Finding the right genrefication balance in your library
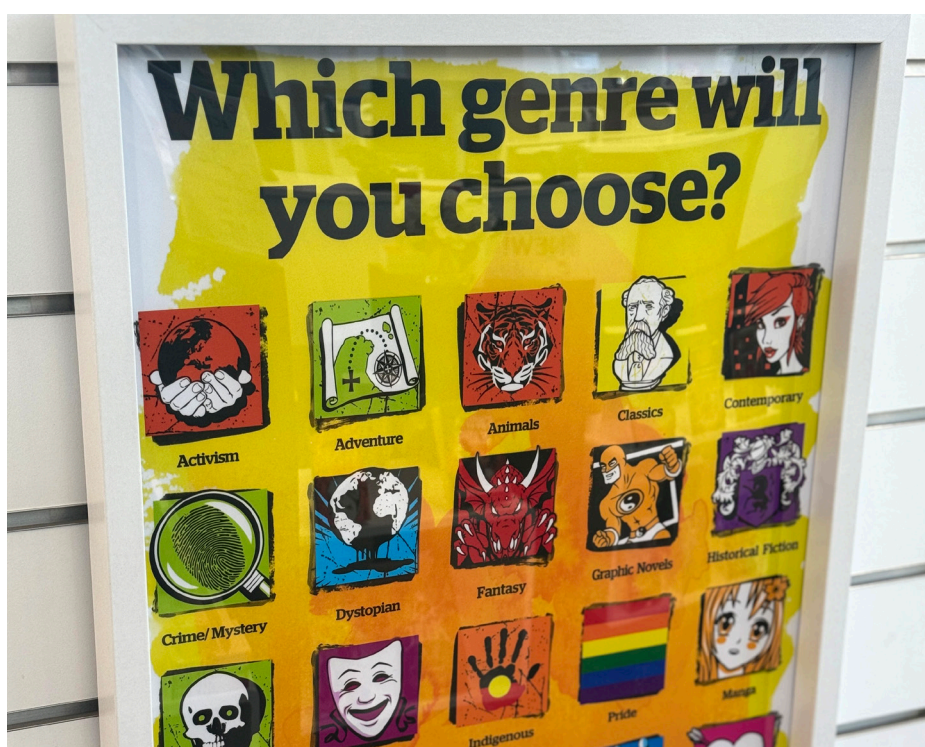
Genrefication in school libraries improves access to collections. In this article, Jessica Finden explores its pros and cons, sharing Carmel College's approach to organising their resources.

One of the core roles of a school library and the teacher librarian (TL) is to establish and provide easy access to information within the library. Genrefication is a current focus within school libraries which aims to make access to fiction and non-fiction collections easier to navigate for students and staff members within the school community. But what happens when you are not sure if you want to genrefy? Plenty of libraries are doing it, you hear!

Here is a basic breakdown of the positives and negatives of genrefication:

Positives

- Students are able to locate materials of interest more easily (Sweeney, 2013)
- It can increase circulation and enhance reader independence (Arenz, 2019)
- Students can be exposed to resources which may have previously been overlooked (Moeller & Becnel, 2019)
- Information is often 'genrefied' in music, social media and streaming services, this is a way of keeping up with current trends (Moeller & Becnel, 2019)

Negatives

- It is time and labour intensive
- There is (currently) no standarised genre system to work from (Hamm, 2019)
- Space and shelving need to be considered
- Genrefication is still not widely used, using it may not provide students with a transferable skill (Sams, 2013)

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Term 3 free webinars

New to your library? Welcome to SCIS

Date: Tuesday August 6 | Time: 10 am AEST

Start Term 3 by getting to know a little about the cataloguing service that saves you time in your library. Join SCIS Catalogue Content Manager Renate Beilharz for this free session as she introduces you to SCIS services and how SCIS can help streamline your cataloguing work.

MARC records in SCIS

Date: Tuesday August 20 | Time: 2 pm AEST

In this 1-hour webinar, SCIS will provide an overview of Machine Readable Cataloguing (MARC), which underpins all data in a library management system. This will help school library staff to better understand the role of MARC in how a library management system displays and uses catalogue data. This session is suited to school library staff who have some understanding of cataloguing standards.

The benefits of SCIS Authority Files

Date: Tuesday September 3 | Time: 10 am AEST

In this 1-hour webinar, SCIS will answer the questions, 'What are SCIS Authority Files?' and 'How can they benefit my school library?' Suitable for all school library staff, this webinar will help you understand the role Authority Files play in effective information retrieval.

Find out more and register now

www.scisdata.com/free-scis-webinars | help@scisdata.com

Tips and Tricks

- Make sure whatever you choose to go with is visually appealing
- Go through the collection and weed before beginning anything
- Be flexible, know that what you start off with will probably change by the end of the process
- You don't need to go through a company for genre stickers, you can create your own. We liked Syba Signs because you can purchase the digital image and upload it into Oliver

Explanation of how my school has 'genrefied'

So how can you meet genrefication in the middle?

At Carmel College, Thornlands the library team have considered the many ways that our students access resources, in particular our fiction and non-fiction collections. Knowing that we needed to work within the confines of our current space and shelving, we knew that change had to come from the collection itself. The update of these collections has been a three-year process, which started with looking closely at the fiction collection. We were already using a mix of genre stickers on the spines and decided to provide more consistency by reducing the number of stickers and using only the Syba Signs designs. We then went through each of our fiction collections and updated each of the genre stickers and the catalogue record to reflect the change. As the Teacher Librarian, I decide on what genre best suits each novel as it allows me to see each book we have in our library and provides uniformity around what constitutes a certain genre. Our 'meet in the middle' moment is that we have kept our fiction collections in alphabetical order. Students can search the shelves by author surname but clearly see which genre each of the books are. We feel that this gives students opportunities to peruse the whole collection instead of going straight to their favourite genre.

