre, they can't be missed and this form of readers' advisory on behalf of the teacher-librarian will stimulate interests, draw students' attention, and perhaps invite a new curiosity in reading. Collection development plans need to take into consideration what appeals to reluctant readers. Reading materials which attract student interest and stimulate pleasure in reading, should not be underestimated or forgotten as important steps in fostering life-long readers.

The modeling of positive reading behaviours has an enormous impact on student reading and free voluntary reading (Morrow, 1982; Von Sprecken & Krashen, 1998; Wheldall & Entwhistle, 1988). Children regard teachers, teacher-librarians, parents, family members, and older students as their mentors and guides through life and reading habits are not disconnected from this mentorship. Studies support the positive effects of reading role models, especially during FVR sessions (Morrow, 1982; Von Sprecken & Krashen, 1998; Wheldall & Entwhistle, 1988). These studies confirm when students see their teachers reading, they are more engaged in reading themselves. The key is in demonstrating reading for pleasure and modeling the enjoyment experienced through reading.

When parents demonstrate an interest in reading and books, their children read more (Morrow, 1983; Neuman, 1986). Siah and Kwok (2010) recommend parents participate in FVR activities with their children because they identified a positive value of reading in students whose parents joined them in the free reading activity. Thus, these children were more engaged in recreational reading and possessed a positive attitude towards reading. Parents can continue this positive reading culture through family outings to a public library, and making these visits a family tradition or routine that is shared with everyone. Parents, along with teachers, need to share their love for reading and develop an environment where reading is cherished and nurtured.

As teachers, how can we possibly expect our students to enjoy reading if they do not see us enjoying a good book too? How will they value our reading recommendations? As a teacher and teacher-librarian, my love for reading is displayed through my enthusiasm for literature, my enjoyment in reading an interesting book, and my excitement about sharing reading experiences. I want my students to be aware of my experiences because they have the potential to experience these feelings and emotions too. When

children observe others personally choosing to genuinely read for pleasure, they will begin to value this perspective and wish to be a part of this reading culture.

Free voluntary reading activities

Integrating free voluntary reading into a school's culture is an attainable goal. It may surprise some teachers and school leaders that it is relatively easy to incorporate FVR into the school reading program and culture. In fact, certain aspects of your classroom lessons or school library initiatives may already include some of these methods. Perhaps all your routine needs is a little tweaking to experiment with FVR. School leaders must advocate for *time* to make these initiatives possible, while providing students with *direct encouragement* to engage students in reading.

Sustained silent reading

The most popular form of free voluntary reading in schools is sustained silent reading (SSR). Krashen (2011) defines this form of reading as periods of time "set aside for recreational reading. Students read whatever they like (within reason) and are not tested on what they read" (p. 1). In Krashen's (2011) book *Free Voluntary Reading*, he offers guidelines for educators, explaining the best practices for SSR. His guidelines include the following suggestions:

1. Distribute SSR time with multiple sessions over the week, do not complete in one day.
2. Underestimate the length of time your students will remain attentive during SSR. If they can read independently for 20 minutes, provide them with 15 minutes.
3. Provide easy access to reading materials.
4. Comic books, magazines, graded readers, and language-learning books are all acceptable reading material.
5. Allow choice in selection of reading material.
6. Minimize censorship of materials.
7. Reading below or above student's reading level is alright.
8. Students can abandon an undesirable book, and select a new one.
9. There are limitations with SSR assisting beginner readers, due to their need for comprehensive text. As well, advanced readers who previously possess a reading habit may not benefit from SSR.
10. Omit reward systems, reading assessment, and post-reading requirements.
11. Permit food and drink.
12. Accompany SSR with activities to increase interest and comprehension. (Adapted from Krashen, 2011)

This common FVR method, SSR, is the approach I used to begin including free reading in my classroom. I discovered it to be very beneficial as an introductory technique to FVR.

Two free reading methods common in schools, and similar to SSR, are self-selected reading and extensive reading. Self-selected reading is typically incorporated into the language arts program. It involves student-teacher conferences and stimulating discussions about the reading material. Extensive reading is the form of FVR requiring minimal accountability, for example a concise summary of student's reading. Miller (2009) recommends slowly increasing the time period provided for FVR in the classroom, so the activity doesn't overwhelm students and cause frustration when first introduced.

Beyond employing the activities described above, it is important to explore activities to increase interest and comprehension, as recommended by Krashen (2011) in the SSR guidelines. These activities include class discussions, literature circles, and read alouds (Krashen, 2004; Miller, 2009). Experimenting with a variety of reading activities will facilitate increased reading and foster a reading community among the students.

Many of these activities involve social interactions. One of the first educational theorists to explore advantages of social learning was Vygotsky (1978), who asserted that knowledge is constructed socially, and children learn specific skills and processes when they are engaged with others. Similarly, Rosenblatt's (2001) Transactional Reading Theory explains how interacting and transacting with others when exploring a text will stimulate an oral response of sharing background knowledge and interacting with others in the group. Furthermore, socio-cultural research indicates that a social, cooperative learning context with peers allows children to learn optimally. Flint (2010) studied how social interactions promote literacy and facilitate reading in a grade one classroom through buddy or partner reading activities. Investigating the students interactions, discussions, and cooperative activity led to three major observations: "the children used reading strategies and prior knowledge to scaffold each other's learning", "they made varied connections with and to the text in order to construct meaning within their partnerships", and "they used play as a type of social interaction and motivational method while reading" (p. 292).

Drawing on these theories, there are activities that can be used in schools to support children's engagement with books and reading. For example, discussions and literature circles guide students to achieve their own understandings of reading and literature. Read alouds also assist with social interactions as dialogue can occur before, during, or after the read aloud in pairs, small groups, or as a class. Moreover, read alouds are the perfect opportunity to introduce new authors and genres to students expanding their repertoire for further discussions amongst their peers. When students interact with their peers about their reading, they will become increasingly motivated to read because they trust their peers reading recommendations.

To promote open communication and conversation about books and reading, Miller (2009) executes a "book frenzy" for her students at the beginning of every year. She encourages her students to explore her book collection for titles of interest to them and books they have read, while seeking recommendations from the teacher and their peers for books to borrow and read. Following this "frenzy" is an open class discussion about how readers choose books for themselves, their reading habits, and "The Rights of the Reader" inspired by Daniel Pennac (see Recommended Resources). Lastly, she suggests a reading plan which plots their next read. Reading needs to be a never-ending experience, therefore planning ahead is crucial.

When free voluntary reading activities occur in a social context, teacher-librarians, teachers, and parents have the option of facilitating and participating in the reading experiences, fostering a reading community where children share their reading without pressure and with pleasure.

Free voluntary reading initiatives are also embedded in warm-up lessons, free choice activities, free reading challenges, library visits, and free voluntary web surfing (Krashen, 2011; Miller, 2009). Warm-up lessons are periods of time before teaching lessons begin. In my experience, warm-up activities typically start with an exercise assigned by the teacher to try to settle, prepare, and focus the students' attention. This is a perfect opportunity within the school day to integrate free reading. The desired calming effects will be similar and it schedules free reading time into the busy school day. Similarly, when students are finished their assigned work early, rather than enforcing an extension activity, allow the student the choice to free read during this time. This will give students ownership for their reading and demonstrate that reading doesn't have to be work and enforced, it can be chosen.

Another type of FVR-based reading activity is a free reading challenge, which is presently growing in popularity. There are many variations to these challenges with different goals and structures. School leaders, teacher-librarians, teachers, parents, students, public libraries, or organizations can promote these free reading challenges. The goals for such initiatives may involve reading a certain number of books, reading award-winning books, and exploring new genres. An example of one of these free reading

challenges is the *Forty Book Challenge* designed by Miller (2009). At the beginning of the school year she challenges her class to read forty books by the end of the year. Many challenges offer online forums for students to communicate and share with the global reading community. It is important to recognize that these challenges, like all FVR activities, do not offer rewards. The best motivation to complete a challenge is the intrinsic desire to achieve this accomplishment. Modify these activities to best suit the needs of your students and they will bloom into self-motivated readers.

Library visits are a natural time to promote free voluntary reading. Teacher-librarians and teachers must let the students take the reins in their choice, while providing guidance along the way as needed. If they would like to read something other than a book, such as a magazine, or map, or comic, let them do so. Facilitating a lifelong love of reading is the ultimate goal, and this love comes in many forms and reading formats. Provide some time during the visit for the students to explore the collection and read their selections. Encourage students to take these books home to read when they desire a book experience.

Diverse versions of free voluntary reading are used by modern school leaders willing to support and integrate 21st century methods and techniques in a variety of formats and genres. Online reading is one of these respected and encouraged FVR methods. In my experience, using the computer was initially deemed as "play time" and was offered as a reward following traditional reading activities. However, a plethora of information and reading is waiting to be explored and discovered in the online global realm by students. Krashen (2011) presents a compilation of evidence from several studies indicating that free voluntary web-surfing can result in higher levels of literacy, especially for English language learners. The Internet provides endless topics of interest, helping to encourage reluctant readers and stimulate their pleasure for reading in another format. School leaders need to provide the opportunities in school for this activity to happen. Fortunately, this practice of free voluntary reading can occur anywhere with Internet access, including students' homes.

Applying a change to a reading program can take different approaches. Free voluntary reading, like any reading program, needs to have an organized plan in place before it can be started. Gordon (2008) suggests educators generate a plan that starts with the observation of a problem in their practice, followed by an exploratory stage involving reflection, communication with students and staff, and exploration of the FVR research. In her experience, modifying the present reading program required the involvement of research-based evidence to support her desire for change and to formulate guidelines for the program. A collection of reading preferences from students and staff assisted with conceptualization of the new program. Once the new program is in place, there is continuous reflection. Through questions such as "Is it working?...Do students like it?...What do teachers think?...How can it be improved?" (Gordon, 2008, p. 39), anecdotal evidence can be accumulated. Gordon recommends also using surveys and questionnaires to obtain quantitative support too. This process demonstrated positive results for Gordon, during the process of changing a school-wide reading program. Every school, class, and library environment is different, it is important to modify a plan that effectively works for your unique situation.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

I read for pleasure and that is the moment I learn the most.— Margaret Atwood

To my delight, following the inclusion of free voluntary reading activities in my classroom, my student who "hated reading" quickly grew a fondness for reading. This successfully developed into a self-fulfilling love of reading. It was amazing to recognize what this student really needed was the

encouragement and opportunity to choose his own reading material, without any expectations from me, his teacher. This student was one among many who experienced this positive change. As a reader myself, I knew what attracted me to reading and what retained my interest, however I did not know the best method to transfer this to my students. If they don't possess the initial self-motivation to pick up a book, how do we ensure they will? Free voluntary reading in school is the reading method I discovered had the greatest benefit for my students, while assisting them in finding their interest in books.

In revisiting the question posed in the introduction of this chapter: "who better to take the lead on promoting and sharing the undeniable benefits of free voluntary reading than the school leaders?" it is my hope that this chapter has offered support for the importance and impact of the school leader's responsibility to provide support with implementing free voluntary reading and reading achievement in the school. It is certainly apparent through the exploration of research evidence the important role school leaders have to play in implementing FVR. As school leaders, we need to resist the urge to control and dictate everything our students should read and learn. If our students do not independently seek information or personal release through reading, once they leave the school their learning may terminate. Teachers are not always going to be present and be the whispering force to provoke their reading. Students need to possess this power.

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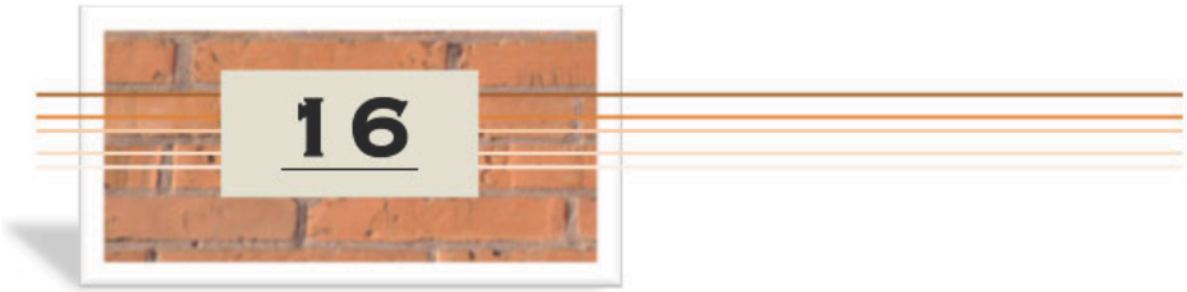

Engaging Boys in Reading Through the School Library Program

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Why should school leaders care… ?

After lunch on Wednesdays is my favourite time of the work week; it is the time when I run my library's book clubs. At different points throughout the year, various book clubs are in session. The first book club of the year was the "Boys' Book Club", which was a free-form, casual meeting of the boys in grades four and five. Members were welcome to read books that they chose and much of the time we had together was spent simply chatting about what the boys were reading. These conversations on Wednesday afternoons led to many titles becoming highly coveted books that were constantly in circulation as all the book club members were anxious to get their hands on them. This weekly "Gentlemen's Club" (as one of my colleagues referred to it), was an opportunity for boys to come together on some common ground and feel a part of a reading community. Most of the boys in the club were somewhat reluctant readers, especially when it came to fiction; others had histories of reading challenges that caused them to be somewhat disconnected from books. The casual atmosphere of the Boys' Book Club proved beneficial for all participants, but particularly for those who may have had negative attitudes towards reading.

Truthfully, the book club essentially ran itself – I did very little. The boys gathered together to discuss the characters, plots, and themes of their books and often ended up suggesting titles to one another. The conversations during "Boys' Book Club" were often obscure, but always on topic. One conversation arose comparing how many characters had perished so far in each of the books read by a small group, the consensus: the more death and destruction the better! Another conversation was sparked comparing the novel of the *Thief Lord* by Cornelia Funke to the movie version of the story. The overwhelming argument being that the movie fell short in many aspects and that the book was "way cooler". In November, Boys' Book Club concluded as I had to start another book club. Myself, the boys, and their classroom teachers were saddened by the conclusion of the "Gentlemen's Club" as it had established a culture of reading among the boys, something that had been previously lacking in our school.

The emerging culture of reading that developed through the "Boys' Book Club" is a valuable aspect of reading promotion that is supported by research. Wigfield, et al. (1997) state that a sense of community strengthens "a child's sense of reading competence and stimulate[s] a child's motivation to read" (p. 143). Furthermore, social interaction around and authentic discussions about reading are essential aspects of productive reading development for all students (Bush & Jones, 2012). Interestingly, while this brotherhood and social interaction that the boys in my book club experienced was powerful, it does not appear to have been sufficient in changing their views towards reading and books for the long-term. The main draw for students to belong to the book club was not the books, but the exclusive community of which they were a part. There was something enticing about the "no girls allowed" rule and the fact that topics of conversations could be based on what the members wanted to talk about in relation to their reading. Being student-driven, conversations did not have to be rooted in what was viewed as polite or intellectual – a refreshing change at school. Since our final meeting. I have not seen many of the book club boys in the library checking out books or even stopping by to say "hello." Without the book club, it seems as though many of the boys have lost their purpose in coming to the library and I surmise many have lost their motivation to read. While I consider my "Boys' Book Club" a success and I intend to run it again in the future, it is not a complete solution for increasing the reading engagement of the male students in the school. I recognize a need to acknowledge the difficulties many boys have in acquiring a fondness for reading and am seeking answers to help solve the problem. I want all of my students, regardless of gender, to be intrinsically motivated to read and to simply pick up a book because they *want* to read it.

Teachers, administrators, librarians, and parents make numerous assumptions about boys and their reading habits. The most common of these assumptions is that most boys simply do not enjoy reading, and thus they do not choose to read for recreation. There is an "unconscious" sense amongst children and adults alike that reading is not a masculine behaviour (Katz, et al., 2005). Such assumptions are not completely unfounded, although they are somewhat misguided. Research indicates that 49% of boys and 58% of girls read daily, however 41% of boys report that reading is "boring" and only 23% report that reading is cool. As boys progress through school and into the senior grades, fewer boys report reading for pleasure and the majority of boys (65%) find reading to be "irrelevant" (Horton, 2005). Another common assumption is that learning to read comes easier to girls, while learning math and science concepts comes easier to boys. Canadian studies indicate this simply is not the case. While boys were significantly outperformed by girls in the area of reading, boys only marginally outperformed girls in the areas of math and science (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009), illustrating that there are significant factors affecting boys and their achievements in the areas of reading and literacy.

Boys represent half of our schools' populations, however they are far more likely to fall behind, be disengaged and/or uninterested in reading as they progress through school (Jones, Dawn, & Melany, 2003). Due to this troubling phenomenon, boys' tend to view literacy and reading more negatively than girls do (Haupt & Clark, 2003). While the reasons for school failure for both boys and girls are multifaceted, students without a strong foundation in literacy are especially vulnerable. Since boys are more likely to struggle with reading engagement, motivation and success, it is imperative that deliberate steps be taken to combat these patterns. Elementary and middle school educators set the foundation for reading and thus are key players in establishing a positive attitude towards and success in reading for all students. Today's approach to reading and literacy is clearly lacking, as education is missing some critical elements required to get male students to be engaged and successful readers. But what is required? Who needs to make these necessary changes? And how can they be implemented into today's schools so that our boys do not continue to struggle to find the joy in, relevance of, and purpose to reading?

What do school leaders need to know...?

Educational scholars and researchers have recognized the troubling patterns surrounding boys and reading and have sought to better understand this phenomenon (Government of Ontario, 2004). Solutions can be found to change these patterns through better understanding of the issues that surround boys and reading. This section will review the research and professional literature related to boys' achievement in reading, attitudes towards reading, reading habits, and the importance of engaging boys in reading.

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, girls consistently out-perform boys in the area of literacy, especially reading. The *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)*, revealed that boys consistently had significantly lower scores on reading achievement tests in all countries studied (Statistics Canada, 2007) indicating a general weakness in boys' reading achievement. Studies examining gender-discrepancies in students with "poor reading in relation to intelligence" (p. 27) found a ratio of 1.69 boys struggling with reading to 1 girl struggling with reading, further indicating that boys are at higher risk of reading failure than girls are (Miles, Haslum & Wheeler, 1998). Rutter, et al. (2004) reviewed four extensive studies on the gender-gap and reading achievement, and concluded that there is significant evidence indicating that reading disabilities are more frequent in boys than girls. There is debate as to why boys tend to have lower reading achievement than girls do; some feel the cause is neurological, while others feel it is social or environmental (Limbrick, Wheldall, & Madelaine, 2011). Regardless of the reason or reasons why boys struggle with reading, teacher-librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators need to make a conscious effort to combat this phenomenon and create more effective and successful reading experiences for boys.

Knowing that boys are more likely to experience challenges in reading, it is not surprising that their attitudes towards reading tend to be more negative than girls. Not only that, boys often have a more negative attitude than girls do toward school in general, which has been found to have a significant correlation with poor achievement in reading (Logan & Johnston, 2009). Furthermore, boys' attitudes towards reading have been shown to correlate with their reading abilities; negative attitudes produced low achievement and positive attitudes produced higher achievement, whereas the same is not always true for girls (Logan & Johnston, 2009). This research indicates that fostering positive attitudes towards reading and school as a whole, is a necessary step in engaging boys in reading and thus increasing their achievement as readers.

Boys' negative views towards reading are likely due in part to the fact that many boys do not view reading as a masculine activity. A study of Canadian grade two boys found that 24% of boys viewed reading as a feminine activity (Katz et al., 2005). Another study found this perception had only strengthened by grade 5, and that boys were feeling increasingly disconnected from books as they progressed through elementary school (Dutro, 2002). Millard (1997) attributes this gendered view of reading to the predominance of women in children's early lives at home and school. Interestingly, while receiving instruction from male reading-tutors helped to change boys' views of reading to a more-masculine activity, male reading-tutors were not any more successful at increasing boys' achievement in reading than female reading-tutors. (Sokal, Katz, Chaszewski, & Wojcik, 2007). The literature suggests boys view reading as a feminized activity and this perception adds further challenges to engaging boys in reading.

Despite boys' more negative views towards reading, Hall and Coles (1997) found that reading levels have increased in both girls and boys since the mid-1970s. Interestingly, their data also demonstrates that boys have consistently read less than girls over the past 25 years. Boys tend to view themselves as non-readers

more often than girls do, and Logan and Johnston (2009) surmise this is in part due to the fact that many boys read non-traditional texts such as newspapers and online articles which are not always recognized or encouraged in school as formal reading. While boys do read less than girls, Wicks (1995) found that reading was the second most common hobby of young-teenage boys and that they enjoyed reading a variety of texts including fiction, comics, newspapers, magazines, non-fiction, and picture books. That said, this study did reveal that as boys moved into the later-teenage years there was either a great decrease in their time spent reading or, conversely, a steady increase – depending on the individual. It is very encouraging to realise that boys are in fact reading; the challenge for educators lies in engaging male students in reading so that reading becomes a life-long behaviour.

Van de Gear, Pustjens, Jan, and Munter's (2009) longitudinal study of gender-differences in literacy engagement, found that while both boys' and girls' engagement in learning decreased as they progressed through school, boys had a steeper decline in their learning engagement than girls did. Success in reading sets the foundation for success in learning, both academically and socially throughout one's school career and beyond (Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002). Learner engagement has been found to be a significant predictor of academic success, particularly for students at risk of struggling with learning (Aryn & Lowe, 2011). Cambourne (1988) stated, "without the learner's engagement with the demonstrations which are made available by the persons or artifacts which surround/immerse him, they will wash over him and pass by" (p. 51). Understanding that boys are at highest risk of reading failure, it makes good sense for educators to focus first and foremost on engaging male students in reading. The implication being, without engagement, reading instruction is for the most part lost. Once engaged, boys will be able to find success and pleasure in reading, hopefully setting them on the road to becoming life-long readers.

In the next section of this chapter, suggestions will be offered how to best engage boys in reading in order to support their success in reading and learning as a whole.

What can school leaders do about… ?

Engaging boys in reading is the key to increasing their reading success and enjoyment, and thus in fostering male students who become lifelong readers. Hooking boys on reading at the elementary and middle school levels is imperative in preparing them for learning success during the high school years and beyond (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). The challenge for educators lies in finding concrete and effective strategies for engaging boys in reading. How do we get boys to read more, to interact with texts, to become excited about their reading, and to want to read more? A simple book club, as I tried, is not a complete solution, but it is an initial step in the right direction. It is important to note that the strategies outlined here are intended to target boys' engagement with reading and are to be used in addition to traditional reading instruction, not in place of it.

Teacher-librarians who want to increase reading engagement among the male students in their schools should focus on three main areas. First, library and learning resources need to be selected with boys' interests and reading habits in mind. Second, initiatives that establish reading as an activity boys can and should enjoy need to be deliberately executed so that reading is acknowledged as a masculine activity. Third, running a book club that targets boys is an effective way to help boys feel part of a reading community, helping with reading motivation and in connecting boys with one another. By addressing these three areas, the library program will best meet the needs of its male patrons.

Developing a collection of readily available, boy-friendly materials is the foundation for increasing boys' engagement with reading. Without appropriate reading materials, engaging boys in reading is almost

impossible. Walking into most school libraries, it is easy to see that library staffs make a conscious effort to highlight and promote books through colourful displays, neatly organized sets and seasonal focuses. The trouble is, while such readers' advisory initiatives come with great intentions, their content rarely aligns with what appeals to boys; boys simply have different reading preferences than traditional library collections reflect (Jones et al., 2003). Teacher and children's author Elise Leonard, suggests that boys "...want the stuff of video games. Action! Power! Comedy! They want fast-paced books that are easy to read" (2009, p. 19). Classroom teachers and teacher-librarians need to be deliberate in selecting materials which appeal to young male readers so boys have ready access to materials that interest them.

Understanding boys' reading habits and preferences is imperative for developing a collection of titles appealing to male library patrons. Simply asking boys what books they are interested in reading is insufficient, because boys are often less able to explain their rationale for selecting a particular title over another than girls are (Mohr, 2006). This makes collection building all the more challenging for teachers and teacher-librarians. Tracking the circulation patterns and titles of the books signed out by the boys in the school is an excellent place to start when investigating what books boys are actually drawn to (Braxton, 2003). Once you have a better sense of the materials that are circulating amongst the boys, experiment with their locations and accessibility in the library and see what effect this has on circulation. As books are returned to the library, engage boys in casual conversations about the books they are returning; these informal conversations can prove very insightful with regards to boys' reading preferences (Braxton). Taking note of the circulation patterns and preferences of the male library patrons is an important step in gaining an understanding of what titles appeal to boys.

In his book, *Serving Boys Through Readers' Advisory* Sullivan (2009) stresses that there is not one genre or type of literature that appeals to all boys, but becoming familiar with books that are appealing to a broad range of boys will help in making informed decisions when acquiring books for male patrons. First and foremost, boys need to be interested in a book's theme, content, or topic to even begin contemplating picking it up – and yes, boys do judge books by their covers (Horton, 2005). For many boys, even at the primary level, non-fiction texts prove to be of most interest to them (Mohr, 2006). Often non-fiction sections of school libraries are not celebrated to the same degree (particularly with regards to recreational reading) as are the fiction sections. Be deliberate in highlighting the great reading that lies in the non-fiction section of your library so that boys can access these titles just as easily as fiction titles in their weekly book exchange sessions. Another interesting observation, related to why some boys prefer reading non-fiction over fiction, is a book's length. Boys more than girls tend to gravitate to books that are shorter in length (Mohr, 2006), indicating the need to have books of various lengths and reading levels available in the library collection. For those boys who enjoy reading fiction, most select fiction titles because they are part of a series they have started reading or are written by an author they enjoy (Wicks, 1995). Ensuring an ample supply of boys' favourite series and authors is important in having a long-lasting and effective library collection for boys. The considerations provided here are a solid basis for selecting and displaying books that will appeal to the male library patrons.

Graphic novels are an excellent place to start when selecting titles specifically for boys because they satisfy many of the things boys look for in books. Adventurous themes and content and shorter length than traditional novels, are some features of graphic novels that appeal to boys. In addition, many graphic novels are often part of larger series, which could prove valuable in increasing boys' stamina and desire for reading multiple titles. Traditionally, comic-style books have been exclusively fiction-based, however as this genre gains popularity, non-fiction graphic novels have become more common. Graphic novels are valuable additions to any library collection for several reasons. First, they are familiar to readers as they often mirror popular kids' television programs, movies, or video games. Second, the images help the reader to comprehend the story, providing needed support for weaker readers. Third, they are more accessible for reluctant readers, as they tell exciting stories using limited text (Lyga, 2006). For librarians concerned with the "literary value" of such books, it is worth noting that graphic novels are gaining literary respect and are now frequently winning top literary prizes (Behler, 2006). Furthermore, many

popular easy-fiction novels (i.e. The *Geronimo Stilton* Series) are being published in graphic novel form, providing a nice bridge between traditional books and comic-style books. At the elementary and middle school levels, graphic novels are a great starting point for acquiring titles to suit the interests and reading habits of the boys in the school.

It is important to note that reading should go beyond traditional print books. Effective school libraries acknowledge this and include a wide range of resources in their collection, including virtual resources. Many boys enjoy reading non-traditional texts such as newspapers, magazines, websites, and e-books (Jones et al., 2003). Reading these materials needs to be encouraged and celebrated in today's school libraries. Developing an accessible, vibrant, and boy-friendly collection is a valuable and necessary first step in engaging elementary and middle school boys in reading. Making a point of selecting and displaying books that follow the above criteria will help to get boys reading various kinds of text and borrowing more materials.

With a diverse collection of resources appealing to boys, teacher-librarians can begin to break-down the stereotype that reading is not a masculine activity. Unfortunately, the images young boys encounter rarely portray men reading and certainly do not promote reading as a masculine activity (Government of Ontario, 2004). Most of the teachers and teacher-librarians working at the elementary and middle school levels are female, further reinforcing this counterproductive stereotype. Fortunately, introducing boys to respected males who read and creating initiatives that bridge the gap between traditional male pursuits and reading are effective methods for changing this gendered view of reading.

Boys need to see men they respect reading, to better understand that reading is not an exclusively feminine activity. Jones, et al. (2003) suggest hanging posters around the school portraying males reading; getting male staff members to read in prominent places; and encouraging coaches of male teams to read aloud to the team when travelling to games. Shoemaker (2003) gives this advice for male teacher-librarians – wise advice for any males working with younger male readers:

> Male teacher-librarians need to read books – lots of books. Always have a book on hand. Carry it. Know a wide selection of books that boys will read. Always be ready to talk to guys about what's good. Listen to them to learn who they are and what they want so you can motivate them – move them – from where they are to the next level, wherever that may be for that particular reader. Share your passion for reading and never stop reading, talking and sharing (p. 33).

The above suggestions are not complicated initiatives, but they are valuable in establishing reading as an activity that boys and men can indeed enjoy.

Having male mentors or reading buddies work with young students is another effective method for de-feminizing reading (Government of Ontario, 2004). A once-weekly session when older male students or community members visit the library and read with younger boys is a worthwhile activity for all involved. Not only do students get the opportunity to meet positive role models, they also benefit from the one-on-one interaction and reading mentorship. Another idea which can help to de-feminize reading and give it a "cool factor" is to invite players from a well known local sports team to the library to read with students. This is a sure fire way to get young boys excited about reading! Instilling the notion that reading is a lifelong behaviour that is valuable and enjoyable for boys and men is best accomplished not only at the school level, but also through interaction with the greater community.

Often times, boys feel disconnected from books and reading because their recreational interests are not acknowledged through school learning initiatives, further reinforcing the stereotype that reading is not masculine. Bridging the gap between what boys are interested in and reading is a challenge that can be resolved through creative initiatives. Not all library initiatives need to revolve around books per se; arrange for a local sports (i.e. martial arts) group to come to your school and give a demonstration, place a

book related to the sport on each of the audience chairs and allow 10 minutes for audience members to browse their book before the presentation begins (Jones et al., 2003). Invite boys to create book displays and write book reviews on themes of their choosing. Older elementary and middle level boys often come to the library to use the technology, embrace this passion for technology by displaying related books, magazines and articles around the library's computer stations (Jones et al., 2003). Through such simple initiatives, boys will begin to see how books relate to their interests, further establishing reading as an activity that can and should be enjoyed by boys.

School-aged boys may sense that reading is not a masculine activity, when in reality this is not the case. Simple initiatives can help to challenge this belief and re-establish reading as a popular activity for boys and men. Making a conscious effort to expose boys to male role models enjoying reading, and linking boys' outside interests to reading and books, can combat this negative stereotype and get reluctant male readers more interested in books.

Although providing engaging opportunities for boys to interact with a wide variety of appealing resources is valuable, this is not a complete solution. To become truly engaged in reading boys require a feeling of belonging to a reading community. The greatest influences on boys' reading habits are friends and family. Boys' friends prove to be the greatest source of book recommendations during the elementary and middle school years (Woolcott, 2001). This indicates that book clubs are an excellent way to get boys reading and engaging with books. Informal book clubs prove to be a worthwhile venture connecting boys with books and with each other, a combination vital for engagement.

Facilitating a boys' book club in the school need not be complicated to be an effective motivator for boys to engage in reading. To meet the needs of as many members as possible, have members choose their own reading materials and be flexible as to the genre, format and topics of the books. Keep members accountable for their reading by requiring them to present and discuss their current book at weekly meetings (Welldon, 2005). An award or level system is a fun way to challenge members to keep reading. Using sports–related level systems such as karate belts is a fun way to integrate boys' personal interests into the book club's format (Welldon, 2005). Once a member or group of members reaches a certain level, simple rewards (i.e. watching a movie or having a pizza lunch) can be enjoyed. This free-form style of book club helps members feel in control of their reading. They have the freedom to choose whatever book they are interested in. Not only that, all interested boys are able to participate in the book club regardless of their reading ability, personal interests, and/or format preferences.

Through casual conversations, a culture of reading emerges among the members of the book club. Boys begin to compare and contrast books they have read, often recommending other titles for further reading to one another. Even with members reading titles of their choice, many common themes and connections will be found. Books begin to take on a "cool factor" and as circulation increases, some books become hot commodities that everyone wants to get their hands on (Welldon, 2005). Book clubs give a purpose to reading; a significant motivator that is missing for many boys in today's school library programs (Horton, 2005). Interacting with a community of like-minded readers is an excellent way to get boys excited about books and reading and even more importantly, engaged in their reading.

Running a book club for the boys in the school is a valuable way to connect boys with books and each other. In my experience, the most effective book club format is free-form as this increases members' freedom of choice and maximises the number of potential members. As the book club progresses and members become familiar with popular titles, book circulation will increase and the boys will be motivated to read more and more.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

I now return to my story of the "Boys' Book Club". As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I was initially very satisfied with the way the club played out and the enthusiasm that the boys were showing for the books they were reading. There was an emerging reading culture within the club and many titles were actively circulating amongst the members. Now that several months have passed since the end of the club, I now see how shallow the club's influence was on establishing long-term reading engagement in the members. Without the club, most members no longer have reason to come to the library on their own initiative, to sign out titles and to talk with their comrades about what they are currently reading. The students simply are not engaged in reading anymore.

Looking ahead I feel positive about the tools I have to effectively engage my male students in reading. I will take a more deliberate approach to collection development with regards to acquiring resources specifically geared towards my male patrons, including the addition of more graphic novels, both fiction and non-fiction. Additionally, I will take the time to promote these boy-targeted titles through engaging, creative, and diverse readers' advisory initiatives to ensure that my patrons are familiar with the collection. As a female I understand that my influence on boys as readers is limited so I will encourage my male colleagues to make their reading behaviours more public and invite male community members (i.e. school liaison police officer, sports teams) to read with students to further promote reading as a boy-friendly activity. Most importantly, I will run the "Boys' Book Club" once again. Its free-form, casual nature was appealing and inviting to the boys and proved to be an effective way to engage them in reading and connecting them with one another. I aim to take a holistic approach to boys and reading promotion to set the foundation for life-long readers in the male students I work with.

School leaders generally, and teacher-librarians in particular, have a unique and powerful role to play in fostering life-long readers in the students we work with. Understanding that boys are more likely to experience reading failure and disengagement than girls, it is important that specific steps be taken to ensure boys' success and engagement in reading. That said, many of us are already doing very positive things to help boys succeed and find enjoyment in reading – without even realising it. Take inventory of your library and school literacy programs to find out what you are already doing well and to better understand what areas need further attention and development. Taking small steps and organising seemingly simple initiatives can and will make a very positive impact in getting boys excited about reading. Canadian schools are well equipped to meet the reading needs of both boys and girls; the trouble is traditional library and literacy programs have not always been effective in connecting boys with books or engaging them in their reading. I challenge you to make a conscious effort to better meet the needs of the boys in your school, prepare them for future learning, and instill in them a love of books and reading that will last a lifetime.

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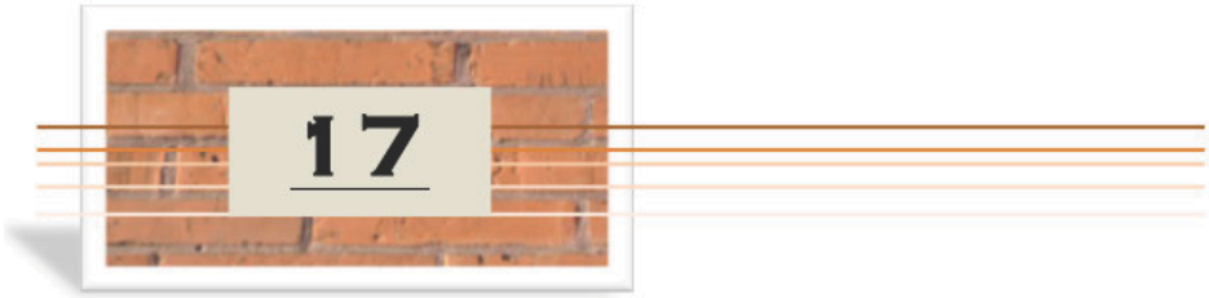

Power Up! Reading Instruction and Your School Library Program

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Why should school leaders care... ?

