Content curation – what, why and how
*Articles to help you add this to your collection development bag of tricks*

SLANZA’s business membership
*Details of this new programme inside*

EPIC – online resources
*Literature Resource Centre and Books & Authors*

Read it! Loved it!
*Gavin Jones talks about creating his readers advisory website*

Professional Development survey results
Editorial
Donna Watt, SLANZA Communications Leader

Content curation is, as Judy O’Connell suggests in her opening article, the latest buzz word in libraries, and indeed, across a range of online education and business contexts. I remember, many years ago, following the introduction of the internet to my school library, taking on the task of sharing great links with staff in my school. As the number of links worth sharing becomes almost too vast to imagine, we now have an even greater responsibility to find ways to curate great online content for our audience in ways that are useful and that contribute to teaching and learning.

In this issue, we hear from librarians using online curation tools such as Livebinders and Scoop.it to share and promote a range of educational topics and tools. Judy O’Connell shares her thinking about curation and the imperatives embedded in current research, and our colleagues at National Library have contributed excellent articles that provide some practical information on how we can assess and use curation tools, some pointers on content for creative reuse, and some strong arguments as to why librarians should be riding the wave of content curation.

We hope that this issue challenges your thinking and makes you consider yet another dimension to your professional practice. We believe that content curation is an area in which library teams can show expertise and leadership, and make valuable contributions to teaching and learning.

Please promote Collected to your teaching colleagues – you may like to print off and bind a copy or two, and leave them in strategic places around your school. This topic may prove to be an excellent conversation starter, and we all know how important it is for us to be having those collegial conversations.

Thank you, once again, to the team of writers who have contributed this fabulous selection of articles, and to the SLANZA communications team who have, once again, excelled.

Donna
donnaraelina@gmail.com

Contents

Feature articles

Content curation is the new black
Judy O’Connell
4

Curating content for creative reuse
Esther Casey
6

Content curation as marketing tool
Peter Murgatroyd
7

Content curation: a checklist
Carolyn Bouffard & Dylan Owen
8

Exploring scoop.it
Hillary Greenebaum
10

Using LiveBinders
Senga White
12

EPIC insights — Literature Resource Centre and Books & Authors
Paula Banks
15

Professional Development survey results
21

Regular columns

News from the President
3

Upcoming events
13

Contains Graphic Content
17

Interview - Gavin Jones
19

Contact us
SLANZA@xtra.co.nz
When the theme of content curation was proposed for this issue of Collected, I was delighted as this is an issue that we are wrestling with at St Cuthbert’s College. What do you use to get the best and most appropriate information and resources to the user, to support inquiry and learning? And how do you work out what is best to use?

We were all challenged by Joyce Valenza and Judy O’Connell at the 2011 SLANZA conference, when they presented us with a stunning range of different tools, tips and tricks we could use. Their sessions are still available at www.slanza.org.nz/conference and provide a reminder of why both are considered leaders in this area. Judy has contributed an article that will start you thinking and reflecting on your own practice, and what your users need from you.

At the conference, Joyce said that creating a Word document with a list of websites and handing it out was no longer satisfactory with so many tools available, and that we all need to look at our professional practice and how we present information to staff and students. The team at St Cuthbert’s is investigating how we can best share resources with our staff and students, as we know that it is an area we can improve upon and that will benefit everyone. We are investigating Weebly and LiveBinders to see what works best for our situation and users.

I’m looking forward to reading all the articles provided by our contributors as I value them all and know that what I read will challenge and enlighten me.

Evidence based practice is another area that the St Cuthbert’s team are looking at, along with so many others in the school library community. We all know it is important, but what evidence do you collect, how do you do it and what do you do with what you’ve collected?

It gives me great pleasure to announce on behalf of the National Executive that SLANZA, in association with Syba Signs, are bringing Dr Ross Todd to New Zealand to present his full day seminar ‘School libraries making a difference: What is your evidence and how do you get it?’ The first seminar is in Auckland on Thursday July 19th and the second in Wellington on Saturday July 21st, which will also include the SLANZA AGM. Keep an eye out for further information and registration details, which will be available very soon. The National Executive is committed to supporting SLANZA members to attend this vital professional development, and will be making every effort to ensure it is affordable and available for all. SLANZA members will receive a discounted rate, so make sure your membership is up to date!

BNZ Literary Awards

New Zealand’s greatest writers were students once.

For over half a century BNZ has been proud to support New Zealand’s preeminent short story writing competition – the BNZ Literary Awards. Now in their 53rd year, the Awards were founded to acknowledge the work of Katherine Mansfield and to celebrate New Zealand literature.

But the BNZ Literary Awards aren’t just for established writers. They’re also about encouraging our next generation of writing talent. That’s why there’s a special category just for secondary school students.

Your school could win $2,000!

If you think your school is teaching some of New Zealand’s future literary greats, please encourage these students to enter the Young Writer’s Awards for Secondary School Students. The winning student will receive $1,500 for themselves and $2,000 for their school.

The experience of writing their own short story is valuable and we hope to see as many students enter as possible. They can check out the entry criteria and conditions of entry on our website. Entries can be submitted online or via post.

Entries open 1st May and close 30th June 2012.

Who knows, you could have the next C.K. Stead, Maurice Shadbolt, Frank Sargeson, Keri Hulme, Vincent O’Sullivan, Daphne de Jong, Charlotte Grimshaw or Carl Nixon (all past winners of the BNZ Literary Awards) sitting in your schools…
Content curation in libraries

Is it the new black?

by Judy O’Connell, Information Studies lecturer at Charles Sturt University, NSW

It seems that the latest buzzword around the web is ‘content curation’. There are literally millions of posts, web articles, and YouTube videos about this already with new tools and marketing strategies being deployed to meet this ‘new’ demand – and most of these posts have nothing to do with libraries!

Yet content curation is core business for all libraries, whether they are the local school library or the National Library itself. This is because culture and knowledge power learning and hence our society’s achievements. So it is worth pausing and exploring the relevance of ‘content curation’ being powered by the latest Web tools, in order to better understand the influence of this new movement on the learning and teaching environment of our schools.