The non-fiction collection required a lot more work as it had not been updated for a number of years. Before starting, the library team went through the non-fiction collection and weeded books that were out of date/no longer relevant or in poor condition. This helped us to have a clear picture of what books we had to work with within the collection. The non-fiction collection was organised using the Dewey Decimal System (DDS) and we knew that we wanted to create more of a general 'genrefied' feel that the DDS wasn't providing. This was the hard part, with over 3500 resources in our non-fiction collection

Genre stickers on books in Carmel College library.

we now needed to work out the best method for organising them. I'll be honest, we changed our minds a lot. The end result was dividing the collection into two – High Interest non-fiction and Curriculum non-fiction. Within High Interest we divided the collection into nine categories that ranged from 'Creativity' through to 'Sport.' The focus was on creating topics that suited the resources we already had but would also be of interest to our students. Within the Curriculum collection we went through and sorted the resources into 'topics' that were studied within departments as one of the issues we had encountered was students looking for books on a certain topic and finding that they could be found across the DDS subjects. This change meant that students who were researching 'American History' could find everything in one section.

To make everything easy to find and shelve we purchased coloured stickers to separate the different categories in High Interest and made our own labels for the Curriculum topics. In the catalogue we added the category name as a 'genre' for High Interest and added the Curriculum topics into a 'list'. This also has the added benefit of being searchable using the 'List' function.

Genrefiction is not a 'quick-fix' for libraries and takes a considered approach to fully accomplish its main goal of easier access to information for students and staff. Speaking to TLs who have gone through

the process is one way of helping to decide if it is the right choice for your school. For our library, we are happy with the current compromise and the benefit of this approach is that a lot of the hard work has already been completed if we do decide to fully embrace genrefiction in the future.

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Jessica Finden
Teacher Librarian
Carmel College, QLD

SCIS is more

Welcome to the Term 3 edition of *Connections*. We hope you enjoyed a well-earned mid-year break, and maybe even managed to escape the cold and get some sun.

As mentioned in 'SCIS is more' in the last edition of *Connections*, this year SCIS celebrates its 40th birthday. SCIS's birthday got me thinking about what I was doing all those years ago, largely spending time in the school library, fumbling through the card catalogue, trying to find spy stories, while not really grasping the mystery of the Dewey Decimal system for non-fiction. When I was a student, the library was a great place to hang out and happen upon books to read. If only, for that young student, there had been a way to discover new books that didn't involve reading a faded typed card catalogue. Imagine an integrated library management system that could easily ingest high-quality digital catalogue records, created specifically for school libraries – back then that was the stuff of science fiction. Luckily for students and library staff, such a system now exists, and SCIS has since been providing high-quality catalogue records for the last 40 years.

Further to SCIS's 40 years working with schools, if you have any stories or historic information you'd like to share with us for our birthday celebrations, please email them to help@scisdata.com. We're building some fantastic historic resources that we'll be sharing close to our actual birthday.

During Term 2, SCIS was lucky enough to visit Adelaide to attend the School Library Association South Australia (SLASA) and CBCA SA conference, Captivate-Connect-Curate. It was great to catch up with so many dedicated school library staff and hear about how they're helping to support better outcomes for students.

The conference program was packed with wonderful presenters delivering fantastic messages. Madison Dearnaley's closing keynote on day 1 was inspiring. Her keynote, The Power of Advocating for the School Library, covered such an important and relevant topic, about which Madison delivered passionately. While advocating for school libraries may not be a superpower, those who advocate for school libraries are definitely superheroes. We look

forward to hearing more from Madison in a future edition of *Connections*.

During Term 3, the SCIS team will again be packing our bags and heading to conferences. We look forward to seeing library staff at the SLA NSW Summit and at the 2024 SLANZA conference in Christchurch. Make sure you attend the SCIS presentations and drop by our trade stand to say hi and have a chat about what SCIS can do better for you.

Speaking of feedback, we would like to congratulate the three winners of the SCIS Customer Survey $500 vouchers. We really appreciate all the feedback from the 1,200-plus survey respondents. We're currently crunching all the data and will have the results available for the Term 4 edition of *Connections*.

As part of the survey, we asked respondents how valuable SCIS products, features and services are to them? We found that SCIS's products are almost universally highly valued by our customers. The data shows that most respondents find our product range extremely, very or moderately valuable. SCIS Data's core product offerings – downloading catalogue records from the SCIS website and SCIS Authority Files – represent high value to our customers, with value scores of 88.3% and 81.9% respectively. *Connections* is also highly regarded by our customers, achieving a value score of 86.3%.

We also asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction with aspects of SCIS.

From the responses to the level of satisfaction, users are overwhelmingly

satisfied with SCIS. More than 86% of responses are very satisfied or satisfied with the aspects of SCIS measured in the survey. An impressive 94.8% of respondents rated their overall experience with SCIS as either very satisfied or satisfied. The process of requesting an item to be catalogued by the SCIS team is an area for improvement, with 69.4% of customers responding that they were very satisfied and satisfied with the process.

We look forward to sharing more data in the next issue of *Connections*.

Don't forget that if you don't have access to SCIS Data, you can set up a free trial. You'll need a school email address and a library management system and access to the internet. Go to www.scisdata.com and click on the Free trial tab (www.scisdata.com/free-trial/) to start your 10-day free trial and download 20 SCIS Data records for free.

From everyone at SCIS, we hope you have a wonderful Term 3 and look forward to seeing you at a school library conference or summit soon.