What are your memories of learning to read? Did you like reading or did you find it loathsome? Did reading come easily to you or did you struggle? I was a strong and enthusiastic reader, but strangely I remember almost nothing about learning to read. Low-level, read-and-regurgitate comprehension questions are mostly what I remember of reading instruction in my primary years. They were easy for me to answer, and I often felt it was a waste of time having to write full sentence answers to comprehension questions that could have been answered with a single word. One day when I was in grade six, something perplexing happened; I came across a comprehension question that was unlike the read and recall questions I was used to. I was reading *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor, and this particular question asked about something I couldn't recall, so I re-read the chapter in hopes of finding the answer. Upon re-reading, I still could not find the answer that I was looking for, so I re-read it again, and then again, even more carefully. Apparently, re-reading was the only strategy I knew at that time! In retrospect, I now understand that the question that stumped me was one that required me to infer an answer, rather than find it amongst the pages of the book. Nearly two decades later, it was Adrienne Gear's *Reading Power* (2006) that helped me connect the dots that led to this realization.

When I began my career as an educator, reading was by far the subject I was most excited to teach, but also the one I found most intimidating and frustrating. Teaching children to read was an exhilarating opportunity, but also a weighty responsibility. I felt fairly comfortable teaching decoding skills, however it remained a mystery to me why some children could read fluently, yet have no idea what they were reading about. These students were the ones who frustrated me the most - not because they couldn't comprehend what they read, but because I didn't have any idea how to help them become successful. Reading had been automatic for me for so long, that when it came to comprehension, I simply 'knew' the answer when I finished reading. Since I didn't understand how I arrived at my answer or why I could

comprehend what I was reading, I certainly couldn't explain to my struggling students how to improve their comprehension skills.

I became aware of my ineffectiveness as a reading teacher on what felt like a daily basis. To improve my practice, I went to every literacy workshop I could find, observed lessons taught by master reading teachers, and took a continuing studies course on literacy strategies for supporting struggling learners. In my literacy strategies course, I learned how to use the *Alberta Diagnostic Reading Program* (Alberta Education, 1986) which covered comprehension strategies including attending, analyzing, associating, synthesizing, inferring, predicting, and monitoring. I learned how to assess which strategies students were and were not using, and how to help them acquire the strategies not yet in their repertoire. A few years later, teaching in my first classroom position, I struggled to remember what I had learned in my continuing studies class about reading instruction. I mentioned this to a colleague one day, and she immediately gave me her copy of *Reading Power* (Gear, 2006) and told me it was a must-read. It was a thin book and seemed manageable, unlike the six volumes that made up the *Alberta Diagnostic Reading Program* (Alberta Education), so I promptly began reading.

Upon opening *Reading Power* (Gear, 2006), I found relatable stories, research, practical advice, and easy-to-follow lesson plans. It was exactly what I needed and I was pleased with the simplicity and clarity of the program. In each of the programs (fiction and non-fiction), I found five comprehension strategies (or "powers") that are explicitly explained and demonstrated, then laid out in sequential, carefully scaffolded lessons. The fiction powers are Connect, Question, Visualize, Infer, and Transform. The five non-fiction powers are similar but slightly different, and include Zoom-In, Question/Infer, Determine Importance, Connect, and Transform. While learning to use these powers, students are guided to 'notice' their own thought patterns in order to become metacognitive thinkers. Many of these strategies mirrored those I learned about through the *Alberta Diagnostic Reading Program* (Alberta Education, 1986), however I found that the *Reading Power* (Gear, 2006) terms were much more student-friendly, and the overall program provided the clarity and practical structure I had been looking for. The most powerful piece of the program for me was metacognition; *Reading Power* had an immediate and profound effect on my teaching because it helped me become aware of all of the strategies that I employ automatically when I read. Becoming aware of my own reading strategies made me a more effective teacher as I was able to model them for my students.

There are many reasons why school leaders should take notice of *Reading Power* and advocate for its use in their schools; it offers plenty of potential for all reading stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, literacy leaders, teacher-librarians, and even administrators. For students, *Reading Power* takes the mystery out of reading and makes it very clear how to think about what you are reading in order to understand the text. For teachers, *Reading Power* is a powerful step-by-step guide to teaching comprehension, complete with clear and simple lesson plans and resource lists. It is a practical and manageable program with roots in best-practice research. The lessons are very explicit and effectively remove the mystery from teaching comprehension. For parents, *Reading Power* offers valuable and accessible information about reading comprehension which they can use to support reading at home. The metacognition piece is key for parents, and can help them understand that reading is much more than just decoding. For teacher librarians, literacy leaders, and administrators, *Reading Power* offers a framework for building a common language around literacy in classrooms and throughout the school.

Throughout this chapter, my goal is to explore how the *Reading Power* programs can be integrated into a classroom to create or enhance a robust library program that supports literacy learning throughout the school at the elementary level. In the next section I will look at *Reading Power* in the context of recent reading and comprehension research, and best practice. In the final section, I will discuss the implications of using *Reading Power* as a powerful teaching tool in your school library and beyond.

What do school leaders need to know...?

The *Reading Power* programs are guides for teaching metacognitive comprehension skills in an explicit manner. In this section, I will briefly review the research that supports all three areas: reading comprehension, metacognition, and explicit teaching.

Comprehension

Reading comprehension has been part of the curriculum since the 1920s, however it has not always been an instructional focus (Pearson & Dole, 1987). When reading comprehension first entered the curriculum, it was based on the instructional model of 'practice makes perfect,' a principle that remained mostly intact until the late 1970s (Pearson & Dole) . Research in the late 1970s and 1980s provided impetus for considerable change in the collective understanding of reading and comprehension. The new interest in comprehension stemmed largely out of a seminal study of comprehension instruction done by Dolores Durkin (1979) and her team. While observing classrooms, Durkin unexpectedly found almost a complete lack of reading comprehension instruction. Comprehension 'lessons' commonly consisted of students answering low-level recall questions; teachers assigned reading tasks without ever really teaching comprehension strategies to their students. Durkin deemed much of what she observed as reading assessment rather than instruction. Spurred on by these findings, reading researchers began experimenting with teaching individual comprehension strategies and found that activating prior knowledge, generating questions, constructing mental images, summarizing, and analyzing story grammar were effective strategies for improving comprehension (Wilkinson & Hye Son, 2011). Pearson (1985) urged teachers to take a more active role in reading instruction, and proposed a new model for teaching wherein the teacher's role would change from "teacher-as-manager" to "teacher-as-teacher". After individual strategies, the research moved toward teaching students a small repertoire of several comprehension strategies. A study by Palincsar and Brown (1984) investigated the use of reciprocal teaching for teaching four comprehension strategies: questioning, clarifying, predicting, and summarizing. They found that this method also produced robust results in improving students' comprehension scores. From the multi-strategy approach, research moved towards a transactional model of teaching a small repertoire of comprehension skills that was led by Pressley and And (1994). This approach focused on teaching comprehension strategies in a flexible way, and considered how students and teachers transact with text as they strive to make meaning from it.

We have come a long way from basal reading programs, however, despite the broad base of research that clearly points to the importance and effectiveness of comprehension instruction, some recent studies echo Durkin's findings that very little time is being spent on teaching comprehension strategies in the classroom (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000; Connor, Morrison, & Petrella, 2004). Researchers suggest that the reasons teachers do not teach more reading comprehension skills include: it is difficult, time consuming, and requires considerable commitment (Pressley & El-Dinary, 1997).

Reading is now commonly considered a meaning-making activity that requires the reader to interact with the text. Readers bring their own experiences and knowledge to the texts they read, making it possible for multiple meanings to be constructed. Good readers employ a repertoire of strategies to help them make sense of text, however there is still some debate as to the exact number of comprehension strategies that are employed by proficient readers. The National Reading Panel's report (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) cited eight strategies, whereas reading guru Routman (2003) cites seven strategies in her book *Reading Essentials*. Keene's *Assessing Comprehension Thinking Strategies* (2006) includes ten strategies, while Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) remind us that Davis's (1944) research identified nine strategies. In an effort to keep *Reading Power* as practical and

doable as possible, Gear (2006; 2008) focuses on five comprehension strategies, and acknowledges that, "the strategies I did not choose are in no way less important. These five were chosen simply because of the belief that they were the ones that students could best learn and that teachers could most easily implement" (2006, p. 12).

METACOGNITION AND READING

Along with the comprehension strategy research in the 1980s came a significant body of research in the area of metacognition. Metacognition can be defined as the awareness or knowledge of, and monitoring of, one's own cognitive processes. Psychologists have identified three main types of metacognitive knowledge: declarative knowledge, task knowledge, and strategy knowledge (also called *conditional knowledge*) (Paris & Jacobs, 1984). While declarative knowledge and task knowledge are also applicable, strategy knowledge is the area most relevant to reading comprehension. An example of strategy knowledge is understanding that comprehension strategies are cognitive tools that can be used deliberately, selectively, and flexibly (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1996; Kolic-Vehovec & Bajsanski, 2006).

A large number of studies found metacognitive instruction had a positive and significant overall result on student achievement in reading comprehension (Paris & Jacobs, 1984; Eilers & Pinkley, 2006; Boolware-Gooden, Carreker, Thornhill, & Joshi, 2007; Houtveen & van de Grift, 2007; Alan & Hancock, 2008). The findings from these studies show that comprehension strategies can indeed be taught. Other findings on metacognition that are of particular relevance to *Reading Power* and *Non-Fiction Reading Power* include: students who utilize metacognitive strategies while they read become stronger readers who are able to clearly comprehend what they read (Dewitz & Dewitz, 2003), and young students can benefit from explicit instruction of comprehension strategies at the same time that they are learning to decode (Eilers & Pinkley, 2006). *Reading Power* and *Non-Fiction Reading Power* teaches students to become metacognitive thinkers as they learn to 'notice' their thinking about reading and discuss their ideas with teachers and classmates.

EXPLICIT TEACHING OF COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

It is hardly surprising that a body of research on explicit teaching has developed alongside the research on comprehension instruction and metacognition. In their review of several major reading studies, The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) found evidence that highlights explicit teaching is an effective method for teaching the major components of the reading process. A study by Duffy and And (1986) found that with training, teachers can become more explicit in explaining how to use reading skills as strategies. They also found that more explicit instruction resulted in greater student awareness of what was learned, when to use that knowledge, and how to use it. Interestingly, in interviews with the trained teachers, Duffy and And revealed that many teachers found teaching explicitly difficult to plan. In *Reading Power*, Gear (2006; 2008) has laid out the lessons explicitly so that the program is easy to implement without being overly scripted.

Three and a half decades of reading research clearly indicates that reading instruction cannot end when students are able to decode words. To become successful readers, students continue to need instruction that will support their understanding of what they are reading (Boolware-Gooden, et al. 2007). Research also suggests that reading comprehension and metacognitive skills continue to develop through high-school and even into post-secondary school. The implications of these findings cannot be ignored; *all* teachers need to be reading teachers. The comprehension strategies and instructional framework found in *Reading Power* are not new, however they are strongly supported by decades of reading research. School leaders, classroom teachers, and teacher librarians can feel very comfortable that they are bringing best practice into their buildings when they decide to embrace *Reading Power*.

What can school leaders do about... ?

Reading Power is an excellent program that supports and strengthens any other classroom-based reading program. Comprehension strategies are an essential component of reading instruction, but other reading skills such as decoding and fluency are equally important. Since *Reading Power* focuses on comprehension strategies, it complements your overall program, but does not replace it. Research has suggested that the explicit instruction of reading comprehension strategies should begin at an early stage in students' reading development; at the same time that they are learning to decode words for reading (Eilers & Pinkley, 2006). As a result, *Reading Power* is ideal in an elementary setting and some of the more complex strategies can easily be extended into the middle years.

Teacher-librarians aiming to support and increase explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies in their schools need to target their *Reading Power* efforts towards two main areas: collection development and instruction. Purchasing books and resources to build a collection that supports implementation of *Reading Power* is mainly the domain of the teacher-librarian, however the responsibility for reading comprehension instruction falls on the shoulders of all educators in the building.

Collection development

One of the best things about *Reading Power* is its simplicity; it is user friendly and highly practical. Collection development and organization is a natural place to begin the discussion of implementing *Reading Power* in your school. If the school library collection is well stocked with books that are recommended for, and support the concept of *Reading Power*, teachers can easily incorporate *Reading Power* strategies and lessons into their reading program.

The book lists provided in the *Reading Power* (Gear, 2006; 2008) programs are an excellent place to start. Chances are that many of the recommended books are already a part of your school library collection, making it easy (and inexpensive) to start integrating *Reading Power* lessons into your repertoire. Gear designed her program to follow Pearson's pedagogical model of gradual release of responsibility wherein the teacher is the expert and the student is the apprentice (Gear, 2006). The fiction program reflects this model by providing a list of teacher read-aloud "gems" and a list of books for independent student practice for each strategy. The non-fiction book lists are organized differently, however. The non-fiction lessons are less book-specific and more generic, so that teachers can integrate them into their science and social studies curriculum lessons. Thus, the non-fiction book lists are organized by topic, based on science and social studies themes, rather than by strategy. Gear also updates her *Reading Power* website periodically with new book lists, to highlight some of the best new titles that can be used with the *Reading Power* programs.

Once the materials have been assembled, it is worth taking some time to consider how to make these resources most easily accessible and recognizable for staff and students. Since the fiction and non-fiction programs are organized in different ways, the supporting materials will likely need to be organized differently too. Gear recommends using book tubs, organized by strategy, for the fiction materials. In my school, the previous teacher-librarian purchased teacher read-aloud books for each strategy and organized them into milk crates labeled with Connect, Visualize, Question, Infer, and Transform. Each crate contains a copy of the *Reading Power* (Gear, 2006) guide, and every book has a label on the front cover that clearly marks the targeted strategy. These "grab-and-go" crates are kept in the teacher resource section of the library, where teachers are able to sign them out one at a time. Independent practice books for students were also purchased and labeled by strategy, but they are shelved with the rest of the

collection. Shelving these books with the rest of the collection prevents a large number of resources from being unavailable to students. Each book is clearly labeled on the spine, which enables me to find them quickly when a colleague wants to make them available for students in their classroom. Managing the books in this manner has proved convenient for my staff, and has worked well at my school.

In my experience, it is a good practice to keep the teacher books in a dedicated place rather than amongst the rest of the collection. This serves two key purposes: the books are easy to locate on a moment's notice, and they are kept out of regular circulation. Having the teaching materials in a set place ensures that books are available and easy for teachers to find. While the second purpose sounds counterintuitive, keeping certain books off of the regular shelves helps to preserve their power as teaching materials. When students are already familiar with most or all of the Question*,* Visualize, and Infer books, it can be more difficult to use those materials to teach the strategy. Caldecott medal winner *Flotsam* by David Weisner (2006) is a perfect example. *Flotsam* is a beautifully illustrated, wordless story book that intrigues children and captures their imaginations. When I have used *Flotsam* as part of my Question unit, it has been my experience that students who are unfamiliar with the book ask all kinds of questions and are totally engaged. However, when I have taught the same lesson with children who *are* familiar with the book, they have not asked nearly as many questions or been as fully engaged. It is worth noting however, that this is more crucial for some strategies than for others. Many of the Connect books, for example, are materials that students are often familiar with, but this does not detract from their use in teaching.

With the non-fiction materials, I don't find book crates necessary. As Gear explains, the lessons are meant to be taught using any available materials, including newspapers, magazines, textbooks, or any of the recommended non-fiction titles. Due to this flexibility, I keep all of the non-fiction materials shelved with the rest of the collection. The only difference is that these books are labeled with stickers that mark them as *Reading Power* recommended books.

Finally, it is worth mentioning how teaching *Reading Power* and collecting related materials can be beneficial to the teacher-librarian. Teacher-librarians are experts at choosing quality materials, yet I have found that using *Reading Power* as part of my library program has helped me refine this skill and consider new materials in a more thoughtful way. As I have become more familiar and comfortable with each "power," I have developed "strategy sense" and am better able to choose new books that are appropriate to support the teaching of each strategy.

In the initial stages of implementing *Reading Power*, the teacher-librarian must be deliberate in the acquisition and organization of materials that will support the program. The most important thing to consider is how to make it as easy and convenient as possible for teachers to begin teaching *Reading Power* in their classrooms. While it may take some time at the outset to get organized, it will save considerable time in the long run. Once the materials are organized and easily accessible, you can decide what *Reading Power* instruction will look like in your school.

Instruction

When planning to implement a new reading program into the school, it is important to keep in mind that "teacher librarians play a vital role in the success of literacy programs in a school" (Beard & Antrim, 2010). In her book *Collaborative Strategies for Teaching Reading Comprehension: Maximizing your Impact*, Moreillen (2007) asserts that "although decoding skills are best taught in the classroom where classroom teachers can closely monitor the progress of individual children, the teacher librarian is perfectly positioned to be a co-teacher of reading comprehension strategies" (p. 2). In another article, Moreillen (2008) points out that teacher-librarians should be reading teachers, not just reading promoters. A position paper from the American Association of School Librarians further emphasizes the teaching role of the school librarian, stating:

> School librarians model and collaboratively teach reading comprehension strategies: assess and use background knowledge, pose and answer questions that are appropriate to the task, make predictions and inferences, determine main ideas, and monitor reading comprehension as well as the learning process. (American Library Association, 2010, p.1)

In short, the teacher-librarian should hold a central role in the implementation of *Reading Power*.

The rationale behind these statements is clear: student achievement increases when teacher-librarians provide reading instruction alongside classroom teachers (Hobbs, Oleynik, & Sacco, 2011; Conklin, 2012; Beard & Antrim, 2010; Moreillen, 2008). Better still, students are not the only beneficiaries when teacher-librarians and classroom teachers work together; both educators can also reap benefits from this collaborative relationship. Hobbs, Oleynik, & Sacco found that teachers gain opportunities to communicate and collaborate with the teacher-librarian, and are more likely to use quality literature to support development of reading skills. They also found that teacher-librarians benefit by becoming more authentically linked to the curriculum, getting to know students on a more individual level, and finding justifications for future library purchases.

Teacher-librarians "must take it upon themselves to develop their own knowledge base in teaching of comprehension strategies so that they may participate fully in explicit reading comprehension instruction to increase student learning" (Zimmerman, 2005, p. 27). *Reading Power* provides teacher-librarians (and other educators) with a tool kit for becoming explicit models and teachers of reading comprehension strategies. The lessons in *Reading Power* can give teacher-librarians greater potential to support classroom teachers and bolster student achievement.

There is no better place for teacher-librarians to begin implementing *Reading Power* in their school than by incorporating comprehension instruction into their library lessons. Supplementing your regular program with teacher think-alouds is an easy, and highly effective, way to start including explicit strategy instruction in your lessons. *Reading Power* will strengthen your library program by elevating story time to an engaging, enjoyable, and educational experience with substance. Information literacy lessons will also be enhanced through increased comprehension of non-fiction texts. The *Reading Power* framework provides focus and a clear progression for lessons, which is a welcome contrast to traditional story-time that may be random and book-specific rather than focused and strategy-specific. This section will provide some practical suggestions for incorporating *Reading Powe*r into your library program, with the goals of giving purpose to story-time and supporting reading comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts.

The lessons outlined in *Reading Power* (Gear, 2008; Gear, 2006) are flexible and can easily be used with a whole class, a small group, or an individual student. In the planning stages, it is helpful to realize that every student does not need to be taught every strategy every year. The number of lessons for each strategy discussed in the *Reading Power* programs can be narrowed down or expanded upon to accommodate different ages and abilities. For the sake of brevity, I will provide examples and suggestions for extending Visualize - one of the fiction reading "powers".

Gear explains the Visualize strategy as making a picture or a movie in your head as you read. Following the gradual release of responsibility model, lessons move from teacher-directed, to guided group practice, to independent practice (Gear, 2006). Initial lessons introduce the Visualize "power" with quick visualization activities and discussion of "picture words" (Gear, 2006. p.66). Students are then guided to share their visualizations through drawing, and use their senses to help with visualization. With primary students, I find that objects hidden in a "mystery" bag are an excellent way grab and focus their attention on visualizing. At first, the teacher can describe some attributes of an object in the bag, and encourage the students to visualize the clues in order to guess what the object might be. After the teacher has modeled describing an item, students can take turns giving clues about the mystery objects to the class. With older

students who are learning about using their senses to help visualization, I like to use sensory focus cards. Each student is given a card that names a specific kind of sensory word that they are to listen for (i.e. texture, colour, taste, sound, etc.). I find these cards increase student engagement, as each individual is charged with a particular task, and the words the students jot down or call out often lead to rich discussion about descriptive language. The many ways in which each of the *Reading Power* strategies can be adapted keeps the program fresh and fun to teach.

In addition to teacher instruction, students can also benefit from student-to-student interactions based on the reading powers. Older student readers can coach younger buddies on how to apply the reading powers, and both students will benefit from this collaboration. Younger students can learn from more experienced students, and older students learn from teaching what they know to someone else. Another variation of student-teaching-student is for older children to create strategy-based video tutorials with the support of their classroom teacher or teacher librarian. In the videos, the older students would explain a strategy, read a story and share their think-alouds with the audience. Younger students could then watch and learn, making the videos rich resources that benefit all students.

Special library initiatives can also be tailored to support the integration of *Reading Power* into your library program. I provide my students with a summer reading bingo card, and feature activities that require students to apply the strategies they have developed throughout the year. I also include *Reading Power* in my "First Read Club." Students who are the first to read a newly purchased book write a very short summary, tell what strategy they used most while reading, and give the book a rating out of five stars. These are simple and effective ways to reinforce the reading "powers" that you are teaching.

Students *and* teachers can learn from *Reading Power*. Various professional development opportunities can stem out of implementing *Reading Power*, including action research and a professional book club. The *Reading Power* guides are ideal materials for a professional book club because they are practical and do not overwhelm the reader with too much information. A book club that is focused on *Reading Power* will surely provide practical ideas, create meaningful dialogue, and support all educators that are involved. The book club may be a stand-alone activity or incorporated as part of an action research project.

Action research projects focused on reading instruction are another option for using *Reading Power* for professional development. Research questions can focus on improving instruction of a single strategy (i.e. How can we best increase the quality and depth of connections that students make?), or on comprehension instruction in general. Action research projects provide a framework for collaborative planning, co-teaching, and group debriefing that can benefit the educators that are involved in many ways. Collaborative planning allows for discussion of best practice, and co-teaching gives teachers and teacher-librarians opportunities to learn from one another. Group debriefing provides a chance for reflection, assessment, and further discussion.

Once *Reading Power* is an established part of reading instruction in school, it makes sense to reach out to the greater school community to help support students in their development of reading comprehension. *Reading Power* provides a common language for all readers to use when talking about their reading; consistency is key. Having all teachers and students using the common language is the first step, but for maximum impact, parents and other members of the school community should also be versed in *Reading Power* language. Parents and other reading mentors can become educated about the various "powers" through school newsletter articles, school and/or library blog posts, and parent information evenings provided by the school literacy team. Adult volunteer readers can receive training designed to help them become skilled reading coaches who are familiar with the strategies and the terminology.

Parents and other reading mentors, just like students and teachers, can learn from *Reading Power*. As they become familiar with talking about comprehension strategies, they will also become aware of the

strategies they use when reading. This is a crucial step in helping parents understand that reading is more than decoding and fluency. Many of today's parents learned comprehension the old way, through answering comprehension questions, rather than by developing metacognition of reading strategies. The more information the school can provide to the community about reading, the more successful the community will be as readers.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Looking back on my memories of learning to read, it is clear that explicit instruction in comprehension strategies was lacking. As a result, I did not become a fully metacognitive reader until I encountered *Reading Power*. This program has profoundly affected me as a reader and a reading teacher. *Reading Power* can help students, parents, and teachers reach their reading (and teaching) potential.
Experts say that reading is the most critical skill that students need to be successful throughout school, into post-secondary, and in the workplace (Hill, 2011). Reading comprehension is a skill that students will use every day of their lives, therefore it must be an instructional focus every day of their education. *Reading Power* is a program that can help make explicit instruction of comprehension strategies manageable for classroom teachers and teacher-librarians.

Teacher-librarians regularly foster enjoyment of reading, promote literacy within their schools, and develop collections that meet the needs of their patrons. These are important and worthwhile endeavors to support literacy, however they are not enough. Teacher-librarians must also be teachers of reading who support students, teachers, and parents with their professional knowledge of reading and instruction. Explicitly teaching comprehension strategies should be a focus of all school library programs. Teacher-librarians can model best practice instructional methods for other educators when they co-teach comprehension strategies with classroom teachers. Parents must also be informed so that reading strategies are modeled and discussed both at school and at home. Students will not learn how to use and apply these strategies without explicit models to show them how to do so.

The true "power" of *Reading Power* is its ability to get people thinking and talking about what they are reading. I urge you to start using *Reading Power*, and be the impetus that generates this essential dialogue in your school.

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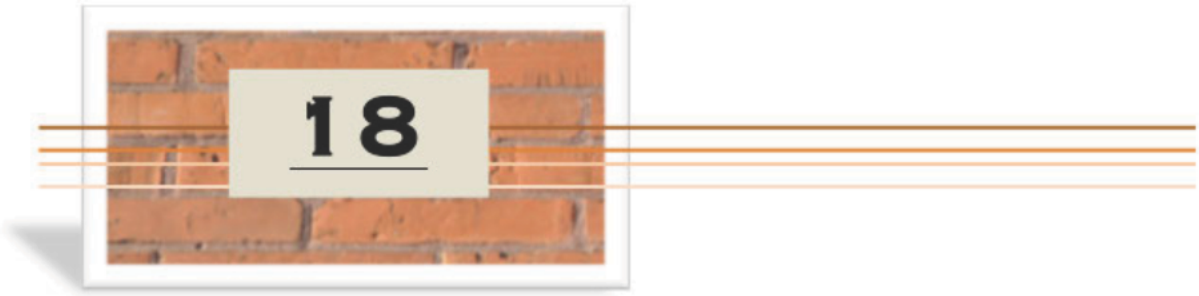
Teacher-Librarians and School Library Collections

At the core of a school library program is its collection of resources. With the abundance of print and digital resources currently available, the selection of materials for the school library collection has become increasingly more important and challenging. Selecting resources to meet the recreational and informational needs of diverse school communities is a vital role for teacher-librarians.

This section focuses on diversity of our schools and the importance of the school library collection in meeting the needs of students and teachers. In the first chapter, Cynthia Peterson describes the issues surrounding the experiences of gender minority, or gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, queer, or questioning (GLBTQ) youth in schools and school libraries, and presents ideas for meeting their special needs. The chapter proposes strategies and ideas for collection development, where to find resources, cataloguing GLBTQ titles, facilitating access through appropriate library services, and programming. The chapter concludes with suggestions for ensuring the school library is a safe haven for GLBTQ students, how to deal with challenges, strategies for collaborating with teachers to integrate gender minority issues into instruction, and advocacy. In the second chapter, Brenda Roberts looks at research on school library resource selection with a focus on diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Attention is given to the justification for acquiring diverse materials and the role of the teacher-librarian in searching, reading, reviewing and locating resources. Roberts then suggests way to create a welcoming and inclusive library environment, promote a diverse collection and develop library programs that support social justice. The section concludes with Niki Card's chapter which focuses on how the school library's collection can, and should, support a school's literacy goals. Card helps us understand basic collection development considerations with a specific focus on school literacy goals, including Daily 5 and Free Voluntary Reading. By aligning the school library collection with the overall literacy goals of the school, this chapter emphasizes how teacher-librarians are resource leaders in their schools.

Meeting the diverse recreational and informational needs of the school community should be the focus of any school library collection. The chapters in this section highlight the important role teacher-librarians have in building and maintaining an effective collection.



Building a School Library Program That Meets the Needs of GLBTQ Students

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Invisibility is a dangerous and painful condition, and lesbians are not the only people to know it. When those who have power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing. Yet you know you exist and others like you, that this is a game with mirrors. It takes some strength of soul -- and not just individual strength, but collective understanding -- to resist this void, this nonbeing, into which you are thrust, and to stand up, demanding to be seen and heard" (Rich, 1986, p. 199).

Picture this. You have brilliant red hair in a society that values only blonds and brunettes. You want to find out more about red hair. What causes it? How many people are redheaded? Are there any others like you? What are they like?

You walk into your school library and ask the teacher-librarian for books on red hair. She looks you up and down, gaze pausing on the hat you are wearing, and says, "What in the world do you want those books for? We don't spend school funds on trash." Then she walks away. Several nearby students overhear the conversation and point at you, calling out rude names. A teacher overhears and laughs. When he looks away, one of the students shoves you, pulls off your hat, and whispers a filthy word too softly for the teacher to hear.

You grab your hat back and head to the computers to research on the Internet about red-headedness, but all the sites are blocked by the district Internet filter. As punishment for your efforts to get the

information you need from multiple blocked sites, the administrator cancels your school network access. You leave without the information you need, certain of two things. You will never step into that library again, and you are destined for much worse harassment once the word gets around school.

Sound ludicrous? Welcome to the world of many GLBTQ teens: gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgendered, two-spirited, queer, or questioning. While this is a useful acronym, gender identity is very complex. If you would like clarification on these terms, please see the glossary at PFLAG Canada (http://www.pflagcanada.ca/en/glossary-e.html).

These young people are members of an invisible minority, those whose gender identity does not match the heterosexual mainstream. If the redhead scenario makes you cringe, ask yourself these questions, Do GLBTQ students see your school library as a safe place? Are they welcomed, accepted, and respected by staff and students? Do they receive the same individualized care and support that your other students get? Do filtering and collection policies allow them access to the high quality information and resources they need? Are your GLBTQ students mirrored in the library collection and programming?

Before you answer yes too hastily, let me share my story. I was a teacher for 38 years, and a teacher-librarian in junior high and high school for 25 of those years. In that time, I worked to build a library program that included all my students. The schools where I taught had populations that varied widely in socio-economic status as well as in ethnicity, and I ensured that the library served our varying populations well. Unfortunately, I did not serve our students of gender minorities as well as I could have. I have to admit my own ignorance. It was partly through doing research for the courses in my Master of Education program that I came to understand how I might have made a difference for our GLBTQ students.

The galvanizing moment for me was the death of Tyler Clementi. Tyler was the Rutgers student who killed himself after his roommate filmed him in an intimate encounter with another man and posted the footage online. The resulting publicity surrounding the issues that beset him and many others like him made me remember some of my former students who are gay or lesbian. I wondered whether I had provided what they needed in our library. I began to think about my grandsons, and how I would react if one of them were gay. How would I support them? How might their teachers and their teacher-librarians support them?

As I investigated this topic for my university work, I discovered that there is research that shows that being ignored is far from the worst fate that faces GLBTQ students in our schools (Kosciw, Greytak, Diaz., & Bartkiewicz, 2010; Taylor et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2009), and that some of them do not consider even school libraries as safe spaces (Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen, & Palmer, 2012; Taylor et al., 2009). Fortunately, there is also a growing body of research and professional literature supporting inclusive library programs that acknowledge the particular needs of GLBTQ students. These students' needs differ, ranging from those who are out, to those who are questioning their identities, to those transitioning to a different gender, to those who are afraid to reveal themselves.

What does the research and professional literature suggest? First, we must recognize the daily trials GLBTQ youth face at school and in the library. Then we must understand the specific information GLBTQ teens need, and provide library services and programming that respect those needs. We must confront the challenges of building a rich and accessible GLBTQ collection. We must commit to making the school library a safe haven where our GLBTQ students find recognition, respect, and support. There are specific and practical strategies we can use to accomplish these goals.

In stark contrast to the plethora of research-based and professional best practices we could be using is the ignorance of otherwise well-informed professionals. I found that the teacher-librarians (and the teachers) I know have never received training in teaching GLBTQ students, either as part of their university training, or as professional development from their schools or districts.

I am frankly appalled that it has taken us so long to deal with these issues. It was only last year that my own school district began a program to deal with bullying of GLBTQ students. If you search my province's curriculum site, you will not find material that addresses these students' needs in curriculum, let alone in library programs.

To paraphrase a bumper sticker I saw online, I myself am not gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, queer, or questioning. "I just support this crazy thought that everyone should have equal rights" (Protogear, 2012), and that includes a quality school library program that reflects its GLBTQ students. If you agree, I have some wonderful resources and ideas to share with you.

What do school leaders need to know...?

Recognize - What is School Life Like for GLBTQ Youth?

Multiple studies and surveys done in Canada and the United States agree that school is not a comfortable or even a safe place for many GLBTQ youth (Haskell & Burtch, 2010; Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen, & Palmer, 2012; Kosciw, Greytak, Diaz, & Bartkiewicz, 2010; Taylor et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2011). Taylor et al. (2011) reported that 70 percent of GLBTQ students heard denigrating or homophobic comments daily from other students, and that 21 percent of them were physically assaulted because of their gender expression. Transgender youth suffered the most, as their differences are often more visible in terms of their gender expression. Aboriginal GLBTQ students and those of colour were most at risk, as they are often harassed for their ethnicity as well as their gender expression (Taylor et al., 2011). Students reported that teachers often looked the other way when they heard these demeaning comments. This perpetuates the feeling that these students cannot count on adults for help, and less than 40 percent of GLBTQ students felt there was at least one adult they could talk to at their school. Most shocking of all is that 10 percent of GLBTQ students heard their teachers make homophobic comments at least once a week (Taylor et al, 2011).

Do you think your school is different? From 2007-2009 Taylor et al. surveyed over 3700 students from across Canada through an open-access online survey and through in-school sessions done in twenty randomly selected school districts. Taylor et al. (2011) found that many school staff ignore or tacitly condone homophobic behaviour.

American studies agree. The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network conducts yearly school climate surveys in the United States. While findings from the 2011 survey of 8500 students from 50 states showed school climate has improved somewhat due to the implementation of anti-harassment policies and GLBTQ support systems, schools need to do much more. Of the GLBTQ students who reported an incident of harassment to school staff, 36 percent reported that staff took no action. In addition, a third of GLBTQ students reported missing school due to feeling unsafe, and researchers found that those who experienced harassment had lower achievement levels, trouble focusing on schoolwork, and a higher incidence of depression (Kosciw, Greytak, Bartkiewicz, Boesen,, & Palmer, 2012). Some deal with the stress by indulging in substance abuse or risky sexual behaviour (Savage & Harley, 2009).

The negative impact of hostile school climate does not end there. Kitts (2005) cites 15 studies that show that suicide rates for GLBTQ youth are 20 to 40 percent higher than for heterosexual youth. In addition, the problems faced by GLBTQ youth may be underreported, as fear of being identified may prevent youth from participating in studies (Cianciotto & Cahill, 2012).