The notion of content curation is one that has traditionally been associated with libraries, archives, galleries, or organisations working with objects or data in some way. In that context selecting data or objects for storage, preservation, access and re-use has been very much an institutional and collection development activity. In the same way, a school library collection represented a form of content curation – a way of sharing vital cultural or information objects and sources of information with its students and school community. But times have moved on, and in a connected world school libraries are busy adapting to the digital needs of their students not only to continue to build a knowledge and reading culture in the school, but to also provide the necessary divergence and convergence in media needed to provide the materials for motivation, differentiation, collaboration and connections necessary for 21st century learning (Lamb & Johnson, 2010) (Hay & Foley, 2009).

Students use technology to research online, anytime, anywhere, and because of this students in primary and secondary schools need to be nurtured in ways to learn how to learn from the multiplicity of resources at their disposal, using the best information organization and critical thinking strategies that that we can show them. We need to build a strong digital culture of enquiry at the heart of each of our schools. As Gordon, (2010, p. 79) explains, a culture of inquiry emerges as teachers become learners, and learners are self- and peer-taught, and everyone becomes a researcher.

This 21st-century environment sees our students involved in five interwoven, integrated kinds of learning: curriculum content, information literacy, learning how to learn, literacy competence, and social skills (Kuhlthau & Maniotes, 2010).

It’s in this environment, and with the power of Web 2.0, that content curation has metamorphosed into new channels of information flow.

The web is a vast open repository of multimodal artefacts and information sources, and certainly not the place to send students deep diving from the front end of Google’s search portal. Librarians have always known this, and so have been actively engaged in developing strong information literacy seeking habits for lifelong learning. But that is no longer enough – not in an era of social networking, 3G and open wireless access to information anytime, anywhere. Web 2.0 revolutionized the means at our disposal to filter and share information. Whether by managing information by social bookmarking or RSS reads and feeds, or communicating with our school community via blogs, wikis, podcasts, YouTube, or Facebook, students, teachers and school librarians have entered into digital conversations. widgets, portals, apps, feeds and aggregators and more now provide us with our ‘tools of trade’ for information curation.

What does this mean?

Content curation consists of identifying and organizing information that others have produced about a specific topic to share with the learning community using socially powered tools. Content exploration and learning demands a mix and match approach of networked conversation, collaboration and content curation, which means that a school librarian has to be intrinsically linked to effective and responsive information curation and dissemination in distributed environments within and beyond the school.

Use of Web 2.0 tools has become embedded in good practice, and information curation has extended beyond the library catalogue to library and school information management systems for bibliographic and media resources, and various organizational tools that reside beyond the school in web environments, such as Libguides, Diigo, Live Binders, wikis, Delicious, Scoopit, Pearltrees, Google tools, RSS, media tools, Netvibes, and many more.

This is exactly why teacher librarians are re-thinking what ‘collection’ of information means, thereby supporting personalized and collaborative information seeking and knowledge conversations. Since information literacy is intended to mean being aware of our information use experiences and the many different ways in which we can engage with information (Bruce et al, 2011), then content curation has to be investigated, understood and adopted as part of our information literacy strategy.
The new core information research tools available for students, teachers and school librarians adopting information literacy in a networked environment include:

- Microblogging tools for information sharing by teachers, students, classes and the school community in primary and secondary schools e.g. Edmodo, Yammer, Google+, or Twitter
- Social Bookmarking and tagged collections e.g. Diigo, Delicious, PearlTrees, Flickr, Vodpod
- Collaborative writing, editing, mind-mapping and presentation tools e.g. Google docs, Exploratree, VoiceThread, Mindmeister, Wikispaces
- Research tools for online information management, writing and collaboration e.g. Zotero, Endnote, EasyBib, Bibme, Mendeley, Refworks
- Information capture in multiple platforms and on multiple devices e.g. Evernote, Scrible

There is a great deal of rich content available for students and teachers that is collaboratively built and shared, including blogs, wikis, images, videos, places, events, music, books and more. Searching for content requires wise information literacy strategies and tools (embedded in the curriculum learning processes) to avoid being lost in the information labyrinth. Content curation is also about organizing, filtering and “making sense of” information on the web and sharing the very best pieces of content that has been selected for a specific purpose or need. It comes down to organizing your sources, knowing which of them are trustworthy, and seeing patterns. So for teachers and librarians it comes down to keeping up the pace in adopting these strategies and using tools to publish curated content in the sense of ‘reporting’ what is happening or what is relevant and new on a topic of research or interest.

A school librarian can do three things:

- Curate your own content for yourself (your own ‘go-to’ repository with tools like Diigo, Delicious, PearlTrees, Evernote, Pinboard, Pinterest, Vodpod, Flickr, RSS readers
- Share this first level curation because your online tools are socially connected
- Curate content for others via targeted tweets or Google+ circles, Facebook pages and groups, wikis, Livebinders, etc
- Be involved in dynamic content curation for information distribution in the global context
- Return information back to your social community at the third level of curation.

It is when school librarians reach the third level of curation that the idea of socially connected ways of publishing ‘what’s new’ and ‘what’s important’ as flexible information sources becomes a demonstration of new forms of information literacy actions for their students.

This is not unrealistic, but the next level of our information literacy practices, because information seeking is no longer a solitary activity but includes being involved in personalized and collaborative information aggregation and knowledge sharing.

Content curation is part of an overall strategy to tame information chaos. It is all about knowing, learning, sharing and teaching, all in one! In addition, by providing a social infrastructure which facilitates sharing, the human aspects of the scholarly knowledge cycle may be accelerated and time-to-discovery reduced.

Do you still need convincing? Perhaps if you visit A Few Good Scoops for Us you will scoop the news that you need to help understand why content curation is the new black!

References


Curating content for creative reuse
Finding content and using it with confidence

by Esther Casey, Development Specialist, Learning Futures & Development,
National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Matarauranga O Aotearoa
The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua

Content curation is taking the library world by storm and the abundance of wonderful tools that are available enables making connections between students and the content they need easier than ever.

In schools, students are more and more often required to present their learning in a range of interesting and creative ways. Digital stories, posters, web pages, videos and infographics created by students are now commonplace and have often replaced text-heavy responses such as essays and narratives. Some students enjoy the challenge of drawing each image, or taking their own photographs but due to the project or research topic or other limitations, that isn’t always the way. Often, this is the point where Google and the cut and paste functions come in.

Understanding the limitations of copyright and the skills of finding content for reuse are key aspects of digital citizenship and the librarian in the school is well placed to lead the teaching and learning of this. There are many ideas for how to do this in the Free to Mix guide. There is also a great opportunity here to enable the staff and students at the school to find content for reuse in a structured, supported and simple manner because, quite frankly, you do need to know a few tricks.