Anthony Shaw
Product Manager, SCIS

Elevate your practice at the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) Conference

Nau mai, haere mai! Join SLANZA's flagship event, the largest gathering of school librarians in Aotearoa New Zealand, convening more than 200 delegates locally and internationally. From 29 September – 2 October 2024, the eagerly anticipated conference is back on track, following the significant disruptions of recent years.

Attending our conference, He Puāwaitanga, isn't merely an event – it's a catalyst for transformation. This year's conference will be a timely opportunity to connect with fellow professionals, exchange ideas and find inspiration to elevate your practice. Think of it as a rejuvenating retreat for your professional growth.

Secure your spot now with early bird registration and gain access to our preliminary program. With keynote speakers from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand already confirmed, the program for 2024 reflects diverse perspectives, voices and topics tailored to the needs of school librarians. Choose from a rich array of workshops, many offering hands-on elements, panel discussions and group activities.

Our venue, Christ's College, is nestled in Ōtautahi Christchurch, a vibrant, modern city built on historical foundations. Centrally located, the conference venue is easily accessible from the airport, with accommodation options to suit all budgets nearby.

29 September – 2 October 2024

Don't miss out on this remarkable opportunity.

Come to Ōtautahi Christchurch, New Zealand, to learn, grow and forge lasting connections – all while immersing yourself in modern Kiwi culture and recreation.

Head to the conference website slanzaconference.org for full details and to get planning. We look forward to welcoming you. Mā te wā.

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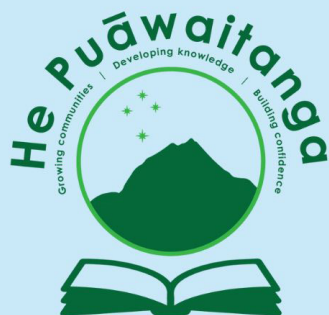
Dr Hana O'Regan ONZM
Wāhine Toa and champion of equity, language and culture.
Keynote

Dr Margaret Merga
Internationally reknown expert in libraries and literacy.
Keynote

Gabrielle Mace
Passionate librarian empowering students through books and knowledge.
Keynote

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affordable and fun social events and networking
Social

accommodation to suit all budgets with easy access to the venue and city
Accommodation

take a break, bring your family (or not!) Christchurch is a great destination!
Holiday

f SLANZA Connected Community

Programme and registrations
https://slanzaconference.org
Preferential rates for ASLA members

TONIGHT ... I'LL BE READING!
A NOVEL APPROACH TO HOLIDAY READING

Siobhan James discusses her library reading initiative, Books-to-Go, and the success and impact the holiday reading program has had in her school.

How do you get boys reading in the holidays for fun? Sometimes, you have to take an old classic, and serve it up as something new.

Books-to-Go was inspired by initiatives playing on the theme of food delivery services, blended with the idea of a 'Blind date with a book'. Students place their 'order' for either a specific request or mystery bag that contains books and holiday activities. These orders are then either hand-delivered to the student or collected from the library in a brown paper bag (receipt and all). It's just like a restaurant – but food for the mind.

Hungry for inspiration

Working in an all-boys school of just over 1,400 students, I am forever trying to find new and exciting ways to get students reading for leisure. Books-to-Go sounds like a fun challenge, but in truth the idea was born from doomscrolling.

It was while on my phone scrolling through social media platforms (like Facebook and Viva Engage), I found posts mentioning terms such as 'Uber Reads' and 'DeliverReads' alongside logo-adorned brown paper bags. The concept looked new, popular and, more importantly, exciting to run, with one teacher librarian (Elisabeth Porreca-Dubois) running an Uber Reads initiative at their school – and it looked to be a success.

I thought: 'Why not give it a try? What's the worst that could happen?'

> "There's a lot of work that goes into developing an initiative from scratch. Even with visual concepts and mock-ups, you still need the two things all librarians want more of: time and time."

Prepping the orders

Since this was my first year as the teacher librarian, my mantra was 'Go big or go home'. Like a chef in a well-stocked kitchen, I needed to sharpen my tools and get cracking.

A lot of work goes into developing an initiative from scratch. Even with visual concepts and mock-ups, you still need the two things all librarians want more of: time and time. In theory, I knew how to make it work, but time is always the killer in our practice.

It took months of planning and preparation just to get the designs the way I wanted – and that was even before promoting the initiative, making the bags, and gaining final approval.

To keep my sanity and help plan, I divided the components of the plan into three categories:

1. Books-to-Go bag: This included the bag, front label and order receipt, plus any holiday activities that I wanted to include.

2. Order forms: This would give students autonomy about their preference for either a mystery bag (for example, 'Blind date with a book') or for a specific order, and would use both digital and physical forms.

3. Advertising and promotion: This included the creation of both physical and digital posters for the library, which I posted on walls around the school, the school servers as well as digital noticeboards. I also spoke at multiple assemblies.

It sounds daunting, but I did have the help of my assistant. If not for her, I would definitely be overcooked! We spent many afternoons and free moments planning and creating materials. We learned weirdly satisfying facts and skills. Did you know Microsoft Word has a barcode font option? We made fancy designer labels in Canva. We typed and stapled individualised order receipts for each bag. There were Google Forms, which synched to digital displays, and that was just the tech set up! We still needed to spread the word further.

Donning a delivery bag on my back (a giant boardgame bag), my laptop in one hand and scanner in the other, I spoke at assemblies and walked down the hallways into English classrooms to ask: 'Have you placed an order yet?'

Serving success

Calling the initiative a success would be an understatement. I would say it was more than just an appetiser – it was a full multi-course triumph!