Surely the school library welcomes GLBTQ students? Not necessarily. One student, fearful of being openly gay but looking for validation, went to his middle school librarian. He recalls, "There were tons of books about gangs and drugs and teen pregnancy and there were no LGBT books. I asked the librarian about it and she was like, 'This is middle school. I can only have appropriate books here'" (Leanne, 2010, B7). Only 44 percent of the students surveyed in the 2011 National School Climate survey reported that they could find information about GLBTQ-related issues in their school library (Kosciw et al. 2011). Not only do GLBTQ students struggle to find resources, they do not feel safe approaching library staff to get help, and feel that others—including librarians—are judging them (Bridge, 2010; Curry, 2005; Hoheb, 1999; Linville, 2004). In addition, school Internet filters often block GLBTQ sites that are in fact appropriate for adolescent use, grouping them as banned sites along with obscenity and pornography (Cianciotto & Cahill, 2012; Holt, 2011; Martin & Murdock, 2007; Schrader & Wells, 2007; Whelan, 2006). Although it may be hard for us to accept that our schools create these difficulties for GLBTQ youth, recognizing this is the first step towards making a difference.

Understand - What Information Do GLBTQ Youth Need?

The next step is to understand the specific information GLBTQ youth need. They have one need common to most youths -- they want to see themselves reflected in the books they read so that they feel part of a community (Martin & Murdock, 2007; Rauch, 2011). After all, “When there is no positive mirror from which to reflect yourself, a distorted and ugly image is constructed” (Little, 2001, p. 102). But GLBTQ youth have needs specific to them. Current research finds that youth begin to identify their gender identity between 11 to 13 years of age, and may choose to reveal themselves as GLBTQ as early as 15 (Cianciotto & Cahill, 2012). They often feel there is something different about themselves much earlier than that (Biegel, 2010).

Unfortunately, unlike heterosexual youth, GLBTQ youth are often outsiders. They do not have the constant support of mainstream society, books, media, familial role models or knowledgeable, accepting adults to show them how they should feel and behave as they are growing up, and to aid in their identity formation (Alexander & Miselis, 2007; Biegel, 2010; Hughes-Hassell, Overberg & Harris, 2013; Little, 2001). They are often hesitant to discuss their gender identity with family and friends for fear of the negative reaction they may get (Joyce, O'Neil, & McWhirter, 2010; Rauch, 2011), so they need access to resources that give “accurate, supportive, unbiased information about their sexuality” (Hughes-Hassell, Overberg & Harris, 2013, p. 12). They also need basic social information, such as how to behave around other GLBTQ people (Mehra & Braquet, 2006).

Another issue to note is that many GLBTQ youth end up homeless due to a variety of factors, including rejection by their families, being forced by parents to leave home, suffering abuse, or being too old for foster care. One American national survey found that GLBTQ youth made up 40 percent of those helped by agencies serving homeless youth (Durso & Gates, 2012).

Given these circumstances, what kinds of resources do GLBTQ need to find in the school library? First is good fiction. "Queer and questioning teens are looking for portrayals of what it means to be queer--a way to describe what they feel, to affirm that it is normal, and to know that they are not alone" (Martin & Murdock, 2007, p. 17). Of course, GLBTQ youth need much more.

In her 2004 survey of GLBTQ teens in New York, Linville asked them what they wanted from libraries, and had them identify areas where public library collections were lacking. We can apply this information to our school libraries. In addition to stories about real people who are GLBTQ, youth wanted,

- coming-out stories
- activism how-to information, including starting a group and equal rights for queer youth

- stories of fictional characters
- lists of community resources
- books about what it means to be queer; sexuality, queerness, and gayness
- safe sex/sexual health (Linville, 2004, p. 184).

Using what we understand about our GLBTQ students' information needs, our next step is to build our school library collection to support our students.

Build - GLBTQ Collection Development

Remember that we are not building this collection just for our GLBTQ students. Including and promoting high-quality resources that show GLBTQ people in a variety of life situations help heterosexual youth understand their GLBTQ peers better (Gardes, 2006; Rauch, 2011; Wood, 2010). Schliesman states,

> One of the first steps every educator can take is to acknowledge that books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning characters aren't about "the other," they're about us—all of us. They're about teens walking down the hallways of every high school, and about the people walking down the streets of every community. They're about the world every teen, regardless of his or her sexuality, inhabits, and literature is one way to challenge readers to think critically about that world and their place in it (Curwood, Schliesman & Horning, 2009, p. 39).

How well are we already serving our GLBTQ students? Studies show that public library GLBTQ collections include only a fraction of available resources (Alexander & Miselis, 2007; Boon & Howard, 2004; Stringer-Stanback 2011).

Are school libraries any better? While multiple large-scale research studies on school library collections are lacking, one recent study looked at high schools in one American state. Researchers searched catalogues for GLBTQ-themed search terms, and for 15 fiction and 6 non-fiction titles from a core collection suggested in *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teen Literature: A Guide to Reading Interests* (Webber, 2010). The results showed that "although LGBTQ teens are estimated to make up 5.9 percent of the students in American high schools, the average number of LGBTQ-themed titles held by these school libraries was 0.4 percent" (Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, & Harris, 2013, p. 1).

There is another issue. School leaders should know what Whelan (2009) calls in the title of her article a "Dirty Little Secret." Some teacher-librarians practice self-censorship, avoiding purchasing items they see as contravening their personal values, or those they fear will cause controversy. Rickman (2010) found that secondary school teacher-librarians showed more of a tendency to self-censor than those in elementary and middle schools. We must ensure that we include GLBTQ materials as part of our overall collection development plan, and that those who select titles abide by our policies and plans. Fortunately, there are a number of professional tools to help us with selection of high quality GLBTQ titles..

While professional journals written for school and young adult librarians of course do include reviews of GLBTQ resources, and databases such as Novelist can also provide titles, a recent study found that professional journals do not provide substantial coverage of GLBTQ youth resources or services (Koehler, 2011). Happily, a number of professional readers' advisory and selection guides specific to GLBTQ literature exist.

There are two excellent guides designed to support teacher-librarians as they make their libraries more useful to GLBTQ students. These are *Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, And Questioning Teens: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians* (Martin and Murdock, 2007), and *Challenging silence, challenging censorship: Inclusive resources, strategies and policy directives for addressing bisexual, gay,*

lesbian, trans-identified and two-spirited realities in school and public libraries (Schrader & Wells, 2007). Each includes an extensive annotated bibliography.

In addition, *The Heart Has Its Reasons: Young Adult Literature with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969-2004* (Cart & Jenkins, 2006) provides historical context as well as title suggestions through its overview of the literature as well as extensive annotated lists arranged by publication date. *Rainbow family collections: Selecting and using children's books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer content* (Naidoo, 2012) is an excellent guide to choosing titles for younger readers.

Another useful resource is *Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered literature: A genre guide* (Bosman & Bradford, 2008). Although this is a review of literature for adults, it details the various genres of GLBTQ literature and provides readers' advisories and annotations for 1100 titles.

Edmonton Public Schools and the Edmonton Public Library have produced a superb resource (especially for Canadian teachers) titled *Sexual orientation and gender identity: Recommended fiction and nonfiction resources for K-12 schools*. In its 34 pages Wells and Bewick (n.d.) provide an annotated list of GLBTQ resources which include "newer releases, landmark resources, and as much Canadian content as possible" (p. 1). Selections include some high-interest, low vocabulary titles, some French titles, DVDs, feature films, and nonfiction resources to educate teachers about GLBTQ issues.

Another recent collection-building tool (and one I recommend highly due to its scope) is *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teen Literature: A Guide to Reading Interests* (Webber, 2010). It includes high quality fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and graphic novel titles organized by theme and genre and provides a summary and reading level for each title. Other selection resources are available online. The Rainbow Book List (http://glbtrt.ala.org/rainbowbooks/rainbow-books-lists) is a yearly list of fiction and nonfiction titles containing "significant and authentic GLBTQ content" (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table of the American Library Association, 2013, footnote) recommended for people from birth to 18 years of age. This year's list includes 45 titles. The six lists (from 2008-2013) include grade level recommendations and brief summaries, indicate what other literary awards books have won, and are selected by members of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) and the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) of the American Library Association (ALA).

Another resource is the Lambda Literary Foundation (http://www.lambdaliterary.org/), which reviews young adult GLBTQ titles and selects a yearly winner in its LGBT Children's/Young Adult Award section (Lambda Literary Foundation, 2013). A third resource, given by the GLBTRT, is the Stonewall Book Award (http://www.ala.org/glbtrt/award), "the first and most enduring award for GLBT books" (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table of the American Library Association, 2013). It includes a children's and young adult category dating from 2010.

It is important to note that GLBTQ titles have received other awards teacher-librarians use to select high quality resources. These include the Michael L. Printz Award and Honor Award, National Book Award finalist, and the Sid Fleischman Humor Award. They have also been included in noteworthy lists such as the New York Public Library's Books for the Teen Age, Young Adult Library Services Association's lists including Best Books for Young Adults, Popular Paperbacks and Great Graphic Novels list; and ALA's Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers (Manfredi, 2009).

Wood (2010) provides us with a guiding principle for GLBTQ collection building. She says, "There needs to be a balance between texts in the nonfiction collection that answer frank questions and fiction titles that give context and explain emotions" (Teen Literature and Sexuality, para. 2).
Schrader and Wells (2007) also offer excellent advice to keep in mind as we build GLBTQ-inclusive collections. "Above all, build slowly, seek resources, find kindred spirits, form networks, strategize

thoughtfully and know that you are not alone" (p. 25). Why not make connections with knowledgeable people in your community? These may include other school librarians, public and university librarians, facilitators of Gay Straight Alliance groups, staff of specialty bookstores, or members of associations such as PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). Most importantly, consult your students and seek their recommendations.

Meeting the Challenges

Creating GLBTQ-inclusive school library collections comes with challenges. Depending on your comfort level, you can build the collection you know your students need, and worry about complaints if they happen (Whelan, 2006). On the other hand, there are steps you can take to prepare for challenges. Martin and Murdock (2007) detail a systematic strategy that allows librarians to determine their institution's (and their own) readiness level and ease their libraries into using GLBTQ resources. Other best practices include developing a clear collection development and consideration policy and a reconsideration (response to challenge) policy in partnership with other teachers and administration (Martin & Murdock, 2007; Rockefeller, 2009; Schrader & Wells, 2007; Whelan, 2006). Rockefeller (2009) suggests creating a review board made up of interested teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members. Sharing your collection development policy as well as reviews, lists of awards, and relevant school and district policies with this board will prepare them to discuss titles for which you need confirmation, as well as provide support for possible challenges.

Developing a GLBTQ collection demands much of a teacher-librarian, and of other school leaders. Brian Kenny, former *School Library Journal* Editor-in-Chief, says, "It takes guts to create libraries that support the needs of all our students. It takes even more guts to support collections that may attract fierce opposition. But that just happens to be our job" (2006, p. 11).

Facilitate - GLBTQ Library Services

What services do GLBTQ youth need? They need the same kind of programs and services that help all students feel acknowledged, accepted, and included in the school library. In addition, GLBTQ youth need services that allow them to access the resources they need while respecting their individual privacy and dignity.

Because GLBTQ youth may be hesitant to approach library staff for assistance, it is essential that teacher-librarians catalogue resources so that they are easy to find (Boon & Howard, 2004). Each resource must be assigned appropriate subject headings and GLBTQ keywords in its description (Johnson, 2009; Hughes-Hassell et al., 2013). If you hesitate to use current terminology, Rockefeller (2009) reminds us that 'If it feels risky or cutting edge to include subject headings like "genderqueer", remember that not long ago, patrons seeking information related to homosexuality had to look under headings like "sexuality, deviant"' (p. 291-2). Teacher-librarians must make choices based on what will work for their students.

Other Services

The professional and research literature provide many examples of services that help connect learners with resources. These examples come from Bridge, 2010; Gardes, 2008; Manfredi, 2009; Martin & Murdock, 2007; Mehra & Braquet, 2006; Rauch, 2011; Rockefeller, 2009; Schrader & Wells, 2007; and Whelan, 2006, as well as from my own ideas.

Set the Tone

- Ask GLBTQ students what they like to read, and incorporate their suggestions in the collection.
- Post *Safe Space* (GLSEN, n.d.), *Safe Zone* (Safe Schools Coalition, n.d.) or similar notices to let everyone know the school library is a GLBTQ-friendly place and that all students will be treated

respectfully. Many different posters are available at the Posters, Stickers, Cards - Safe Schools Coalition page (http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/rg-posters.html)
- Actively discourage homophobic talk (including expressions such as "You're so gay").
- Use resources from Think Before You Speak. Don't say, "That's so Gay." (http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/), a web site from GLSEN that offers suggestions on what to do when you encounter homophobic language. You can download posters to display or videos to embed in your library web site.
- Protect the privacy and dignity of GLBTQ students.
- Treat GLBTQ students in a friendly, natural way, as you would any other student.

Promote and use GLBTQ Content

- Add GLBTQ titles to your lists, such as genre-specific (fantasy, science fiction, romance, sports, etc.), for Valentine's Day, or biographies of important historical figures.
- Make GLBTQ materials accessible and visible by including them in your regular programming, book talks, displays, and pathfinders.
- Include new GLBTQ titles with your regular displays of new books.
- Put bibliographies of GLBTQ literature on the library web site and on bookmarks you leave around the library.
- Encourage English teachers to teach literature written by GLBTQ authors and provide them with lists of suitable authors and titles.
- Encourage social studies teachers to include GLBTQ issues in human rights and social justice research projects.
- Encourage the use of GLBTQ titles in book clubs you sponsor.
- Include GLBTQ titles with those you display and/or read aloud during Freedom to Read Week (you can find information on banned titles at the Frequently Challenged Books (http://www.ala.org/advocacy/banned/frequentlychallenged) page of the American Library Association web site).

Acknowledge Special Needs

- Encourage access to appropriate online GLBTQ resources and web sites and, where possible, eliminate Internet filters.
- Include contact information for GLBTQ support and assistance groups on your library web site, along with other support groups suggested by your school counsellors.
- Display this list on a poster in the library.
- Provide services in a supportive, non-judgmental manner to youth seeking GLBTQ information
- Where possible, allow students to check out their own resources
- Put a library catalogue station in an area where searchers have some privacy

Reach Out

- Observe (or organize) events such as Gay Pride Week, International Day Against Homophobia, LGBT History Month, and Day of Silence (an annual vow of silence to bring attention to harassment in schools); Spirit Day (participants wear purple to show they stand against bullying and support of GLBTQ teens), or Pink Day (participants wear pink to show their opposition to bullying).
- Help create and support Gay-Straight Alliances and other student clubs that address GLBTQ issues, and host them in the library.
- Invite representatives of groups such as PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) to speak in your library.

It is, of course, also essential to ensure that everyone who works in the school library, including library technicians, parent volunteers, student assistants, and substitute teachers as well as regular teachers, understands --and abides by-- your policies towards your GLBTQ students.

Commit - The Safe Haven

We all want our students to experience the library as safe. David Levithan, an award-winning, bestselling author and gay himself, writes,

> I have met so many amazing librarians in the past few years, staunch and strong defenders of expression and representation. I can say without a single doubt that many young readers' lives have been helped and saved by their librarians' open-mindedness and courage. (I have the e-mails to prove it.) Many people consider librarians to be gatekeepers, usually in terms of keeping things out. I also think of librarians as gatekeepers in terms of the people they help through the gates. . . the amazing number of librarians who support and encourage their openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students as they strive to live their lives the way they want to live them. (2004, p. 45)

Think about *your* school library. Is it obviously heterosexist? Do its programming, collection, and displays demonstrate that only heterosexual individuals are welcome, acknowledged, and important? Does it send the message that GLBTQ students are invisible, and should stay that way? If we recognize what GLBTQ students face at school, understand their needs, build a high quality, inclusive collection for them, and facilitate their learning by providing the services they need to flourish, then we commit to making our school library the one that Levithan describes. Surely all our students, even the red heads, deserve nothing less. I believe they deserve much more.

What can school leaders do about... ?

Since teacher-librarians are involved with all staff and students, they have a unique opportunity to influence their schools. They are also often on the leading edge of new initiatives and are concerned with equitable access to quality resources for all students. Advocating for GLBTQ rights is, of course, not easy. After all, as Flecker and Gutteridge (2008) point out, most of us have not had the "opportunity to professionally acquire and learn the skills necessary to deal with issues of sexual orientation in a respectful manner, using the framework of human rights"(p. 38). But make no mistake -- this is a human rights issue.

It is not enough just to develop inclusive library programs. We must also advocate for GLBTQ content in our curricula. Thornton (2009) points out that the heteronormativity (the idea that only heterosexuality is normal) found in current social studies curricula denies inclusive education to GLBTQ students (p. 362). Other researchers found heteronormativity in a number of provincial resources. These included 26 Quebec secondary textbooks over five subject areas (Temple, 2005), the Ontario Canadian and World Studies: Grades 11 and 12 curriculum (Horton, Lemisko & Clausen, 2010), and the British Columbia English Literature 12 curriculum (Watson, 2010). Given these conditions, how, then, do we as school leaders advocate for the rights of our GLBTQ students outside our library doors, and inside our colleagues' classrooms?

As a teacher-librarian, I considered it part of my job to provide education to teachers (and administrators) on a wide variety of topics and issues. When I found that our students' online research skills were weak,

for example, I did professional development sessions on online reading skills for all 100 of our teachers. We then integrated teaching these skills into our collaborative projects. With any new learning, teachers need first to be made aware of the issues. Then they need to understand what they can do about the issues, and for that they need resources and lesson plans to help them change their practice. These resources to promote better understanding of the issues of GLBTQ students do exist. A number of school districts, teacher associations, and other organizations in Canada have developed professional development programs that support anti-homophobia, anti-heterosexist policies.

Why not request time on professional development days, at staff meetings, over lunch hours, or during exam week in high school to offer professional development on GLBTQ issues that reflect your district or provincial guidelines? If you do not feel confident presenting the material yourself, you can research what experts are available to present to your staff or workshops interested teachers can attend for training. Your local board or teachers' association may have a designated consultant or can connect you with one.

As with other initiatives, I would start small, first discussing this with my administration and then enlisting sympathetic colleagues. As this is a social justice issue, social studies teachers may already see this as their issue too. Once the initial presentations have been made, be ready to offer resources to teachers. You do not have to reinvent the wheel to deliver the message effectively. Here are some useful resources to begin.

First, check your district or provincial policy. On November 29, 2011, my local board, Edmonton Public Schools (EPS), implemented its first-ever policy on sexual orientation and gender identity for both students and staff. This policy and associated regulations reference inclusive environments, education, and resources, professional development for staff, and much more. Why not post your district policy so that it is visible to all in the school?

Next, determine what professional development resources on GLBTQ issues your district or province offers. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Equitable and Inclusive Schools produced the Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism: A K-12 Curriculum Resource Guide (2011) which offers a wide variety of activities for many subject areas as well as suggested videos and other resources. Activities range from a primary lesson on celebrating all kinds of families in elementary, to a secondary lesson looking at how the media perpetuates hetersosexism, to guiding teachers on "How to handle Harassment in the Hallways in Three Minutes" (Erickson, Gladstone, Gottlieb, Ng, & Parkins, p. 212). The TDSB offers many other resources on their Gender-based Violence Prevention page.

Canadian teacher professional organizations are another excellent resource. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation page Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) issues in schools provides multiple resources including classroom strategies, lesson plans, reference material, video resources, and free workshops. The Alberta Teachers' Association page Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity offers resources for teachers, counsellors, and administrators as well as information on workshops. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has produced the *Positive space: Take action kit* which details ten ways for teachers to build "safe, supportive school community environment for all students, in particular, for LGBT youth" (2011, cover).

Other organizations also provide assistance and resources to educators. Egale Canada (http://egale.ca/) provides the MyGSA web site, which provides a host of resources not only for those starting a Gay/Straight Alliance, but also for all students, parents, and educators interested in GLBTQ issues. The Educators page provides annotated book and movie lists, lesson plans and resources, and MyGSA.ca - Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools. GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) Educators page provides lesson plans, curricular resources, as well as the Safe Space Kit, which includes a guide to being an ally to GLBTQ students. A GLSEN resource created

for athletic programs is Changing the Game The GLSEN Sports Project, designed to encourage respect for GLBTQ students involved in sports.

As you explore and share materials, create a curated, annotated collection of resources dealing with positive climate, and resources that provide inclusive curricula. Include them as part of the teacher resources section on your library web site. Share selections with appropriate teachers, and suggest ways to implement them in your collaborative projects. The beauty of educating your colleagues (and your students) about GLBTQ issues is that you begin to extend the inclusion of those redheaded students beyond the library doors.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

The New Brunswick Teacher Federation document, *A Resource Guide for Educators Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Heterosexism* provides an excellent summary of what must happen, not just in school libraries, but in our education system if we are to address the needs of GLBTQ students. I highlight some of these requirements here.

School leaders—and indeed, all teachers and teacher-librarians--must
- Educate themselves about GLBTQ issues,
- Model respect for diversity, and
- Work to make schools safe for GLBTQ youth, and challenge those, including parents, who demonstrate homophobic attitudes.

School districts must
- Develop anti-homophobic, anti-bullying polices, and
- Provide professional development programs in GLBTQ issues.

Teacher education institutions must
- Provide pre-service programs that train teachers in addressing GLBTQ issues in schools.

Ministries of Education must develop curriculum, resources, and professional development that
- Reflect the cultural and historical contributions of GLBTQ individuals, and
- Include anti-heterosexist and anti-homophobic perspectives. (New Brunswick Teachers' Association, 2007, p. 3).

What does the future hold for our redheaded students? If we embrace these changes, I believe that colour will be just one of the many hues we honour, part of the human condition reflected in our school libraries.

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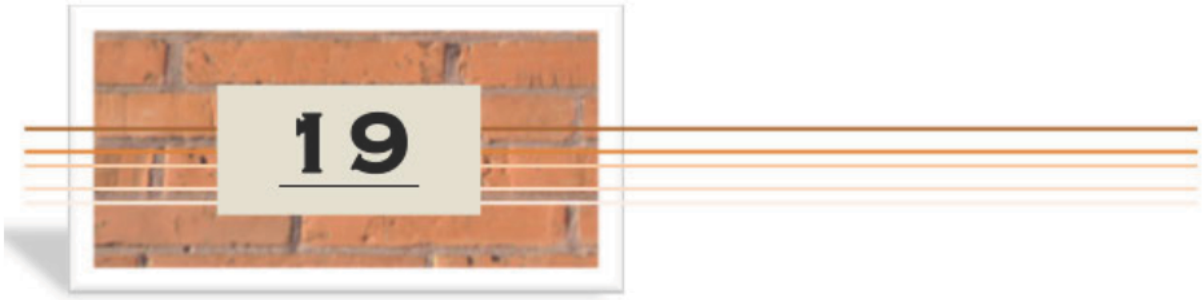

Supporting Social Justice Through Collection Development

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Maybe it started when I saw my grandmother slip a twenty-dollar bill to every African-American hotel maid we encountered as we traveled the southern United States in the 1960's. Or maybe it developed when my grade six teacher connected us with a variety of pen pals from around the world, many from developing countries. Or maybe it took hold when I began teaching beside an international airport and my first group of Kindergarten students were mainly new immigrants to Canada and few spoke English. Whenever it began, I've been acutely aware that I have led a privileged life.

Being white and middle class in a Christian family meant that far more than my basic needs were met. Not once have I felt that there was something that I could not try or accomplish. I was surrounded by books, countless opportunities, and family members who were educated and interested in my development. How different would my life have been if I never saw myself reflected in the books I read? Would I have developed a love of reading if I was not allowed to borrow library books because I had lost one and my family couldn't afford to pay the replacement fee? Would I have gone to university if I was disabled and my walker didn't fit between the library shelves?

I have been a teacher for nearly thirty years. I live and work in a very diverse, multicultural community. Finding ways to make a rigid curriculum meet the needs of all learners has always been my mission. This should include providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environment. About twelve years ago my school board produced a document titled *Manifesting Encouraging and Respectful Environments* as well as a program called The Future We Want. Based on the Ontario Human Rights Code the future described in these documents is "symbolized by fairness, respect and inclusiveness" (Peel District School Board, 2000, para. 1). Complementing this program are many resources from the Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario, for example: *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good, Imagine a World that is Free*

from Fear, The Power of Story, Racism Hurts, and the new document titled *Social Justice Begins with Me*. I was immediately on board with this new system-wide program and was stunned to hear the backlash. Twelve years later, some progress has been made; however, what I view as a philosophy of education others view as an extra burden that is not a part of the curriculum.

Since becoming a teacher-librarian I have been asking myself, What is the teacher-librarian's role in supporting and promoting social justice? In what ways can collection development support colleagues and students by promoting an inclusive environment? Through collection development can teacher-librarians facilitate open dialogue in order to achieve this future we want? Using the eight isms (ableism, ageism, classism, faith as an ism, heterosexism, lookism, racism, and sexism) as search terms, my guiding question focuses on the role of the teacher-librarian and the responsibilities we have for developing a collection that supports social justice.

What do school leaders need to know...?

This literature review is divided into three sections. The first highlights the legal and professional viewpoints which inform the development of a diverse collection. The second section looks at what the literature says about the benefits of providing a diverse collection. The final section considers the interfering role of censorship and stereotypes in collection development.

Intellectual Freedom

Having access to resources that reflect our pluralistic society is not a choice, it is a basic human right (United Nations, n.d.; Government of Canada, 1982; Government of Ontario, 2012). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (n.d.) ensures equality, freedom from discrimination, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and freedom of opinion and expressions, (Articles 1, 2, 18, 19). It also provides direction regarding the role of education.

> Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (United Nations, n.d., Article 26 (2))

Additionally, position statements from library associations around the world further explain the role of libraries in upholding these rights. The Canadian Library Association's (1986) Position Statement on Diversity and Inclusion states "libraries strive to deliver inclusive service. Canada's libraries recognize and energetically affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, or income" (para. 3).

At the local level each school district should have a selection policy. Bishop (2007) points out "that selection policies articulate the media program's commitment to the right of intellectual freedom, and they reflect professional ethics, rights of the users, and concern for intellectual property" (p. 12). District selection policies not only guide teacher-librarians in selecting diverse materials but provide solid rationale for their choices.

> Every effort will be made to maintain balance in the collection. It is in the interests of democracy that freedom of choice be maintained and that the students' needs for many different types of materials and points of view be recognized. (Peel District School Board, 2002, p.1)

Collection development is a teacher-librarian's responsibility. Bishop (2007) explains that this includes serving "as program administrator, including developer and evaluator of the collection....Acting as a teacher, an instructional partner, and an information specialist, the media specialist gains knowledge that is then used in making decisions about the collection" (p. 4). With charters, position statements and policies outlining their responsibilities in place, teacher-librarians should feel confident in seeking out a wide variety of resources.

THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING A DIVERSE COLLECTION

The literature illustrates that providing a diverse collection is beneficial for emotional, social and intellectual development. The majority of studies focus on racial and cultural minorities, people with disabilities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, queer and questioning community (Colby & Lyon, 2004; Hughes-Hassell & Hinkley, 2001; Irwin & Moeller, 2010; Prater, Dyches & Johnston, 2006). Researchers repeatedly point out the importance of seeing ourselves and our lives reflected in text, illustrations and media (Irwin & Moeller, 2012; Jorgenson & Wilson, 2011; Prater, Dyches & Johnston, 2006). Seeing ourselves reflected in library materials positively impacts emotional development with overall feelings of self-worth (Coatney, 2004; Wopperer, 2011). It also can increase self-esteem, give us a sense of purpose, help us to see ourselves more positively, and teach us how to cope with problems (Coatney, 2004; Hughes-Hassell & Hinckley, 2001; Prater, Dyches & Johnston, 2006; Wopperer, 2011). While diversity is an overall goal of the collection, it is important to note that for the minority child, materials that fit their specific situation are needed. Clyde & Lobban (2001) suggest that collections "should support gay, lesbian and bisexual students as they begin to explore their sexual identity" (p. 27). Hughes-Hassell & Cox (2010) point out the need for books that reflect the lives of minority groups "given the potential role they play in the development of self-concept among children of color" (p. 226).

Diverse library collections are also seen as benefiting individuals socially. Inclusive resources can provide opportunities for the development of positive interpersonal relationships. Prater, Dyches & Johnston (2006) suggest "children's literature...can be used to promote awareness, understanding and acceptance" (p.14). Similarly, Dyches, Prater and Jensen (2006) explain "books can help change student attitudes and or knowledge about disabilities" (p. 6). Clyde & Lobban (2001) state that collections "broaden straight students' view of the world and of sexuality" (p. 27). Agosto (2007) claims that:

> A school library collection that represents the perspectives of a range of cultures can serve as a form of advocacy on behalf of students from minority backgrounds by making them feel included in classroom and school environments. A well-balanced school library collection can also teach non-minority students about the true nature of our diverse world. (p. 1)

Researchers also point to the intellectual benefits of inclusive resources. Vardell, Hadaway & Young (2006) conclude that "titles that spring from the students' cultures are ideal in providing familiarity for ease of comprehension as well as for identifying with story characters" (p. 736). Hughes-Hassell, Barkley & Koehler (2009) summarize their research findings by explaining that for the minority group, the lack of resources that accurately reflect them, negatively impacts their motivation to read as well as reading comprehension. When students are provided culturally appropriate material, not only did reading comprehension improve but so did recall (Hughes-Hassell, et al., 2009). Hughes-Hassell et al. (2009) also found that being able to relate to the cultural content of material as well as the characters positively influenced phonological awareness and improved fluency.

Global education also needs to be considered when building a collection. Diverse resources give students a chance to understand the world, opportunities to learn about new places, ideas and situations (Hadaway, 2011; Jorgenson & Wilson, 2011). "Exposing students to diverse literature and points of view is a first step to building bridges of understanding" (Hadaway, p. 5). Jorgenson & Wilson credit multicultural literature with "opening [students] up to new cultures and worlds" (p. 84). They conclude that the positive impact of diverse resources isn't just an appreciation of diversity but the "success of learners becoming contributing citizens of society" (p. 84).

Censorship and Stereotypes: Obstacles to be aware of when selecting resources

The directives for establishing a diverse collection and the benefits seem clear. So why is there still a predominance of white, male, heterosexual characters (Hughes-Hassell & Cox, 2010; Agosto, Hughes-Hassell & Gilmore-Clough, 2003; Lund & Carr, 2010)? Two key problems seem to interfere with the development of a rich collection: censorship and stereotypes.

Challenges come from parents, community members and colleagues. Rickman (2010) insists "while all individuals have the right to challenge ideas, none have the right to censor access of information" (p. 4). In the face of challenges, teacher-librarians should be well-versed in their local procedure for challenges. A clearly laid-out challenge procedure should be part of this policy. "A formally approved materials selection policy with review procedures is the legal basis for selection and reconsideration of all instructional materials used within a school" (Adams, 2008. p. 28).

"Absolutely invisible" and "silent censorship" are two ways Jenkinson (2002) describes self-censorship. This form of censorship usually happens during the selection process but may occur once the material is available and concerns are voiced (p. 23). Rickman (2010) explains that "self- censorship by a school librarian involves making collection management choices on the basis of avoiding conflict with administrators, parents, or colleagues. Self-censorship decisions are often made on the basis of religious, sexual, political or health factors" (p. 1). In a recent study, Rickman (2010) found that certain groups are more apt to self-censor than others: school librarians aged 60-69, those holding no education degree, those with less than 15 years experience and secondary school librarians. Bishop (2007) suggests that teacher-librarians "be aware of their own biases and preferences so that personal prejudices do not inadvertently affect selection decisions" (p. 170).

Internet filters and publishers censor material as well. For example, Schrader (1999) explains "when blocking and rating decisions are made by unknown third parties with unknown qualifications and unknown ideological agendas, the danger to public debate is palpable" (p. 9). Schrader (1998), Bell (2007) and Stephens (2011) all urge teacher-librarians to stay informed about filters and to advocate for access to a full range of diverse material.

Similarly, Klausen (2007) suggests that a form of censorship is created by "monopolies in educational publishing" (p. 8). Publishers wield great control. Entire minority groups have difficulty getting published (Hughes-Hassell & Cox, 2010; Wopperer, 2011). Krueckl (2005) reports that "native writers have also experienced resistance from publishers" (p. 10). Nauman (1987) reports that major publishers "uncertain of the extent and permanence of the market" have been slow to embrace minority writers (p. 203). Instead, small, independent publishers have become the champions of diverse resources. Clyde & Lobban (2001) recommend that "specialist bookshops...continue to be sources of relevant books" (p. 19). Along with difficulties getting published, many minority students do not see themselves as writers. Khan (2013) shares "I thought I couldn't. I was brown, I was from Pakistan. Writers were white" (para. 5).

Stereotypes

Several trends emerge from the literature that looks at the quality and authenticity of materials available: there are not enough books published that feature minority characters (Krueckl, 2005; Meyer, 2011), there are not enough books published that are written by minorities (Ko & McKenzie, 2003; Krueckl, 2005; Lahey, 2000) and many materials that are available continue to stereotype minority characters (Dyches, et al., 2006; Irwin & Moeller, 2010; Meyer, 2011; Morgan, 2009). While researchers note an improvement in recent years (Burns, 2005; Hill, 2012; Irwin & Moeller, 2012) many resources still depict stereotypes (Ayala, 1999; Dyches, et al., 2006; Irwin & Moeller, 2010; Meyer, 2011; Morgan, 2009). Whether it's a board book, early reader, levelled book or young adult novel, all suffer from the same misrepresentation of minority groups. Irwin & Moeller (2010) noted that even in the relatively new format of graphic novels "people with disabilities are represented ... however, those portrayals most frequently fit a negative stereotypical image" (p. 8).

Our mandate to select diverse resources for school-library collections is clear. Williams & Sloniowski (2012) state "we sit squarely in the social conscience of the information world" (p. 11). How do we move into the role of social justice advocate by locating and promoting the use of these materials?

What can school leaders do about... ?

School administrators need to be informed about the responsibilities of teacher-librarians. They need to hire people who are open-minded, informed and willing to stand up for their patrons' rights. They need to seek out staff who in addition to understanding intellectual freedom, censorship and the reasons for building a diverse collection are willing to take the time to research, read and build connections as they search out the best material available. School districts may want teacher- librarians to complete "a master's degree in school library media [which] would provide school districts with master-level teachers capable of integrating and co-teaching as information resource leaders in the twenty-first century" (Rickman, 2010, p. 16). Programs such as the Masters of Education (Teacher-Librarian) at the University of Alberta or the Master of Library and Information Science (Teacher Librarian Program) at the San Jose State University would fulfill this purpose. Hill (2012) adds "school library programs should include a full course or, at the very least, readings and assignments to specifically address methods for serving students with special needs in the school library" (p. 11).

Not only do teacher-librarians need to be aware of their responsibilities but they need to be lifelong learners. Bush & Jones (2010) state "remarkable teachers are different, and it has to do with personal and professional behaviours known as dispositions" (p. 1). Teacher-librarians need to constantly seek new knowledge and learn new skills. They need to be willing to build a professional learning network through professional associations and teacher-librarian discussion groups. They also should be actively involved in attending professional development sessions and library conferences as well as offering professional development to others. Rickman (2010) suggests,

> Professional development...specifically, a course or inservice focusing on reconnecting with patrons and their needs is one possibility. Another option is to create a series of courses or in-service sessions available for school librarians at specific years of experience that would provide updated information and best-practices for collection development and management, intellectual freedom, and censorship. These options would provide an avenue for the practicing professional to reconnect with other school librarians and revitalize their knowledge and professional practices. (p. 16)

Professional development topics should include social justice. Arnone (2010) found that teacher-librarians rated social responsibility as one of the most important dispositions for a teacher-librarian to have and one they would like to discuss further.