Some wonderful search tools will become the staple links for any curation project that supports students in finding content for reuse. Digital NZ has a set of filters for usage rights and will find New Zealand images, video, data and more from over 100 New Zealand organisations. Flickr, YouTube and Vimeo all have ways of finding reusable content, if you know where to look, and deep in Google’s advanced search you will also find some options for limiting results. Have a look at the Safer Journeys example below for the ways of limiting to this content. And make sure you know about and promote these two meta search tools developed by Creative Commons - CCSearch and Let’sCC.

You can probably use any of the curation tools that others have mentioned in this journal. You are simply selecting and arranging a collection of the most appropriate tools and resources that students, and teachers, can use to find reusable content. The way in which you arrange them, and the extra bit of guidance you provide, should make for a comprehensive and very useful content collection.

As an example of a content curation project for reusable content using Prezi, we made this reusable content resource collection to support the NZTA remix competition, Safer Journeys for Teens. The most appropriate way of grouping links for this purpose was by types of content, so links to places for video, sounds and images were put together on the page. We added some hints for finding the best content and some possible keywords related to road safety. This scaffolding will hopefully allow the students to concentrate on the message they wish to convey rather than the mechanics of finding appropriate content. Meanwhile, they are becoming familiar with the concepts of Creative Commons and searching beyond standard Google.

Nikki Robertson has used Pinterest to collate resources on copyright and fair use to bring together the resources most appropriate for her community. She has included information around citations and plagiarism as well as many links to a wide variety of content repositories.

It would be reasonably simple to select, arrange and share these resources in whatever context is most appropriate for your school. Wikis, Learning Management Systems and any curation tool you choose will provide an engaging, accessible and endlessly useful collection of tools for students to find content for reuse.

Through promoting this collection and your expertise, students will soon be creating new content by remixing the old with confidence, pride and a good understanding of the amount of amazing reusable content out there.

Further reading
Creative Commons Aotearoa www.creativecommons.org.nz
CC Kiwi video vimeo.com/25684782
Content curation as marketing tool
Can it grow your professional profile?

by Peter Murgatroyd, Programme Adviser, Services to Schools
National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mataranganga O Aotearoa
The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua

It is commonly accepted that libraries have two front doors – a physical door to the library space and a virtual front door to a collection of online resources and services.

Content curation offers librarians a potential paradigm shift to a new dimension of access and visibility – moving beyond the virtual front door towards a ubiquitous presence embedded in the information ecology of the user. Emerging content curation tools offer a platform for engagement, collaboration and communication with an audience that is not determined by institutional, geographic, or demographic boundaries but by a shared common interest and information need.

Libraries and librarians do not have a monopoly on content curation – indeed in an online environment it could be argued that all organisations are publishers and all individuals with a social network presence are potential curators. Identifying, contextualising and annotating content for re-dissemination through online communication channels is as much a social as an economic imperative.

Content curation is a tool for companies, organisations and individuals to engage with an audience, build profile and strengthen recognition and branding. For libraries and librarians it is absolutely critical that they are clear about the audience that they are trying to reach, the areas of common interest they share with that target audience and their information needs.

Librarians need to be mindful of how the library or librarian role is currently perceived and understood and to use the curation opportunity to shape those perceptions and understandings with their audience. What distinguishes excellent content curation from noise or spam is the knowledge and expertise of the curator in selecting, contextualising and adding value to content that has true relevance and resonance to its target audience.

Building trust. Establishing your reputation as an expert. Demonstrating credibility and integrity. Building your influence. These are all legitimate objectives in embarking on content curation. However before setting out on your journey you must have a well defined scope for the content that you will curate and a strategy for maintaining and building your online presence and linking it to your overall library marketing strategy. How does your content curation strengthen and communicate your library brand or profile? How does it generate traffic – both physical and virtual - to your library, its resources and services? How does it extend your sphere of influence with key stakeholders and decision makers? Marketing is not about promoting, advertising and selling a product or service. Marketing is about engaging with customers, understanding their needs, developing products and services that meet those needs, and building channels for communication and participation.

Simple rules to follow include: keeping your content up-to-date, fresh and relevant; sticking to your defined niche and area of expertise; and connecting with users in their spaces: blogs, Facebook, Twitter, email listservs, and Scoop.its etcetera. Your curation must be visible and infinitely shareable.

It is important to understand that engagement and communication is a two-way process and you must also be listening to your target audiences’ messages and participating in their conversations.

Beyond curating for your students and teachers, content curation could be used to market the school to its local community – and the librarian could raise their visibility and profile within the school by taking the lead on such an initiative. Content curation has the potential to be a marketing tool for your school, for your library and its services, and indeed for you as a professional within the broader library and education sector. Becoming a recognised leader in content curation within your school may also open the door for opportunities for library-teacher collaboration to assist teachers and students in developing their skills in content curation.

Librarians tend to be very good early adopters of new technologies and there is certainly a wave of excitement within the library community about content curation. However the key is not the technology or platforms themselves, it’s about how we position ourselves within our target audiences, aligning our content curation with a clear understanding of their information needs, and having a defined strategy for leveraging the content curation opportunity to raise our profile and influence within our schools.

Further reading
Content curation: a powerful community-building tool
Content curation strategies to boost your online business
Content curation: definitions & context for content marketing
Marketing library services using web 2.0
Marketing libraries in a web 2 world
A marketer’s guide to content curation
Content curation: a checklist

by Carolyn Bouffard and Dylan Owen
National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Matauranga O Aotearoa
The Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua

What is content curation?

How do you find the ‘best’ information? How do you select, sort and share it with your audience in meaningful ways, especially in this age of information overload? One solution is using online content curation tools.

While there’s no one definition (it’s as varied as that for Web 2.0) content curation is about the continual finding and sharing of relevant content, analogue and online. Sound familiar? That’s exactly what librarians, teachers, journalists have always done for their users. As Rohit Bhargava states in his succinct definition,

“Content Curation is a term that describes the act of finding, grouping, organizing or sharing the best and most relevant content on a specific issue.”

Rohit Bhargava
rohitbhargava.com/2011/03/the-5-models-of-content-curation.html

Content curation tools

Online content curation is currently experiencing a boom with those involved in managing and distributing information - from professionals to the online DIY crowd.