ODD AND THE FROST GAINTS

The story was truly amazing and the books were connected in more than one genre. Just amazing

★ ★ ★ ★

Sivansh Chowhury

Some of our student reviews

Books-to-Go Orders ready for delivery and collection

It was definitely a huge success to physically leave the library and approach students in their classrooms and beyond. As a result, they were rushing to the library to fill out their orders, or quickly logging onto their computers to submit their requests. We even had parents place orders for their children, in advance, during parent–teacher interviews after they saw the bags.

We were so busy on the last day of school – orders were literally flying out the door. Teachers spoke to us about how satisfying it was seeing students carrying their Books-to-Go bags outside at bus stops and train stations. It felt good.

For each order, students could write a short review of their selection. Reviews were then placed in a lucky dip with winners drawn at assembly where students could win canteen vouchers and book prizes. Student reviews were also posted on school noticeboards and put on the library shelves for others to read. Students felt like they were being heard and rewarded (both true, of course!) and staff were so happy seeing their students this excited.

Digesting the data

The first time I ran this initiative it was more aimed as a 'blind date'. The second time, I wanted to have both physical and digital order forms to expand accessibility for both students and staff and keep a running tally on orders. By doing this, we were able to identify consistent and interesting trends.

- We lent more than 300 books (110 Books-to-Go orders placed).
- The two most enthusiastic year groups to place orders were Years 7 and 8, followed by Year 10.
- Fantasy was the most popular genre, followed by Mystery and Manga.
- Junior students ordered books en masse, with up to six books per order, mainly from series.
- Senior students were more likely to borrow books based on leadership skills (3), self-help/mental health (2), Indigenous Australian perspectives (8) and LGBTQIA+ (2).

The data seemed to suggest that because books came in a discreet brown bag, students felt comfortable enough to order books that might ordinarily carry a stigma among their peers. Running this initiative indirectly supported those who may feel judged or uncomfortable publicly asking for help. It seemed to emphasise the need to not only have these materials in our school library, but also continue to run Books-to-Go to support all students.

Leaving a tip or two

- **Save where you can.** For those on a tight budget, trying to cut corners where you can helps. I used old school paper bags for the initiative to cut down on buying bags in bulk. Using stores such as Officeworks or online stores can cut down costs if you choose to trial the initiative.
- **Give students a voice.** Students are our primary audience, so their word counts. Taking the time to read student reviews makes a huge difference. One student even told us of books that were damaged or needing an update. Taking that little extra time shows we care.
- **Get help.** Running this initiative solo can be daunting (trust me!). If you have a fellow teacher librarian or assistant, get them to help make up the orders. If you have library leaders/monitors or Duke of Edinburgh volunteers, have them lead the way for advertising or delivering the orders. Teamwork makes the dream work.

The one thing I love about our profession is our passion for knowledge, and our desire to share it. I am more than happy to share all my resources with you, give advice, or just talk through things. There's even a 'how-to' guide out there that will walk you through it.

The only question left is, are you ready to place your order?

Siobhan James
Teacher librarian
Epping Boys High School

INSIGHTS FROM THE DISCOVERING A GOOD READ SURVEY

We look at the results from the 'Discovering a Good Read' survey, uncovering Australian teens' reading habits and strategies to ignite their passion for books amidst social media distractions.

Reading for pleasure opens a world of benefits, from nurturing empathy to enhancing academic performance (Rutherford et al., 2024). However, for many Australian teens, reading books often takes a backseat to social media when it comes to their preferred way to wind down.

The *Discovering a Good Read survey*, conducted by a project team from Deakin University, provides insights into the reading habits of adolescents and the nuanced preferences and challenges we need to address to foster greater reading for pleasure among our teens. We've recently read the report and felt inspired to create our own breakdown of its data, as well as offer some suggestions to help you keep your teens excited about their next read.

Teen reading habits

The survey reveals that only 15% of teens read daily, while 29% do not engage in reading at all during their free time. This, among other statistics, demonstrates preferences for online leisure activities over reading, highlighting the competition for teens' attention.

The spectrum of teen readers

The survey also identifies seven distinct types of teen readers: Fiction Fanatics, Regular Bookworms, Rushed Fans, Casual Dabblers, Holiday Browsers, Sparse Readers and Book Abstainers. Each group exhibits unique characteristics and preferences, which library staff can leverage by tailoring their reading engagement strategies to capture a wide range of reader types.

Fiction Fanatics

Fiction Fanatics read daily and have a strong preference for fiction. They are typically enthusiastic about exploring new releases in their favourite genres and enjoy immersing themselves in complex narratives and character development.

Regular Bookworms

Regular Bookworms also read frequently and appreciate a balanced mix of fiction and non-fiction. They often seek out a variety of genres and are open to recommendations that expand their reading horizons.

Rushed Fans

Rushed Fans, on the other hand, read frequently but in short bursts. This is often due to their busy schedules. They might prefer books that are fast paced and engaging, or those that can be read quickly.

Casual Dabblers

Casual Dabblers read infrequently and have mixed feelings about reading. They might enjoy interactive, book-related activities or events that make reading a more social and engaging experience, helping to spark their interest in books.

Holiday Browsers

Holiday Browsers primarily read during school holidays, taking advantage of their free time to enjoy books they wouldn't typically read during the school term.

Sparse Readers

Sparse Readers rarely pick up a book, often due to a lack of interest or difficulty finding appealing content. For these readers, personalised recommendations and accessible, high-interest materials can be crucial in encouraging more-frequent reading.

Book Abstainers

Lastly, Book Abstainers do not engage in reading at all. Addressing their barriers, such as providing more diverse and relatable content or incorporating multimedia and interactive elements, could help in gradually introducing them to the joys of reading.

Creating personalised experiences for different readers

Recognising and celebrating the differences between each type of reader allows library staff to create more personalised experiences for each cohort.