GET TO KNOW YOUR COLLECTION AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Once school administrators have hired a qualified teacher-librarian, the new teacher-librarian should spend some time getting to know the collection as well as their school community. Using children's literature can "help children better understand" global citizenship and social responsibility (de Groot, 2007, p. 54). Finding the resources you need, however, is not always easy. Not only is there a lack of material but there is little research available about the use of and quality of materials, especially those that focus on ageism, classism, faith as an ism and lookism. So, what should a teacher-librarian do? First, I take a look at the demographics available to me through the school registration process such as first language, citizenship and number of schools attended. As social justice advocates, teacher-librarians must get to know their students and acquire knowledge of each individual's diverse needs (Coatney, 2004; Mestre, 2009). Although it seems simplistic, it is important for students to know that "regardless of their backgrounds, ...school library staff cares about them" (Mestre, 2009, p. 9). Consider asking students and staff for input. Farmer (2002) suggests "by collaborating with young people throughout the collection development process, school librarians optimize resource use and fulfill their core mission. Use your catalogue and circulation statistics to get to know your collection. Teacher-librarians should know what material they have and what they need to acquire. Once the collection gaps and needs are established, reading reviews, following authors and bloggers and getting to know booksellers and publishers is the next step.

LOCATING DIVERSE MATERIALS

Teacher-librarians need to develop a system for learning about new, diverse material. One of the easiest things to do is to read journals that feature book reviews. Review journals like *MultiCultural Review* and *Children's Literature in Education* are a good place to start. Similarly, blogs that feature reviews of diverse material like Reading in Color, Paper Tigers, Cynthia Leitich Smith and Lee Wind's site I'm here. I'm queer. What the hell do I read should be part of the teacher-librarians blog roll. In addition to sites that provide reviews, teacher-librarians should follow authors like Jean Little, Beverley Brenna, Sharon Draper and Alma Fullerton who focus on social justice issues. Watch for books that win awards such as the Coretta Scott King Award, the Burt Award for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Literature (and The Dolly Gray Children's Literature Award. As you build lists of resources you wish to acquire, keep in mind that many organizations and bloggers put out lists of recommended titles. One of the first places to look for books featuring homosexual characters is the ALA Frequently Challenged List. "Each year the ALA publishes the "Top Ten List of Most Frequently Challenged Books" to highlight the titles and topics that drew the most censure" (Adams, 2009, p. 48). Some sites like UBC's Multicultural Children's Literature wiki and CBC Diversity recommend a variety of useful selection tools and resources. Teacher-librarians can also expand their own knowledge of social justice issues and build their network by joining a variety of organizations, especially their local and national library associations as well as groups like Partners against Hate and The Centre for Social Justice.

Teacher-librarians should get to know specialty bookstores as well as vendors who will search for specific material for them. Parker (2009) notes there are "still a number of select independent publishers who continue to publish children's books, particularly those aimed at children from different ethnic backgrounds, since this is a niche that the larger companies aren't interested in due to the small market number" (para. 4). In Ontario, diverse resources can be found at A Different Booklist, Another Story, and Good Minds. Teacher-librarians should also get to know which publishers champion diverse material. Parker (2009) notes "there are several other wonderful small presses in the U.S., including Lee and Low Books, Barefoot Books, Charlesbridge, Chronicle Books and Just Us Books to name a few" (para. 4). In

Canada, publishers like House of Anansi, Coteau Books, Pemmican Publications and Fifth House Publishers are committed to publishing multicultural literature.

Teacher-librarians should also consider inviting authors to visit. I often use Author's Booking Service in order to locate and connect with Canadian authors. Finding authors who reflect my diverse community is a challenge; however, hosting author's as Mahtab Narsimhan, Rukhsana Khan and repeated visits from Michael Wade have been a highlight in our library. These simple events have resulted in tremendous community response with many parents becoming involved in reading these authors' works with their children.

Create a welcoming environment with easy access to all resources

Once you have developed an inclusive and diverse collection, how do you promote it? First, make the environment welcoming by making resources readily accessible. This includes applying appropriate subject headings and tags to ensure that items are easily found in the catalogue (Clyde & Lobban, 2001, p. 19). Thematic resource displays are an easy way to showcase new and diverse material. Maloney (2012) notes that "a 'Diversity Book Display' initiative has been a popular way to promote the library's books as well as co-curricular multicultural programming" (p. 281). Mestre (2009) adds "even a relatively simple act of displaying images and book jackets representative of students' cultural backgrounds can help students feel accepted and better connected to the library as a place where they belong" (p. 10).

Along with displays, Vardell, Hadaway and Young (2006) recommend giving book talks or selecting diverse titles for read alouds. If you are new to giving booktalks, seek out professional resources like *Booktalking Around the World: Great Global Reads for ages 9-14*, for a comprehensive list of multicultural titles as well as clear information on how to give interesting book talks. I also use book trailers to introduce staff and students to new material like R. J. Palacio's *Wonder*, Sharon Draper's *Out of my Mind* and Mahtab Narsimhan's *The Tiffin*. One way I try to develop our community of readers is to encourage students to not only recommend books to peers or for the library to purchase, but to create interest in books they recommend by embedding book trailers on their reading record wiki page.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

"Most of us have little if any personal experience of the world that millions endure every day" (Orme, 2007, p. 24). It's not enough to simply purchase books that reflect your local community. Library resources should reflect the cultural pluralism that exists in the world today. In addition, "developing culturally responsive instruction is one way the teacher-librarian can play an important role in the education of students" (Mestre, 2009 p. 9). The curriculum is our entry point. In Ontario, there are few direct expectations that address social justice issues. There is, however, an overall philosophy which states that students are,

> Expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of citizenship, as well as willingness to show respect, tolerance, and understanding towards individuals, groups, and cultures in the global community and respect and responsibility towards the environment...The critical thinking and research skills taught in social studies, history, and geography will strengthen students' ability to recognize bias and stereotypes in contemporary as well as historical portrayals, viewpoints, representations, and images. The learning activities used to teach the curriculum should be inclusive in nature, and should reflect diverse points of view

> and experiences to enable students to become more sensitive to the experiences and perceptions of others. Students also learn that protecting human rights and taking a stand against racism and other expressions of hatred and discrimination are essential components of responsible citizenship. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 17)

It is important that we consider both classroom and library instruction. In the library I try to plan lessons that celebrate diversity. For example, as part of our grade two heritage unit, I read *Welcome Dede! An African Naming Ceremony*. Following the story students share their knowledge of how their name or their siblings' names might have been chosen and any experiences they have with a naming ceremony. Students are then assigned the task of interviewing family members to find out why their name was chosen, who chose it, what their name means and if there was any kind of celebration or ceremony connected to their naming. Students join together to share their name stories at the library and the activity is concluded by having volunteers type their stories and collate them to form a book for our library collection.

As a teacher-librarian I try to promote the use of our diverse collection in a variety of ways. One thing I do is purchase six to eight copies of specific novels that illuminate social justice issues, such as *Parvana's Journey*, *Libertad*, and *Tinfoil Sky*, for teachers to use for literature circles. I also join and promote The Forest of Reading Programs as there are often excellent, diverse materials nominated in these provincial programs. At my school we also use the books and activities suggested in the resource kits *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* and *Social Justice Begins With Me.* We have provided easy access to the lessons that accompany the books and each month fill book bags with the resources for specific grade levels and sign the items out to the grade level chairperson. If teachers are uncomfortable reading some of the titles like *And Tango makes Three* and *King & King*, two titles on the American Library Association's Frequently Challenged Books of the 21st Century list, we are there to support them. A member of our school's The Future We Want Committee, a group of teachers dedicated to implementing the school board's equity vision, will teach the lesson for the classroom teacher. During the lesson we will model how to support student dialogue, answer questions and address any student or parent concerns.

Silvers & Shorey (2012) support their Social Studies units by choosing "books with particular social issues and themes" (p. 34). As teacher-librarians inquiry is our greatest tool. Consider planning projects that "celebrate diversity and build a culture of caring - for each other and the world beyond" (Mestre, 2009, p. 9). Something as straightforward as Identity Day, a day when students present projects that celebrate their personal interests and talents, is a good place to start. Silvers & Shorey (2012) describe the need to move students beyond "purely emotional connections to thoughtful activism and problem solving" (p. 34). Leslie Holwerda (2012) merged the idea of Identity Day and social justice by linking a school wide inquiry project to the isms. Every student in her school participates in the Inquiry into Inclusion and is challenged to not only research a specific ism but take action.

Marcoux (2009) urges each of us to "be a more global and culturally literate teacher-librarian" (p. 6). Think about the professional references that you purchase for the library or recommend to your staff. Materials like Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Number, Black Ants and Buddhists, and MATHTHATMATTERS: A Teacher Resource Linking Math and Social Justice guide teachers to think differently and embed social justice issues in their lesson plans. Consider thinking about the resources which you already have access to and how you can use these materials in different ways. Saint-Pierre (2010) reports that information featured on the Statistics Canada website can be used to mathematically "explore social issues" (p. 91). He highlights topics like "income inequality, differences in access to health care, the relationship between income and literacy, the digital divide, survival of our forests and many more" (p. 91).

By developing a diverse collection we support critical literacy. Mestre (2009) confirms that "providing opportunities for students to view reality through numerous perspectives helps them understand, evaluate,

question and challenge the issues" (p. 11). This can be achieved by providing interesting, engaging and at times controversial material. Silvers & Shorey (2012) summarize "critical literacy resides at the heart of multiliteracies. Students work together to make a difference for others and for themselves. They learn to examine many points of view, analyze texts and question practices of privilege and injustice" (p. 149). By becoming involved in social justice programs like Be the Change Movement, Check Your Head and Global Citizens for Change, we can help "students understand the issues and how to take appropriate meaningful action" (Orme, 2007, p. 29). Students can "have direct and immediate impact on living conditions elsewhere in the world" (Orme, 2007, p. 29).

Coatney (2004) concludes "building a responsive, inclusive school library collection is a never-ending task" (p. 47). It is a task that teacher-librarians should embrace. Reflect on your collection. Think about the resources that you have that reflect your students lives and that show living conditions around the world. Not only should students see their lives reflected in resources but,

> When students open the doors to their school libraries in Canada, they can open themselves to a greater awareness of the lives of children around the world, a deeper understanding of our wealth and how it is generated and how we can make a difference globally. (Orme, 2007. p. 30)

Openo (2010) believes we can "aid human progress by continuing to educate the human imagination....the library can help awaken this imagination and it can provide the resources necessary to turn the imaginary world into the real one" (p. 218). Take the lead in your school and be the change.

Those of us who have led privileged lives need to become advocates for change. All children regardless of their race, gender, class, faith, appearance, sexual orientation, ability or age, deserve to see themselves and their own lives reflected in the materials they interact with in the school library. Research indicates that diverse material can support social, emotional and intellectual development. Further research is needed on the impact of material that focuses on age, faith, and appearance.

Teacher-librarians have the responsibility to develop a rich and diverse library collection. It is their mandate to find a wide range of resources. Not only should the library collection reflect the pluralism of society, it should foster interest in different viewpoints and social responsibility. Silvers & Shorey (2012) believe that students can "learn to examine many points of view, analyze texts and question practices of privilege and injustice....As informed citizens, students care about each other and the world beyond the classroom" (p. 149). Take the lead, build a diverse and inclusive collection and support and promote global citizenship and social justice.

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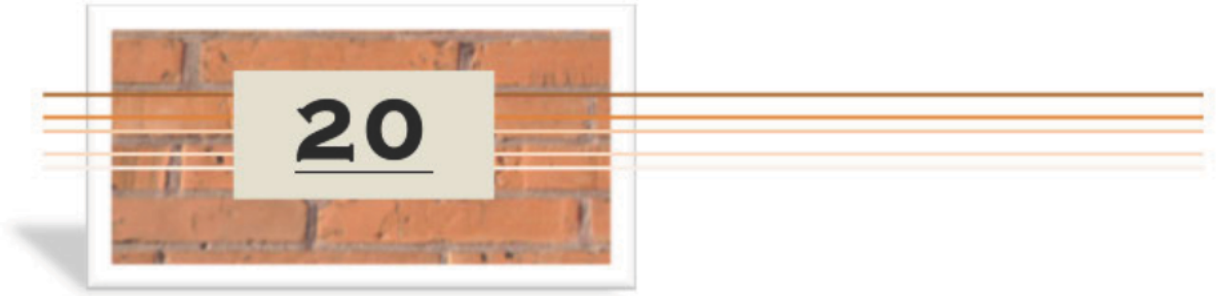

Literacy Goals and School Library Collections

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Reading changes your life. Reading unlocks worlds unknown or forgotten, taking travelers around the world and through time. Reading helps you escape the confines of school and pursue your own education. (*Miller, 2009, p. 18)*

For many years I taught in primary grade classrooms, most comfortable with beginning readers exploring print and engaging with text. Watching my young students blossom into readers gave me much pleasure. However, over time, I wondered if I could do more in my school; could I help more than just one classroom of students at a time experience the love of a good book? Could I share this passion with other educators, as well? These questions propelled me on my journey to become a teacher-librarian.

Through my coursework at the University of Alberta and my developing personal learning network, I have had the pleasure of having my educational philosophies nudged and reshaped. One of the texts that has had a profound effect on me as an educator is *The Book Whisperer* by Donalyn Miller (2009). Miller writes passionately about independent, free-choice reading and motivating children to read voraciously. Stephen Krashen's work has also had a significant impact on my educational philosophy. Krashen (2004, 2011) cites study after study that supports the importance of free voluntary reading. He readily demonstrates that free voluntary reading breeds high academic achievement across subject areas.

Both Miller and Krashen promote fostering children's love of reading and enabling children to spend significant amounts of time reading. Their work has led me to consider how the notion of passionate readers and their volume of reading is reflected in best literacy practices in our schools, including in the school library. How can teacher-librarians support these best practices through collection development?

In my role as teacher-librarian, I have the ability to influence the literacy tone and achievements of my whole school. The school library:

> Is that magical place that exists between the classroom, the home, and the public library that has the potential for supporting, guiding, and helping students reach beyond their current lives and selves and enter new and greater vistas within the safety of the school. (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 40)

Reading is the core component of all future success and most educators want to develop passionate, life-long readers. Fervent literacy leaders, such as Miller and Krashen, demonstrate that incorporating free, independent reading into the school day is critical to motivating and developing readers. Educators wish to incorporate the best literacy practices into their programming and it is most effective when the whole school presents as a unified front -- all educators in the school on the same page, including the library. When educators utilize a literacy program, such as Accelerated Reader, or establish their program modelled after another, like Daily 5, how is that reflected in the school and classroom libraries? How can teacher-librarians build and maintain school and classroom libraries that support reading engagement and the literacy goals of the school?

Krashen (2004) posits that "if libraries are a major source of books, and if more reading means better reading, better libraries should be associated with better reading. This has been found to be the case" (p. 65). The school library has the potential to be the hub of great reading within each school, if developed and tended properly and incorporated into students' daily lives. School leaders need to consider the implications of school literacy goals and programming on the school and classroom libraries. Supporting school literacy goals is more than backing the underlying pedagogy; for school leaders, literacy programming has significant financial considerations, as well. If school library collection development can be synchronized with the school's literacy goals, school funds can be maximized. It is the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to ensure the literacy needs of the school are being met and the responsibility of all school leaders to ensure this is being done in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate the importance of supporting an individual school's literacy goals through library programming and collection development. The current research on best literacy practices can, and should, be reflected in the learning hub of the school -- the school library.

What do school leaders need to know...?

We must build critically needed reading environments for all our learners - book by book.
(Krashen, 1997-1998, p. 21)

To make strong connections between a school's literacy goals and the school library, educators must first appreciate the positive influence a strong school library collection has on the literacy development of its patrons. It is also important to understand the significant impact an exemplary library collection and qualified teacher-librarian have on students and on staff. This section will demonstrate the strong correlation between well-developed library collections, including those that meet or exceed collection benchmarks, utilize collection development policies and represent their patrons well, and the literacy development of students, including academic achievement and reading motivation.

Library Collections

The library collection is defined as all of the resources available to the library's patrons. It is "a group of information sources (print, nonprint, and electronic) selected and managed by the media specialist for a defined user community (students, faculty, and sometimes parents in a school)" (Bishop, 2007, p. 1). The school library collection should serve the academic and recreational needs and interests of its patrons.

The *Achieving Information Literacy* (AIL) provides guidelines for school library collections. "An effective school library offers provides [sic] intellectual and physical access to a wide array of materials and services to meet learning needs, both within and beyond the school" (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003, p. 24). AIL's exemplary collection model emphasizes the availability of resources to facilitate resource-based learning, literacy development, curriculum implementation and meeting the assorted personal and academic pursuits of learners. Additionally, carefully chosen collection materials are to be readily accessible, current, and in good physical condition. Further, CASL advises that the library budget be a consultative process that considers short- and long-term collection development needs and provides ample funding for library resources (Asselin et al., pp. 26-27). Young (2010) states, "the school librarian who provides materials that support the curriculum, as well as individual student needs, interests, abilities, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and maturity levels, has the beginning of a well-balanced collection" (p. 20). The school library collection is integral to the overall academic success in a school (Francis, Lance & Lietzau, 2010) and research demonstrates a "positive relationship between well-resourced libraries and higher student literacy outcomes" (Softlink, 2012, p. 2).

A strong library collection is critical to literacy promotion within a school environment. Krashen (1997-1998) determined that children acquire a significant portion of their reading material from libraries and that since "simply providing access [to reading materials] is the first and most important step in encouraging literacy development" (p. 19), the conclusion can be drawn that libraries are integral to the literacy growth and success of students.

Collection Benchmarks

Haycock (2011) conducted research in the province of British Columbia that compared school library survey data and standardized test results from various public and private schools to explore the impact school libraries have on student academic achievement. While not determined to be causational, Haycock notes a strong correlation between libraries with large, current collections and higher academic success (p. 44). The average library collection in higher performing schools consisted of three thousand more books (of all types) and had an average publication date four years newer. Higher performing schools also spent more than double the amount on print and other resources for their school libraries (Haycock, p. 42). These research findings have been consistently repeated elsewhere as well. A recent study in Pennsylvania also demonstrated the significant correlation between a larger school library book collection and higher reading and writing achievement scores on standardized state tests, "when students have more access to books and other physical formats in their school libraries, they are more likely to succeed in school than their counterparts who lack such access" (Lance & Schwarz, 2012, p. 51). Researchers have also found a corresponding correlation with reading achievements and larger video and periodical collections (Francis et al., 2010; Lance & Schwarz, 2012). Strong school library collections are correlated with higher academic achievement, and increased reading enjoyment and motivation (Francis et al., 2010; Haycock, 2011; Lance & Schwarz, 2012; Softlink, 2012).

Achieving Information Literacy provides detailed collection benchmark information considering many factors, including size of the student population and the grades being served by the school library. Further, Asselin et al. provide specific benchmarks for a variety of formats, accessibility issues, currency, and funding. For example, to achieve an exemplary book collection (in size) according to CASL standards, an elementary school with a population of less than 300 students would need to have 5000 books (or 35 per student, whichever was greater) maintaining a ratio of 15-30% fiction: 70-85% non-fiction and reference (p. 28). According to Asselin et al., standards, this same school would need to

annually budget $36 or more per student to maintain its exemplary school library collection (p. 35). Lance and Schwarz (2012) believe:

> That there is overwhelming evidence that students are more likely to succeed academically where they have school library programs that are better staffed, better funded, better equipped, better stocked, and more accessible. Such library programs have the resources required to ensure that their schools provide the information-rich environments necessary to the academic success of their students. (p. 161)

Adequate staffing, including a qualified teacher-librarian, is required to oversee the library collection and to ensure the benchmarks are being met or exceeded.

Collection development policies

The school library collection must meet the demands of its community of learners. The collection must be current, appealing, and contain a variety of topics, genres, and formats. The collection cannot be static; the collection needs to grow and change with the needs of its patrons to ensure it remains integral to students' learning. Having a well-developed, detailed collection development plan is critical to creating and maintaining a superior collection. A collection development policy also provides teacher-librarians and other library staff members with a clear guide to assist with the purchase and de-selection of materials. Kral (2005) states that:

> A Collection Development Policy provides guidelines that can be modified as the library collection needs to change. The relationship of the curriculum and the collection development policy are linked together by the culture of users and will influence the selection of the resources. ... The policy must address the goals and objectives of the collection which ultimately must support the curriculum. (p. 13)

Collection development policies ensure that the library is being maintained and managed in a professional manner that considers the overall academic and recreational needs of library patrons.

Representing patrons

It is important that the school library reflect its community. In particular, teacher-librarians should consider the needs of more unique users, as those students are often overlooked. For example, Morgan (2002) promotes materials appropriate for students with visual impairments and explains that children with visual impairments typically do not have access to adequate library services and should be considered in school library collection development. English Language Learners (ELLs) should also be considered in collection development. Blair, Brasfield, Crenshaw and Mosedale (2011) state that "English language skills are easier to acquire if they are taught in a culturally familiar context. This means it is important to have reading materials available in all the home languages represented by the ELLs in the school" (p. 35). Blair et al. provide additional suggestions for collection development that considers ELLs' needs, including collecting demographic data to enable you to know your patrons, purchasing wordless picture books to practice storytelling, and including non-fiction and non-print resources (p. 36).

The school library collection should also be a source of resources for staff. Hill Jordan (2001) suggests that "the professional collection should be available to school faculty to meet their most immediate need with easy access to the resources" (p. 18). This is based on Wilson's (2000) statement that "the hallmark of a truly outstanding professional collection is heavy usage of the resources by faculty members" (p. 20). To be considered an extensive resource for all patrons, the school library collection must include resources to support the professional development of staff, as well as resources to aid curriculum implementation.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER-LIBRARIAN AND THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Having a qualified teacher-librarian to build and maintain the school library's collection and to work collaboratively with teachers is significantly correlated with noticeable academic gains for students (Beard & Antrim, 2010; Asselin et al., 2003; Chu, Tse, Loh, & Chow, 2011; Farmer, 2006; Haycock, 2011; Lance, Rodney, & Schwarz, 2010; The Ontario Library Association [OLA], 2006). The strength of the school library's impact on literacy is amplified when overseen by a literacy-passionate, qualified teacher-librarian.

In what has become known as the "Colorado Study", researchers Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell (2000), on behalf of the Colorado Department of Education, determined that students who have access to a well-staffed, well-funded school library, score higher on standardized testing (CASL, 2003, p. 65). Numerous American states and Canadian provinces have reported similar findings. Lance has conducted similar research in at least seven other states that all consistently demonstrate that "schools with well-staffed, -stocked and -funded libraries score from 10% to 25% higher on standardized tests than students with poorly resourced libraries" (OLA, 2006, p. 7). Researchers in Ontario examined reading test scores and attitudinal information for students in grades 3 and 6, as well as information on library staffing, accessibility, budget and collections. Their findings show a significant correlation between well-supported school libraries and reading success, as indicated by the standardized test scores (OLA, 2006). As well, according to the Ontario Library Association (OLA), "the presence of a teacher-librarian was the single strongest predictor of reading enjoyment" (OLA, 2006, p. 4).

As stated earlier, similar correlations were found in research done in British Columbia. Haycock (2011) reports that:

> Over 20 library predictor variables were identified as being statistically related to school and student achievement in British Columbia. These included access, staffing, collection, networked technologies, outreach and partnerships with teachers and students, as well as integration and use of the school library. (p. 40)

Haycock's findings support previous research; high academic achievement can be correlated with well-staffed, accessible, and well-maintained libraries. Extensive research has been conducted that consistently demonstrates the significant correlation between school libraries and students' academic success and engagement.

The teacher-librarian can have a significant impact on student reading motivation and enjoyment (Beard & Antrim, 2010; Chu et al., 2011; OLA, 2006). Researchers conducted a study with fifth-graders, identified as reading below grade level in a school in Missouri (United States of America), to examine the effect of teacher-librarian support in student book selection. The results demonstrated that consultation with the teacher-librarian to attain literacy goals has a positive impact on reading achievement, engagement, attitudes and comprehension (Beard & Antrim, 2010). A well-developed school library is in the position to greatly affect student motivation to read and reading enjoyment. Interaction with a teacher-librarian has a positive impact on reading abilities and attitudes, even when that is not the primary focus of the interaction. Chu, Tse, Loh, and Chow designed a case study to investigate the far-reaching effects of teacher-librarian and teacher collaboration on inquiry-based learning projects with primary school students. They found notable improvement in reading ability, comprehension, attitudes, and self-concept among participating students (Chu et al., 2011).

Research demonstrates that a well-designed school library collection will influence the academic success, including reading achievements, of students. The school library and the teacher-librarian are critical to the overall academic achievements. Ensuring the school library collection is developed and maintained in a

thoughtful, effective manner, will place the school library in the position to support best literacy practices throughout the school.

What can school leaders do about… ?

Don't think of books for young people as tools; try instead to treat them as invitations into the reading life. (*Roger Sutton, 2010, p. xi)*

This section provides a brief overview of a variety of current, popular literacy practices that likely shape the literacy goals of your school. It will then connect those practices to the school library and highlight how partnerships can be formed around these practices and goals and how these goals can impact collection development. The objective of this section is to provide you, the reader, with information, resources and ideas to support library programming and collection development in tandem with your school's literacy goals.

As conscientious educators, we strive to incorporate best literacy practices into our schools. But, what does this mean? What does this look like? There are so many experts writing and sharing their knowledge in the field of literacy programming and best literacy practices that it is easy for an educator to become overwhelmed with all the current literature on the topic. Typically, schools and/or school divisions have narrowed their focus to a particular style or point of view, which can provide educators with some guidance.

Many of the current literacy practices in place in Canadian schools have similar underlying philosophies. They consist of a multifaceted, or a balanced, approach to literacy education, usually in-part consisting of an adult-supported reading component. The groupings vary from individualized, to homogenous groupings based on reading level, to groupings based on reading goals or skill development. Some of the most popular literacy programs are guided reading or reading workshop, Daily 5, and free voluntary reading.

Guided reading, in which reading instruction is provided in a small-group (or individual) setting with students at homogenous reading levels, is at the crux of literacy development in programming suggested by literacy leaders such as Marie Clay, Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. Some literacy leaders, such as Regie Routman, promote a slight variation on the more traditional form of guided reading and suggest that reading workshops be conducted with students working on similar reading goals, but who may not be at the same reading level.

Boushy and Joan (2006; 2009) promote their strategies for fostering independent literacy development engagement, through an instructional routine called the "Daily 5". Within the framework of the Daily 5, students engage in five literacy activities every day: read to self, read to someone, listen to reading, work on writing and word work. Students are scaffolded to develop many independent literacy skills or habits to enable the educator to freely work and/or conference with small-groups in a focused, individualized manner. One of the independent literacy skills Boushy and Moser (2006; 2009) strive to help students achieve is proper independent book selection, called "good-fit books", utilizing the framework, "I PICK".

Krashen (2004; 2011) and Miller (2009) posit that students should be provided with the opportunity to read extensively every day. This reading should be student-selected and include little-to-no accountability measures, such as book reports, and should not involve extrinsic rewards for reading. The basic premise

of free voluntary reading is that students can only develop as readers by reading and that accountability measures and rewards interfere with the development of reading motivation and engagement. This is also referred to as uninterrupted sustained silent reading (USSR), sustained silent reading (SSR), free uninterrupted reading (FUR) and drop everything and read (DEAR).

By now you have an understanding of some of the research that demonstrates the importance of an exemplary school library collection managed by a qualified teacher-librarian and a basic understanding of some of the underlying literacy philosophies that shape our Canadian schools. The following scenarios are intended to help you visualize how all of these practices come together.

Mrs. Buch's school library

Mrs. Buch began her day in the school library by confirming that the library technician had filled the classroom Daily 5 book bins with the appropriate books for the week. A student helper from each class would be coming soon to collect them. The bins looked good to Mrs. Buch; each bin contained a variety of reading materials at a variety of reading levels that were appropriate for the grade. Mrs. Buch smiled with approval when she noted that the technician had remembered to include a selection of high-interest low-readability novels in the grade six bin for Loren and Gordon.

Just as she finished looking over the bins, 6 year-old Nolan came into the library to ask if he could exchange his library book. When Mrs. Buch smiled and replied "of course!," Nolan wandered over to the non-fiction section and looked to see what appealed to him. Nolan enjoyed reading about animals and his current interest was bats. Mrs. Buch knew just the book for him! She handed him a newly-catalogued book for his approval. Nolan found the cover appealing, but knew that he needed to take a bit more time to see if this was a "good-fit" book for him. He glanced at the "I PICK" mini-poster hanging at the end of the shelf to remind himself what he needed to consider. He decided that this book met his reading purposes; he was interested in the topic; he could read and understand most of the words. Using I PICK, he knew this was a good-fit book, so he asked the technician to sign it out to him. He had already started to read it before he left the library, calling "thank you!" over his shoulder as he left.

The classroom helpers started to arrive to take their classroom book bins back to class before their Daily 5 sessions began. Within moments, the library was filled with the sounds of excited voices as the children quickly glanced at their selections. Ready to begin their Daily 5 work, the children all scurried back to their classrooms, planning to begin with Read to Self so they could choose from the new selection of books for their classroom.

Reflection

Mrs. Buch's whole school, including the school library, embraced the Daily 5 literacy programming. The brief scenario demonstrated that Mrs. Buch has worked collaboratively with her colleagues, including the library technician and the classroom teachers, to ensure the library is an integral component of their daily literacy practices.

Mrs. Buch also demonstrated the power of reader's advisory. When selecting resources for the library, Mrs. Buch knew that she had a student interested in reading about bats at a very basic level and purchased accordingly. She was then able to easily connect Nolan with a book of interest that fit his selection criteria for a good-fit book. Mrs. Buch had again supported the Daily 5 strategies by having "I PICK" mini-posters visible in the school library.

When a classroom or a whole school embraces the Daily 5 framework for literacy development, there are implications for collection development. The teacher-librarian must ensure there are enough titles at a variety of reading levels to support the classroom book bins, but still have a wide enough selection

remaining for library book exchanges. The school library was able to support and supplement the classroom libraries without additional expense, as the school library and the classroom libraries can share titles.

Mr. Aklat's school library

Mr. Aklat looks forward to the start of each school day in the school library with much anticipation. The whole school begins each day with a "soft landing" which includes extended reading time in every classroom. The students are always welcome in the library and can select a new book at any time, especially prior to the free voluntary reading time.

On this particular morning, a group of grade eight girls come in together and after greeting Mr. Aklat, they quickly hurry over to the new book display. Ainslee and Janice, two voracious readers who often ask Mr. Aklat to make specific purchases for the library, are in the group. Candace is also with the group of girls. As usual, she selects the latest comic book from the shelf to read during reading time. Mr. Aklat smiles and nods his approval to her when she looks up. Meanwhile Ainslee has located the new novel she was keen for Mr. Aklat to purchase. The reading level will be a challenge for her, but she cannot wait to get started! Mr. Aklat is pleased he could use her recommendation and provide her with a book.

One of the school's educational assistants enters the library next with a small group of grade seven English Language Learners. This group comes to the library at the beginning of each school day. Mr. Aklat has been helping these students learn to select "just right" books for their reading time. They do not have access to many books at home, so the classroom teacher and Mr. Aklat want to ensure they have significant access to reading materials at school. The students carefully choose their books, with some guidance from Mr. Aklat. One of the boys, Jairus, selects a book in his first language, Tagalog, for today's reading time. Once again, Mr. Aklat smiles his approval. He also writes himself a quick reminder to look into purchasing a few books in Russian, as school administration told him this morning that a new family is arriving next week from Russia.

All of the students who came to the library this morning have now gone back to their respective classrooms with reading material in hand, ready and keen to begin their school day. Mr. Aklat is about to sit down to begin his own "soft landing," when Paul comes in. He passes Mr. Aklat a note that he quickly recognizes as a library pass. Paul often chooses to read in quiet comfort of the library during the morning's reading time. Paul and Mr. Aklat both settle into the library's soft reading chairs and turn their attention to their wonderful task at hand -- reading.

Reflection

Mr. Aklat's school has embraced free voluntary reading. This school library is open and accessible to the school community. Particularly noteworthy are the group of English Language Learners who come to the library every day. Mr. Aklat has collaborated with the classroom teacher and educational assistant to ensure these students have ample opportunity and experience selecting appropriate books to ensure they develop this independent skill. Access to reading material is critical to literacy development. Book displays are used to capture student interest and Mr. Aklat uses student input when making collection development decisions. The students know this and eagerly anticipate the displays and new selections.

Mr. Aklat displays acceptance of the students reading selections, including one student who was keen to try a challenging book, another that selected light reading material (comic), and yet another who made a selection in another language. Mr. Aklat understands that all of these readers need the opportunity to read what interests them, "with no strings attached". He demonstrates forethought when making collection development decisions for the library and has these materials available for the students. Mr. Aklat also

understands the importance of modelling. He always participates in the "soft landing" reading time with the students as he wants them to know he values reading; besides, what a wonderful way to start your day!

Other Literacy Programs

Aligning collection development and the teacher-librarian's support with the school's literacy practices can become more of challenging when the school as a whole and/or specific educators have adopted less than the best practices. An example of such literacy practices are computer-assisted reading programs. Research has demonstrated that computer-assisted reading programs, such as Accelerated Reader (AR) are ineffective tools for fostering reading motivation and engagement (Krashen, 2004, 2011; Mackey, 2003). Computer-assisted reading programs create the illusion of choice, but in fact may act as a deterrent to reading. Mackey (2003) states that:

> Real reading is a voluntary activity that involves the power to say Yes or No to a book. When we create programs that reduce or eliminate that power of choice, we create self-imprisoning reading opportunities that wind up repackaged as docility tests. The Accelerated Reading program is a good example of such a docility test. (p. 50)

Krashen (2011) suggests that AR's effectiveness as a reading instruction tool is largely hampered by the inclusion of tests and rewards. Without the tests and rewards, access to a variety of reading materials and time to read them are what remain and, as we know, reading research has demonstrated the critical nature of those components. Therefore, if a school or educator is utilizing a computer-assisted reading program, the teacher-librarian can work collaboratively with the educator to shift the emphasis to the reading time and materials and away from the tests and rewards with the ultimate goal being to replace the computer-assisted reading program with the school library and better literacy practices.

When making collection decisions, the teacher-librarian needs to consider many factors and find a balance between material selection and censorship. The teacher-librarian needs to consider such factors as reading level to ensure the collection has adequate resources to supplement the literacy programming at each grade level, but needs to be sensitive to censorship issues. Bush and Jones (2010) caution that labeling reading levels can be a subtle form of censorship (p. 111) and Krashen (2001) suggests that making suggestions to young readers based on lexile (readability) levels is potentially harmful and students should be learning to determine their interest in a text independently by examining and sampling it (p. 25).

All of this *is* achievable. A school library collection *can* reflect the school's literacy goals and the teacher-librarian *can* form collaborative partnerships that enable the school library to become a fluid extension of classroom literacy programming. This fluidity can be achieved with a few minor adjustments to collection development and partnerships. The dividends will be noteworthy.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

As part of my journey from the classroom to the school library, the work of Miller and Krashen has enabled me to connect the power of the school library with best literacy practices. To make a strong connection between the school library's programming and collection development, one must be knowledgeable about literacy practices, the community of learners, and current literature. A well-

developed school library collection development policy to guide selection and de-selection of materials is also critical.

How are your school's literacy goals reflected in the school library? Do you have a qualified TL, a well-stocked collection and a budget to purchase materials to support the literacy initiatives of your school? What impact do the literacy goals have on collection development, collaboration and library use in your school? It is time to start thinking about the answers to these questions.

