



Term 3, 2012

ISSN 1179-8548

# Collected



## Evidence based practice – putting the pieces together

*Dr Ross Todd writes about EBP as a key to the future of NZ school libraries, and we bring you practical advice about gathering and sharing evidence, pedagogy in the school library, and a public library view of EBP*

School library review

Keys to effective collaboration

Te Ara redesign – the inside view

Reviews: Graphic novels and more

# Editorial

By Donna Watt

In this issue of Collected we share the lessons learned at the Dr Ross Todd workshops on evidence based practice, and begin to talk about what comes next.

Ross Todd very kindly agreed to write our lead article, and his piece provides the rationale for evidence based practice. For those of you fortunate enough to attend the workshops, you will be clearly reminded of the messages he shared with us. For everyone else, this is an excellent introduction, explanation and call to action.

Lisa Oldham was fortunate to spend some time with Ross during his visit, and relates the messages he shared with her to the many resources available on the Services to Schools website. Senga White details the collaborative partnerships being built in her school, as she works with teachers to develop a school-wide information literacy programme which is beginning to build and document a body of evidence that relates improved student achievement to library programmes and interventions. Michele Whiting looks at EBP through the lens of a school principal, and explains why it is so necessary for us to gather evidence and share it widely.

Scattered throughout this issue are examples of the direct action that school library teams around the country have already taken, or are beginning to plan as they consciously move towards this new way of doing, measuring, and reflecting. Adaire Hannah shares some of the ways in which her library team measure student achievement, and also they ways that the information is shared with the school community. Bridget Schaumann describes the action she took on returning to school, and reflects on the lessons she learned, and the changes she will make to the lesson plan as a result of that data-gathering exercise.

We harvested responses to the workshops from many of the attendees, and share them in a composite piece called 'Pay dirt' – and it is truly heartening to hear that so many participants took away key messages and are ready to take action.

We urge you to read this issue carefully, as evidence based practice is a pathway to improved learning outcomes for students, and also provides the hard evidence of the contribution that school library programmes, resources and staffing make to students and their learning. Advocacy is not only easier when you have the evidence that you need, it also resonates with your school community when it can be directly related to student achievement.

SLANZA National Executive are working on a shared presentation on evidence based practice, to be rolled out to every region in coming months. Be prepared, be part of the conversation. We hope this issue makes the journey seem just a little more achievable.

Kind regards

Donna  
[donnaraelina@gmail.com](mailto:donnaraelina@gmail.com)

# Contents

Feature articles



<b>Evidence Based Practice</b> Dr Ross Todd	4
<b>Enhancing the role of school libraries through EBP</b> Lisa Oldham	7
<b>An evidence gathering exercise</b> Bridget Schaumann	8
<b>Pedagogy in the school library</b> Adaire Hannah	9
<b>A letter from the other side</b> Donna Watt	10
<b>Pay Dirt</b> Donna Watt	11
<b>School library review</b> Michele Whiting	13
<b>Keys to effective collaboration</b> Senga White	14
<b>Te Ara Redesign</b> Heath Sadlier	16
<b>Regular columns</b>	
News from the President	3
Contains Graphic Content	23
Book reviews	25
Professional development	27
Upcoming events	28
<b>Contact us</b> SLANZA@xtra.co.nz	

# From the President

by Fiona Mackie

Wow! Our recent seminar with Dr Ross Todd certainly challenged and inspired all who attended, and I know everyone came away with an enormous amount to think about and to put into practice. This issue of *Collected* will give you insight into how people are really using Dr Todd's ideas, and what you could do to gather evidence, from the very simple tasks to projects which run throughout a term. Collaboration with other staff was also a very strong theme. Dr Todd expects us to work with teaching staff, so the challenge for all of us is to identify who is the person (or the department) that you will be able to collaborate and share expertise with. I strongly urge you to join the Evidence Based Practice Facebook group, so you can benefit from the experiences and wisdom of colleagues in New Zealand and Australia, and share your experiences and wisdom too. [www.facebook.com/EBPforSL/](http://www.facebook.com/EBPforSL/)

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent AGM in Wellington. It gave me great pleasure to announce the recipients of the SLANZA awards for 2012. Principal's Awards were given to Tony Mabin, acting principal of Queenspark School in Christchurch, and Peter Ross, principal of Wakefield School in Nelson, for their continued support and promotion of the libraries at their schools. SLANZA Certificates of Recognition were awarded to Carole Gardiner of Queens High School in Dunedin and Karen Carswell of Woodford House School for their continued and tireless work on making the SLANZA wiki the best it can be. Desna Wallace from the Fendalton Open-Air School received a SLANZA Award of Merit, in recognition of her dedication to providing children with just the right book for them and her use of technology to promote reading and literature.

I was also delighted to announce that inaugural Honorary Life Memberships had been given to the Steering Committee who founded SLANZA:

- Karen du Fresne
- Margaret Forbes
- Judi Hancock
- Elizabeth Jones
- Dr Penny Moore
- Elizabeth Probert
- Jill Stotter



As an organization, we owe so much to the Steering Committee, who not only created a national organization that we can be proud of, but who were also instrumental in bringing the IASL conference to New Zealand in 2001.