- For Fiction Fanatics, this might mean recommending new releases in their favourite genres.
- For Regular Bookworms, a diverse array of genres in both fiction and non-fiction areas could keep their reading experience fresh and exciting.
- Introducing fast-paced, engaging books to Rushed Fans could fit their busy lifestyles, while interactive, book-related activities can spark interest in Casual Dabblers.
- For Holiday Browsers, ensuring access to appealing books during school breaks is key.
- Tailored, accessible recommendations can encourage Sparse Readers, while innovative, multimedia content, such as audiobooks, might gradually engage Book Abstainers.

Influences on reading habits

The survey reveals that parental reading habits, peer influence, gender and age significantly impact teens' reading behaviours. Understanding these influences can empower librarians to adopt more nuanced approaches.

Parental reading habits

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's reading habits. The survey notes that teens whose parents read regularly are more likely to develop a love for reading themselves. Librarians could leverage this influence by organising family reading events where parents and teens can read and discuss books together. These events might include family book clubs or read-aloud sessions that create a shared reading experience. Introducing parent-teen reading challenges can also encourage families to read together, with rewards for those who achieve specific reading goals. Additionally, conducting workshops for parents can be instrumental in teaching them how to foster a reading-friendly environment at home and how to select books that their children are more likely to be interested in.

Peer influence

Peers have a significant impact on teens' reading choices. According to the survey, teens often choose books based on recommendations from friends. Librarians can harness this influence by setting up a system where teens can recommend books to each other. For instance, a 'peers picks' section in the library or a peer review board can make book recommendations more relatable and appealing. Facilitating book clubs and social reading groups can also make reading a more social activity, where teens can discuss books with their friends and classmates.
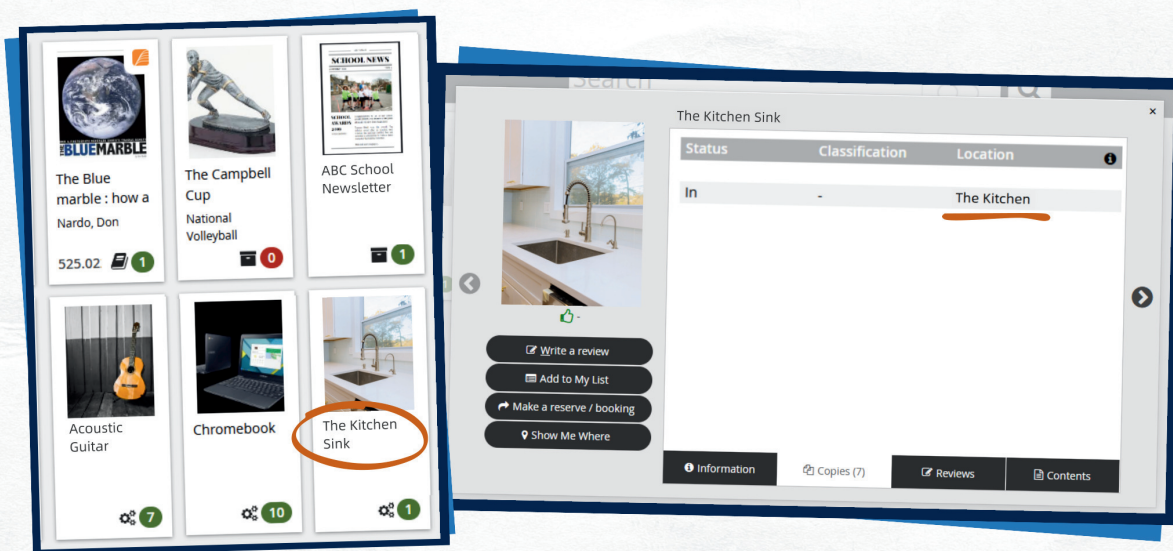
If you have time, creating accounts for your library on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok can help you share book-related content in places where teens are likely to engage with it and share it with their friends.

The role of gender

Gender can affect reading preferences and behaviours. The survey highlights that female-identifying teens may be more inclined towards fiction, while male-identifying teens might prefer non-fiction or graphic novels. Highlighting and including diverse authors and stories within the library collection can help reflect a wide range of experiences and perspectives and foster inclusivity. By incorporating books that represent different cultures, backgrounds and identities, librarians can create a more welcoming environment for all individuals. Additionally, designing inclusive book displays that showcase a variety of genres and authors can inspire teens to explore literature beyond their usual preferences.

Age-appropriate strategies

Age can also influence reading habits, with younger teens often being more consistent readers compared to older teens, according to the survey. To address the decline of consistent reading in older teens, library staff can tailor their strategies based on age groups.

For younger teens (11–13 years), focusing on creating engaging and interactive reading experiences, such as book-themed events, storytelling sessions and interactive book-related activities, can be particularly effective.

For mid-teens (14–15 years), offering a mix of genres and formats, including graphic novels, audiobooks and digital resources, can cater to their diversifying interests as they mature.

For older teens (16–18 years), providing access to a wide range of materials, including career-related books, self-help guides and advanced literature, can keep them engaged. Encouraging participation in book discussions and literary analysis groups can further stimulate their interest in reading and critical thinking.

Explore the report for in-depth insights

As we navigate the evolving landscape of teen literacy, the *Discovering a Good Read survey* serves as a great resource, helping us blaze a trail through the complex jungle of challenges, preferences and distractions that must be addressed to keep our teens reading for pleasure. For those interested in delving deeper into the data, we highly recommend a thorough read of this excellent report.

Article by the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS)

SCHOOL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL LIBRARY COLLECTION RECOVERY INITIATIVE

In early 2023, severe flooding in New Zealand caused significant damage to school libraries, prompting a collaborative recovery effort led by the National Library of New Zealand and the Ministry of Education.