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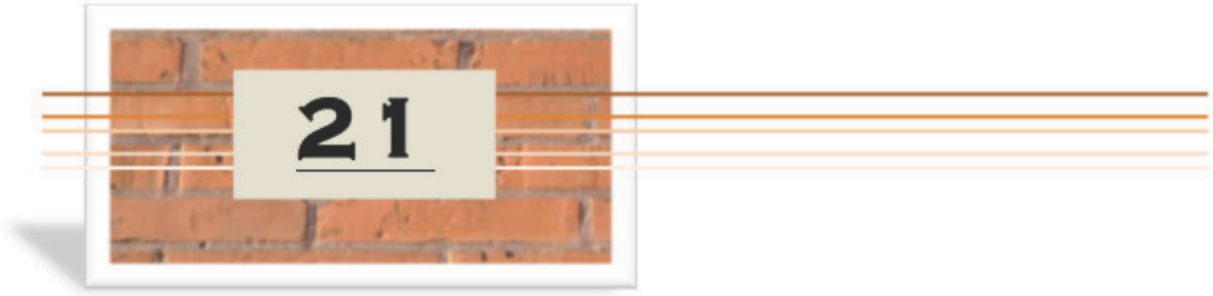
Teacher-Librarians becoming and Being School Leaders

The final section brings us back full-circle to the leadership role of the teacher-librarian. In this section, we see specific examples of teacher-librarians taking on specific challenges in their school community. This final section of *Becoming and Being* highlights further ways in which qualified teacher-librarians can be and are school leaders.

Heather Eby's chapter focuses on the ways in which qualified teacher-librarians have the power and expertise to transform professional development from within their schools therefore shifting the perception of the teacher-librarian from "keeper of the books" to school leader. The chapter includes practical ideas and suggestions for teacher-librarians to facilitate both formal and informal professional development opportunities. The second chapter in this section emphasizes the important leadership role teacher-librarians play in supporting teachers as readers. Anne Rogers highlights how teacher-librarians, with expertise in children's literature and reading motivation, are in an ideal position to offer professional development in the school library and to facilitate a reading culture among teachers. By means of technology, book clubs, and staff meetings, teacher-librarians can promote reading to benefit the whole school community. Natasha Hritzuk's chapter in this section focuses on the importance of involving parents in promoting and facilitating the development of students' information literacy skills. The chapter includes several practical ideas are suggested and the roles of parents and educators are outlined in the article. The final chapter in this section, and in this book, highlights the information literacy leadership role of the teacher-librarian. Renae Gartrell argues that teacher-librarians are uniquely positioned to teach students how to manage, learn from, and share their learning with others, locally and globally. Teacher-librarians must develop their role as the information literacy leaders within the school to begin building an information-literate school culture with school leaders and all those involved with the education of our youth.

Qualified teacher-librarians, those with graduate level training in teacher-librarianship, are uniquely situated to be leaders in their schools. With experience and training in all aspects of teacher-librarianship, including technology, resources, inquiry, and literacy, teacher-librarians are school leaders and the chapters in this section, together with all the chapters in this book, provide a glimpse into the ways in which teacher-librarians are becoming and being school leaders.



Professional Development with a Qualified Teacher-Librarian

Heather Eby

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What do school leaders need to know...?

> "We don't go in the library unless it's our book exchange day."
> "They call the library, *The Ice Palace*."
> "Just go get your books and then get out. Whatever you do, don't ask any questions."
> "The grade seven and eight students don't use the library for anything but computer use."

Imagine my surprise when I first arrived at my newly assigned school, brimming with excitement to teach grade five, and overheard these comments about the school library flying around the staffroom. I had always worked in schools with dynamic, knowledgeable, and collaborative teacher-librarians and thought that was the "norm". Everyone's perceptions of the teacher-librarian at this school painted a picture of an uncooperative, disengaged, and frankly, "old-school" librarian stereotype. I knew in my heart that this was not a way to run a library. The teacher-librarian who had garnered such negative feedback was ready for retirement and I was determined to be the one to replace her! I had always envisioned myself working in the library someday, and eagerly jumped at the opportunity to follow my dream. I knew that in order to make a difference I would need to develop a new skill set, a broader knowledge base and a deeper understanding of the role of the teacher-librarian.

I began my journey five years ago by enrolling in the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning (TLDL) program at the University of Alberta. My journey to become the educator and school leader I am today came with some incredible self-discoveries, revelations and challenges regarding the role of an effective teacher-librarian in the 21st century. With only one year of coursework under my belt, I became the teacher-librarian in my school. It did not take long for me to realize that redefining the role of the teacher-librarian and establishing a warm and inviting space in our school library for our staff and

students was not going to be an easy task. The challenge of shifting perceptions of the role of the library and the teacher-librarian within the school became my major focus during those early years in the school library. How was I going to change the school's perceptions of its library and teacher-librarian in order to create the welcoming environment of learning and service that I believed exemplified an effective 21st century school library?

I began with a major overhaul of the physical library space: redesigning, reshelving, and reinventing a new space for learning, creating, researching, and of course, reading! The new look of the library helped to shed some of the old feelings toward the library. The next step, however, proved to be much harder - convincing the staff and students that there was more to the library than just getting books and using computers. I was a teacher at heart and wanted to keep teaching, not just check out books! Being a teacher, I knew my library's potential and it was not being met with simply providing computer stations and book exchanges. I wanted to use my expertise as a teacher and a librarian to elevate my library to the next level.

Fortunately, my first year in the TLDL program provided some of the "ammunition" I needed to convince my staff that I knew what I was talking about with regard to 21st century learning, information literacy and technology. As I began my first year in the library, I decided to begin sharing my newfound knowledge through the creation of a virtual library presence. To begin, I designed our school library website to include a variety of resources for both staff and students. I also insisted that every class in the school visit the library for a 40-minute period. In addition to the regular book exchange, I used this time to teach lessons in the library, which covered information literacy, digital citizenship, reading strategies, and more. Our principal made it a requirement that teachers not use this time as a planning block but stay to help supervise the students. Truthfully, I did not need their help with supervision. I recognized this as an opportunity to begin changing perceptions of my role and to develop a relationship with my colleagues as a collaborative instructional partner. Our library classes together proved to be the perfect conduit for providing my staff with informal professional development and for transforming their thinking regarding my role. As my students were learning about Web 2.0, effective online search strategies, and website evaluation, my colleagues were learning right alongside them and beginning to appreciate my role. I was establishing myself as a resource in the school and an expert on technology and information literacy that was readily available.

As my own professional learning grew through my graduate study courses, so did the knowledge and expertise that I passed on to the staff and students. I was so excited about all the new and exciting things I was learning at university and through my professional learning networks (PLNs), I began to seek out other ways to share with my staff. Soon, I was providing workshops on technology, which ran on in-service days, participating as the team leader in several professional learning communities (PLC) on inquiry and digital literacy, as well as continuing to provide informal professional development through our school wide blog and during my library classes. My colleagues were acutely aware of my continued education towards my Master of Education degree, specializing in Teacher Librarianship, which added to their elevated perception of my role and their increased interest in working with me as a collaborative teaching partner.

Over the years, it has become increasingly clear to me that by providing professional development opportunities, which educate my staff informally throughout the year, I have slowly transformed their old perceptions of teacher-librarians and libraries as a whole. The benefits and value of a teacher-librarian providing professional development in their schools cannot be measured; they are priceless. The teachers benefit as they are learning about the latest trends and developments in 21st century education without leaving the school. The students benefit from the newly found expertise of their teachers, and of course by developing a new found love of the library. Principals and school division leaders benefit from the budgetary gains from the local "expert in the building" and the knowledge that their schools are staying cutting edge. Finally, the teacher-librarian benefits as colleagues and students shift their

perceptions of the role and TLs are able to resurrect themselves as teachers and school leaders, not just "keepers of the books".

Teacher-librarians are in the perfect position to lead and encourage professional growth and learning in our schools. We are in a central, insider position that allows us to share, teach, learn, and provide support for our peers. Why should administrators bring outsiders into their schools when plenty of expertise, energy and leadership reside within their buildings with the most effective professional developers yet? Teacher-librarians are on-site, on-demand and on top of their game!

What do school leaders need to know...?

Leadership roles in technology education, inquiry learning, and skill development of information literacy have put teacher-librarians in a unique position to improve instructional practices in their schools. "As their duties expand, it is more important than ever for stakeholders to view their librarians as teachers, curriculum designers, technology gurus and school leaders" (Francis & Lance, 2011, p. 69).

Professional development has taken on new meaning in the last decade due to educational reform efforts and the influx of technology education and standards. The increased pressure for schools to improve student achievement and prepare their students for 21st century work environments has forced administrators to make professional development a high priority in their districts (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001). By staying on the cutting edge of the latest developments in educational improvement, teacher-librarians can play an integral part in this movement to increase professional development in today's schools. In their book, *Growing Schools: Librarians as Professional Developers*, Abilock, Fontichiaro and Harada (2012) share their view of the unique "in position" teacher-librarians play within a school network. Teacher-librarians have a whole school view and model lifelong learning for their staff and students. Abilock, Fontichiaro and Harada highlight the role of teacher-librarians as professional development leaders as it is not only cost effective for schools but helps to facilitate teamwork and the ability to learn from each other within a building.

Professional development has undergone rigorous evaluation and study over the past few decades, which has brought to light several influences on what constitutes effective professional development. Guskey (2002a) defines professional development programs as "systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students" (p. 381). Consistently, researchers agree that the key to effective and successful professional development efforts is their ability to affect student learning and improve student outcomes (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Guskey, 2002b; Joyce, Showers & Rolheiser-Bennett, 1987).

Over the years, professional development has taken on many forms, both formal and informal; conference lectures, in-service days filled with workshops, mentoring, book study groups, and more recently, professional learning communities and online professional learning networks (PLNs). Yet the question remains, which professional development opportunities are in fact producing the best improvement in instructional practice that demonstrate a direct link to measurable student achievement (Guskey, 2003)? School leaders today do not have the same funding or time to invest in professional development experiences that are not producing the desired results in their students' academic success. Research has shown the characteristics of effective professional development include 1) ample time and resources for learning, implementation and reflection, 2) opportunities for colleagues to work together in peer collaboration and 3) school or site-based learning that relate directly to curricular outcomes and increasing teacher's knowledge of content material (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Guskey,

2003; Riveros, Newton, & Burgess, 2012). Not surprisingly, these three key elements link seamlessly with the role of today's teacher-librarian.

Many teacher-librarians are already providing effective professional development in their schools by focusing on student learning and academic improvement, providing "just in time" training, and working side by side with their peers. Much of the literature demonstrates the ability to achieve effective professional development with the leadership and support of a qualified teacher-librarian. Harada and Zmuda (2008) define teacher-librarians as "learning specialists" who should be facilitating professional growth in a school. They believe teacher-librarians possess valuable skills in designing and analyzing instructional activities and assessment tasks, modeling of processes and best practices, and coaching of improved staff and student performance" (p. 69). As you will note, the literature and research today consistently addresses the expanding role of the qualified teacher-librarian as a *collaborator, leader* and *technology expert.*

Collaborator

Collaborative planning, teaching, assessing and learning have become the mantra of the 21st century teacher-librarian. It is through these subtle yet dynamic collegial partnerships that teacher-librarians are able to affect professional development in their schools. Research states that teacher-librarians bring extensive knowledge of curriculum, common core standards, resources and practical ideas to the planning table which allows them to offer "just in time" professional development for teachers" (Kimmel, 2012, p. 92). Harada's (2005) study demonstrated how the instructional partnership between a teacher-librarian and a classroom teacher can "refine [the teachers'] craft knowledge" (p. 50). Data emerged that revealed teacher-librarians as "informal leaders" who, through their collegial collaborative efforts, were able to bring new knowledge and understandings of instructional practices to their team teachers and thus extend their professional knowledge base (Harada). It is not hard to find the literature that demonstrates the collaborative benefits of working with the expertise, resources, and support of a qualified teacher-librarian (Ash-Argyle & Shoham, 2012; Francis & Lance, 2011; Montiel-Overall & Hernandez, 2012).

Leader

Leadership qualities have a predominant theme in the research regarding the role of the teacher-librarian. "The opportunities for librarians to influence with purpose, through instructive, facilitative, supportive, mentoring staff and modelling leadership enable the visionary librarian to be a guiding force in educational organizations" (Dotson & Jones, 2011, p. 79). In order for teacher-librarians to affect professional development and thrive as "change agents" within a school, teachers, administrators, and students need to view their teacher-librarian as an effective leader; one who is knowledgeable and can be trusted to guide them in the right direction (Hughes-Hassell & Harada, 2007).

The guidelines established in *Empowering Learners* (American Assoication of School Librarians, 2009) summarize the leadership role of the teacher-librarian clearly: "Leadership is integral to developing a successful 21st century school librarian. As information literacy and technology skills become central to learning, the school librarian must lead the way in building 21st century skills throughout the school environment" (p. 17). Not surprisingly, the expertise teacher-librarians have in technology and information literacy provides them with a strong foundation for providing professional development opportunities in their school.

Technology Expert

The demand for expertise and understanding of educational technology provides teacher-librarians with an unexpected edge to stand out as instructional leaders and learning specialists among their peers and in effect, drive professional development within their schools.

The leadership role of librarians as technology experts gives them the ability to provide in-house, contextually situated professional development on an on-going basis in their schools. Mouza's (2003) findings highlighted that "technology-related professional development programs needed to provide teachers with a variety of activities such as modeling, discussion, brainstorming of ideas, hands-on actions, and just-in-time support" (p. 285). The results of this work support the instructional practices and leadership qualities researchers have identified in a qualified and trained teacher-librarian.

The consistent message that permeates the research is that teacher-librarians are most effective as leaders, technology experts, and ultimately professional developers when equipped with ample knowledge, training, and skill development. Branch-Mueller and de Groot (2011) surveyed graduate students enrolled in a required Web 2.0 course as part of their Masters of Education in Teacher-Librarianship. The results of their study indicated the students gained increased knowledge of Web 2.0 tools and now viewed themselves as technology leaders in their schools capable of conducting workshops for their colleagues. Francis and Lance (2011) similarly reported that, "qualified teacher-librarians are more confident in their teaching abilities than paraprofessional library staff...[they feel] included in curriculum design, and feel teachers view them as providers of in-service staff development, as leaders, and as technology trouble shooters..." (p. 65). Dotson and Jones (2011) solidify this view in stating, "development of strong effective visionary library leadership skills to produce instructional leaders supporting the curriculum is required to keep the librarian role in the forefront impacting the entire school..." (p. 84). Qualified teacher-librarians are treasures in a school where administrators and staff value continuous professional development in a meaningful and hands on approach.

The role of the teacher-librarian today is not only one of collaborator, leader and technology expert but also 'change agent', instructor, partner, mentor, and developer. These enhanced roles appear consistently throughout the research and literature. By providing professional development in an ongoing, timely basis through inquiry instruction, collaboration and technology leadership, qualified teacher-librarians strengthen the importance of their role within schools. Teacher-librarians are indispensable school leaders who are ready, willing, and able to improve and redefine professional development for the 21st century.

What can school leaders do about... ?

"Who dares to teach must never cease to learn."
- John Cotton Dana

The term "professional development" always seems to conjure up visions of off-site workshops, lecture halls filled with bored teachers, and scribblers lined with ideas that never seem to reach fruition. As pointed out in the previous section, teachers and administrators are no longer willing to accept this model of professional development and have been seeking newer, more effective forms of professional learning to meet the needs of today's changing times. They are eager to be a part of a system and practice of professional development that will lead our 21st century learners toward academic achievement and support the educators faced with teaching in a demanding and rapidly evolving digital world. As school

leaders, qualified teacher-librarians are able to position themselves strategically at the core of the school's professional learning environment. Teacher-librarians possess the qualifications, dispositions, and drive to implement both *formal* and *informal* professional development opportunities that make a positive impact on student learning.

Formal professional development

Although there is no exclusive definition of *formal* professional development (PD), most administrators and teachers agree that formal PD includes activities such as off-site conferences, graduate-level courses, workshops presented by special guests at various times throughout the year, online webinars, and the implementation of Professional Learning Communities. These more traditional models of PD serve specific learning purposes and can be an effective way to disseminate information to a larger group of individuals all at one time.

As a teacher-librarian who believes in fostering the professional learning in my school and keeping everyone as informed as possible, I have taken on some of the responsibility of creating opportunities for formal PD within my school. Due to time constraints and other factors, it often seems more efficient to address larger groups or share information in a more formal setting. The following examples include workshops I have conducted myself, and others that I hope to facilitate in the future.

One of the most influential workshops I have organized and facilitated encompassed our school goal to develop technology skills amongst the staff and begin the process of infusing more technology into their instructional practice. I took the lead in a partnership with my colleague (who happened to be the computer applications instructor) to head up our Literacy with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) committee. As technology leaders in our school, it was a natural fit for us to plan a full-day workshop around the infusion of technology into current curriculum outcomes. Our PD day involved some large group instruction at the onset and progressed to hands-on workshops that the teachers were able to select based on their own needs and interests. Taking the lead on this workshop not only kick-started our year-long PD plan to improve technology integration in our school, but I also garnered respect from my colleagues regarding my expertise in this area and my role as a school leader. As well, being an 'on-site' presenter allowed me the opportunity to continue to assist and develop my colleagues' skills in technology in a more timely and practical way after the PD session.

Staff meetings have proven to be another effective formal means of communicating professional learning in our school and making connections with colleagues. Taking advantage of a pre-scheduled time, venue, and captive audience allows a teacher-librarian the ease of spending a few minutes providing simple and concise professional development. It might be a new trend in education, a recently discovered Web 2.0 tool, the use of a newly acquired database, or even the chance to "book talk" the latest additions to the professional school library. Sometimes these few precious moments can lead to a new face in your library wanting to learn more or perhaps the beginnings of a future collaborative partnership.

A third means of formal professional learning I have embarked upon in the last two years involves my participation and leadership in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Some may not regard PLCs as formal PD; however, it requires the full support of your administrator and follows a particular structure of implementation in order to effectively produce the intended results - measurable student learning! The growth and acceptance of Professional Learning Communities over the past decade is evidence of the need and desire for educators to take the lead in their own professional learning and work in a collaborative environment. This short chapter could not possibly explain the extent to which PLCs can affect professional development in a school and how to properly implement such an effectual model of professional learning. Several resources are available to learn more about this phenomenon in 'teacher leader' professional learning. DuFour (1998) is one of the key instructional leaders in this movement and

defines PLCs as demonstrating certain characteristics: "1) shared mission, vision and value; 2) collective inquiry; 3) collaborative teams; 4) action orientation and experimentation; 5) continuous improvement and 6) results orientation" (p. 25-29). It is easy to see why a teacher-librarian fits so effortlessly into the PLC framework.

Since collaboration is at the heart of what we do every day, the PLC is the perfect conduit to team with our colleagues and share our vision, expertise, resources, and inquiry learning skills. In my own experience, I worked with a group of Grade 5 and 6 teachers focusing on integrating inquiry learning into their Social Studies curriculum. Fortunately, I had just completed my own formal training in inquiry the previous summer and provided the group with a framework to follow, along with unit ideas, resources, further reading, and eventually co-teaching many of the lessons. That said it was a true collaboration amongst all of us, as we bounced ideas back and forth to reach our ultimate goal. We would try a lesson, reflect on its effectiveness and make the necessary changes for our next step in the process. My second foray into a PLC was less hands-on with a much larger vision and goal in mind. We wanted to move our school in the direction of a more digitally literate community of learners. As we began our task of creating a shared vision and discussing our goals, we realized we had a much bigger endeavour ahead of us and it may require a few years to reach fruition. Our PLC decided to develop a digital literacy continuum for our middle year's students with each grade adopting various digital literacy outcomes for their students to build upon throughout their digital learning journey in our school. My role as the teacher- librarian fit seamlessly in the plan as I taught all the students in the school and could effectively assess, guide, and help instruct digital literacy lessons for many of the students along the way.

Pink (2009) believes that in one's profession we are motivated and driven to succeed when provided with three elements: "mastery, autonomy, and purpose" (p. 62). PLCs provide the perfect outlet for teachers to strive for *mastery* in their profession, allow them room to express their *autonomy,* and give them a *purpose* for their professional learning. Personally, Professional Learning Communities have allowed me to cultivate collaborative partnerships, build trust with my colleagues, share my expertise in inquiry and technology, and foremost, help develop the skills of my colleagues, in order to better meet the needs of our students.

While I am actively engaged in organizing formal professional development activities in my school, I discovered through my research several new ideas I would love to attempt to implement in the near future. Abilock, Fontichiaro and Harada (2012) share several amazing professional learning experiences involving the teacher-librarian as facilitator. Of the many ideas that peaked my interest in this book, two stood out for me as possible options in the years to come. First, the Exploratorium approach (pp.1-15) intrigued me as it had the teachers exploring areas of technology that would meet their *own* professional learning needs in three separate sessions. The first session involved a large group workshop introducing various technology tools and how they could directly impact teaching. The second session required teachers to work on developing the technology skill area they selected for improvement, ensuring that it integrated with their specific curricular outcomes. The final session became a sharing session for teachers to present the various technology-integrated projects they developed over the course of the "exploratorium".

The second idea that intrigued me was entitled, "23 things for 21st century learners" (pp.19-39). The concept originated from Blower's (2007) Learning 2.0: The 23 Things Project. This PD opportunity puts the learning in the hands of the teachers as they tackle new digital learning tools or concepts at their own pace and are able to challenge themselves to complete them all. This unique, fun, and creative format of professional learning has morphed into several different variations over the years to include educating administrators, and engaging students. In both these professional learning scenarios, the role of the teacher-librarian is not hard to visualize. As collaborators, technology experts and leaders, it only makes senses that teacher-librarians fit into these models of professional learning by providing support, leading the organizational aspect and continuing to offer ongoing support and encouragement after the activity is

over. It is up to us as teacher-librarians to take the initiative to introduce these learning experiences into our schools and to demonstrate our capabilities beyond the traditional role of the teacher-librarian. Clearly, when placed in the right hands, formal PD can bring about powerful changes and improvement to instructional practices. The expertise, creativity, and motivation to provide professional learning opportunities exist for all schools with a qualified and driven teacher-librarian.

INFORMAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Unfortunately, formal professional development does not come without some hurdles. For many schools, time, financial cost, the need to differentiate for the teacher-learners and of course the effectiveness to create change in our teachers to improve student learning and instructional practices, can be a serious challenge. Fortunately, teacher-librarians can also play a more *informal* role in providing professional development in a school. Unbeknownst to the educators in my school are the subtle and casual ways I am attempting to implement professional learning everyday and thus affect pedagogical change. I believe it is the informal professional learning moments I provide, that result in more immediate and effectual change. The means, methods, and models of informal PD that make up my day go from the everyday collaborations with my colleagues to the smaller "snapshot" learning moments.

A model of informal professional learning presents itself with every collaborative partnership and meeting I undertake within a school year. The importance of collaboration in our roles as teacher-librarians cannot be overstated. PLCs definitely provide that perfect vehicle for ensuring collaboration but we cannot always wait for formal meetings. Some of my best collaborative moments have happened "on the fly", in the lunchroom or hanging out after school. These impromptu brainstorming and idea sharing sessions often lead to more meaningful planning time for discussing curricular objectives, the integration of technology, possible resources, presentation formats and assessment strategies. Haycock (1999) put it best, "collaboration between teacher and teacher-librarian not only has a positive impact on student achievement but also leads to growth of relationships, growth of the environment and growth of persons" (p. 38).

Another format of informal PD that coincides with collaboration is modeling and co-teaching. Often, my colleagues ask me to facilitate lessons on certain topics regarding information literacy skills or digital citizenship when we have not done any advanced collaborative planning. I am always eager to take these moments to share my expertise not only with the students, but also with my colleagues. Often I seek out these opportunities when I overhear discussions about upcoming units or projects and take the initiative to offer my services. Another unique scenario that developed into an informal professional learning opportunity is the transition of teachers from one grade to another or a new teacher to the school. Frequently these teachers are feeling overwhelmed and looking for support and guidance regarding their new curriculum. They are more than happy to spend time with someone who has a clear picture of curricular outcomes across the grade levels. They are eager to receive resources, ideas, and more importantly collaborate with me on future inquiry projects.

Some of the smaller "snapshot" moments of informal professional learning materialize in the resources and "marketing" efforts created to improve the schools' instructional practices. Surprisingly, at the same time, these small moments continue to build a relationship of trust and respect with my colleagues. For example, I have designed a bulletin board just outside the library, which serves several purposes. At various times I share new resources, celebrate reading programs, display infographics on the latest findings in educational research, and generally promote the services the library has to offer the school and beyond. As well, I have taken on the responsibility of updating our weekly staff blog that acts as our default page whenever teachers access the internet. I take advantage of this task by including lots of library news and embed some technology lessons with our weekly feature, "Websites of the Week." Not surprisingly, technology supplies me with many opportunities to provide informal professional development; from writing the weekly blog, to sending out an occasional email to a colleague about a

pertinent resource for their curriculum, to filling our virtual library website full of teacher resources. It only seemed natural to create a wiki for our teachers to store all the technology workshop ideas and resources and begin to develop a community of asynchronous online professional learners. The ability of teacher-librarians to provide informal PD opportunities throughout the school year allows for immediate and ongoing professional learning; keeping both teachers and students informed and at the forefront of the latest educational developments.

Whether it is formal or informal professional development opportunities, it is critical that our colleagues and administrators know that, "the library is the road to professional development and personal learning, whether we are connecting [with] teachers ...or providing targeted learning sessions at meetings. It's our job" (Abilock, Fontichiaro, & Harada, 2012, p. 35).

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Several factors are important to consider and establish in order for teacher-librarians to take the lead in professional development in their school and make PD a part of their job. We must come equipped with the right knowledge, expertise, dispositions, and dedication for implementing change before we can truly make a difference.

By sharing new trends in educational technology and collaborating in curricular learning experiences, we must be prepared to continue our own professional development and commitment to lifelong learning. In many cases this might mean beginning your own journey towards acquiring a Masters degree in Education specializing in Teacher-Librarianship, or perhaps exploring other certifications to garner the qualifications and knowledge to continue supporting professional development in your school.

For qualified teacher-librarians, the most effective and rewarding way to maintain their own professional development is through their Personal Learning Networks (PLN). Essentially, PLNs are a way for educators to stay connected and share resources, ideas and commonalities with each other. Most PLNs develop through online social networking tools such as twitter, blogs, wikis, Facebook, nings, RSS readers, and social bookmarking sites. If we are going to share the latest and best instructional practices in education, we need to ensure we are keeping our own professional learning on the cutting edge.

Beyond progressing in our own learning, teacher-librarians need to establish a trusting and respectful relationship with their administration. In the end, it is the connections we make with the principals in our schools that allow us to do our jobs with the best support and understanding as possible (Francis & Lance, 2011; Oberg, 2006; Shannon, 2009). As teacher-librarians, it is important to educate our administrators on our capabilities and expertise to help guide professional development opportunities for our colleagues. Weekly casual meetings with your principal on educational trends, being on the school goal planning committee, or inviting them into your library during one of your lessons will begin to open the lines of communication. As school leaders, we need to take deliberate measures to change our principal and colleagues' perception of the role of the teacher-librarian and help them understand the power we yield in driving educational change and professional learning in our schools. Principals today are looking for teacher leaders among their staff to help cultivate a school culture that makes learning and student achievement a priority.

Many professional development organizations such as National Staff Development Council and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development are available to assist teacher leaders by providing frameworks of effective professional learning. More recently, an international organization

called *Learning Forward* (Crow, 2012) has committed to developing a set of *Standards for Professional Learning*. Their hope is to reach teacher leaders all over the world and share their message of quality; professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and delivers results for all students (Hirsch, 2012). As high-profile teacher leaders, teacher-librarians should consider the standards set out by *Learning Forward* and reflect on how they match their own goals to increase professional learning in their school.

> The greatest frustration for school leaders and classroom educators is the difference between what we know and what we do. We know what effective professional learning looks like. It is intensive and sustained, it is directly relevant to the needs of teachers and students, and it provides opportunities for application, practice reflection and reinforcement. We also know what it doesn't look like: death by PowerPoint, ponderous lectures from people who have not been alone with a group of students for decades and high-decibel whining about the state of (take your pick) children, parents, teachers, public education, and Western civilization. (Reeves, 2010, p.23)

By taking the lead in implementing effective professional learning opportunities and experiences in our schools, teacher-librarians not only make an impact on student achievement, we become a motivating force in our educational institutions. As school leaders, qualified teacher-librarians have the ability to provide on-site, on-going, mentorship, modeling, resources, collaboration, expertise, instruction, and above all, support. Through this form of leadership and education, it is nearly impossible for administrators and colleagues to accept the notion of today's teacher-librarian as "keeper of the books". Over the past twenty years, the role and model of the teacher-librarian has truly evolved into that of a school leader and lifelong learner. In the words of Zmuda and Harada (2008), "we are learning specialists, strategically positioned to be teacher leaders"(p.xvi).

> One-day workshops at the board office viewing PowerPoint presentations - $60
> Conference registration and most of the workshops you wanted were full - $400
> Out of town guest speakers flown in for a boring lecture-based PD session - $3000
> Qualified teacher-librarian catering to the unique professional learning needs in your school – PRICELESS!

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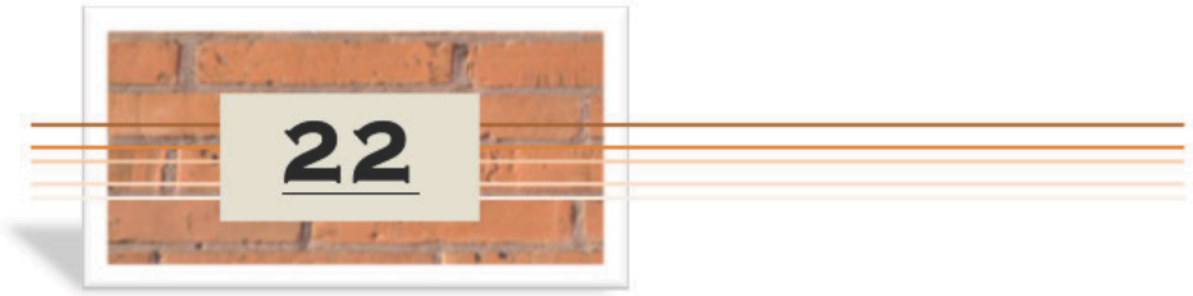

Teacher-Librarians Supporting Literacy Teachers as Leaders

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Why should school leaders care… ?

> *The first thing a teacher teaches is herself, and her attitude to reading, her pleasure in it will come across to the child even before his first reading lesson.* (*Meek, 1982, p. 64)*

My road to reading began when, as a small child, my parents read aloud to me from picture books filled with whimsical and wonderful illustrations. Later, I listened to chapter books and have fond memories of the Burgess Bedtime Stories. I listened with anticipation to each adventure of Sammy Jay and Buster Bear even though I already knew them quite well. When the time came to start reading by myself, I looked to my parents who were my role models and tried to follow their lead. I sensed comfort and contentment as they sat curled up with their books and I wanted to imitate them. With avid readers around me, the house was brimming with books in nearly every room, including my own, as I gradually discovered titles that I enjoyed

Today, I choose from a broad range of fiction and non-fiction, my favourite genres being realistic and historical fiction. Families facing hardships and sagas of courage and determination transport me away from my everyday world and allow me to connect with characters that I am saddened to leave when the last page comes.

In my role as an elementary teacher-librarian, I want students to experience this joy that comes from being completely engrossed in a book. To achieve this important outcome, I reflect on the steps that I can take to open the door for children as readers and I am exploring ways to develop a reading culture among my fellow teachers. Building bridges between students and books is important as I encounter children every year who do not know the magic of being lost in a story, nor unfortunately, do they know how to

overcome hurdles that prevent them from choosing 'just right' books for themselves.

So how did I come to the topic of teachers as readers? I have been an elementary school teacher-librarian for just over five years and have been working towards a Masters in Education in Teacher-Librarianship from the University of Alberta for much of this time. Through reading from our library collection and reflecting on the ideas of reading specialists, I have been introduced to concepts and strategies for fostering a lifelong love of reading. Teachers and experts including Aidan Chambers, Margaret Meek, Donalyn Miller, and Mary Anne Wolf have informed me about the absolutely critical role that the teacher plays in the process. This research, and that of others in the field, clearly outlines that teachers who read are more likely to create reading environments that invite students to explore literature in ways that allow them to develop an inner reading life. Understanding this causal relationship, one of my questions is: How do we as teachers meaningfully connect children to books? As a teacher-librarian, I believe I have a unique opportunity to look at the research in this area, influence school leaders, and support teachers so that they may foster a love of reading in their students.

Teachers are in an ideal position to model the habit of reading (Camp, 2007). The research has shown that the more students read, the more proficient and confident they become. The better they become, the more they want to read. Thus, a habit is formed. Teachers who are readers themselves can more readily assist in this habit forming and can enrich their students' lives. Chambers (1991) in his book, *The Reading Environment*, eloquently stated, "I know that without enabling adults who are thoughtful readers to give you guidance, it is all but impossible to become a thoughtful literary reader yourself." (p.88)

As I began exploring research on the role of the teacher in the promotion of reading and classroom instruction, I realized that this is something school leaders should care about. School leaders should ask what dispositions does the teacher possess that make him or her ideally suited to this task? Is the teacher a reader? What kinds of literacy experiences are available to their students? Imagine walking into a classroom that has no books, no reading area, no soft seating or carpet square inviting students to relax and explore literature. What a bereft world this could be for a child. We learn the mechanics of reading because we need to know what the symbols on the page mean but we choose to read because it feeds our inner lives, our emotional selves. I want all my students in my school to have these opportunities and therefore I strive to connect them with books that will help them grow as readers. In my experience, readers who are excited by what they have read typically want to share their thoughts and responses. The person best able to model this enthusiasm is the teacher. The students, given opportunities to practice and engage in book talk with each other, experience the joy that comes from responding to a book. To me, this joy is one of the key ingredients that fuel a reader.

In this chapter, I will present research from the field of reading development as well as ideas of key thinkers on the role that the classroom teacher plays in fostering a love of reading. In the words of Aidan Chambers (1991), "if we want to be skillful in helping other people, especially children, become willing, avid, and - most important of all - thoughtful readers, we need to know how to create a reading environment that enables them" (p. 7). I will also be exploring the research on current practices in classrooms and schools, the reading lives of pre-service teachers, and the reading habits of students of all ages. I will then connect the research to the work going on in our schools and the ways in which teacher-librarians are, or can be, supporting teachers.

What do school leaders need to know…?

To keep our students reading, we have to let them. (*Miller, 2009, p. 177)*

Numerous studies and books have examined the role of the teacher in literacy development and have established that a teacher has a profound impact on the students in their care. Not only do children need a foundation in the mechanics of language but the research shows that they also greatly benefit from opportunities to read freely and widely with the goal of becoming lifelong readers. As teachers, we know that we have the privilege to influence the choices of our students and therefore, should share our own reading values. I love to read and often share my enthusiasm with my students. I talk with them about their interests and read from our collection so that I am able to offer advice on their choices. As Miller (2009) reminds educators,

> Reading has more impact on students' achievement than on any other activity in school [therefore], setting aside time for reading must be the first activity we teachers write on our lesson plans, not the last. It is said that we make time for what we value, if we value reading, we must make time for it. (p. 52)

I have examined the work of researchers committed to students' literacy development from the earliest years in school. Common themes emerge from the literature: teachers who read tend to use literacy best practices; students benefit from time to read freely and widely; teachers should model reading; students need access to a choice of books and other reading materials with opportunities to talk about what they have read. Let me take you through the research and professional literature that is connected to these themes.