This is partly due to a growing range of interactive curation tools now available. These allow you to gather, organise and distribute online information in accessible and meaningful ways.

Sites like LiveBinders, Paper.li, Scoop.it, Pinterest and most recently Pinwheel give you the ability to create online magazines, newspapers, bulletin boards, and interactive maps which you then populate with content of your (or your client’s) choice. Other tools can link to specific feeds and curate, select or summarise the most suitable or ‘top’ stories for you. Google Alerts is an early example of this, another more recent one is Summify.

They’re also free and incredibly easy to use. Often you simply sign up, download a small app and that’s it, you’re ready to choose your topic and select and share content.

These tools are becoming very popular. Pinterest lets users create virtual themed pin boards where they can annotate and ‘pin’ photographs or videos they find on other websites, then share. Currently it’s the fastest-growing website in history, with a 145% increase in use since January this year! Interestingly 80% of its user base is female.

Beautiful Libraries on Pinterest

Librarians are now using these tools to make sense of the online information flow or at least filter out pertinent content which can then be shared with or support their students or fellow professionals.

Collegial examples include:

Services to Schools Lisa Oldham’s School library future thinking
Linda Braun’s Content Curation for Teen Librarians
Nikki Robertson’s Copyright & Fair Use Resources

Choosing a content curation tool

So how do you know which curation tool is right for you? There are a number of ways. A quick fix is Google – just type in this search string – “Online content curation for libraries” to explore a library perspective on these tools and specific examples of their use.

However given the growing and wide variety of content curation tools available before you choose one it is important to think carefully about the purpose of your project, the type of content you will be curating, who is involved and exactly what you hope to accomplish

Focus Questions

1. Who is my target audience?
2. What is my content scope? Where is this content found and are there any copyright issues around it?
3. Who will be responsible for curation and upkeep?
4. How long will this project continue? Is it for a specific time/unit or open-ended?
5. Where will this project be displayed? How do I want others to access it?
If you are using this tool with students you may also want to consider:

1. Is it easy (and free) for students to set up their own accounts?
2. Can students add content/comments/notes on other students’ projects?
3. Do I want students to use it individually or in groups?
4. Are students aware of the limitations of copyright, and skilled in finding content to reuse, like CC licensed content?
5. How much time are students required to spend curating their projects? Will I give them time in class or expect them to do this at home?

Checklist to evaluate a content curation tool

When evaluating content curation tools you might like to use this following checklist to help you decide on the best tool for your ongoing needs or for a specific project.

Using this handy template will certainly help you and your students to identify the most appropriate digital content curation tool and go a long way in helping you tame that information overload beast!

Want to see more?

30+ Cool Content Curation Tools for Personal & Professional Use
Digital Content Curation is a Career for Librarians
Free to Mix guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist to Evaluate a Content Curation Tool</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comment/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is it free? If not, does it fit my budget?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it hosted online?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it by invite only or can I join up immediately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the instructions clear, organised and easy to follow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it easy to use and not intimidating to new users (including students)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it allow multiple information formats (images, WebPages, videos, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I easily embed it into other platforms?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it searchable?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I organise information into folders/tabs/sub-tabs etc?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I curate more than one topic with my account? How many?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can it be shared easily with others? How?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I automatically alert others when I add new content (e.g. through RSS feeds)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it allow me to add comments, attributions and/or annotate content?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it allow others to leave comments and/or annotate content?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it suggest and bring in content for me to sort through and evaluate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am I able to bring in content that I find myself?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much ‘maintenance’ is required? How often will I (or my students) need to commit in order to use this tool effectively?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it create a visually attractive end-product that is clear and easy to negotiate (e.g. not a lot of scrolling)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the last SLANZA conference, I heard the term curation, yet did not fully understand what it looked like in the context of library. Time passed, and my curiosity simmered on a back burner. Finally, one rainy day over the Christmas holidays, I stumbled upon ‘Scoop.it’ and looked at a few examples. It all became very concrete and I realized this iteration of curation referred to an organization of information (not art!) for presentation.

As I created my first page on Scoop.it, I reflected upon what it potentially means for learners in today’s world. To help me connect the dots inside my head, the best analogy I could generate was an online magazine. This approach includes (a) a picture to engage students, who often possess high levels of visual literacy, (b) a blurb to explain the relevance, more about the site, and why they might look at it, and (c) the hyperlink, in readable text. Each site fills one box. The number of boxes per page is determined by how many sites you add to your topic. By the end of that morning, I had created a decent page with eight boxes and linked it to my cloud-based Oliver site.

How did I actually create my page? I first came up with the topic: ‘Learning about New Zealand’. I went to www.scoop.it, created an account, and named my topic. I soon realized there are two streams of sources: pre-selected sites and sites generated (curated) from my keywords. I needed to come up with accurate and comprehensive keywords to search the web for me so I copied and pasted a long list of key terms from other sites to be sure I included everything. Using your key terms, Scoop.it trawls the web for you.

Once you have your topic, there is a blue radio button on the right side that says curate. Press that and you start to review, analyze, and potentially select sites to add to your magazine. As I reviewed the generated sites, I had to be extremely discerning and only add the sites that fit my purpose from sources I trusted and carefully reviewed. I received a plethora of sites; some looked promising but many ended up being superficial or useless. There are tools to delete the source or simply clear the page.

After a quick browse through pre-selected sites, I then thought about what sites I knew I wanted to add to my site, including The National Library’s Quick Links for students, Matapithi, Infoblitz, Radio NZ, and other NZ based sites that offer large amount of reputable information, primary sources, video, and sound files along with many images. The pictures are important, similar to a book cover, brand, or logo. Students respond to graphics so I had to find images with a creative commons type license to stay within copyright regulations.

Getting pictures was simple. For most of the sites a picture just appeared; it was like adding an article to Facebook where you can select from a variety of thumbnail images. For other sites I had to find a photo to represent the web site.

Keywords are essential for automatically searching the web for you. The keyword field expands out of view.

Once you have your topic, there is a blue radio button on the right side that says curate. Press that and you start to review, analyze, and potentially select sites to add to your magazine. As I reviewed the generated sites, I had to be extremely discerning and only add the sites that fit my purpose from sources I trusted and carefully reviewed. I received a plethora of sites; some looked promising but many ended up being superficial or useless. There are tools to delete the source or simply clear the page.