In early 2023, New Zealand faced a series of severe weather events that wreaked havoc across various regions, including Northland, Tāmaki Makaurau, Waikato, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty and Tararua. The resulting floods caused widespread damage, significantly impacting schools and, by extension, their libraries. To understand the extent of the damage and the subsequent recovery efforts for New Zealand school libraries, we spoke with Lewis Brown, the Project Lead for the School library collection recovery initiative.

Extent of the damage

Brown shared, 'In the wake of the floods, the National Library of New Zealand, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, conducted a phone survey of approximately 1,000 schools in the affected regions. The survey revealed that 138 schools suffered damage or loss to property and resources, with 32 of these schools specifically requesting assistance for the loss of library or classroom books.'

Brown went on to detail that the impact of the floods on students' learning was profound. Many schools had to relocate to temporary premises, disrupting the normal learning environment. Additionally, communities faced the loss of homes, as well as vital community supports and infrastructure, which further strained the education system.

Impact on school libraries

School libraries were significantly impacted by the devastation. 'Two schools lost their entire library collections, eight schools lost over 1,000 books each, and four kura kaupapa Māori lost their learning resources,' Brown noted. In total, more than 25,000 books needed to be replaced, and 11 schools required new shelving. Eight of the affected schools did not have a SCIS subscription and were provided with a one-year subscription to help them rebuild their collections.

Supporting schools to rebuild

Rebuilding the affected schools and their libraries has been a collaborative effort. The New Zealand National Library Services to Schools team has played a crucial role by offering advice, professional learning and quality resources to educators. Brown elaborates, 'We provided information and advice on managing flood damage, support for restoring library spaces, and special long-term loans to mitigate collection loss. Additionally, we curated a list of books to support discussions around loss, grief, trauma and dealing with emotions.'

The support extended beyond just physical resources. The initiative aimed to inspire and inform student learning, foster a love of reading, and help students develop a deeper understanding of their culture and heritage.

Looking to the future

The recovery process has been lengthy and challenging. 'The Ministry of Education is leading the efforts to repair and rebuild the affected schools. Some schools have only recently managed to fully restock and reopen their libraries by the second quarter of 2024, due to delays in acquiring replacement books and ongoing repairs or relocations,' Brown shared.

While the road to recovery has been arduous, the efforts of the New Zealand National Library Services to Schools team serve as an inspirational example of the central role that libraries and their support networks can play in times of adversity. The team at SCIS and our parent organisation, Education Services Australia (ESA), wishes all the affected schools in New Zealand and the Services to Schools team all the best with their continuing recovery efforts.

Article by the Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS). Thanks to Lewis Brown and the National Library Services to Schools team for their participation.

TEACHER LIBRARIAN LEADERSHIP AND GENERATIVE AI: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LEADING INNOVATION

Teacher Librarian Matthew Boggon on the pivotal role of teacher librarians in guiding schools through the AI revolution.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT and Perplexity, is undeniably a revolutionary development in the information landscape, and therefore, by extension, the education landscape. The expanse of generative AI is enormous. It has the potential to be used in generating programming, lesson resources, tasks, assessment as well as to source further information. It is also a pathway for students to conduct wider research, in much the same way one would type a prompt into a search engine. This has been acknowledged by the New South Wales Department of Education (NSW DoE) with the development of NSWEduChat, a generative AI model marketed as being a 'private, safe and secure implementation of generative AI' (n.d.). The NSW DoE has also established an executive leadership group tasked with 'implementing policy, guidance and solutions' as it relates to the use of AI in schools (2024). This executive leadership group defines one of its goals as 'providing teachers with statewide professional learning' (NSW DoE, 2024). It is clear that the NSW DoE believes that generative AI will become a mainstay in education, similarly to Web 2.0, and is therefore worthy of providing statewide support to develop teachers' AI skillsets.

The implications for this AI revolution on school libraries and teacher librarians are extensive. These implications, succinctly discussed by Oddone (2023), confront issues such as the accuracy of information, the ethical considerations of using generative AI, our responsibilities as educators and developing effective teaching programs for students. However, another significant implication of the inclusion of AI in education is the leadership role that the teacher librarian will play in the staff setting. This leadership is critical to the role of a teacher librarian, outlined in the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and Australian School Library Association (ASLA) joint statement on teacher librarians in Australia, stating that a teacher librarian will 'lead and provide services and programs … including the professional development of staff' and 'be future-focused with an appreciation of emerging trends in education, technology and librarianship' (2016). It is our duty as teacher librarians to not only embrace the inclusion of generative AI in our schools, but also actively lead our staff in utilising it, for we are the information authorities upon whom our schools depend.

What does teacher librarian leadership in the field of generative AI look like? Given the relative youth of generative AI in education, the teacher librarian acts as an innovative leader, providing staff with the skills necessary to drive an educational vision forward. The first step in accomplishing this is developing your own understanding of generative AI. A 'foundational' understanding of the world of generative AI is vital to the performance of informed leadership (Oddone, 2023). This will allow the teacher librarian to better understand the greater educational directives regarding generative AI, and form them into their own context, leading to the next step in leadership, the unification of a school strategic vision.

The development of a strategic vision regarding generative AI with the school executive is a significant step that must be taken. In understanding the strategic vision of your school or institution, you are better equipped to unify the school library with the broader school plan, and therefore meet the needs of the wider school community (Oberg, 2011; Platt, 2017). You may begin this process by clearly defining the goals of the school library and aligning them with the school vision, utilising this connection to act in the best interests of your school (Kemp, 2017). In doing so, the teacher librarian is leading with a broader, more-inclusive sense of purpose. On one hand, you are serving the needs of your school community and students, but you are also situating yourself as an ongoing leadership figure in the field, maintaining the credibility and authority of the library and cementing its place as a modern information hub (Green, 2011).