Best practices in literacy instruction

Teachers who are readers are more likely to use best practices in their literacy instruction (Nathanson, Pruslow, & Levitt, 2008). Some of these practices include "using children's literature, reading aloud to students regularly, daily sustained silent reading (SSR), discussing literature in small groups, guided silent reading, small group explicit instruction, regular miscue analysis, and daily shared reading" (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999, para. 6). These instructional practices are foundational for young readers. It is common for adults to read silently, read aloud, discuss books in small groups, share their opinions, make recommendations, or try titles suggested by others. Miller (2009) and Gallagher (2011) have published books about their approach to reading instruction and demonstrate their use of best practices with their students. They provide numerous examples of students who thrived in the reading environments they created in their classrooms. Research by Krashen (2011) states that students who are given time to read their choice of material, during SSR, become better spellers and readers, with larger vocabularies (p. 5). Describing her reading workshop approach, Atwell (2007) explains, "Children are encouraged to skim, skip, and look ahead. Abandoning a book that a reader isn't enjoying is viewed as a smart move, not a character defect" (p. 17).

Free voluntary reading

When teacher-librarians talk about free voluntary reading (FVR) they often think of Krashen's book *The Power of Reading* (1993), which presents extensive research indicating that reading freely in school is a key component of a students' literacy development. Encouraging students to read what interests them is acknowledged as essential to fostering a love of reading (Atwell, 2007; Chambers, 1991; Gallagher,

2009; McCracken & McCracken, 1978; Miller, 2009).

Miller's book, *The Book Whisperer* (2009), details how her students rise to the challenge of reading extensively in her classroom. Through multiple examples, Miller demonstrates how free choice and time to read pays dividends for her students who arrive in her class at different stages of their reading lives (p. 28). A lifelong reader herself, Miller recognizes that "without support for their reading interests and role models who inspire them to read, these students never discover that reading is enjoyable" (p. 28). A Finnish study, which looks at literacy in Finland and Canada, found that the same conditions in classrooms supported higher levels of student achievement. The researchers concluded that free reading or reading for pleasure, supported the learning of students at various levels of ability (Linnakyla & Valijarvi, 2005). In Finland, teachers develop readers through the exploration of "interesting and exciting texts, as well as through personal choice of reading materials, significant literary experiences and collaboration with peers" (p. 37).

Teachers as reading role models

Reading specialist Aidan Chambers laid the foundation for the development of the reading life of a child in his book *The Reading Environment* (1991). In it, Chambers makes a compelling case for the role of the adult in nurturing a young reader. "The adult enables selection, reading, and response. One activity leads to another" (p. 9). The teacher who reads understands the importance of creating a conducive environment, a special place in the room for quiet reading, with both teachers and students pursuing books. Children "depend on knowledgeable grownups because there are some things about every craft and every art - reading is both art and craft - that you only know from experience and can only be passed on by those who've learned them by experience (Chambers, p. 15).

Similarly, Mueller (1973) concluded that teachers' attitudes and values have "immeasurable potential for influencing pupils' attitudes toward reading" (p. 203). Subsequent authors have reached similar conclusions, that teachers' attitudes about reading have a significant impact on their students' attitudes about and success with reading (Cox & Schaetzel, 2007; Krashen, 1993; McCracken & McCracken; 1978; Meek, 1982; Miller, 2009; Mour, 1977; Nathanson, et al., 2008). Sustained silent reading, or SSR, for example, is often referred to in the literature as a valuable tool for supporting reading development in classrooms. Wolf (2007) reminds us that "teachers who are readers provide experiences where children can 'try on' emotions for themselves in a safe, caring environment with an enabling adult to guide them" (p. 85).

Research in the area of teachers' reading habits has also revealed some disheartening statistics. In several studies, pre-service and in-service teachers as well as graduate students were surveyed to determine how much they value reading and the results were low: 50% or fewer said they valued reading (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Braithwaite, 1999; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999; Nathanson, et al., 2008). Nevertheless, the data suggest that teachers at all stages of their careers benefit from reading for pleasure, making them better able to "encourage children to enter into and transact with the text" (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 4).

Readers need choices

Successful reading teachers understand the importance of choice for their students. Accessible high interest materials, whether in the classroom or school library, support growing readers (Atwell, 2007; Chambers, 1991; Gallagher, 2009; Linnikyla & Valijarvi, 2005; McKool & Gespass, 2009; Miller, 2007). Gallagher (2009) believes that students need a lot of choice so that they are able to learn to read across a variety of platforms (print and digital media), the way adults do. "Our students should be reading through many windows, not just a single narrow window that gives them a view to the next exam" (p. 29).

Brassell (2006) describes a teacher/author who motivated him to read by "providing lots of interesting books in his classroom, and letting students read while he read his own" (p. 92). Testaments such as this one speak to choice as a critical factor benefiting students as they find their own reading path. Choice is especially necessary for students who do not see themselves as readers. In collaboration with classroom teachers, teacher-librarians have the expertise to advise and provide choices to meet a range of abilities and interests.

When teachers are readers, great things can happen for students who arrive in a classroom filled with books and time scheduled to read them. Books become the subject of conversation in the room with both the teacher and other students. In the next section of the chapter, I will connect the research to current practice and describe ways in which teacher-librarians can provide support for school leaders and teachers in their school.

What can school leaders do about… ?

> *Teach reading so that student readers feel the enthusiasm of a trusted adult when we communicate to them one-to-one about literature - so they get that the teacher loves books, and that our advice about reading them is trustworthy. (Atwell, 2007, p. 93)*

Mrs. Blair, the teacher-librarian at Westwood Elementary School, writes regularly in her journal, something she firmly believes in, as a way of reflecting on her practice. Today she ran a professional development (PD) session for new and veteran teachers in her school and focused on literature for primary students. She is also trying to build a reading community for the teachers. She is using a strategy to create a safe and inclusive learning environment that she learned during a recent Tribes Learning Communities (2006) workshop.

September 20, 2012
I held my first PD session of the year early so that I could showcase the new literature we have in the library. I want teachers to know what is available for them and their students. People milled about, visiting and perusing the book displays I had set up around the library. Once they got a snack and found a seat, I did book talks, shared my enthusiasm for free voluntary reading (FVR) and its many benefits, and organized a Tribes activity to learn about the teachers as readers.

Sitting in a circle, we began a modified version of an activity called 'Snowball'. Teachers wrote anonymously on a piece of paper the title of a book they were reading or had recently read. Judging by the looks on the faces of some of the new teachers, they had nothing to write and were searching the ceiling. I made a mental note to touch base with these folks in the hope of recommending a 'just right' book. Crumpling their paper, everyone threw their 'snowballs' into a box in the centre of the circle then drew one out belonging to someone else. Moving around the circle, teachers read what was written on the retrieved paper. There were some terrific books mentioned which seemed to peak some interest in the group.

This activity did not isolate the non-readers but helped me figure out who might need a little extra support to find things to read for pleasure. With everyone using FVR in our school, it is important that the new teachers understand that they model reading for their students and should read personally to be authentic when they are teaching reading. I talked about the book I am currently reading and what I love about it. As luck would have it, someone else had read it so we chatted back and forth and found some other titles we might enjoy. The group visibly relaxed as neighbours turned to each other and talked

about the things they do like to read. I was ecstatic to see the potential for a reading community developing among these teachers. It's going to be a great year!

Mrs. Blair is an experienced teacher-librarian who collaborates with staff at every opportunity and thoroughly enjoys working with students. She believes that in order for children to grow into lifelong readers they require scaffolding by knowledgeable teachers who can communicate their passion for reading. With the arrival of new teachers who do not read for pleasure, Mrs. Blair reflects on past experiences and consults the research to plan the best ways to share children's books.
Some of the research that concerns Mrs. Blair looks at the reading interest levels of young people entering teacher education programs. The numbers are worrying because as many as 50% of student teachers surveyed indicated that they are detached, disinterested or unenthusiastic readers (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Cox & Schaetzel, 2007; Mann & Misheff, 1987). She wonders how the respondents in the study will influence students when they become classroom teachers. Mrs. Blair wants the best for her students and believes that the inroads she makes with teachers will help students discover that reading is a joy they can experience throughout their lives.

As Mrs. Blair demonstrated, teacher-librarians naturally reach out to their communities, supporting both students and teachers. While she reads the professional literature and materials from her library collection, she continually asks what else can be done to support teachers as readers. In this section I wish to discuss some of the strategies presented in the research as well as current practices being used in schools.

Teacher-librarians and free voluntary reading (FVR)

There are numerous benefits to students when they are allowed to choose their reading material, have time during the school day to read, and are not assessed on this reading. Importantly, he noted that students read more when their teacher also reads during FVR time (Krashen, 2011; Dreher, 2002). Modeling reading not only sets the example for students but also sets the stage for teachers to talk about books and create an interest in those items chosen for FVR. After reading, I would recommend that a teacher talk about the book enthusiastically then display it prominently in the classroom. A sign-up list nearby could be very helpful when multiple students want to borrow the teacher's book.

The finding that teachers should read during FVR, or SSR, suggests that reading along with students is powerful motivation. Everyone reading in a classroom at the same time creates a win-win situation: the classroom teacher would become more knowledgeable about the reading interests of the students; students would internalize the concept that reading has value because their teacher is reading. When they pursue topics of personal interest, the teacher might find a higher level of engagement resulting in fewer discipline problems.

The more teachers model reading, the more likely students will emulate the behaviour they see (Dreher, 2002; McKool & Gespass, 2009). While I don't often read silently with students in the library, sometimes something delightful happens after reading aloud to a class. Students will jump up to be first in line to borrow the book I have just read. It is not uncommon to play rock-paper-scissors or draw names to determine who will be next in line. Enthusiasm can be contagious. When a young student checks out the 'read aloud' book, they scramble to sit in my reading chair with a friend and enjoy it with great gusto.

During the academic year, our district provides opportunities for schools to offer professional development that caters to the needs of their teachers. I would be happy to lead sessions that provide teachers with information about the collection. This would serve two purposes: teachers would become more knowledgeable about the collection thus facilitating book talking with students, and secondly, teachers would hopefully find books they themselves would enjoy reading. There is wonderful children's and young adult fiction to engage even the most adamant non-reader.

If reading from an elementary library collection does not appeal to teachers, I would suggest some alternatives to encourage greater personal reading. One way is through casual conversation. In our school, for example, there is an informal network of adult readers who are always happy to talk about books. Some belong to book clubs while others are simply avid readers keen to share their thoughts and opinions. We cross paths in the hallway and staff room where our banter hopefully entices others to investigate for themselves.

Book clubs

A more structured approach I would use to promote reading is a book club. This could be challenging to set up simply due to the fact that teachers are already busy and funding may be required to purchase books. Of course, a book club can be based on materials available from a local library and meetings could take place in someone's home; creative thinking can make this work. Cardarelli (1992) looked at a reading program that was designed "to provide middle grade teachers the opportunity to read contemporary, best selling books and to discuss the books with their colleagues" (p. 664). It was believed that if teachers' enthusiasm for reading grew, this would have a positive effect in classrooms. He concluded that the program was successful by enabling teachers "to become better role models for the rewards that reading promises, and they experience the personal fulfillment from reading and enjoy quality literature" (p. 665). Students showed interest in the teacher's reading program by asking what they were reading and if they too could read the same books. Students became motivated to set up their own book clubs. What marvelous role models the teachers were for their students.

The "Teachers as Readers" (TAR) program in the United States supports teaching professionals who wish to start a book club. As there is not an equivalent national program in Canada at present, guidelines for setting up a club are available from the National Council of Teachers of English website. Author Margriet Ruurs (2006), writing about her TAR group, remarked that the social aspect "is what makes a TAR group attractive and fun" (p. 22). Also of value to the participants was the variety of books read by the group and the lesson support practicing teachers received through book recommendations. On the TAR initiative, Dillingofski (1993) noted "the project has the potential to encourage educators to use children's books even more extensively in the classroom, as well as to model the kind of in-depth book discussions that build a love of literature" (p. 33).

Using technology to promote reading

Through collaboration with teacher-librarian colleagues I know that similar reading communities exist in other schools. When we work together there is always conversation about books. Teacher-librarians at the secondary level collaborate on reading lists for their schools but perhaps, as a district group, we could broaden our scope to feature books which our colleagues might enjoy. Using existing websites such as Librarything or Goodreads, it is easy to add titles, synopses, and reviews. A link could be added to a school's home page or an email sent out to all staff of updates to reading lists. From whatever means the notification is delivered, the important thing is that teachers are offered recommendations and inspiration for their own reading.

Connecting with staff

Staff meetings are opportunities to share new acquisitions and encourage teachers to participate in an activity such as a five minute book talk to promote something of their own (Dreher, 2002). Building enthusiasm and interest in small ways may preempt a negative response from reluctant readers. Teachers are busy but those who love to read make time to read. Dreher (2002) recommends involving staff in library book promotion. If a teacher has read something they'd like to recommend to students, they can

fill out a small review and attach it to the book. I did something similar in our K-6 library but instead of written reviews, I photographed teachers holding their favourite children's book and asked them to write a few sentences explaining why they chose it. I then posted the pictures in a gallery format in the hallway for students to read when they passed by. It was very successful and a lot of fun for students who may not have previously perceived their teacher as a reader.

Dreher (2002) suggests making books easily accessible to teachers through the use of a dedicated shelf in the library or staff room. The avid readers on our staff already exchange books with each other but extending this to other interested staff members could help grow the school's reading community. As Dreher reminds us "we all want to develop students who are engaged readers - students who not only can read but also want to read" (p. 340). She argues that we can achieve this if teachers are engaged readers who are "motivated to read, are both strategic and knowledgeable readers, and are socially interactive about what they read" (p. 338).

What does this mean for school leaders...?

Teachers who are readers share their passion and enthusiasm for reading with their students, encouraging them to read widely and often while teaching the social skills that enable them to talk about their books with others. Research shows that teachers who read are more likely to use literacy best practices such as reading aloud and sustained silent reading which have a positive impact on overall academic achievement. School leaders focused on improving student learning will see the benefits when a teacher-librarian supports reading engagement of both teachers and students.

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Parents as Partners in the Development of Information Literacy

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Why should school leaders care... ?

"Since the explosion of the information age, libraries now compete with a myriad of search engines, electronic book collections, and open-access repositories for users, and must struggle against a tidal wave of commercial marketing to make users aware of the full extent of services freely available to them" (Nunn & Ruane, 2011). Despite continuous efforts to facilitate the development of information literacy skills, students continue to use Google for their information needs instead of online databases, electronic encyclopedias, and other search directories (Julien & Barker, 2009; Loertscher, 2007; Quintana, Pujol, & Romani, 2012). I have observed this in every school setting I have been in, which leads me to wonder: If reference databases are provided free of cost to students, and instruction in their use is also provided, there must be significant factors that discourage the use of reference databases, or rather encourage the use of search engines at home. School leaders, which include teacher-librarians, administrators, and classroom teachers, have recognized the need for information literacy skills instruction and this has become an important part of instruction over the years. Despite advocacy for and implementation of information literacy skills instruction in school settings, students tend to have a, "good enough" attitude rather than a "find the right answer" attitude (Martzoukou, 2008) and they continue to use search engines on the Web (Avdic & Eklund, 2010), where the task of evaluating the validity and accuracy of content becomes much more difficult. "Despite clear evidence that sophisticated information literacy skills are beneficial to academic success, students are generally unsophisticated information seekers" (Julien & Barker, 2009, p. 12). As the Internet becomes inundated with all kinds of information, our young people seem to resist the idea of quality over quantity with regards to search results. So, what is the missing motivator?

During my first year as an elementary school teacher-librarian in an international school in South Korea, my goal was to make all teachers and students aware of how to access our online resources and our non-fiction print resources. My goal was to help my colleagues see the ways in which our library program

could evolve and play an essential role in helping teachers and their students improve their information literacy skills. I attempted to market these services in a subtle way and follow-through with our library program mission by showing through actions what I was saying with words. As a result, the library program and its potential integration in all curricular areas became more evident, which initiated a collaborative relationship between the library and teachers. These positive results supported my view that advocacy is essential to the development of information-literate students and teachers. Despite these advances in our international school, grades three to five students seemed to be selective in their use of information literacy skills at home.

Our upper elementary students were performing well at school, using information problem solving models, like the Big6 and Super 3 (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 2012), and effectively retrieving information from print and digital material. Nonetheless, they did not transfer these skills when they conducted research at home. They would inevitably resort to using Google, Yahoo, or Wikipedia, copying and pasting from websites, and choosing the first result they found in their search, rather than evaluating their sources. In several instances when I asked students why this was happening, they replied that as soon as they faced an obstacle in their research, their parents guided them to Google. Would this parental guidance have been different if parents were also instructed in the use of online resources available through the school?

The skills that parents and students learn in our international school library will accompany them to many parts of the world as their employers transfer them from one country to the next. It is for this reason I believe all of our patrons must be fully aware of how to access the resources available to them. In any community where parents are eager and able to support their children's education, more opportunities should be given for parent involvement in the development of students' information literacy skills. According to Quintana et al. (2012), parent involvement is a key contributor to kids' success with developing information literacy skills. In fact, "parents' engagement in their children's learning at home has been shown in many studies to be a significant factor in children's achievement in school" (Grant, 2011, p. 293).

Upon reflection of my time working as a teacher-librarian in an international school, I realize I had not included parents in the strategic planning for our library program. Doiron (2007) described the "frontline," a place "where the goals of school library policies and programs are realized" (p. 345) and where many groups must work together to achieve student learning expectations. When teacher-librarians communicate with principals, teachers, students, and parents via newsletter (online and/or in print), emails, websites, and promotional activities, they offer to stakeholders the opportunity to become a part of the frontline. I began to consider the key role that parents could play in an all-encompassing library program: the role they could play in that frontline.

"Family literacy is an educational method based on a common belief that improvement in library skills and overall academic performance will result from continuing education of children and their parents through planned child-parent interactions" (Chance, 2010, p. 8). As I step into the teacher-librarian position in a new school, my goal will once again be to maximize the use of the resources we currently have, but this time my strategy will be to engage the parent community in promoting and guiding their children's 21st century skills. [Note: throughout the remainder of this chapter I will refer to teacher-librarians as TLs].

In this chapter, I will explore the ways that parents can play a key role in students' successful acquisition of information literacy skills. My inquiry is based on the possibility that the missing motivator for students' application of their information literacy skills at home is the parent community's understanding of how to access quality information online. By exploring the possibility of a cooperative relationship between parents and educators, we will be able to develop information literate students who apply their

information seeking skills at school, at home, and anywhere in the world. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will refer to the teacher-librarian as TL.

What do school leaders need to know...?

Students need a variety of tools in order to meet their information needs for academic purposes. Whether communication tools, assistive technologies, management tools, or presentation and graphics packages, students expect that all of these work quickly and flawlessly (Loertscher, 2003). It is this kind of "I need the information now" attitude that contributes to the decision-making of many young people regarding online resources. Consequently, young researchers turn to search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Wikipedia when looking to complete a research assignment (Julien & Barker, 2009; Quintana, et al., 2012).

Reference databases, while superior in terms of quality of information, have often been unavailable when students need them, which is usually when they are working on assignments at home (Loertscher, 2003). Obstacles to accessing databases can include missing login information, Intranet limitations, account limitations, difficulty locating links to the databases, and sometimes issues with hardware (Luyt, Zainal, Mayo & Yun, 2008). Despite the fact that reference databases and online encyclopedias have been explicitly taught as superior sources and instruction on their use has been provided in schools, many students still justify the use of Wikipedia, as they feel that it offers the breadth and depth that they need to quickly fulfill their information needs (Luyt, et al., 2008). If parents are trained on how to access databases, might this remove several of the barriers that lead to the students' avoidance of database use?

As a result of the information explosion on the web, students have not necessarily needed to get better at evaluating authority, instead they now need to learn how to choose the most authoritative source out of many (Francke, Sundin, & Limberg, 2011). We see an example of this in Francke et al. where students evaluated the credibility of Wikipedia articles based on their reference list and balance of viewpoints. Students also used the links in the Wikipedia reference lists to further their research (Davies, 2011). While students have not been choosing to use the strategies and resources we teach them in schools, they are developing their own search strategies (Davies, 2011). In what way can educational leaders take the strategies that seem natural for young people and fine-tune these so that they are helping students find quality, reliable, and relevant information in an efficient way?

I found little research on the use of reference databases and search engines by upper elementary students for academic purposes. This gap in current research might indicate that there have not been many connections made between the developmental progression involved in learning information literacy skills and the deficiency in sophisticated information literacy skills that our youth currently maintain. In a related study of 190 elementary and secondary students in Spain, Quintana et al. (2012) found that upper elementary students who had plenty of exposure to computer use more quickly and easily learned to use reference databases for information retrieval than did those who had less exposure to computer use. However, in contrast with the findings of Francke et al., all of the student participants still lacked skills in evaluating and analyzing the information they found. One might conclude that using students' self-developed search strategies and maximizing exposure to technology and online resources are key to developing more sophisticated information literacy skills beginning at a younger age.

Information Literacy Instruction

Asselin (2005) looked at the extent to which information literacy skills were being taught to sixth and seventh graders in British Columbia. "Information literacy is becoming viewed less as a separate responsibility of the school library program and more as an integral part of students' comprehensive literacy development as the number of learning outcomes pertaining to the new literacies of the Information Age increase in core curriculum" (Asselin, p. 3). Three information literacy skills that many students continue to struggle with are focusing the research question (Roy, Kumar, & Satija, 2012), formulating key words that will turn up relevant results (Avdic & Eklund, 2010; Boyd, Hampton, et al., 2006; Large, Beheshti & Moukdad, 1999), and evaluating information (Griffiths & Brophy, 2005; Quintana et al., 2012). Interestingly, in the Fast and Campbell (2004) study, university students, who we would consider mature learners, mastered the skills of formulating key search terms and effectively searching reference databases, but still preferred to use Google.

An explanation for this finding is provided by Julien and Barker (2009) who argued that if we leave the teaching of information literacy skills to post secondary educators and academic librarians it will be too late because students will have missed the opportunity to be successful with information literacy in their personal and academic lives. My research confirms that information literacy skills instruction must begin in elementary school, when students are most receptive to integrating new schema into their information searching culture and adults (at home and at school) have a greater influence over information search decisions.

Even though it is mandated in most North American educational systems that information literacy instruction is to take place in school, restricted access, limited funding, an overloaded curriculum, and inadequate professional development present barriers to the effective implementation of information literacy skills instruction in schools (Asselin, 2005). If teachers are not supported, parents are not informed, and students are not receiving a consistent message at home and at school, how can we expect to develop successful 21st century learners?

TRANSFERRING INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

Even when students demonstrate in a school setting that they know how to evaluate sources according to applicability, reliability, and currency, they have not been transferring these skills to their home environment or even to subsequent assignments (Francke et al., 2011; Quintana et al., 2012). Ultimately, students have been intrinsically motivated to look for the path of least resistance; to put forward minimal effort in order to get what they want or need (Griffiths & Brophy, 2005). It is also quite possible that students avoid reference databases because they fear investing a lot of required time and effort (Julien & Barker, 2009). While many changes have been attempted to improve reference databases so that they are easier to use and more appealing to students (Valenza, 2010), there still remains a major problem that discourages student use of databases and encourages the use of search engines.

One of the key obstacles deterring the use of reference databases is that they do not allow the same adaptability in definition and search terms that search engines like Google and Wikipedia do (Avdic & Eklund , 2010; Griffiths et al., 2005; Roy et al., 2012; Silverstein, 2007). As a result of the information seeker's inability to formulate effective key search terms, the extra time required to find results using a reference database, as opposed to the quick and plentiful results using a search engine, can prove quite frustrating (Avdic and Eklund, 2010). Search engines appeal to students because users are able to use natural language in their queries (Roy et al., 2012) and these are easily accessible (Brophy & Bawden, 2005). Google, Yahoo, and Wikipedia make it easy to skip the important task of identifying the information problem and developing key search terms by returning a massive number of results from which the information seeker can select. This step-skipping, timesaving feature is what appeals to many students who prefer to avoid the added, "cognitive burden" of actually applying sophisticated search skills (Griffiths & Brophy, 2005). This can also be considered a fault in the design of search engines because it is assumed that the Internet user has the skills to clearly articulate their information needs

(Martzoukou, 2008). Without taking the time to articulate information need, students become lost in their research and lose focus as they acquire new knowledge.

Several studies found that students are confident about their search abilities, despite numerous failed, abandoned, redundant, or "good enough" searches. Often, students felt they were successful in using information literacy skills if they found information quickly (Urquhart & Rowley, 2007). This perceived success is contradictory to the trend that teachers are seeing in their students' research assignments because despite the amount of quality information available to them and the speed and ease with which they can retrieve that information, assignments are still of substandard quality (Avdic & Eklund, 2010).

The Role of Parents

In addition to accessing prior knowledge, meta-cognition is important in students' acquisition of new skills. "Studies in young adult information seeking note that students are most successful with the needed intervention of adults, when they can discuss their progress and problems with others who can support gaps in their searching and content knowledge." (Valenza, 2006, p. 21). Educators and parents can serve the role of intervener.

In its Harnessing Technology strategy, the United Kingdom (UK) government identified the vital role of parents in helping students with their academics, and aimed to show parents the value of supporting their children's Internet use for learning purposes (Davies, 2011). The aim of the participating UK schools was to help children become independent Internet users, which challenged the parents' perceived obligation to protect their children from the dangers that exist online. Davies (2011) conducted research on the impact that parents' attitudes toward Internet use had on their children's Internet strategies. He found that of the 262 students interviewed over a three-year period, younger students were quite eager to comply with parental expectations, but as children got older they started to develop their own Internet strategies. Nonetheless, parents still had some influence, as middle school students were began to internalize some of their parents' concerns about Internet use for learning, and integrated these values with their self-developed search strategies.

Evidence that many parents are keen to become involved in the information literacy education of children is apparent in several studies (Cook-Cottone, 2004; Davies, 2011; Grant, 2011). Among the parents interviewed in Davies' (2011) research, their reasons for supporting their children's Internet use were, "in the interest of their children's learning at school, and in order to ensure that they were prepared for future demands of the workplace and, given the perceived importance of such potential benefits, these parents were prepared to accept and help their children to navigate safely the negative aspects of technology use" (p. 333). In a case study about the role of family in literacy development (Cook-Cottone, 2004), 48 families, with ethnic groups equally represented, were surveyed. Results indicated that 75% of the parents surveyed wanted to learn specific strategies to help their child develop literacy skills. Contrary to the Cook-Cottone findings, results from the Grant (2011) study on parent attitudes toward a collaborative relationship with educators and investigating whether or not technology could serve as a bridge between home and school, showed that a definite boundary between home learning and school learning was maintained. Clearly, we must continue to develop an effective and efficient method of bridging home and school learning (Grant, 2011).

Literacy in the 21st century means being able to access information in a variety of contexts. Past research provides little information about the role of parents as key partners with educators in the development of information literacy skills in schools. I agree with Grant (2011) that, "the communication and connection between children's home environments and their schools is a critical subject to consider if we wish to support children's learning in the widest sense" (p. 292). The challenge becomes this: When and how do

educational leaders engage parents in the development of their children's information literacy skills development?

What can school leaders do about… ?

We find ourselves in a world where an overwhelming amount of information is available 24/7. As a result, information seekers want instant gratification when it comes to resolving their inquiries. Our children find themselves in an interesting predicament: They have the instructional opportunities and tools to access credible information, but they fail to be convinced that the effort required to find credible information is necessary and important. The involvement of parents in the education of 21st century learners is critical now more than ever before if we are to motivate students to practice sophisticated information literacy skills in all contexts. We, educators and parents, must work together to send a clear message to today's youth that quality is more important than quantity and speed with regards to information retrieval. All adults in the school community have a role to play in instilling this value and that work must begin now.

Teacher-librarian roles and responsibilities

The TLs role in a school-wide literacy initiative involving parents in information literacy development is threefold. The TL must act as an instructional leader in the instruction and mentorship of skills acquisition, as a public relations representative, and as an advocate for students, teachers, and parents. These roles can seem like an overwhelming addition to the daily TL responsibilities, especially if working within a fixed class schedule. To make the TLs role more manageable, supporting, collaborating, and facilitating leadership opportunities for others is key.

To begin, the TL has an important role as an instructional leader, facilitating professional development opportunities and providing information to administrators, teachers, and parents. Whether through workshops, at faculty meetings, at parent association meetings, or through teacher websites, the TL and the school library's services need to be visible and accessible if support is to be expected. However, it is not enough to simply impart information, as few people understand the depth and breadth of what a TL is trained to do (Beyers, 2005). Stakeholders must be shown what effective instruction in information literacy looks and sounds like. One way to advocate services is to be visible and be heard by routinely attending meetings. By sharing at a staff meeting a successful collaboration with Grade 1 teachers, I was able to solicit more collaborative opportunities with different grade levels. A simple five-minute presentation (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAXKI2lwyRU) piqued teacher interest in the Super 3 (http://big6.com/) and willingness to adopt this research model as well as the instructional methods that would be used consistently in all of their students' major projects. This same presentation was posted on the library website for parents to view. The information and practical application contained in the presentation marked the beginning of a development of consistent vocabulary relevant to information literacy skills and a consistent set of procedures, which helped students, teachers, and parents better understand what effective information retrieval looks like, as well as the TLs role in that process. My observations have been consistent with Whelan's (2003) and Mackey & White's (2004) findings that repeated exposure to consistent terminology is necessary for teachers and parents to understand what information literacy means. The use of a common language at school and at home will help to ensure that students internalize these ideas.

A second important role is for the TL to act as a public relations officer to ensure school-wide support for the library and library services. The public relations skills required to successfully promote the role of the

library include having a vision, friendliness, approachability, and initiative. One of the ways that a TL can share these skills and promote library services is through storytelling as is suggested by Nunn and Ruane (2011), where users share their experiences with the librarian and libraries. Storytelling can include multimedia presentations posted on the library website where students, parents, and teachers share their successful collaborations in interviews. Teachers and TLs can make short presentations at staff meetings sharing their successes working together (Mackey & White, 2004). On their e-portfolios, students can include a short story about why or how they use the library. Marketing the ideas that a TL facilitates technology integration, promotes critical thinking skills, enables the development of reading skills, and encourages creativity, as well as the belief that teachers can also teach information literacy skills (Loertscher, 2008) can be achieved through storytelling. In addition, I would promote a fourth idea that parents can also reinforce information literacy skills.

A critical part of acting as a public relations officer and soliciting parent support is to figure out the most effective way of communicating with parents. For example, if the majority of my students' parents use a Facebook account, I would create a Facebook page, like the one at Marina High School Library in California, where parents can access up-to-date information regarding information literacy skills, homework helpers, and the school's subscription resources. I might also find it helpful to have a rotating schedule of trained parents who would be willing to be "on call" on that Facebook page to help students and parents with their questions during and after school hours. Sending text messages or Google alerts about new website posts or workshops being offered might initiate more interest and awareness about opportunities for training and leadership among the parent community (Circle, 2009). These methods of relevant communication ensure repeated exposure to the terminology and philosophy behind information literacy skills instruction, which facilitates a common understanding of what it means to be information literate.

In order to fulfill the TLs third role, and to properly advocate for parents, students, and teachers, it is important to solicit feedback about the library program and user needs. To help users feel comfortable enough to offer honest feedback, an open and respectful line of communication must be established. For example, I found that teachers are more receptive and responsive to online surveys as these offer anonymity and flexibility for response time. Survey Monkey offers free online surveys which can be embedded onto a wiki or blog. The traditional "comments and suggestions box" can also be anonymous and I have found this type of surveying to be popular with my students who are already physically in the library. Gathering information about parents' perceptions of the library and the TLs role in information literacy education is critical in order to facilitate a successful collaborative relationship. The next step would be helping parents to see that they can benefit from the library's services.

ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A school-wide information literacy initiative to involve parents requires the support and shared vision of administration and teachers. With a common understanding of the definition of and philosophy behind information literacy skills development, as well as a shared belief that parents can play an important role in this learning, school faculty can present a strong, united information literacy program.

Administration can provide support by assigning designated information literacy time on staff meeting agendas, by designating professional development days to learning about information literacy skills integration, and by approving flexible scheduling to allow TL attendance at collaborative grade level meetings. A starting point is to work with teachers to identify the information literacy needs of the school community. In this way, administrators can ensure that a foundation is laid before seeking the support of the parent community. By facilitating a collaborative effort among educators to identify information literacy needs and ways that parents can be involved in this process, administrators can ensure that a foundation is laid before seeking the support of the parent community. These suggestions are non-verbal ways of showing reinforcement, but we need administrators to voice their support as well. When

presenting a united vision of the critical need for information literacy instruction to the school board and community, an administrator's words carry a lot of weight and can influence a larger number of parents to commit to their role in their child's learning.

With teacher commitment, students can be encouraged to use reliable information sources for their homework and assignments. Teachers can include information literacy criteria in rubrics, collaborate with the TL, provide links and information in communications between home and school, and link to valuable online resources through teacher blogs and websites. By emphasizing in the classroom the importance of applying sophisticated information literacy skills, students will understand that they will be held accountable for finding quality information for their assignments. In my experience, working with the classroom teachers to design the project rubrics and taking part in assessing the students' work has been the most effective way to ensure that students receive the message that we value their application of information literacy skills.

Essentially, teachers and administrators need to be prepared to explain what information literacy is, why information literacy is important and how the school is going to support information literacy instruction. All members of the school community need to have a common definition. There needs to be collaboration among administrators, teachers, and the TL if parents are expected to become more involved in their child's information literacy development. When collaboratively planning with my colleagues, my experiences have been consistent with those described by Mackey & White (2004), as I have found that having a consistent framework for our planning meant that our team meetings were efficient and effective. We were able to clearly communicate each person's role in the unit of study, which ensured that each teacher contributed their expertise. We all learned from each other. Through collaboration, information literacy instruction can be implemented throughout the school... and at home.

PARENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Based on Fast and Campbell's (2004) findings that university students are still choosing Google even though they were taught to use quality reference sources, I asked if it was even worthwhile to teach students search skills specific to reference databases if they will never use the reference databases anyway. Would addressing these skills at a younger age lead to a greater potential for the internalization of quality over quantity and speed? What is the missing motivator for these students who refuse what is clearly more credible information? My research has shown that teachers, TLs, and administration are beginning to join forces in order to develop capable 21st century learners. However, parents are not being recruited as crucial partners in this mission. Addressing information literacy skills at a young age (as young as kindergarten) and involving parents are key factors to support a new direction for information literacy education.

Vygotsky's Social Development Theory about social contributions to learning and development provides excellent reasons for parents to be recruited in the information literacy skills development of their children (Cook-Cottone, 2004). Vygotsky states that parents help to shape the way a child understands the world by providing continuous feedback and introducing new knowledge. This understanding of the world is often based on cultural and personal experience. By mentoring parents in the use of reference databases, such as Culturegrams and Ebsco's Searchasaurus and by presenting them with strategies to guide their children's information literacy skills development, they can present this information in a way that is, "tailored to fit the child's formative familial and cultural experiences" (Cook-Cottone, 2004, p. 209).

Activating prior knowledge is best practice and it is something that teachers aim to accomplish, but proves quite difficult with so many diverse learners in the classroom. Parents are able to provide meaningful context for new skills, helping their child to reshape their understanding of valuable research skills. In 2002, on behalf of the American Library Association, KRC Research, surveyed several focus

groups to learn about people's perceptions of TLs and libraries (Beyers, 2005). From those findings, I learned that parents have little experience as participants in the development of information literacy skills (Beyers, 2005). This seems counterproductive to me, as my research clearly shows that parent involvement in literacy education plays a key role in the successful acquisition of literacy skills. While some might argue that there is a lack of interest among their parent community with regards to getting involved in information literacy education, I would argue those parents may not have the tools or information to understand just how valuable a role they can play. Cook-Cottone (2004) demonstrated that parents are interested in their children's literacy, but they need to know strategies for helping their children. Equipping parents with skills to guide their child in information literacy allows parents to determine when their child is ready to face the risky world that is the web (Loertscher, 2003).