After a quick browse through pre-selected sites, I then thought about what sites I knew I wanted to add to my site, including The National Library’s Quick Links for students, Matapithi, Infoblitz, Radio NZ, and other NZ based sites that offer large amount of reputable information, primary sources, video, and sound files along with many images. The pictures are important, similar to a book cover, brand, or logo. Students respond to graphics so I had to find images with a creative commons type license to stay within copyright regulations.

Getting pictures was simple. For most of the sites a picture just appeared; it was like adding an article to Facebook where you can select from a variety of thumbnail images. For other sites I had to find a photo to represent the web site.

Keywords are essential for automatically searching the web for you. The keyword field expands out of view.

Once you have your topic, there is a blue radio button on the right side that says curate. Press that and you start to review, analyze, and potentially select sites to add to your magazine. As I reviewed the generated sites, I had to be extremely discerning and only add the sites that fit my purpose from sources I trusted and carefully reviewed. I received a plethora of sites; some looked promising but many ended up being superficial or useless. There are tools to delete the source or simply clear the page.

After a quick browse through pre-selected sites, I then thought about what sites I knew I wanted to add to my site, including The National Library’s Quick Links for students, Matapithi, Infoblitz, Radio NZ, and other NZ based sites that offer large amount of reputable information, primary sources, video, and sound files along with many images. The pictures are important, similar to a book cover, brand, or logo. Students respond to graphics so I had to find images with a creative commons type license to stay within copyright regulations.

Getting pictures was simple. For most of the sites a picture just appeared; it was like adding an article to Facebook where you can select from a variety of thumbnail images. For other sites I had to find a photo to represent the web site.

Keywords are essential for automatically searching the web for you. The keyword field expands out of view.

Once you have your topic, there is a blue radio button on the right side that says curate. Press that and you start to review, analyze, and potentially select sites to add to your magazine. As I reviewed the generated sites, I had to be extremely discerning and only add the sites that fit my purpose from sources I trusted and carefully reviewed. I received a plethora of sites; some looked promising but many ended up being superficial or useless. There are tools to delete the source or simply clear the page.
As I played, I saw the potential for students to be able to engage with and access topics/concepts via curated web pages. For example, as foundational curriculum support: A teacher could create a page around Environmental Sustainability and add sites about pollution, ecological footprints, natural resources, climate change, and so on. Certainly curated sites for younger students would focus their online research attention. The library staff could catalogue each website and add all the relevant keywords and tags to the catalogue records to facilitate searches, as well as the image for instant recognition.

Another example is classic (now digital) vertical files and hot topics. If it is current, you know it’s online. Curated sites can also augment traditional reading lists. In Oliver, you can organize any type of resource into hyperlinked lists (that connect to our web based catalogue) to facilitate access for students. Link Scoop.it sites to traditional book catalogue records by copying and pasting the URL to the catalogue record. Even students can organize and curate topics or concepts as demonstration of their learning or interests. Curation lends itself to higher order thinking skills such establishing a purpose, developing criteria for selection of sites, analysis of websites, while synthesizing that information into a new product. Moreover, it is fun!

Creating my first page, stumbling along, experimenting and learning as I went took about three hours. It was surprisingly easy. I have now added several other Scoop.it pages to my cloud based Oliver demo system catalogue, and created a consistent method of cataloguing and posting the title to indicate a unique type of web page. Curation certainly lends itself to collaboration so enlist some of your young, fearless, student librarians and make a Scoop.it page!

Catalogue record for a Scoop.it website with keywords in the subjects field.

OPAC search results illustrate both ‘list’ and ‘hover’ screens with hyperlinks to the Scoop.it website.

Softlink, a world-leading developer of Knowledge, Content and Library Management software are pleased to be a SLANZA Top Shelf business sponsor.
http://www2.softlinkint.com/?nz/welcome
In our increasingly information-rich world there is a plethora of tools designed to help us collect and find information. One of the tools I use most often in my school is Livebinders. **Livebinders** is a simple curation tool to organise and present your online resources easily.

Curation is one of a range of new buzz-words frequently bandied around on listservs, blogs and social networking sites such as Twitter. This simple 90 second clip on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) will give you a teacher’s perspective on possible ways of using Livebinders.

I have found Livebinders invaluable for grouping resources together to share with both teaching staff and students not only on our school intranet but also through our [website](http://www.jamesharestcollege.org.nz/). To date I have created sixteen Livebinders for various uses. The following three examples show the different purposes I use them for.

**Online teaching tools**

I have compiled groupings of resources for specific reasons for our teaching staff in this [On Line Teaching Tools](http://livebinders.com/). The black tabs across the top allow you to specify groupings and then you can put as many sub-tabs as you require within them. You can also customise these pages to add media, and change page layouts to include any notes, lesson plans, or instructions within the sub-tabs.

**Pre-research Evaluating Websites Unit**

This [Year 9 Social Studies](http://livebinders.com/) Livebinder is used with students. Note: I have deliberately made all teaching resource Livebinders green and all student Livebinders red to avoid confusion. The resources in this tab are used for a lesson that all our Year 9 students undertake prior to a research assignment. All of the websites tabbed above are very credible-looking websites. Students are asked to select one website and evaluate it using the QUICK information checklist guide. It is surprising how long it takes before students realise their site is a hoax.

**Reading for enjoyment**

Initially I set up the [Reading for Enjoyment](http://livebinders.com/) Livebinder as a resource teachers could use and also share with students. However I have also used it as a resource to share with the Southland Literacy Teachers when I was asked to speak to their group about how libraries can support literacy in schools.