Following the creation of a shared strategic vision with school executive staff, a teacher librarian must then consider their approach to professional development. It is crucial here to consider that you, as a teacher librarian, are the expert within your own context; you best understand the needs of your students, and therefore your staff. The manifestation of professional learning is entirely dependent on your school context.

It is important to firstly recognise that professional development for teaching must be delivered effectively for the learning to convey. Effective professional development involves the following principles: modelling of effective practice, coherent delivery, focus and collaboration (NESA, 2021). In crafting your professional learning, consider the needs of your staff, and succinctly transfer your expertise to them, offering collaborative opportunities and effective modelling. Your school is likely time-poor; if you have successfully reached this point, you have been trusted with the golden resource of time, and utilising it effectively is an important component of the trust relationship intrinsic to school leadership.

It may be suitable to provide targeted development programs, working with faculties according to their needs. A relevant example of this may be working with faculties where assessment is largely dependent on research components, such as History, Society and Culture, or Design and Technology, and provide an individualised, specialised program for idea generation and source acquisition using generative AI. Humphries (2023) outlines the significance of generative AI in research, discussing most significantly its ability to reduce the time and cost of research, indicating that developing these research skills using generative AI acts as skill development in the same way that research skill

lessons and digital literacy programs often taught or supported by teacher librarians are. This is an extension of the work many teacher librarians are already successfully delivering.

You may find it more appropriate to consult an entire staff body, providing them with the relevant skills needed in order to access, use, understand and teach with generative AI, as well as consider its ethical implications and potential pitfalls. This aligns closely with a whole-school approach to generative AI and is a significant time-saver on the above development program. You may decide on a blended model, whereby a whole-school approach is initially used, with targeted approaches discussed with faculties.

Following the implementation of emboldening staff, a teacher librarian must gather and utilise evidence of its success. It is impossible for a teacher librarian to evaluate the success of their leadership without relevant data (Bentley et al., 2016). This evidence will come in multiple forms, such as:

- feedback from staff
- feedback from students
- inclusion of generative AI in programming and assessment
- teacher capabilities
- ongoing requests, communications and interactions with staff regarding their professional development.

This evidence may depict your leadership as wholly successful or, more likely, you may recognise avenues for future professional leadership as you seek to embolden staff with the ability to utilise generative AI in one or more areas. It is thus your role to collate the evidence and use it to inform your future practice. Similarly, it is also highly encouraged to remain up to date with research and literature regarding generative AI, so that you may continue to make informed, adaptive and responsive professional development for staff. Undertaking your own professional development opportunities will support you to create relevant, useful programs for your colleagues, inform your leadership and continue networking with people facing similar challenges.

Teacher librarian leadership in the information field does not 'end'. The information landscape does not cease to develop. It is critical to recognise that generative AI is rapidly changing the landscape in which education exists, for all parties in the education process. Ultimately, the goal of leading our staff through this educational revolution is not to educate them and move on. Teacher librarians are key in the process of enacting cultural change, and the move towards the utilisation of modern information technologies in all aspects of teaching practice. We, as information experts, must continue to construct an education environment where students and staff are equipped with the necessary skills to navigate an ever-changing landscape.

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FOR YOUR REFERENCE

Martin Gray looks at a practical approach to teaching referencing skills. His model guides students from basic source lists to advanced in-text citations and annotated bibliographies, ensuring they are prepared for post-school academic success.

In my library career, I have found that many students look at referencing as a scary and unnecessary burden. While copying a link to a website may be easy and make sense, the rigid formality of APA or Oxford formats might seem to some quite complex and a waste of time. However, referencing is not just required at the Tertiary level, but also for some HSC subjects. As my library works largely with senior students, I have devoted a lot of time into improving these skills for my students, not just at the senior level, but at younger year levels too, before the skills are fully required and assessed.

Plagiarism is a key concept for all students to understand, and is taken seriously by the NSW Department of Education. Yet when university librarians discuss student needs with secondary school teacher librarians, they often mention a lack of referencing skills from new students. Referencing, being an academic information skill, falls very squarely within the realm of the teacher librarian, but there is little agreement on what referencing skills need to be taught, and when.

To support sequential building of referencing skills in students, I propose a three-level model, and suggest a rough timeline for when specific skills should be taught, aligning with NSW educational sources, but largely applicable in other states.

The three levels of referencing teaching I suggest be taught across Stages 4 to 6 of the curriculum.

- Stage 4: Creating a reference list or bibliography of sources used, in a recognised format.
- Stage 5: Creating a reference list or bibliography of sources used WITH use of in-text citation, footnotes or endnotes as required.
- Stage 6: Creating a reference list or bibliography of sources used WITH use of in-text citation, footnotes or endnotes. Annotated or critical bibliography as required.

This progression matches requirements already existing within schools, in at least some subjects, and allows for building previously learnt skills from the stage before.

Stage 4 (Years 7–8)

Coming into Year 7, students already have a range of experiences. Some may have already started making lists of sources, though not in a recognised format. For many students, the concept of recording resources used is new. At this level, the most basic concept of recording lists can be introduced.

Students in this stage of learning should acknowledge sources, according to the NSW Information Fluency Framework (IFF), a support document to the NSW Library Policy. The Ethical strand for Stage 4 states: *IFF4E.2.2: Demonstrate reasoning when creating information by applying ethical information protocols in context*.

This includes selecting and properly acknowledging sources. While the standard supports referencing, it doesn't specify the level of detail. However, given the need for referencing in later school years and the availability of tools such as Google Docs, MS Word and Citemaker, many students, particularly academically gifted ones or those in Year 8, could be taught a more standardised referencing format.