We sadly farewelled Senga White, who had completed her time as Immediate Past President, as well as Donna Watt, who was standing down as Communications Leader and Southland regional representative. Both have contributed so much during their time on the National Executive and will be sorely missed. We welcomed Donald Cunningham as the new Southland regional representative, and confirmed Bridget Schaumann as President-Elect. Bridget will become the President at the AGM during the next conference, which will be at Wellington Girls High, July 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> - mark it in your diary now and add it to your budget request for 2013, as it is going to be great!

# Evidence-based practice

## A key to building the future of New Zealand school libraries

by Dr Ross Todd, Director, Centre for International Scholarship in School Libraries,  
School of Communication and Information, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

A professional focus on evidence-based practice (EBP) for libraries has emerged over the last two decades. In more recent years, this focus has begun to be addressed by the school library community. New Zealand can claim somewhat to be the birthplace of EBP in school librarianship!

At the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) conference in Auckland in 2001, I presented the idea of EBP for school libraries as a significant international concern and agenda (Todd, 2001), and challenged the school library profession then to engage in professional practices which chart, measure and document the impact of school libraries on learning outcomes.

In that paper, now published in several languages, I argued that evidence-based practice for school libraries should focus on two aspects: “the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the performance of your role. It is about using research evidence, coupled with your own professional expertise and reasoning to implement learning interventions that are effective. ... Secondly, evidence-based practice is about ensuring that your daily efforts put some focus on effectiveness evaluation that gathers meaningful and systematic evidence on dimensions of teaching and learning that matter to the school and its support community” (Todd, 2001).

Since that time, the EBP movement has developed considerably, and the urgency of implementing it has also increased. Widespread concerns around the world about the closure of school libraries in the wake of digital information services, coupled with the perceived invisibility of both the professional role of school librarians and the lack of understanding of the impact of school libraries on student learning provide a renewed challenge for EBP as a critical local agenda of all school libraries. This was brought home recently with the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia’s Inquiry titled “School Libraries and Teacher Librarians in 21st Century Australia” tabled on 23 May 2011. This extensive inquiry gathered input through 387 written submissions and 12 hearings across Australia and acknowledged the central importance of the role of school libraries and school librarians. It reported: “The Committee has been struck by the breadth of anecdotal evidence that it received demonstrating the significant contribution to learning outcomes in primary and secondary schools that a fully resourced school library, when staffed by a fully qualified and active teacher librarian, can make. This supports the findings of Australian and international research in this area” (p.118). The report also stated: “The Committee appreciates that evidence-based practice takes time on the part of teacher librarians but agrees that

documenting and highlighting examples of teacher librarians’ successes in improving educational and community outcomes is critical to illustrating the enormous potential of school libraries to help students achieve better results”. The report concluded: “We recommend that the profession as a whole needs to develop the capacity to articulate needs from research-based evidence and local evidence collected in the school” (p. 118)



This is the challenge for all New Zealand school libraries: demonstrating through systematically gathered and shared evidence, the power of the school library in relation to student achievement and wider community outcomes. It raises these specific local questions that every librarian working in a school context should be able to answer:

- How does my school library impact on student learning? How does MY school library help students learn?
- What / how does my school library add to personal, social, cultural and global growth of students in my school and in my care?
- Do students who have been taught information literacy competencies through my instructional interventions, in collaboration with teaching partners, perform better academically than students who do not have such instruction?
- What evidence can I provide to ensure that my school library is sustainable and accountable – in terms of its infrastructure, personnel, resourcing, and instructional processes – so that optimal student outcomes are achieved?
- How do I disseminate the impact of my school library and demonstrate its educational, social and cultural good?

Where does one begin? I believe that the evidence should centre on how students’ information- to-knowledge experience is enabled through school library initiatives such as information literacy instruction, reading and literacy programs and other services. Evidence-based school librarianship is the systematic collection, integration and dissemination of evidence of the tangible impacts and outcomes of school library practices: claims about student achievement and the development of deep knowledge, deep understanding and competencies and skills for information use, thinking, living and working. Evidence-based practice of school librarianship demonstrates the value-added role of school libraries to the life and work of a school – outcomes that centre on learning, literacy and living – and the development of students intellectually, personally, socially, culturally and globally.

This is not to diminish or remove the information measures that have traditionally been at the centre of school library practice, such as the number of classes in the library, the number of library items borrowed, and the number of students using the library at open access times. However, these are evidences of inputs and processes, rather than evidences of outcomes. They do play a role in making decisions that will lead to optimum outcomes, and should not be overlooked. But they are not the centrepiece of evidence-based practice. Evidence-based practice with its focus on outcomes calls for school librarians to adopt an outcomes mindset rather than just describing what school libraries and school librarians do. This means gathering evidence to make claims about: students' mastery of curriculum content; critical thinking and knowledge building competencies; mastery of complex technical skills for accessing and evaluating information and using them to construct deep knowledge; outcomes related to reading motivation, comprehension and enrichment; as well as outcomes related to attitudes and values of information use and learning, and the development of self concept and personal agency.