Making parents aware of the Information Search Process (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2007; 2008) and the resources that are available in the library and online can empower parents to provide sophisticated mentoring to their children. Parents can then direct their children to the right places to find quality information. Before parents can act as guides, however, they need to understand how to navigate quality online resources like databases with ease and efficiency. Julien and Barker (2009) say that students fear the amount of time required to develop key terms, access online references, and then search the databases. A child may feel that there is no point in performing sophisticated searches if the adults around them have not taken the time to learn to do so. I suggest that the amount of time and effort required for students to independently transfer information literacy skills to the home environment can be alleviated if parents receive training on how to guide their children, especially at younger levels, to identify their information need and locate quality resources. With practice at home and school, with the same message reinforced in both environments - quality over quantity - students can begin to feel as though identifying their information need, developing key search terms, and looking at quality information sources is the norm, rather than the exception. Providing parents with questions that can guide their children to reflect on their information literacy practices would also be highly beneficial as a form of scaffolding towards independent research.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are drawn to search engines like Google and Yahoo because these suit their needs in a timely manner, not because they feel that the information is superior (Julien & Barker, 2009; Luyt, Mayo, & Yun, 2008; Quintana, Pujol, & Romani, 2012). Addressing information literacy at a younger age, in multiple environments, supported by multiple influential adults allows students to begin to take ownership of their learning. Students can be held responsible for their choices when they do research if they have been equipped with information literacy skills at school, if they have been mentored at home, and if they are provided with access and instruction on the use of quality information sources. Making appropriate and credible resources easily accessible on the library website, like that at Mont' Kiara International School ensures that students are set up for success. Once students have been exposed to technology, have learned to identify their information need, have learned how to access and search online reference sources, and have learned to trouble shoot through obstacles, they can be held responsible for their own information seeking. Students can then learn to use the tools they have been given, to adapt those tools to suit their information needs, to contribute to the world around them, and to make informed decisions.

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION

Given this supportive learning environment at home and at school, it is reasonable to expect that for personal inquiries students use the quality information sources that were explicitly taught at school. The lack of intrinsic motivation to use online reference sources for academic and informal purposes is an important issue to consider. Silverstein (2007) conducted a study in 2005 to find out if online reference

services supported the informal learning of students. She found that elementary school aged students sometimes used online databases for their personal, informal learning. These students had difficulty submitting some of their queries because online databases are designed to help with formal, school related queries and they do not offer the same search suggestions as search engines (Silverstein, 2007).

Grant (2011) and Loertscher (2003; 2007) discuss the possibility of having students create a new information space which combines the information sources they are intrinsically motivated to use with the quality resources required for the completion of structured, academic inquiries. An example of this type of new learning space might include a blog where a student creates one academic page (containing links to databases, presentation tools, favorite credible websites, links recommended by teachers, school assignments), a fun school stuff page (containing links to Math games, typing games, neat videos related to curriculum) and a third page with information, links, and work related to the student's personal interests (art work, music videos, paintings, sports videos, etc). The creation of this type of learning space helps students to develop skills in evaluation and analysis in both formal and informal learning by having them select the best quality resources to make accessible in their learning space (Loertscher, 2003). The personal learning space can be redefined and expanded as the student matures and identifies different needs. Reflection and meta-cognition are also employed when their learning space evolves simultaneously with their information needs and interests. Miller (2009) lists additional benefits for students creating the learning space described above: self-directed learning, independence, and a connection with others. TLs, teachers, parents, and students all have a role in designing this type of information space. Combining intrinsic motivation with a structured learning environment is the key to internalizing the idea that certain resources are worth the effort and time it takes to navigate them.

Loertscher (2003; 2007) suggested that TLs help students build the information space, so that they can access quality information sources with guidance when they need it. This space can blend their three worlds: personal, school and Internet. This means that the parents would determine the level of access to the Internet. Parents would have a key role in determining their child's level of readiness for the third space (the Internet), and teachers would play a role in determining the sources needed for the school space. A TL would work closely with the teachers to select quality resources that meet curricular needs. A TL would work closely with parents to guide them not only in the use of these technologies, but also in strategies for evaluating sources and mentoring their children through research obstacles. Administrative support would be key in allowing the flexibility and time for collaboration, as well as approving a subscription for a safe and appropriate hosting site for each child.

What does this mean for school leaders...?

It seems as though we are seeing a shift in students' information literacy skills where students recognize that not all information is created equal, but in general they are not motivated to apply sophisticated search strategies that require more effort than the quick and easy Google search. In my experience, I have found that many parents also tend to lean toward the quickest and easiest answer when helping their children with homework. I don't believe they do this out of disregard for quality information, but rather as a result of lack of knowledge about sophisticated search strategies and evaluating resources. Part of this lack of understanding is the result of a weak link in communication and collaboration between home and school. This techno-cultural disposition of the 21st century learner has prompted me to seek a possible catalyst that might motivate students to become more information savvy.

I believe it is time that educational leaders (administrators, TLs and classroom teachers) consider the ways that parents can support their children in their development as information literate learners. It is time not only to consider the key role that parents can play, but also to advocate parent involvement and

to take action. My vision as a TL in an international school includes a collaborative relationship between school and home, where we develop 21st century learners of all ages.

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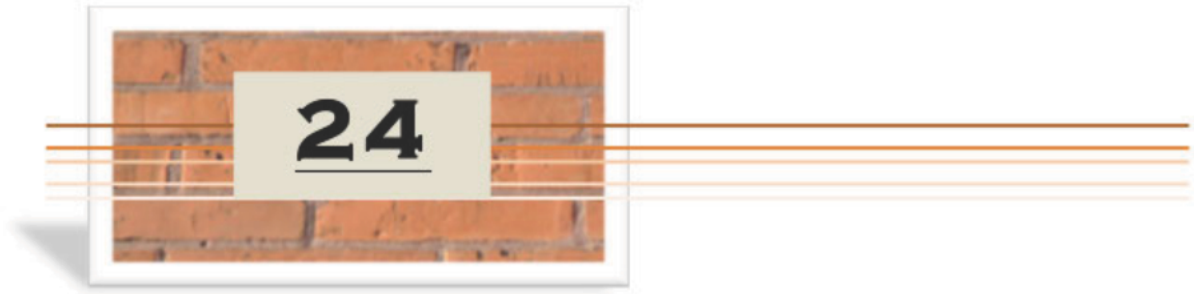

Teacher-Librarians as Information Literacy Leaders

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Why should school leaders care... ?

Information is not knowledge. Albert Einstein knew it.

In the 21st century this concept has not changed, but the sheer magnitude of information available to us certainly has. How are people supposed to cope with and make sense of copious amounts of information? More importantly, how do parents and educators help our children cope? How do we teach our youth to "manage, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize large amounts of information?" (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 22). Not only do they need to be information experts, they need to familiarize themselves with the variety of formats through which this information can be presented to them.

Teacher- librarians are uniquely positioned to teach our students how to find information, build knowledge and make meaningful connections. "We [TLs] need to build on earlier foundational knowledge and practices through research that continually identifies changes within evolving information media and learning contexts" (Bahnisch, 2011, p. 20). According to Bahnisch schools are not doing a good enough job "reshaping information services" and therefore "students are not emerging with the requisite skills that would enable them to transact in the modern information environment" (p. 20). Teacher-librarians will need to take on this leadership role to "reshape" the information landscape within our schools.

"The sad truth is that few, if any, information literacy efforts in schools have fulfilled the promise of a *comprehensive* information literacy program" (Eisenberg & Murray, 2011 p. 10). I first realized that a dramatic shift was taking place in education regarding information literacy and access to technology after a presentation to teacher librarians in my district by University of Alberta's Dr. Jennifer Branch and Dr. Joanne de Groot. In a temporary teacher-librarian position at the time, their presentation about the

changes in school library programs, the role of the teacher-librarian and growth in technology and amount of information available to our students impacting their education, began the journey that has landed me where I am today.

At school I realized I needed to take on this information literacy mission professionally and personally when my daughter came home from school and asked if we had any encyclopedias or books on environmental issues for a research project she had started in class. The class was not looking for information using any other resources or media available to them at school and the use of the Internet was discouraged as it was deemed "unsafe and unreliable." This happened three short years ago, at the beginning of my teacher-librarian career, and has driven my mission to become the information literacy leader at my school. My position as a teacher-librarian has promoted my role within the school as a leader of literacy and technology, and continuously fuels the need, and personal desire, for continued professional development in the area of information literacy. Developing an information literate student is developing a person who is a "lifelong learner, skilled at using complex cognitive processes and diverse technological tools in order to solve problems in personal, social, economic, and political contexts," (Asselin, Branch & Oberg, 2003, p. ix).

"Whether presented through print, audio, visual, multisensory, or digital media, it is the information itself--not the 'carriers' that deliver it--that learners must use to make meaning" (Neuman, 2012b, p. 18). Why is it important for school leaders, including administrators, teachers, counselors, Parent Advisory Council members, and teacher-librarians to concern themselves with these types of information? Why should they be concerned with information literacy and how it is impacting our students? Most importantly because information literacy *will* impact their futures in some way; there is no denying that. How we prepare and educate them for their futures requires us to take a hard look at with what and how we are preparing them and "information literacy should be of increasing importance in the curriculum in a rapidly changing digital future" (Weaver, 2011, p. 22).

Students will need to engage with a variety of information types and formats in their schoolwork, in adulthood, and in the workplace. Building the skills necessary to evaluate information and create new knowledge should be an essential role of K-12 education. Technology will continue to be an important factor in the information learning process and these skills "word processing, multimedia production, web use and creation - should not be considered or taught as a separate set of learning objectives. Rather, they should be presented and learned as part of the overall information process" (Eisenberg, 2003, p. 21). It should be made clear by information literacy experts though, that it is the information and learning itself, not the technological tools, that must be the goal for student development.

This chapter on information literacy will explore the following questions that guided my research about my role as a teacher-librarian: In this information age, how do educational leaders prepare students to be critical, efficient, ethical, and responsible consumers and producers of information for learning? What information skills and strategies are critical for encouraging student success throughout their school years and beyond as lifelong learners contributing to society? What about success in the workplace? Eisenberg (2003) states that "Information and technology literacy is clearly the new basic skill of the 21st century" (p. 20). He notes that employers in the US are hiring people at entry-level positions that have "the ability to: (1) acquire and use information, and (2) work with a variety of technologies." (p. 20) As an information literacy leader, how do I support and assess the teaching of these skills at my school?

What do school leaders need to know...?

What do school leaders, administrators and educators, need to know about information literacy? To begin with, they need to have an understanding of the historical dynamics of the definition and how it is defined today. I discovered through my reading and research that defining

information literacy has been surprisingly challenging. Herring (2011) notes "the professional literature lacks one accepted definition of information literacy in schools, which reveals evidence of some contradictory understandings of what constitutes information literacy or what attributes the information-literate student might have" (p. 3). Many of the experts in the field present opposing views on its definition and the vocabulary used to describe it. Herring reviewed many of the existing variations of information literacy definitions by researchers in the field. Kuhlthau's Information Search Process (1989) contributed to the definition of information literacy by including the affective domain - "thoughts, feelings, actions, strategies and mood" (p. 19). She writes, "the challenge for education in the twenty-first century is to prepare students to use information," and that the library "becomes the information center of the school, providing access to a wide range of resources and guidance in the process of learning from them" (p. 19).

Asselin, Branch and Oberg (2003) define information literacy as "the ability to find and use information with critical discrimination in order to build knowledge" (p. ix). Herring (2011) describes it as a "practice" that "is a critical and reflective ability to exploit the current information environment and to adapt to new information environments" (p. 4). Herring also mentions the importance of student reflection and self-awareness of individual learning styles while in the trenches of these information environments. Neuman (2011) describes information-literate people "to be efficient and effective learners in the information age," and "individuals [who] must be able to engage successfully with a wide variety of information types and formats" (p. 1).

Ironically my quest for a single, all-encompassing definition of information literacy has led me through the process or "practice" of information literacy itself. Searching, locating, retrieving, evaluating, reflecting, building new knowledge, and making connections are all practices I have undertaken in order to develop a working definition of information literacy for myself professionally. Defining information literacy for the purposes of this chapter, then, will be a collection of terms and statements provided by the key researchers in the field as well as derivatives from my personal understandings. Information literacy can be therefore defined as:

- A critical and reflective practice to find and use information.
- The ability to construct new knowledge and adapt to new information environments.
- The ability to engage with multiple kinds and formats of information.
- The ability to be efficient, effective, ethical, and responsible learners in the information age.
- Learning that leads to a collaborative exchange or shared learning environment impacting local and/or global issues, concerns or questions.

A key role of today's teacher-librarian is to teach students how to interact and learn from the abundant types and formats of information available to them. Herring (2011) reports that although there is much research being conducted regarding information literacy, "the question of whether school students transfer information literacy practices has not been considered in any depth within this literature" (p. 1). This notion of transfer of information literacy skills between subject areas and throughout their school years has to be a critical focus of the teacher-librarian in developing information-literate students. There continues to be an erroneous assumption by educators and parents that students are self-taught, successful users of information, that "children and youth acquire these key skills and competencies on their own by interacting with popular culture," (Jenkins, Purushotma, Robison & Weigel, 2006, p. 3). While our youth may be successful with accessing and interacting with a variety of types of information, Jenkins et al. remind us that we cannot assume "that youth can simply acquire these skills on their own without adult intervention or supervision" (p. 12). This is an assumption that educators, and all those involved in education, can no longer afford.

Beyond interaction with information, students need to be taught how to be critical, efficient, and effective consumers and users of information so that the learning is meaningful to them. Ultimately these

practices, infused within all subjects, should lead to a collaborative exchange or shared learning environment impacting community and/or global issues, concerns, or questions. Teacher-librarians are uniquely placed to develop an intuitive understanding of the interpretation of information literacy to "guide decisions, solve problems and steer through uncertain, complex futures" (McKenzie, 2000, p. v). Gordon (2009) also refers to the practices and instruction of information literacy in school libraries as a "complex phenomenon" (p. 20). It is evident from the research that implementing these practices will not be a simple undertaking by teacher-librarians and school educators; it will require "a sincere and robust commitment to professional development . . . and a commitment to IL by schools as they strive to improve reading, writing and thinking of their students" (McKenzie, 2000, p. v-vi).

"How can school librarians, working with administrators, change the classroom paradigm of instruction using 21st century learning methods" (Gordon, 2009, p. 32)? What does information literacy instruction look like in a 21st century school? Whose responsibility is it to commit to best practices of information literacy education? Ideally all school educators and administrators should make the commitment to educate themselves and foster the development of "information seeking and knowledge building behavior" of students (p. 30). Furthermore, Asselin's (2005) research regarding information literacy instruction and supportive factors at school found that "principals' support of information literacy may indicate that advocacy efforts directed at the critical role of administrators in school library programs may be having an effect" (p. 31). As well, Asselin noted that many teacher librarians held the belief that information literacy instruction was important to administrators, which "could signal a shift to a more mainstream location of information literacy in the mandated curriculum" (p. 31).

Realistically, in this information-age school environment, these practices of finding and using information need to begin with the information literacy specialist, the teacher-librarian. The teacher-librarian's dedication to building a school culture of "information-age learning" (Neuman, 2011, p. 10), as well as developing information-literate students, will require school-wide collaboration and focus from all school personnel including educators, education assistants, and administrators. McKenzie (2000) predicts that if educators take the initiative to improve their own information literacy skills then these "professional development programs might well make information literacy the centerpiece of all adult learning," (p. 41). What results from adult learning, guidance and modeling may be an increase in student motivation to possess similar information literacy skill sets. Herring (2011) concluded from his research that there "is a need for discussion between teachers, teacher librarians, and school management about the teaching of information literacy practices" (p. 16). This "discussion" must be the focal point, the first step towards developing a school culture of information literacy, in turn leading to the evolution of information-literate students.

Reinforcing the instructional role of the teacher-librarian as information literacy specialist is the next logical progression in the school's quest to cultivate information-literate students. Gordon's (2009) research into "evidence based information literacy instruction in school libraries" (p. 20) is a single example of many similar theories being investigated by experts in the field of information literacy and schools, in particular, school libraries and teacher-librarians. Gordon notes that teacher-librarians are the "logical" professionals to lead the development of a "theory that accommodates research embedded in digital environments, where information seeking and use and knowledge construction are all self-directed, points to a pedagogy for the future and is, in itself, a social reform," (p. 41). Loertscher & Lance (2003) suggest in their book that schools with quality information and technology resources and professionally trained school library staff are the schools that are taking the steps to build an information-literate school community. "The implications for self-improvement in teaching and learning that leads to educational reform on a social scale that is lead by the library profession reinforce the paradigm shift that redefines librarianship as it moves from an information age profession to one that enables a knowledge society." (Gordon, p. 42)

Moving forward in the 21st century information age, school leaders require understanding of the dynamic, evolving nature of the information literacy landscape. They need to be cognizant of the fact

that students are, and will continue to be, overwhelmed by an abundance of information and our role as educators is to teach them how to manage and build knowledge. Teacher-librarians must take on the instructional leadership role to build and nurture an information-literate culture within the school. Monumental changes are upon us in education and teacher-librarians need to be a part of that change. In the words of school library advocate and technology expert, Johnson (2009), "These horses are gone, boys and girls, and there's no putting them back in the barn. Get over it. Figure out ways to saddle the horse and ride it" (para. 3).

What can school leaders do about... ?

Why is it important to build an information literate school? I think we could all agree that the future will continue to become a much more complex world for our youth in terms of information processing and digital technologies. One only has to watch Karl Fisch's Did You Know 3.0 (2012) video to truly understand how rapidly our future is changing. Although people have been consumers of information for centuries, the amount of information and the way information is presented continues to grow and change. "Information is now a '24-7' phenomenon: It comes from everywhere, at every time, at every level of quality, and in every format imaginable. It bombards us" (Neuman, 2012a, p. 25). Teaching and learning in the 21st Century requires critical consideration by all those involved with educating our youth. Oberg (2012) advises that people need to reach "beyond the 'how' of learning to the 'why' of learning, to realize that learning is for life" (para 12). As well, "we know that information is acknowledged as a resource and people with high-level information skills are very marketable" (Koechlin & Zwaan, 2003, p. vii). The future of our students is why we should be concerned about implementing and building a school-wide information literacy instructional program. Unfortunately, "the sad truth is that few, if any, information literacy efforts in schools have fulfilled the promise of a ***comprehensive*** information literacy program" (Eisenberg & Murray, 2011, p. 10). So what can we do and who is responsible for building an information literate school?

"Research has revealed that the principal's support of the school's library program is critical to its success" (Shannon, 2009, p. 1). School principals and vice-principals need to be involved and invested in the information literacy program to begin making changes towards an information-literate school community. Integrating classroom and teacher-librarian instruction in terms of subject matter and teaching students how to learn can show us "that the entire culture of the school changes from the administration down to classroom teachers and teacher librarians and on to the students" (Loertscher, 2012, p. 57). The leadership of the school principal is key in advocating to staff the integrity and importance of the school library program to deliver information literacy instruction.

Kamloops/Thompson School District's *Framework for School Library Programs in the 21st Century* (2008) outlines how the school administration can show support for the teacher-librarian and library program. It suggests administrators provide collaboration time for teachers and teacher-librarian, in-service professional development opportunities, and equal access opportunities to the library program for all students. The principal can also support the teacher-librarian's endeavours to promote school-wide information literacy instruction, a school culture of inquiry, and shared evaluation practices of the library program. "Teachers, teacher-librarians, and principals – learning and working together – support and facilitate improvements in teaching and learning" (Oberg, 2012, para 20).

McGhee and Jansen's (2010) e-Book offers a multitude of suggestions and best practices for school administrators in their endeavours to support the school library program to "constantly learn about best instructional practices in information literacy and the information search process" (p. 5). They encourage principals to work with teacher-librarians and classroom teachers to provide time and resources for

collaboration and team-teaching of projects and lessons. The schools administrators are important advocates for the teacher-librarian and the library program and should "educate others about the importance of the library media center in the learning of life" (p. 5). McGhee & Jansen also note the value of feedback provided by administrators for teacher-librarians and the school library program and that "true instructional leaders strive to understand appropriate indicators of practice not only for classroom teachers but also for other campus professionals such as the librarian" (p. 5). Administration support is crucial for the success of the school library program and development of teacher-librarian leadership roles throughout the school.

How do teacher-librarians take a leadership role in advancing the paradigm shift of 21st century information instruction? Teacher-librarians should seek financial support from their principals, as they are the ones responsible for allocating funds from the school budget to the various school programs and "adequate funding allows resources to be current and relevant to the school's curriculum and to the school's specific instructional focus" (Oberg, 2012, para 7). Gaining financial support from the administration is just as important as gaining program support. "It is a simple but painful fact that those who are not seen as valuable will increasingly be seen as being expendable" (Crowley, 1995, p. 8).

With school administration on your side, the teacher-librarian's next step is to establish instructional, information literacy, and technology leadership roles throughout the school community. de Groot & Branch (2011) are correct when they declare, "the role of the 21st-century teacher-librarian is diverse" (p. 296). "In a perfect world, teacher librarians would be experts in leadership, curriculum, special education, assessment, literacy and new literacies, adult education, evidence-based practice, technology, collaboration, and even librarianship" (p. 296). The teacher-librarian must establish these leadership roles as a priority to advocate support for the school library program and its initiatives such as information processing strategies and inquiry learning. "The foundation of any strong, integrated school library program rests on the school librarian implementing, with colleagues, complex and demanding innovations like collaborative program planning and teaching and inquiry-based learning" (Haycock, 2010, p. 42).

The instructional role of the teacher-librarian and collaboration with classroom teachers are critical aspects of the 21st century information instruction dynamics. "Collaboration is crucial for sustaining educational change and improvement in schools, and the modern school library functions as both a catalyst and a support for change" (Oberg, 2012, para 5). Collaborative efforts between the teacher-librarian and classroom teacher in regards to information literacy and instruction will ensure improved student learning in the areas of "access and use of resources, reading engagement and information retrieval and processing" (Asselin, 2003, p. 54). The American Association of School Librarian's (2007) *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* also notes "school librarians collaborate with others to provide instruction, learning strategies, and practice in using the essential learning skills needed in the 21st century" (p. 3).

Taking the lead in the school as the information literacy expert is another important role of the teacher-librarian. Information literacy was defined earlier in the chapter as:

- A critical and reflective practice to find and use information.
- The ability to construct new knowledge and adapt to new information environments.
- The ability to engage with multiple kinds and formats of information.
- The ability to be efficient, effective, ethical, and responsible learners in the information age.
- Learning that leads to a collaborative exchange or shared learning environment impacting local and/or global issues, concerns or questions.

21st century teacher-librarians must take on the role as the information literacy expert in their schools to provide students and staff with the tools and strategies needed to cope in this information era. "No other educator in the school is better suited to teach students the skills to manage, evaluate, analyze, and

synthesize large amounts of information than the school librarian" (Bush & Jones, 2010, p. 22). There are many resources available to teacher-librarians to help students better understand the research process and the technologies and online environments that have impacted that process today. The Big6 (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1987) and the Information Search Process (Kuhlthau, 1989) are research methods that the teacher-librarian and students can use independently or in combination to question, find, evaluate and use information. Inquiry learning goes hand in hand with the skills and strategies of information literacy where "students are invited to grapple with complicated and messy issues and questions by recognizing the interrelatedness of the world and how it is becoming more so" (Bush & Jones, p. 23). Inquiry-minded tools available to teacher-librarians include Alberta Learning's (2004) Inquiry Model, Stripling and Hughes-Hassell's (2003) Model of Inquiry, and the British Columbia Teacher-Librarian Association's (2011) Points of Inquiry. While the attention should be concentrated on student learning, "technology and, in particular, Web 2.0 tools and services can be used throughout the inquiry process to support the appropriate thinking skills" (Berger, 2010, p. 17).

Ongoing professional development will allow the teacher-librarian to stay abreast of emerging technologies and digital media that will continue to impact information processing strategies and inquiry type learning for students. Berger (2010) identifies the phases of the inquiry process, teaching and learning strategies, and technology tools and resources in her Inquiry and Web 2.0 Tools Integration Guide (p. 16). Tools such as GoogleDocs, TeacherTube, VoiceThread, Wikispaces, and Skype are suggested for each phase of the process, effectively embedding technology within the inquiry process. Symbaloo, a tool that allows you to organize and share your web resources, and videoconferencing are additional resources that are helpful with information processing and phases of inquiry. The International Society for Technology in Education (2012) developed the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS), which "set a standard of excellence and best practices in learning, teaching, and leading with technology in education" (para 5). NETS provide a framework and starting point towards building an information-literate school community.

Certainly there are many considerations for the teacher-librarian who is developing an exemplary library program that includes information literacy instruction, an inquiry-based pedagogy, emerging digital technologies, and access to various types and formats of resources. Oberg (2012) concludes "excellent school libraries feature planned programs, collaboratively designed to provide stimulating intellectual inquiry and engaging cultural experiences for students and teachers" (para 5). The 21st century teacher-librarian undoubtedly has his or her work cut out for them aspiring to build an information-literate school community.

"Why do I need to learn that when I can just find the answer online?" How many educators and parents have been asked this question by students, why *should* we expect them to sit in a classroom and learn how to multiply and divide fractions when there is an app that can do it for them. Teachers' resolve and school commitment to information literacy is needed now more than ever to "strive to improve the reading, writing and thinking of their students" (McKenzie, 2000, p. v). The role of the classroom teacher is critical in assisting students to manage information and teach them that "it is more the ability to 'know how to learn' that is vital in our society than the random memorization of facts" (Sykes, 2006, p. 71). Sykes also suggests that information literacy "can mean the coming to terms with one's own thinking" (p. 71). Teaching these metacognitive skills and strategies to our youth remains a crucial role and responsibility of today's educators.

What can classroom teachers do then to be part of a school-wide information literacy paradigm shift? Teachers can commit to the professional development of their own information literacy education that in turn may "nurture the same skills in their students" (McKenzie, 2000, p. 41). They must engage themselves in the discovery of relevant and reliable information and be familiar with the variety of formats this information can be presented. They must be able to interpret the information and apply what they have learned in order to share their knowledge with others. Finally, the information-literate teacher

must be able to transfer these skills and strategies to all aspects of his or her professional and personal life. If these are the skills we expect from our students, then this is what 21st century educators must commit to as well.

Classroom teacher's willingness to collaborate with teacher-librarians is also an important aspect of creating a school-wide culture of information literacy instruction. As outlined in the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) (2008) NETS for teachers, educators in the 21st Century in an effort to advance student learning must "model collaborative knowledge construction by engaging in learning with students, colleagues, and others in face-to-face and virtual environments" (p. 1). Teacher-librarian and classroom teacher collaborative relationships are instrumental in the movement towards a school culture of information literacy.

"Learning in today's information-rich environments requires our learners to have far more complex and sophisticated skills than pointing and clicking or copying and gathering: It requires them to be information experts who can extract meaning from a variety of presentation formats and who can create those formats themselves" (Neuman, 2012a, p. 25). Building an information-literate school environment can be seen as a daunting task and as Eisenberg & Murray (2011) pointed out, is not happening in a great percentage of schools. What should a comprehensive information literacy program offer? Eisenberg & Murray offer the following guidelines:

- A comprehensive program should reach all students in the school.
- A comprehensive program should be predictable in terms of what students are expected to learn and how they are to learn it.
- A comprehensive program should be measurable in terms of setting accountable goals for the program and assessing performance by the students.
- A comprehensive program should report the results--to students, their teachers, parents and guardians, and to the overall school and district (p. 10).

So what are some practical examples of information literacy in action in schools today? Teacher-librarians collaborating with classroom teachers to implement inquiry-based, information processing activities and units with students throughout the school is one example. I recently completed an inquiry learning project with a group of grade seven students who were trying to find out more information regarding a proposed mine at the head of the Adams River, home to one of the largest salmon runs in British Columbia. Students used Neuman's (2012b) I-LEARN Model to Identify, Locate, Evaluate, Apply, Reflect, and kNow what information would help them find out more about their concern and possible ways to share their learning. The I-LEARN model is a contemporary tool that describes the "process of learning with information and provides school librarians and others with a teaching tool created specifically for information-age learning" (p. 18). An important assumption of the model, and I believe of all information literacy practices and inquiry-based learning, is that the "learning itself is the goal of information-seeking in schools and that information in its various representations is the basic building block for lifelong learning in the twenty-first century" (p. 18). Students retrieved information from a variety of sources including local newspapers, municipal officials, CBC radio and news archives, Canadian Student Research Centre database, Adams River cartography resources and historical documents, and Adams River Salmon Society personnel. Students used their findings to develop an interactive presentation that included a variety of Web 2.0 tools (VoiceThread, Glogster, and EduBlogs) and an information brochure, hoping to share their information at a public forum discussing the proposed mine. As stated in Alberta Learning's (2004) *Focus on Inquiry* document students who are involved in inquiry-based activities will "learn to cope with problems that may not have clear solutions" and "deal with changes and challenges to understandings" (p. 3).

Many qualified teacher-librarians could share similar examples of inquiry learning projects lending to an information-literate school environment. Saskatchewan teacher-librarian, Tamzen Kulyk, completed an

inquiry activity with grade three and four students, Under Our Feet, that showcased the information processing and critical thinking skills inquiry-based learning offered her students in their quest for information about Saskatchewan rocks, minerals, and soil. Teacher-librarians possess a sharing, collaborative disposition that best informs their instructional practices to promote student success and achievement. Take the time to ask fellow teacher-librarians about their successes and failures regarding information literacy instruction and the inquiry process, as it is this time spent reflecting that allows professional and program growth. Bush & Jones (2010) declare, "the best gift we can give to students is a learning environment that builds respect for lifelong learning, inquiry, and flexibility" (p. 26).

Steps for implementing school-wide information literacy

Administrators

1. Develop personal learning and knowledge of information literacy and its best practices by watching Eisenberg's Information Literacy Vodcast Series provided by ABCLIOLive.
2. Share leadership with the teacher-librarian in developing information literacy standards to specifically suit the needs of the school. The AASL Standards for 21st Century Learner and the ISTE NETS are resources that can be used when developing school standards.
3. Plan how to implement a school-wide information literacy program with the teacher-librarian and include the school information literacy program and philosophies in local school policy and documents.
4. Provide time for staff information literacy professional development and teacher-librarian and classroom teacher collaboration.
5. Provide feedback and assessment of the information literacy program in relation to school-wide goals and overall student achievement. Share results with school and district personnel.

Teacher-Librarians

1. Secure school administration program and funding support by providing examples of increased student achievement resulting from information literacy programs and practices. Todd's (2003) evidence that trained teacher-librarians and quality school library programs do impact student achievement. Visit Keith Curry Lance's website to read the latest about school library impact studies, including the Pennsylvania and Colorado studies.
2. Share leadership with school administration in developing information literacy standards to specifically suit the needs of the school. The AASL Standards for 21st Century Learners and the ISTE NETS are resources that can be used when developing school standards.
3. Plan how to implement a school-wide information literacy program with school administration and suggest they include the school information literacy program and philosophies in local school policy and documents. The International Federation of School Libraries has published guidelinex, practical steps that can be taken by the teacher-librarian, to implement an information literacy school program. IFLA also provides guidelines for assessing an information literacy program.
4. Establish instructional, information literacy, and technology leadership roles throughout the school community. Offer information sessions and professional development for staff and parents describing what information literacy is and outlining the importance of teaching information processing skills to students and the steps to take towards building an information-literate school community.
5. Collaborate with classroom teachers to plan, execute, and assess inquiry-based embedded research practices that utilize a variety of online and digital media tools. Take the time to reflect with the classroom teacher on project successes and failures to improve future information literacy practices.

Classroom Teachers

1. Teachers can commit to the professional development of their own information literacy education by learning what information literacy is and how to implement it in their classroom. Watch Eisenberg's vodcasts #1, *What is Information Literacy* and #2, *How to Implement Information Literacy*. Follow

the blogs of information literacy experts Buffy Hamilton and Joyce Valenza.
2. Collaborate with the teacher-librarian to make information literacy practices a regular part of your classroom instruction. Watch educator, Dr. Loopy, talk about benefits of teacher-librarian and classroom teacher collaboration. Share your projects and activities with the school community, parents, and district personnel. Take the time to reflect on the process with the teacher-librarian to make improvements for future information literacy conventions.

Implementing a school-wide information literacy program should be a priority for teacher-librarians and their school library programs. Processing information, critical thinking, and problem solving are skills that will impact overall student achievement in the school environment and are skills future employers will be looking for. "Every person in today's world needs to be an information literate lifelong learner, able to use information to reason and to think critically, to make decisions, to solve problems creatively, to use information responsibly and ethically. Information literacy is not just a library issue -– it is an educational issue (Oberg, 2012, para. 9).

What does this mean for school leaders...?

How do school leaders initiate movement towards building an information-literate school in Canada? The teacher-librarian, as the information literacy leader, must begin the process by sharing knowledge and creating dialogue among school administration and educators regarding the necessity for teaching information literacy. Teacher-librarians can "create professional development resources centered on information literacy and available online," (Moore, 2005, p. 12) to share with educators. With support from the school administration, the teacher-librarian can officially collaborate with classroom teachers to plan, instruct, and assess information literacy practices throughout the school. The creation of professional learning networks is key for teacher-librarians at the school level and beyond to "promote conversation and collaboration" (de Groot & Branch, 2011, p. 290).

In this era of information an essential role of educational leaders must be to prepare students to be critical, analytical, efficient, ethical, and responsible consumers and producers of information. Through inquiry-based learning, information processing skills and strategies, and 21st century research practices that include digital media and technological tools, educators can impact student success at school and future successes in the workplace. Are you willing to take on the challenge to begin the process of building an information-literate school community? I can assure you that your students are certainly ready for the challenge.

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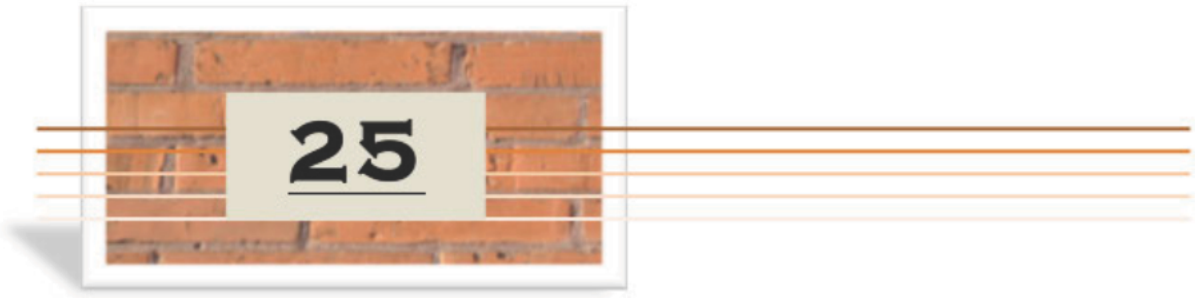

Being a Leader in Blended Learning

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Why should school leaders care... ?

The seeds of change begin to germinate when there is a vision. The change begins to take root when the vision is shared and cultivated through collaboration. When the climate is ready and ripe with possibilities, and there are people who are willing to take risks, the vision becomes a reality. Sometimes we are presented with a situation that forces change upon us, for the status quo is no longer possible. This is the story of one school's vision based on voice, choice and flexibility. Our vision was created due to a need for a different educational model in order to provide our students with the best education possible in a small rural community. What is the role of a teacher-librarian in the midst of this kind of educational change?