Stage 5 (Years 9–10)

In Stage 5, the History curriculum has a requirement for students to reference sources, though it does not state whether in-text citation or footnotes are also required.

In developing these texts and organising and presenting their arguments, students use historical terms and concepts, evidence identified in sources and they reference these sources.

This would suggest by Year 9, students need to know how to reference, and those looking to more academic subjects would benefit from being taught how to use in-text citations or footnotes as well, as these will be required in senior years.

Stage 6 (Years 11–12)

While not every subject requires referencing or annotated bibliographies, the use of referencing is encouraged to avoid malpractice. Both the Australian Certification Examination (ACE) Manual and the All My Own Work (AMOW) course clearly state the requirement for students to reference and cite sources appropriately.

Footnotes and citations are also both mentioned. This shows that full referencing, not just a bibliography, is required, and that different referencing standards may also be necessary. As such, it is recommended to teach correct in-text referencing for Year 11 and 12 students.

Teaching how to create an annotated bibliography should be reserved for subjects which specifically require it, for example, The Year 12 History Extension.

A screenshot showing details in a library management system resource record that are relevant for referencing purposes.

Pedagogy

Teaching referencing skills in a focused, chunked manner is likely more efficient and effective. In the age of misinformation, it's more important than ever for students to understand how to conduct quality research and properly reference their sources. Teaching the skills listed here, aligned with the year-level timings, allows students to progressively and comprehensively engage with referencing in a manner that will likely enhance the research and information literacy skills. It also allows teacher librarians to demonstrate referencing tools, which reinforces our role as information specialists within the school at a time when these skillsets are needed more than ever. In doing so, we show students that the expertise they need for presenting information is available in the very place they often search for it – the library.

Useful information

How to use in-text citation in Google Docs
youtu.be/r6BfrRoXRGQ
How to use in-text citation MS Word
https://youtu.be/ynvDBl5fltI

Terminology

Reference list

A reference list is a list of all sources cited in an academic work or research paper. Each entry should include the author's name, publication date, title of work, and publisher. A reference list generally sits at the end of the research paper and works cited are listed in alphabetical order by each author's last name.

Bibliography

A bibliography is a detailed list of all sources both consulted and cited in the creation of an academic work or research paper.

Annotated bibliography

An annotated bibliography is similar to a bibliography except that it also includes a brief summary and evaluation of each source. They are often used to provide readers with further detailed information about sources used.

Footnote

A footnote is a note placed at the bottom of a page that gives additional information about the text on that page, such as sources cited or to definitions or explanations of complex concepts.

Endnote

Endnotes function in the same way as footnotes except that they are placed at the end of a chapter, book or document.

In-text citation

An in-text citation references a source within the text of a paper or academic work. In-text citations are used in situ to credit content and ideas directly to sources used. A full list of in-text citations is then provided in the reference list.

Here is a sample in-text citation (APA style):

Gray (2024) noted that using a three-step approach to teaching referencing had evidence of success in students from Years 7 to 12.

This in-text citation tells the reader that the information in the sentence came from a source published by Gray in 2024.

References

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WEBSITE + APP REVIEWS

Nigel Paull reviews the latest educational websites and apps you can use in your library. Use the web address to view the resource, download the SCIS record by using the SCIS number or the QR code.

AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION CENTRE

www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au

The Australian Constitution Centre (ACC) has developed resources that embrace aspects of the Australian Curriculum HASS, Civics and Citizenship, Years 5–10. The teaching and learning resources may be used when visiting the ACC or as standalone units.

SCIS No: 5495805

BE THAT TEACHER

www.bethatteacher.gov.au

Careers advisors – and teaching staff in general – may use this resource to help inspire the next generation of teachers. A joint Australian, state and territory government initiative, Be That Teacher focuses on inspirational teacher stories, pathways to teaching, scholarships and financial incentives.

SCIS No: 5495826

DANCE WITH A DIGITAL HUMAN

www.csiro.au/en/education/Resources/teacher-resources/Dance-with-a-Digital-Human

The CSIRO showcases 'how artificial intelligence and motion capture techniques can transform humans into digital humans'. The activities are linked to the Australian Curriculum, focusing on Science outcomes, and Health and PE outcomes. Suitable for students from Years 1–9.

SCIS No: 5495854

JUNIOR LANDCARE LEARNING CENTRE

juniorlandcare.org.au/learningcentre

This section of the Junior Landcare website offers teachers a variety of resources linked to the Australian Curriculum. Topics include biodiversity, traditional land management and cultural heritage, waste management and food production.

SCIS No: 1388492

HEALTHY EATING ADVISORY SERVICE: SCHOOLS

heas.health.vic.gov.au/im-working-in/schools

Schools wanting to promote healthy eating will discover strategies relating to canteen menus, food intolerance, healthy recipes, online training and policy creation.

SCIS No: 5496123

ITRANSLATE VOICE

apps.apple.com/au/app/itranslate-voice/id522626820

Teachers with EAL/D students may find this a handy app for real-time language translation. The app is available in several languages, and is initially free.

SCIS No: 5495812

GOAT MATHS

www.abc.net.au/education/these-maths-games-are-the-greatest-of-all-time/101946832

Designed for primary students, GOAT Maths aims to extend mathematical thinking and skills. The games can be played as a class or small group to enhance exploration and discussion of mathematics concepts.

SCIS No: 5496124

NGARRNGGA

www.ngarrngga.org/

Ngarrngga is a project from the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Education, Indigenous Studies Unit and Indigenous Knowledge Institute. Curriculum-aligned resources are available for stages 2–5, in all learning areas.

SCIS No: 5495861

The websites and apps selected for review are often of a professional nature and should be initially viewed by teachers and library staff to determine suitability for students. The links, content and address of these sites are subject to change.

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