Another useful feature within Livebinders is the ability to track the number of times your Livebinders are viewed, which helps to ascertain their usefulness and popularity, as well as also providing good statistics you can use when appraisal time comes round.
## Upcoming events

### May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9th May</td>
<td>Book Processing and Repair Workshop</td>
<td>9.00 am – 12.30 pm</td>
<td>Kelston Boys High School Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:k.leahy@kbhs.school.nz">k.leahy@kbhs.school.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th May</td>
<td>UBS Book Buying Evening</td>
<td>6.00-9.00pm</td>
<td>University Book Shop</td>
<td><a href="mailto:k.leahy@kbhs.school.nz">k.leahy@kbhs.school.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>Waikato / Bay of Plenty AGM.</td>
<td>9.00 am</td>
<td>Kaitao Intermediate, Rotorua</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Gerri.Judkins@southwell.school.nz">Gerri.Judkins@southwell.school.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Southland AGM</td>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Public Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Donna.Watt@ilibrary.co.nz">Donna.Watt@ilibrary.co.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th May</td>
<td>EPIC Training</td>
<td>3.30 pm – 5.00 pm</td>
<td>Aorere College</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abroadbent@aorere.ac.nz">abroadbent@aorere.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### June

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd June</td>
<td>Book Processing and Repair Workshop</td>
<td>9.00 am – 12.30 pm</td>
<td>Rangitoto College Library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:trish.webster@rangitoto.school.nz">trish.webster@rangitoto.school.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th June</td>
<td>Wellington AGM</td>
<td>3:45-5:30 pm</td>
<td>Raroa Normal Intermediate School, Johnsonville</td>
<td>Clare Forrest <a href="mailto:c.forrest@raroa.school.nz">c.forrest@raroa.school.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th June</td>
<td>Creating Engaging Displays (Anita Vandenberghe)</td>
<td>10:00 am - 12 pm</td>
<td>Kerikeri High School library</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jeannie.Skinner@dia.govt.nz">Jeannie.Skinner@dia.govt.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th June</td>
<td>RealM Seminar Day</td>
<td>8:30 am - 5:30 pm</td>
<td>the RSA, Palmerston North</td>
<td>Sasha Bennitt <a href="mailto:manawaturealm@gmail.com">manawaturealm@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23rd June</td>
<td>E-Books in Action/ SLANZAK AGM</td>
<td>9.30 am to 12.30 pm</td>
<td>National Library of New Zealand, 8 Stanley St, Parnell, Auckland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Anthea.Hamlet@dia.govt.nz">Anthea.Hamlet@dia.govt.nz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19th July</td>
<td>Ross Todd National Library Auckland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st July</td>
<td>SLANZA AGM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Content curation: Professional Development

Services to School is running Professional Development courses on content curation for school librarians - in primary or secondary schools - in the third term of 2012 at the following locations:

- Auckland 30 August
- Auckland 31 August
- Tauranga 13 September
- Rotorua 25 October
- Dunedin 6 November
- Invercargill 8 November

Come along to this half-day course and find out how to develop high quality curated content in your school library, and learn more about the best tools for the job. You’ll become a member of a supportive online learning community, where you will be able to share your learning and ideas.

For more information visit [http://schools.natlib.govt.nz/professional-development](http://schools.natlib.govt.nz/professional-development)
SLANZA’s business membership
Subscriptions now available

by Lisa Salter, for SLANZA’s National Executive

SLANZA is pleased to announce the launch of Business Memberships for businesses who would like to enter into a productive relationship with our members.

Features of and benefits for all Business Memberships include article(s) in this publication with your logo and a live link to your website or current promotion on a banner at the bottom of the article’s page.

Collected has a readership of over 800 with more than 10,000 unique page views per issue. Our readers are mainly from New Zealand but we also have readers in the UK, USA and Australia.

Collected is developing as a leading source of information for school librarians in New Zealand. This is your opportunity to reach those readers and inform them of an idea, trend or service that may interest them.

The article must be informational, providing reviews or commentary on new products or innovations, and will not be a paid advertisement.

Membership forms are available on the SLANZA website slanza.org.nz/businessmembership.html

For further details, questions or suggestions please contact Lisa Salter rua@wailibrary.org.nz or phone 021 116 1080.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Shelf</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>An article in all 3 issues of Collected each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Live logo / link banner on article page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Live logo / link banner on SLANZA website &quot;Join&quot; page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advance notice of SLANZA events, with the opportunity to attend or provide promotional material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulator</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>An article in all 3 issues of Collected each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Live logo / link banner on article page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved</td>
<td>$275</td>
<td>An article in 2 issues of Collected each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Live logo / link banner on article page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>An article in 1 issue of Collected each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Live logo / link banner on article page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the last Collected Magazine the resource that I chose to highlight was Encyclopaedia Britannica Online. This has ended up being pretty timely as soon there will only be an online version of Britannica. And luckily, thanks to funding from the Ministry of Education, this fabulous resource is available free to all New Zealand schools through EPIC tk.org.nz/epic.

This time I thought that I would highlight a couple of subject specific resources. The Literature Resource Centre and Books & Authors are two resources that provide a wealth of information for students studying English.

I also thought that I would demonstrate this and the differences between the two products by getting on The Hunger Games bandwagon.

Books & Authors is the perfect resource to start off with if you want to get a good overview of a book or series of books. It is also a good place to go if you enjoyed a book and want to find similar reads or genres or you just have no idea what you want to read next (Check out the Who, What, Where, When Tool – centre image).

It also contains an extensive list of international literary award winners, including the Montana Book Awards, New Zealand Post Children’s Book Awards and the LIANZA Children’s Book awards.

I did a title search Hunger Games in Books & Authors which provides a link to the book or the trilogy. I chose the trilogy (top image). You can then select tabs to find out more about the series, the author, reviews or read-alikes.

Literature Resource Centre is the place to go if you want more in-depth information about a literary work, author or genre. It is the ideal resource for English students and teachers to use to broaden their understanding of a work they may be studying. As well as overviews of works, the Literature Resource Centre provides access to authoritative literary criticism, reviews and biographical information.

In the Literature Resource Centre, I did a basic search on Hunger Games.

As the screen shot shows, the results of this search are presented in tabs based on content type. The tabs are: Literature Criticism, Biographies, Topic & Work Overviews, Reviews & News, Primary Sources & Literary Works, Multimedia.

The results under each tab are presented in order of relevance. There are also further options to limit or change your results in the left hand column of the results page.

Again, if you have any good examples of how you have used Books & Authors or the Literature Resource Centre with a class, teacher or connected to an assignment or the curriculum, we would love to hear about them at EPIC so that we can collate and share them with other users.

Please either email me at paula.banks@dia.govt.nz or our School Libraries representative on the EPIC Governance Group, Senga White library@jameshargest.school.nz
Hard copy books will continue to have their place on the School Library shelf. But increasingly Schools are embracing eBooks. Wheelers have created a platform that enables schools to easily profile and facilitate the lending of eBook titles to students. It’s called ePlatform – a secure library-lending platform set-up and hosted by Wheelers and personalised for each school.