As a teacher-librarian, I am passionate about inquiry-based learning which provides an opportunity for students to learn the vital skills needed to develop new understandings while bridging previous knowledge and making connections with new discoveries. Students involved in inquiry are more engaged and invested in their learning. Through inquiry, we are able to model and scaffold the dispositions that students need to develop: competencies in information literacy, problem solving, critical thinking, research strategies, effective communication, leadership, creativity, resilience and lifelong learning. After several years of collaborating with teachers in our grade 6 – 12 high school on inquiry-based projects, and reflecting continuously on ways to improve student success, I am aware of the elements necessary for an ideal learning environment: rich background knowledge, cross curricular connections, collaboration and flexible timetabling. My vision of an inquiry-based learning environment was beginning to become clearer. Ideally, teachers and students would be able to meet at various times to attend guest speakers, learn outside the school walls and collaborate with other students in various grades on projects that meet learning outcomes in a variety of subject areas.

Faced with an uncertain future, due to the district level budget cuts, the staff as Rossland Secondary School knew that change would be required and a shift in the school's vision was necessary to help deal with some of these changes. It was decided that a group of teachers should meet once a week after school

to begin creating our vision. If we couldn't timetable using our current system, why not start from scratch and use this as an opportunity to be visionaries? Our initial meetings began with the elements that we believe are necessary for student success: choice in terms of courses offered, personalized learning to meet the needs of all students, and flexibility as to when, where and how students learn. It is also important to have the opportunity within the school day for teachers to collaborate so that inquiry-based learning can cross subject areas naturally. We know that with all our individual strengths coming together, students will have an opportunity to make richer connections between subject areas, which happens naturally in the real world. The traditional timetable had created some challenges in terms of scheduling guest speakers and field trips for our inquiry projects; therefore, I envisioned a more flexible approach. Our school was already beginning to experience the demand for online courses from students who were unable to get the courses they wanted. In addition, the students participating in the school's ski academy were using online courses in order to accommodate training and race schedules that often made it difficult to attend traditional classes on a regular basis. We also know the online courses are not ideal in that they cover too many learning outcomes but do not delve deeply into any.

As we took stock of what our ideal school would look like, we began to map out the steps needed to make the vision viable. I provided research on blended learning and inquiry, while others brought the logistics of what a day in the life of a teacher and student would look like. Not all staff were comfortable with the proposed changes and many needed to get a sense of what it would look like in reality. Where would students go during the day if they weren't timetabled into classes? What would teachers do if they weren't at the front of the classroom teaching? How would course content be delivered? It isn't easy getting educators who have been in the classroom for decades to feel comfortable with the proposed changes. Many feared technology and were unsure how they would be able to manage in a blended learning environment. We worked together to develop a clear vision that would lead us through our decision making process.

Our vision centered on a school that provides personalized and inquiry-based learning in a blended environment, incorporating the best of online tools and face-to-face contact, offering students a variety of courses while meeting the needs of all learners. The learning experiences enabled students to have choice, voice and learn at their own pace. Learning outcomes are constant but everything else is variable. Teachers collaborate on planning, facilitating and assessing student work while working with students individually, and in small and large group sessions. They also provide seminars and guest speakers. Working outside a traditional timetable allows teachers and students to work together in resource areas and in the community. Students learn the skills to create long and short term goals; organize their schedules to meet their learning needs; reach out beyond the school walls into the community; collaborate with peers, teachers, parents and community members; take on leadership roles; and share their learning with others, locally and globally. This educational model aligns with the goals of the BC Education Plan and is based on current research in the field of education.

Throughout this process, and as the vision began to take shape, my role as a teacher-librarian was to provide my colleagues with the knowledge, tools and resources to create inquiry-based courses that harness the power of online learning by using the best of online tools to increase student collaboration, critical thinking and inquiry skills. Blended learning, at its best, will enable us to exploit collaborative abilities to increase understandings and provide deeper learning for students while creating a community of learners.

What do school leaders need to know...?

The potential of blended learning lies in creating communities of learners that can collaborate, reflect, problem solve and create new knowledge using the capabilities of technology, as well as debate, entertain new ideas and communicate in a variety of ways in a face-to-face environment (Cherry, 2010). Blended learning has the ability to push educators to rethink course structure and delivery models to encourage higher order thinking and actively engage students, moving from a teacher-centered model to a student-centered one (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008; Graham & Dziuban, 2008; Gonzaléz, 2009). There is no formula to determine what constitutes a blended environment, but it does include, and is not limited to, face-to-face learning and teaching combined with tasks and activities in an online environment (Gonzaléz, 2009). As Caufield (2011) states, blended learning "may be defined as courses that have reduced 'face time' that is replace by time spent outside the traditional classroom" either in community-based projects or experiential learning (p. 3). Definitions of blended learning are varied but do include learning styles, learning objectives and building a sense of community, not simply focusing on the mode of delivery (Cherry, 2010). Paramount to blended learning is that it is a "redesign that transforms the structure of, and approach to, teaching and learning" (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p. 5). Activities are purposefully structured to increase collaboration for deeper learning through discourse and reflection (Akyol & Garrison, 2011).

In order for blended learning to achieve its goals of increased student engagement and deeper learning, instructors must be able to design online components that augment and transform the learning experience, rather than simply layer technology over traditional instruction or treat technology as an 'add-on' (Garrison, & Kanuka, 2004; Gonzaléz, 2009; Vaughan, 2007). Students' views on blended learning indicate that there must be recognition and correspondence between face-to-face and online components, so as not be treated as separate entities (So & Bonk, 2010). These barriers to blended learning can be overcome if teachers work together, especially in subject areas, to collaborate on course redesign in a blended learning environment (Aycock, Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Cherry, 2010; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Hughes, 2005). Working in isolation does not provide teachers the opportunity to feed on suggestions of others or the role modeling of their colleagues (Cherry, 2010). "Without adequate preparation, most faculty will simply relocate their traditional class sections and the benefits, resulting from a blended course, will not be achieved" (Vaughan, 2007). By working collaboratively, teachers will be able to witness colleagues take risks, and they will have opportunities to reflect on what works and what doesn't as they share course content online, creating awareness of what 'change agents' are doing (Cherry, 2010).

Redesigning course structures and pedagogy to harness the power of blended learning necessitates that a constructivist theory of education be a fundamental building block. Based on the educational theories of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner, constructivism is defined as active construction of new knowledge based on students' prior experience (Koohang, Riley, & Smith, 2009). Students are encouraged to create knowledge rather than just receive it and to apply learning to real life situations, as well as participate in cooperative learnings and reflection, while providing the opportunity for input into assessment and learning objectives (Cherry, 2010). Providing students with an educational model that allows them to be part of constructing the learning goals and objectives, along with assessment, creates a student centered learning experience (Koohang, Riley, & Smith, 2009). Constructivism asks students to draw on their past experiences and encourages active learning, leading to deeper knowledge construction (Koohang, Riley, & Smith, 2009). There is also a need for teachers to be provided with constructivist learning experiences

that ask them to reflect on their beliefs and knowledge, in order to allow them to potentially change their pedagogies (Hughes, 2005).

Blended learning necessitates a redesign of the traditional classroom environment. Due to the nature of an online environment, the tasks, activities and assignments that work in a face-to-face environment can not simply be transferred online. Educators must ask and understand what tasks and activities will be better achieved online (So & Bonk, 2010). There is a need to exploit the online component of blended learning to develop a sense of community and engage students in an interactive learning experience that foster collaboration in various ways. (Akyol, & Garrison, 2011; Cherry, 2010; So & Bonk, 2010). Individual student activities online lead to a sense of isolation. Blended learning courses should include engaging activities such as real-world problems and issues, exploration of the problem to find information for a possible explanation, integration of ideas through analysis and synthesis, and a resolution for the problem or creating new and deeper understanding of the problem (Akyol & Garrison, 2011). When educators move away from a teacher-focused learning environment to one that is focused on students, teaching becomes more of a democratic process focused on communication and collaboration, creating quality learning experiences (Cherry, 2010; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Gonzaléz, 2009). The activities that should be included range from collaboration, cooperation, entertaining multiple perspectives and ideas, real world examples, and scaffolding and assessment in various forms ranging from self, peer and teacher (Koohang, Riley & Smith, 2009). Ultimately, creating blended learning courses pushes teachers to rethink their views on teaching and learning as they cannot effectively deliver the old content on a new platform. Furthermore, it is about letting go of control and allowing students to have a voice in their learning. Students are developing critical, creative and complex thinking skills using the power of an online environment allowing for collaboration, interaction and reflection while thoughtfully integrating relevant face-to-face instruction (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

Those involved in the redesign will need support in instructional design and curriculum development, as well as technology skills. Blended learning is less familiar and takes a lot of work to do well. Support for educators needs to be subject-area specific and not solely focused on technology but also how to harness the technology (Cherry, 2010). This will enable teachers to create a community of learners that will change teachers' instructional practices, including tasks and activities that promote higher learning, collaboration and problem solving through inquiry (So & Bonk, 2010). When teachers work in inquiry groups within their subject areas, they can draw on their specific discipline and curricular outcomes in order to identify problems and topics to guide their use of technology to provide possible solutions (Hughes, 2005). The community of inquiry increases collaboration and it is this power of community that can create real change in pedagogy (Cherry, 2010).

The challenge for teachers is to take the opportunity to question how their instructional methods might be improved through the power of online learning and reinvent their instruction for this new context with new tools (Cherry, 2010). This is a chance for educators to take a close look at what they want students to achieve in their courses and what is the best way for them to meet these goals, using the spontaneous and lively interactions of a face-to-face environment with the collaborative and reflective space online learning offers. Learning can also take place within the community where students interact with experts in a field or participate in experiential learning (Gonzaléz, 2009). An important question is how can teachers learn to infuse technology innovatively into their subject areas in ways that will significantly change the learning experience for students (Hughes, 2005). The answer lies in creating communities of inquiry amongst educators who work on the redesign process together (Aycock, Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Cherry, 2010; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). When teachers work in communities of inquiry within their content areas, they use their understandings of their discipline and curricular outcomes to identify areas that are problematic or ineffective, and use these to determine the educational technology that will provide possible solutions (Hughes, 2005).

Blended learning is much more than simply transferring face-to-face interactions and lessons online, and will push teachers to rethink and restructure teaching and learning, transforming education to increase

deeper learning within communities of learners that can connect anytime, anywhere (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Technology to support pedagogy can simply function as a replacement for teaching or amplify teaching, but if approached properly, it can transform teaching into an innovative educational experience (Hughes, 2005).

What can school leaders do about… ?

A leader must have a vision and be able to communicate it to others; this vision needs to radiate out from the middle and not come from a top-down hierarchy. It must propel us forward to an imagined future. When administration and colleagues are provided with a well-articulated vision that is substantiated through current research and pedagogy, along with "meaningful models and examples" (Haycock, 2010, p. 3) colleagues will be able to see the road to successful reform and the role of the school library, resulting in student success. In order for others to accept the vision, a teacher-librarian must possess certain leadership qualities that convey confidence, competence and trustworthiness. Teacher-librarians must be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and share these with colleagues while recognizing areas in which others can take the lead. There has been a culture of isolation in education for a long time and many educators feel content in their classroom domain so a teacher-librarian must possess leadership qualities to inspire, influence and persuade others to follow.

Communities of Practice (CoP) are groups of people who share a common goal, concern or interest in a particular issue. CoP enables individuals to learn from each other in a trusting environment, while building confidence through sharing ideas and engaging in open discussion (Hughes-Hassell & Harada, 2007). The CoP model originates in the work of Wenger (2006), and has since served many educators who are seeking to reform education through professional growth. Members of a community of practice are continual learners and bring research to further inform their ideas and share best practice with each other. In addition, members encourage others to join in the community of practice and participate at different levels. Socialization is an important part of professional growth and conversations educators have increase our knowledge of the craft of teaching to improve student success (Zmuda & Harada, 2008, p. 9).

Our Tuesday after-school meetings, which we called 'Dialogue to Practice', began in early November and were created as a means for teachers to begin formulating a common vision for change within the school, along with common goals to help see the vision become a reality. The core group was comprised of several math and science teachers, a fine arts teacher, a French language teacher, an English teacher, a grade 6 teacher, a special education teacher, and the teacher-librarian. This provided a range of expertise in terms of knowledge of core curriculum, and as teacher-librarian I was able to bring knowledge of inquiry-based learning and information literacy to the group. It is important to note that this group was not initiated by administration but came from our desire as educators to make positive changes to the traditional education model to better serve the needs of our students. Because the reform was teacher driven, we were invested in its success from the beginning.

We began by looking at the needs of students and developing a comprehensive list:

- The opportunity for meaningful dialogue with peers
- The opportunity to collaborate with peers and community members
- Meeting face- to-face with educators around areas of common interest and passion
- Access to a healthy variety of courses that students want and need
- Learning at their level

- Inquiry-based learning
- Core competencies such as creative and critical thinking skills, ethical citizenship, collaboration and communication skills
- More flexible times - length and timing
- Scope and sequence - mastery learning of Math and English courses that are not grade specific but are individualized levels
- Enrichment rather than acceleration
- Mechanisms to catch students from falling through the cracks
- Integrated subject areas/cross curricular
- Use of community integrated with curriculum
- Students involved in outside activities
- Independent learning follows a logical progression of independent learning skill acquisition and time management

In addition, we examined the needs of educators:

- Teach in areas of passion and training
- Work together as a team with a common purpose and time to do it
- Opportunities for collaboration, observation and reflection
- Structure that allows students to work at their own pace
- Providing students with deeper learning opportunities

Finally, we looked at the needs of parents:

- To be informed
- To be involved
- To be active in their child's learning and the school community
- To have access to the research on which we have based these educational changes

The CoP spent many afternoons crafting a vision and subsequent goals, talking about practice, sharing craft knowledge and how to create an environment for student success (Barth, 2006). I provided research on blended learning and inquiry-based learning from journals, websites, blogs and books, and conveyed the relevant learning to others. A variety of educational models from around the province and within North America were examined. We also spent time reviewing student responses from a district-wide initiative asking students for their input on what they envisioned for their educational model. A timeline was created outlining the various stages of implementation, including the overall structure and philosophy of blended learning, and communication with staff, students, parents and the community, as well as course structure, technology and facility changes. The CoP allowed us to take risks in our thinking, as we were able to share our ideas and receive feedback from colleagues who were invested and accountable to our common vision. Each of us brought different skills, took responsibility for certain tasks, and provided emotional support for one another under the pressure of trying to create a new educational model, not seen in our district, within a very short period of time.

Our CoP continues to meet, providing the opportunity to reflect on what is working in this new model and what needs to be refined or changed. This is our own inquiry and it is important to recognize that not everything works as planned. For example, we had originally wanted to provide students the opportunity to work at their own pace so we did not provide due dates but implemented a progress checking system to teach them short and long term goal setting. Feedback from students was that they wanted due dates to help them set goals and stay on track. With so much change, they needed some consistency and so we made appropriate changes for the second semester. We moved away from self-paced, to self-directed,

which means that students can work ahead, but need to work at a reasonable pace to meet appropriate deadlines.

In order to share the vision of blended learning with school administration, staff, students and the community, it is critical that the benefits of moving towards change, substantiated with research can be communicated. As a teacher-librarian, I had been working collaboratively over the last several years to help teachers move towards inquiry-based teaching. Our work together has helped build trusting relationships with my colleagues and allows them to see me as an educational leader. This is directly related to student success and the deeper learning they achieve through inquiry. It was important for me to be able to show that our vision for reform would enable students to be more engaged and invested in their learning, while providing them with opportunities to pursue their interests and passions in a flexible environment that valued their voice and provided them with choice. As a member of the CoP, and in recognition of my leadership role within the school and district, working collaboratively with teachers to make sure information literacy skills are integrated effectively using inquiry-based learning, I provided informative sessions to teachers, administration, district staff, community members, parents and students on the blended learning model that we would be implementing in September. In addition, I created a website to house research and provide additional information on blended learning for those who wished to learn more. Included on the site are documents outlining a day in the life of a student and a teacher, an introductory video on blended learning, and interviews with students about their experiences in the new learning model (www.rssblendedlearning.wordpress.com).

In October, I found myself presenting our blended learning model to over 300 people, comprised of superintendents, principals, vice-principals and school trustees, at the 2012 Educational Leadership Conference in Vancouver, BC. By sharing our journey with other educational leaders across the province, I was providing proof that educational reform can be achieved when the change is driven from the bottom up through a community of practice. It was also important to share that qualified teacher-librarians are respected key figures when it comes to implementing change as they are school leaders who collaborate with teaching staff and administration through their role as learning specialists (Zmuda & Harada, 2008, p.16). Teacher-librarians stay up to date with research focused on best practice and provide in-service opportunities for staff to allow them to implement learning opportunities that will allow for student engagement and success. The role of a teacher-librarian lies at the heart of the school because the learning that happens through a school library is central to all learning: increasing student achievement.

With a clear vision of what a blended learning environment at RSS would look like and a timeline outlining tasks to be completed before September, it was time to discuss course design. We agreed that all courses would be housed on the Moodle platform and contain similar elements in order to provide uniformity. Working together as subject areas specialists, teachers began by determining the prescribed learning outcomes and competencies that were essential and posted these in student friendly language in the course introductory material. Discussion ensued regarding common course elements that would allow students to have voice, choice and personalize their learning.

Courses are designed around the concept of learning paths, established using a variety of elements. Based on an understanding that students learn in a variety of ways, and wishing to utilize the skill base and assets of teachers and community members, courses are multifaceted and include elements such as Community-Linked Projects, Inquiry-Based Projects, Small Group Sessions, Large Group Lectures, and Integrated-Learning Opportunities. Many of these are requirements for successful completion of courses, yet students can still personalize their learning depending on their interests and learning styles. Some elements are not optional and are considered to be essential. However, as a result of choosing between and within numerous options, no two students will have the same learning path. Learning outcomes remain consistent but everything else is variable.

One of the greatest challenges in designing blended learning courses is moving away from what teachers had previously been doing in the classroom. The tendency for many educators was to replicate their face-

to-face teaching in an online environment. One teacher asked if it would be possible to scan and upload all the worksheets that students are normally required to complete during a course. Providing guidance and support, I was able to assist teachers to design courses using an interdisciplinary approach and inquiry to gain a new perspective on teaching the curriculum that was student-centered rather than teacher-focused (Bush & Jones, 2010, p.13). Encouraging teachers to turn prescribed learning outcomes into essential questions gave them a starting point for inquiry and encouraged them to give students greater ownership and opportunities to integrate learning outcomes from other courses (Bush & Jones, 2010). Ideally, students would be able to negotiate with teachers to develop inquiry-based projects, community linked projects and/or experimental design project that would meet a variety of learning outcomes across subject areas.

Online components of the courses needed to include strategies to create communities of learners who participate in online discussion forums, contribute to class wikis and blogs and employ other Web 2.0 tools to share their learning. Initially, some teachers found it challenging to learn the new technology necessary to create quality courses that capitalized on online tools. Keeping abreast of emerging technology is another facet of a teacher-librarian's role and it was important to provide support for my colleagues through small group sessions during lunches and after school. These sessions focused on how to leverage the power of online communication and collaboration tools to allow students to make connections, share research, communicate ideas, provide feedback and reflect on their learning.

Furthermore, it was crucial teachers had the technical support to create and edit courses in Moodle. The administration provided release time for small groups of teachers to work with me on course design and construction from April through to June. Having attended a Flipped Learning Network, many teachers were interested in creating short videos that could be uploaded to Moodle or linked from You Tube. Students could watch these instructional videos anytime, anywhere and attend the seminar sessions where they would be able to demonstrate their understanding of the material through hands-on labs and experiments, or work in small groups to apply their knowledge to a more complex issue or problem.

One of the most appealing elements of a blended learning environment is that it removes the barriers of the traditional model such as timetables, block rotations and courses taught in isolation from other subject areas. In the past, I often collaborated with a team of teachers to create cross-curricular inquiry projects but it became difficult due to conflicting schedules. The blended model provides flexible scheduling so that students and teachers are not limited by traditional class time. Students attend one weekly seminar session per course but these are flexible, allowing teachers to team-teach and bring a large group of students together if needed. Alternatively, teachers can meet with smaller groups of students in the resource areas, specializing in the humanities or math/sciences. With this added flexibility, it becomes easier to provide students with the resources and guidance they need for inquiry-based learning.

I was eager to take advantage of the blended learning model and approached the staff with the idea of creating an inquiry-based project on the broad topic of food. The inquiry would be open to students in grades 10 through 12 as they were the students in the blended-learning program, providing opportunities for them to work outside of the traditional grade system. Food was chosen as it provides cross-curricular connections in all subject areas, including elective courses, and is vital to our survival. Part of our vision for blended-learning was providing students opportunities to make connections between school and their own lives and interests, working with the community, providing cross-curricular connections and dealing with real world issues and problems. Best practices are those that engage students personally with the content and encourage connections to be made across and within disciplines (Bush & Jones, 2010, p.12). The food inquiry had the potential to touch on all of these. There were four teachers, along with the special education teacher, who were willing to collaborate with me. Each would bring their own expert subject knowledge in relation to their curricular area, as well as their own personal experiences. My role would be to provide a variety of resources, make community connections, link to the public library and

other local resources as well as make connections between inquiry-based learning and information literacy skills (Zmuda & Harada, 2008).

The advantages of working within a blended environment quickly became evident. Arranging guest speakers and field trips was simple. Students were notified through the school's Google calendar of the scheduled guest speakers and field trips and would make note in their personal calendars of the time and date. As students do not need to be in a certain class at a particular time, they are not missing vital information by attending a field trip to tour local gardens and chicken coops. The guest speakers were not limited by blocks and were able to spend the extra time talking with students one-on-one to provide more information. It was evident that the food inquiry was building a community of learners that ranged in age and ability, as well as interests. As noted in the literature review earlier, it is vital to build and maintain a community of learners in both the face-to-face and online environment.

The online component of the food inquiry, housed on Moodle, includes a variety of tools allowing students to discuss food related issues; brainstorm possible topics; connect with experts in the field, both locally and globally through social media such as Facebook and Twitter; share resources; post final projects and reflect on the learning process. After attending a large group session with a guest speaker on the topic of permaculture, students posted their thoughts and questions on the discussion forum. Access to the discussion forum rubric was provided through Moodle and students needed to post an initial reflection and respond to at least three other posts. At the following face-to-face seminar session, points made in these discussions were referred to as students need to see the connection between the various learning environments. After several field trips to local area gardens, chicken coops, a museum exhibit focusing on what people around the world eat in a day, and an additional guest speaker, students had a strong understanding of how food connected to their own lives, experiences and interests and the real world issues surrounding this precious resource.

Working collaboratively with a team of teachers and the teacher-librarian, the students spent a seminar session working in small groups sharing their ideas and formulating essential questions for their inquiry-based projects. With a range of specialist teachers available with whom to work, students were able to link a variety of learning outcomes from their courses to meet requirements in several classes at once. Two students were going to create an aquaponics system for Physics 11 and grow food to use in their Foods and Nutrition class. The blog they kept to record their learning and reflect on successes and failures would be part of their English 11 course work as well. A community-linked project was developed by a student interested in conducting an inquiry into the feasibility of a local curbside composting program in Rossland. These examples, along with many others, present real world learning for students and their new understandings are presented to authentic audiences.

Beyond the food inquiry, students and staff have been participating in a variety of projects involving the community. The local ski resort is working with students to design a terrain park linking Physics, Math and English learning outcomes. Those enrolled in Social Studies 10 are working on an augmented reality tour of Rossland based on its rich mining history linked with the Rossland Historical Museum. The blended learning environment has changed the way teachers, students, parents and community members view Rossland Secondary School; it is an inviting environment, encouraging real world learning linked to students' lives outside the walls of school. Elimination of the isolation of classroom-level practice is indicative of the true impact the innovations and changes have brought (Zmuda & Harada, 2008, p.160).

What does this mean for school leaders...?

There is no doubt that blended learning has caught the interest of educators and school leaders in British Columbia. Since its inception, administrators and their school staff have been coming to meet with us, tour the school and talk with students about their impressions of blended learning. Many of our visitors face the same push-pull factors: declining enrollment; small rural populations; inability to offer students courses they need and want; a desire to make learning more relevant and personalized; removing the traditional timetable constraints; and providing deeper learning through inquiry.

With the implementation of British Columbia Ministry of Education's Education Plan, teachers are being provided the opportunity to personalize instruction through less prescribed and more flexible curriculum. Learning outcomes are reduced and there is a focus on the core competencies, skills and knowledge that students need to succeed in the 21st century (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2011). A blended learning environment encourages administrators, staff, students, parents and community members to re-envision education and make it relevant to students who will be entering a workforce that demands the skills to problem solve, think critically and creatively and work collaboratively with others. Post secondary institutes are also looking for students who are active learners, able to collaborate, reflect on their learning and transfer their new understanding to novel contexts. Moving away from memorizing facts to skill-based, process-oriented learning will shift the focus from knowing the content to being able to understand and apply it (Durley & Harkness, 2012).

Although there is no formula for creating a blended learning environment, the vision should be created through collaboration amongst staff and administration, focusing on the needs of students and their success. Providing both technology and course design support for teachers is crucial, as is adequate time to create quality courses that exploit the power of online communication tools and link to face-to-face seminar time. Course redesign should be started at least six months ahead of time (Aycock, Garnham, & Kaleta, 2002). Additionally, a qualified teacher-librarian brings specific skills in leadership, collaboration, inquiry-based learning, current research on pedagogy and instruction, and emerging technology. Teacher-librarians and the school library are at the center of the school as they work with all staff and students and are able to see the 'big picture', facilitate change, enabling the vision to become a reality.

With the acknowledgment that the needs of our students are changing and the traditional education model no longer meets the demands of the 21st century, educational reform is happening in pockets around the province and the country. The time to change is now and Rossland Secondary School is an example of how a collaborative vision based on voice, choice and flexibility for students can be achieved when educators are passionate about making learning relevant for all students.

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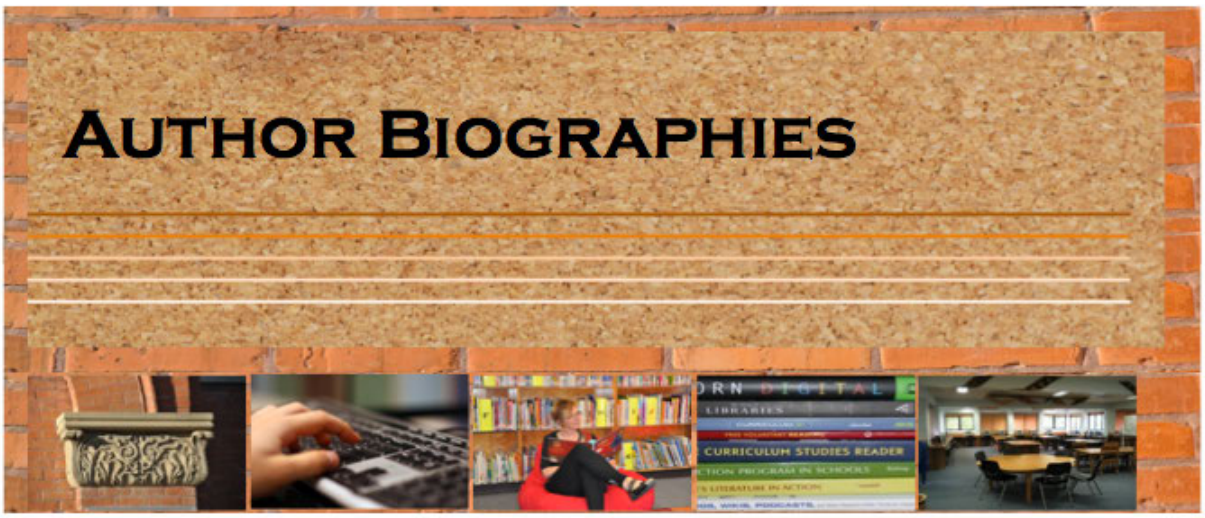

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Jennifer is an Associate Professor at the University of Alberta. She is the Coordinator of both the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program in the Department of Elementary Education and the Online Master of Library and Information Studies program in the School of Library and Information Studies. Jennifer is married to a Computer Scientist who is a Professor in the Faculty of Science also at the UofA and is Mama to Andy who is 7 ½ years old and is just finishing grade two. She loves to quilt, read, travel and play board games with her family.

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Melissa is a Primary/Elementary teacher and an aspiring teacher-librarian from St. John's, Newfoundland. Melissa is presently living in Ottawa, Ontario awaiting the arrival of her first child with her supportive husband, Mark. She is looking forward to applying the vast knowledge and engaging tools gained in her Master of Education degree to her future teacher-librarian practice. Melissa believes all students deserve an enriched learning environment of equal opportunity that nurtures and supports individual needs and ambitions in order to become confident 21st century learners with a lifelong desire to learn.

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Niki works as a teacher-librarian in a small elementary school in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is an executive of both the Manitoba School Libraries Association and the Winnipeg Children's Literature Roundtable. Niki is passionate about great picture books, seamless technology integration, and inquiry learning. Her interests away from the library include her own young children, running, yoga, scrapbooking and, of course, reading.

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Heather is the teacher- librarian in a K-8 school in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is enjoying her fourth year in the library, promoting quality children's literature, developing information literacy skills and providing professional learning opportunities for her colleagues. She has been advocating for Manitoba school libraries through her work with the MSLA and currently holds the position of journal editor. Along with her love for libraries, is her devotion to her family, their passion for downhill skiing and cruising the lakes of northwestern Ontario in the summer.

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Renae is a Teacher-librarian in an elementary school in the Interior of British Columbia. She completed her education degree with the University of Victoria and has recently finished her graduate work through the University of Alberta, obtaining a MEd in Teacher-Librarianship. She views her leadership roles in literacy and technology as key in moving forwards as an instructional partner within the school.

Hali Hamel

Hali is a teacher and teacher-librarian in Prairie Spirit School Division. Her perfect day would start with coffee and the newspaper, include time on the deck with a good book and some fresh-baked cookies, and end with a delicious meal and a local theatre production! She lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan with her husband and daughter, who happen to be two of her favourite people on earth.

Terri Hayes

Terri is a grade 1, 2 and 3 Montessori teacher with the Calgary Board of Education. She has a degree in English, history and ancient history from the University of Queensland, and a Bachelor of Education from Mount Saint Vincent University. Hayes is passionate about the importance of the school library learning commons in promoting strong literacy skills in all students, and so pursued a Masters of Education in Teacher-Librarianship from the University of Alberta. When she's not teaching, Hayes enjoys travelling and reading to her grandchildren

Jacqui Higginbottom

Jacqui's TL Girlfriends reminded her she needed to complete this bio! They said to mention that she was a first year TL in a busy middle school library on B.C.'s West Coast and that she was a classroom teacher for twenty years before that. They felt it was important to mention that she has a wonderful husband and that her teenage son and tweenage daughter were very patient while she was researching and writing. And of course to say "CHEERS" to her TL Girlfriends who helped her survive her first year. Also, we need another bottle of Chardonnay.

April Hilland

April is a recent graduate of the University of Alberta Masters of Education program (teacher-librarian specialty) and former District Teacher Librarian for the Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows School District. Currently hailing from beautiful Fort St. James, British Columbia, April is working as a consultant with the Fort St. James Public Library and is the Digital Librarian for Changing Results for Young Readers (www.youngreaders.ca).

Laurie Hnatiuk

Laurie works at two K-8 elementary schools with the Saskatoon Public School Division. She is proud to say that she is now a teacher-librarian and not a teacher-in-the-library since completing her Masters of Education in teacher-librarianship. She enjoys assisting students, teachers and the community in the many leadership roles that teacher-librarians have to offer from the love of reading to integrating technology. She is grateful for the special bonds she has created within the librarian community and looks forward to the challenges and learning that lie ahead.

Natasha Hritzuk

Natasha spent most of her childhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. She earned her B.Sc. in Biology and her Education degrees at the University of Saskatchewan. Natasha is teaching in international schools overseas as a classroom teacher and as a teacher-librarian.

Nicola Kuhn

Nicola is a teacher-librarian at Rossland Secondary School in Rossland, British Columbia. Nicola has been an educator for 15 years, teaching a wide range of subjects. She was part of planning and implementing blended learning at RSS. She works closely collaborating with teachers to implement inquiry-based learning into their classrooms.

Tamzen Kulyk

Tamzen is a teacher-librarian in the Saskatoon Public School Division in Saskatchewan. Tamzen is passionate about facilitating a participatory learning culture through connected learning, inquiry and makerspaces. These interests will continue to lead her in new directions and to face new challenges as a life-long learner. She believes that being a teacher-librarian is one of the best jobs in the world as she is able to work with all of the students in the school, collaborate, and learn alongside other teachers.

Metthea Maddern

Metthea is a teacher-librarian in Victoria, British Columbia.

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Stacey currently works as a teacher-librarian and grade 3 classroom teacher in Victoria, BC. She has experience teaching levels Kindergarten to grade 8 in the public school system, as well as teaching Business English at the University of Abu Dhabi, UAE. Stacey enjoys running a variety of book clubs for the students at her school, including a “Boys Book Club”.

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Kirsten works as a teacher-librarian/learning specialist at Stratford Hall IB World School, an independent International Baccalaureate K-12 school in Vancouver, BC. She has also taught as a classroom and subject teacher across a broad range of grades. Kirsten is married and has two boys in elementary school.

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Kristie teaches in a Montessori school in the lower mainland of British Columbia.

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Cynthia is a retired teacher-librarian with 38 years of experience teaching junior and senior high school in Edmonton, Alberta. She is the co-author of *Paralympics: Where Heroes Come*, a history of the Paralympic movement. Her research interests include inclusive education, integration of technology into instruction, and teaching online reading.

Kelly Reierson
Kelly is a teacher-librarian at Strathcona High School in Edmonton, AB. She is an avid reader who enjoys playing and experimenting with technology.

Brenda J. Roberts
Brenda is a book loving, veteran educator with an interest in social justice issues. She has worked in a variety of diverse school settings including family groupings, contained gifted classrooms, a multiple intelligence school and a flow room based on the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. In addition to inclusion and equity she has an interest in developmentally appropriate practice, active learning and new technologies.

Anne Rogers
Anne has been working as a teacher-librarian in a large elementary school in Medicine Hat, Alberta for over five years. She is an avid reader and runner and parent of two busy children. Her goal is to take what she has learned in the TL-DL program and build a lively and engaged reading community in her school.

Kimberly D. Scheideman
Kimberly is a teacher and instructional coach at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in Spruce Grove, Alberta. In 2009 she became involved in the Alberta portion of Historical Thinking Project and later co-presented on Historical Thinking Concepts at the 2010 ATA Social Studies Conference. Kimberly was a finalist for the 2011/2012 Ken Spencer award for her work to promote digital literacies through school-wide projects. Kimberly continues to work with students and teachers to support the implementation of innovative research-based approaches in all areas.

Lisa Vanness
Lisa is an elementary Fine Arts and PE teacher working in British Columbia. As a teacher-librarian of the future, she can be found on Twitter (@lisavanness), between the stacks of school and public libraries, and reading, dancing, and singing with children.

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Pam is in her 10th year teaching, four of which have been in the role of teacher-librarian. She currently works in two elementary schools in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Tracy Woodward
Tracy Woodward is a wife, mother, and full-time teacher-librarian at Warman Elementary School in the Prairie Spirit School Division. Teacher-librarianship is her passion, and completing her M. Ed. has been a labour of love. She feels she has the best job in the world and is challenged daily by its many possibilities. She is a true life-long learner and hopes to inspire that in both the children and staff with whom she works.