As the ePlatform is personalised, all titles purchased are profiled on the School Library OPAC. The platform enables both the purchase of eBook titles (specifically licensed for library lending) from Wheelers and the lending out of those titles to students. Most importantly, eBook titles are secure and protected by Digital Rights Management – an encryption technology used to protect the copyright of titles.

It works quite simply. Schools purchase eBooks from the Wheelers website (click here to view a sample selection of these). The Library OPAC profiles the eBook titles and links to the ePlatform for students to borrow eBooks. Students then log-in with their existing member details, and download the title to almost any reading device – tablets, eReaders, mobile phones or even computers. All titles automatically expire after the loan period (each librarian chooses what this is). Students can also browse the ePlatform direct from anywhere – at home, school, or out and about.

As a book supplier to New Zealand schools they’ve created the ePlatform with schools in mind. No extra hardware or infrastructure is required; the platform will integrate with almost any library system; it’s simple to use; there are no real set up costs and only minimum ongoing costs (based on usage only). It’s an affordable way for schools to both own and loan eBooks – and there’s no need to worry about the additional costs of book covering.

But what may be most appealing is the opportunity that ePlatform presents to further connect students to the world of books. For most of the new generation, the online world is where they exist. Music is downloaded; ideas and trends are found through YouTube and other sites, Facebook keeps them in touch with friends. And eBooks easily fit into this world.

With eBooks, students can read wherever they are, on any enabled device. They can read a novel on the bus, waiting in line, at the park – it allows reading to easily take place in all sorts of situations. As one librarian pointed out, “It gives books ‘street-cred’ because a device is involved.” With thousands of eBook titles available from Wheelers – there’s something to interest every student.
Anthropomorphic Tales

Mouse Guard
By David Petersen
Archaia Press
ISBN: 9781845766603

In the tradition of the Redwall series and other anthropomorphic animal stories, Mouse Guard brings us the adventures of a band of warrior mice. Set in the town of Lockhaven and its surroundings, the three graphic novels tell of the brave Mouse Guard and its history.

The books are published in a long format unlike most comics, and this format really suits the stories told. The illustrations are more realistic than cartoon in style and Petersen uses the comic form to its utmost. The fine detail in the art, the superb colouring, both add to the appeal of these tales. The painterly approach to the panels really shows off Petersen’s skill with drawing and colour.

The stories are set in a well developed medieval style world with quite a realistic tone. The mice fight and defeat larger animals. The tone of storytelling can be quite harsh and the violence in nature is not shied away from, making this more suitable for readers of year 10 and over.

Petersen’s storytelling skills are excellent and Mouse Guard has moments both gripping and charming. Originally published as a series of individual comics, the graphic novel collections perpetuate the rhythm and cliff hangers of that format.

So far there have been three collections, Mouse Guard. Autumn 1152, Mouse Guard. Winter 1152 and Mouse Guard. Legends of the Guard. The first two books feature recurring characters Lieam, Saxon and Kenzie, Mouse Guard soldiers and guides. Legends of the Guard is a selection of stories and tall tales from the Mouse Guard’s past.

These books are available in hardcover and soft cover formats and are available as special orders through bookshops and comic shops.

Highly recommended for the adventurous fantasy reader.

mouseguard.net
Maus
By Art Spiegelman
Pantheon Books, New York. 2003

Maus is probably the most well-known graphic novel in recent history. Published as a serial in Raw Magazine, it won the Pulitzer Prize and is regarded by critics as a seminal graphic novel. Originally published as two books, Maus: My Father Bleeds History and Maus: And Here my Troubles Began. It is now available in one volume as Maus.

Maus is the story of Art Spiegelman’s father, Vladek, and his experiences as a Polish Jew on the run, before being interned in Auschwitz during World War Two. It is a personal tale of the Holocaust told in Vladek’s fractured English. It is also the story of Art and Vladek’s relationship, and their shared tragedy - the suicide of Vladek’s first wife and Art’s mother, Anna. All characters are portrayed as mice or other animals.

We see the modern interaction of Art and Vladek and see how Vladek’s experiences have changed him and affected his attitude to the world around him. His relationships are all affected by his experiences and contribute to his difficulties in relating to others.

His experiences are horrific and moving, and the voice that Spiegelman gives him is affecting and personal as he tells his story.

In artistic terms, Maus is a graphic triumph. Its view is harsh and unyielding, told in a formal almost wood cut style. The lack of colour also emphasizes the stark nature of the events. Spiegelman’s unflinching eye lets him show all the horror of Vladek’s experience.

The choice of animals to represent the characters is a bold one, and is drawn from Hitler’s characterization in speeches of Jews as vermin, Poles and Slav’s as pigs, and other “lesser” races as dogs. It doesn’t trivialize the characters or their experience, nor reduce characters to representative types, but gives us fully rounded individuals because the characters are drawn so well.

Maus has been used in the NZ curriculum at Level 2 and gives the student reader much room for discussion on both a personal/character level and on the level of larger events.

Last year was the 25th anniversary of Maus and Spiegelman has produced a large volume called Meta Maus, a series of interviews and reflections on this ground breaking graphic novel. Also included is a DVD of interviews, film extracts and the original interviews with Spiegelman’s father. This would be a great resource for teachers studying and presenting Maus in the classroom.

Maus is recommended for senior students.
Donna: Could anyone do it?
Gavin: I suppose so. I initially taught myself web authoring back in the late 1990s, and as a result my skills are a bit rusty thus I am using a version of Dreamweaver from 2005 (I am a bit challenged by the latest version). The design of the web site is not very ambitious but I wanted to keep it simple and be able to do it myself. I am sure as the website grows and develops that one day I will probably have to enroll the help of web designers and IT gurus, as I intend to be doing Read it! Loved it! for a very, very long time.

A very interesting aspect of the website is that the students at my school assumed I had paid a boffin big bucks to design it, and they were quite surprised that anyone could author a website. Even though amateur web design was very common 10-15 years ago, most kids now use social media websites such as Facebook, which is formatted for them, only requiring them to add information, videos, pictures etc. in a standardised manner.

Donna: Have you presented it to your own students as an aid to book selection?
Gavin: I use the website on an iPad for all of my guided reading classes (19 every fortnight). It is light and portable and easy to use when I am with the students at the bookshelves. I use it to remind myself of titles I have read, and quite often I give it to a student who uses it for about 5 minutes, while I help someone else. It was essential for me to get their feedback especially when Read it! Loved it! was established and thankfully they love that it is simple and specific.

Donna: If so, what comments would you make about the way it has impacted on book selection behaviours?
Gavin: One of the real joys of the website is that I can help promote books that have been either forgotten, or are remembered fondly by grandparents and parents but possibly now unheard of by today’s youth, or aren’t regarded as particularly marketable anymore. The website has helped expand the breadth of borrowing by the students at my school (and hopefully elsewhere) as they are exposed to a wider range of titles that are specifically aimed at their year level in the genre they want. Basically, books that were gathering dust are starting to be borrowed.

One of my aims with Read it! Loved it! is to avoid focusing on recent releases. Now and then I do read a new book, but I would prefer to read books that have been popular over the last 200 years, not only to expand my own knowledge and enjoyment, but to keep these books in the public eye. A great example of this is The Wolves of Willoughby Chase written in 1962 by Joan Aiken. I read it 2 months ago and absolutely adored it and I am having great success recommending it to our Year 5s and 6s, but in some ways it is now considered an obscure classic simply because, in my opinion, most reading websites focus on what is new and hip. An old title only gets exposure if there is a new film being made of it, or there is some promotion for it from the publishers.

I do offer to email the booklists to anyone who asks, and when they receive the spreadsheet file containing all the titles and the year levels and genres they fit into, I think that it helps confirm that a website is a better alternative than a multitude of paper lists.

Donna: And what CMS did you build it on?
Gavin: Adobe Dreamweaver
Many websites promoting reading need to be financially viable and they need to reflect what their financial sponsors want, thus the reason why ReadIt! LovedIt! will stay fiercely independent. I want to be completely free to recommend books that I think are worth recommending.

The students at my school also appreciate that the books are specifically aimed at their particular year level. Many websites will use fairly vague age recommendations e.g. 9-12, 12-16, 12 and up etc., and I can understand why publishers do this, as they will sell more books by keeping the age range as open as possible. It seems my students like that ReadIt! LovedIt! is so particular, and if they feel that the books in their year level on the website aren’t appropriate/too easy/too hard, they can move up or down a year level. And as they can access the website independently and anonymously they don’t feel any embarrassment if this is the case. Some students feel all at sea when it comes to finding books to read, and the website is aimed at making it easier for them (and their parents and teachers) to keep reading and loving it.

Donna: Have you promoted it to other teachers at your school, and do they use it with their students?
Gavin: The entire school community is aware of the website. The English faculty uses it and suggests to the students that they use it. English teachers are generally so busy that they don’t have that much time to read (yes, the irony) and they appreciate having such a resource to direct students to.

Donna: Are students in your school permitted to use their smart phones in the library/at school?
Gavin: They can use them anytime during recess, lunchtime, before and after school, but definitely not during class time unless specifically directed by the teacher.

Donna: Positives?
Gavin: Students can independently access ReadIt! LovedIt! anytime they need to. I assumed that they would browse the shelves with their iPhone or iPad at their leisure, but it seems they prefer to browse the website at home or whilst travelling, so when they come to the library they go straight to what they want and borrow it.

Donna: Issues?
Gavin: There are always issues at school with phones, laptops etc. but as long as the students are kept on track and the teachers alert, we generally don’t have too many problems regarding misuse of technology - remember though, I work at a girls school, boys are generally more eager to push the boundaries.

Donna: Tell us about the feedback you’ve had?
Gavin: Feedback has been generally very positive. The wonderful thing about the Internet and email, it means it is easy for people to let me know what they think of the website. This has helped me tweak the website and it also has been very satisfying that the majority of people understand what I am trying to achieve very early on in the picture. Less than 5% of feedback questions the lack of book reviews, and one or two people have had a go at me for remaining relatively anonymous on the website, even though I am more than happy to let them know my background once they have contacted me. I have been very impressed though by the number of librarians who have asked me about myself, and this is exactly what they should be doing i.e. evaluating the validity of a website before they use and recommend it. And virtually all the people I have talked to understand that the website is all about the books and not me (or the money).

Both the Public Library Associations of South Australia and Victoria publically endorse the website, and many of them now have the poster on display. I have contacted numerous library and school associations around the world and it is wonderful knowing that ReadIt! LovedIt! is helping students, parents and school and public librarians in the U.K., the U.S.A., Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and in International Schools.

Donna: Are you intending to expand the website further?
Gavin: I have already started the boys part of the website and I am hoping to have that up and running by June/July. I have added a Twitter feed so people can keep up-to-date with each new addition to the website. I am also considering adding short video reviews for each book so that the site is more attractive to reluctant readers but that won’t occur until next year. Some people have suggested that I run a blog regarding all my reading, but my intention was to make ReadIt! LovedIt! An entirely positive website, and I would prefer to forget books that I did not enjoy and simply leave them off the website rather than wasting everybody’s time venting my spleen on a blog.

Donna: And finally, can you give me a brief bio - who, where, what your role is in the school?
Gavin: I am 43 years old, married with a six-year-old daughter and a four-year-old son (both avid book lovers I am glad to say). I have been working in school libraries for 17 years now. My first job was at Wesley College, Melbourne, Australia, and from there I managed the library at the Bavarian International School in Munich, which was a co-ed school as well. When I returned to Melbourne, Australia I managed a campus library at St. Kevin’s College, a Catholic boys school, and then moved on to manage the library at Camberwell Girls Grammar, an independent Anglican girls school. In order to spend more time with my children, I then moved to Melbourne Girls Grammar, another independent Anglican girls school, where I have just been appointed Head of Library Services.

My role at Melbourne Girls Grammar includes 19 fortnightly guided reading periods for every Year 5 to 9 class, daily story time reading to the three- and four-year-olds at our early learning centre, all fiction acquisitions and management, as well as the various day to day operational requirements of a typical school library. I am also a keen soccer coach at school and love attending school camps as they are a great way to get to know the students better.

Thanks Gavin, for the interview and a great little website. We are looking forward to more recommendations and the upcoming focus on books of interest to the boys.

readitlovedit.com
@readitlovedit
Earlier this year, we asked you to tell us about your professional development needs and experiences. On behalf of SLANZA I would like to express my thanks for the great response to our PD survey. Your information and preferences will be applied constructively in determining highly relevant PD sessions. Some of the main trends are summarised below.