This is clearly signalled in the New Zealand Curriculum. As I review New Zealand Curriculum documents (<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents>)

several things stand out to me, especially the focus on developing students who are confident, positive, motivated, resourceful and resilient; developing students who are effective users of information and communication tools to be contributors to local and global communities; and developing students who are lifelong learners, who engage with information as creative and critical thinkers and who have the capacity to be active seekers, users, and creators of knowledge, and informed decision makers. This national focus provides the language to describe key learning outcomes. The New Zealand curriculum also gives emphasis to a number of dimensions which demand quality school libraries and library professionals for their implementation. These include respect for multiple identities and ideas, perspectives, and values, enabled through engaging with diversity of resources and the development of inquiry, critical thinking and reflection capabilities. Access to quality digital and print sources serve as a framework for connecting communities, the digital world and the global networked world; and the development of digital citizens of a sustainable and global community (Todd, 2008).

Reflecting these national curriculum goals, I see six key themes that might serve as a framework for documenting library-driven outcomes, and challenge school librarians to identify and present outcomes around them:

Resource-based capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are outcomes related to seeking, accessing and evaluating resources in a variety of formats, including people and cultural artefacts as sources. They also include using information technology tools to seek out, access and evaluate these sources, and the development of digital and print-based literacies.</li> </ul>
Thinking-based capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are outcomes that focus on substantive engagement with data and information, the processes of higher order thinking and critical analysis that lead to the creation of representations/products that demonstrate deep knowledge and deep understanding.</li> </ul>
Knowledge-based capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are outcomes that focus on the creation, construction and sharing the products of knowledge that demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding.</li> </ul>
Reading to learn capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are the outcomes related to the transformation, communication and dissemination of text in its multiple forms and modes to enable the development of meaning and understanding; and outcomes related to reading and literacy initiatives.</li> </ul>
Personal and interpersonal capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are outcomes related to the social and personal aspects of leaning about self as a learner, and the social and cultural participation in resource-based learning.</li> </ul>
Learning management capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are the abilities and dispositions that enable students to prepare for, plan and successfully undertake a curriculum-based inquiry unit (Todd, Gordon &amp; Lu, 2011).</li> </ul>

There can be multiple sources and types of evidence and multiple ways of systematically gathering this evidence in order to make claims of outcomes. Different sources and types of evidence might include:

- Student interviews where they reflect on their learning, their research and its impact;
- Student portfolios where they show their mastery of research processes;
- Reflection and process journals, and search logs that they keep during research tasks;
- Formative and summative assessment tasks by teachers;
- Standards-based scoring guides and rubrics used to measure learning in research tasks;
- Surveys of students and teachers. The question we used in the Ohio study might be helpful here: “Now, remember one time when the school library really helped you. Write about the help that you got, and what you were able to do because of it”. (Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005, 75)
- Pre-test and post-test measures, such as initial and end point curriculum knowledge;
- Student generated products as representations of new knowledge, including the bibliography which indicates use of sources, quality of sources, diversity of sources
- Standardized tests which can be analysed to see if there are connections to high use of the school library; and
- Skills measurements, such as pre and post measures of a range of information literacy competencies

Just do it. Take action, gather some evidence, analyse it, make some key claims and share them within your school and wider community. Step outside traditional comfort zones and deal with any perceived lack of belief about your ability to impact, and move beyond the anecdotal.

Engaging in outcomes- driven practices may need some adjustment of existing library management strategies. The success of small initiatives builds a sense of the worth of evidence-based practice. Begin to develop an evidence-based practice plan that makes you part of school’s solutions, and not the school’s problems where cuts, setbacks and redundancy become the only options. Presenting clear evidence of alignment and direct contribution to the learning goals of the school is a far more convincing argument in building support than merely advocating for the opportunity. Making it a collaborative endeavor with some key teachers will help address time concerns. Use action research as a collaborative framework for building evidence-based practice, using its cycle of planning, acting, observing (data) and reflecting.

Gain access to and examine data existing in the school. Use it to connect to library initiatives, and drill down into the data to find the gaps and where students need help, especially ones that lend themselves to school library interventions. Target one or two of these specific gaps, use published research to identify instructional and service strategies that might help you implement appropriate strategies, establish strategies that measure improvement, and share the outcomes to the existing structures in your school.

Begin constructing an evidence-based portfolio, compiling data from diverse sources into one place: library-based data; instructional processes, exemplars, assessment data; synthesized summaries; statements of outcomes; examples of students work that illustrates high quality learning.

It provides an immediate, accessible pool of evidence when called on for various purposes, including negotiating for continuous improvement, defending proposed cutbacks. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem- and take small steps to construct a bright future for your school library.

## References

- Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia (2011) Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians in 21st Century Australia. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia. Available at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_Committees?url=ee/schoollibraries/report.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=ee/schoollibraries/report.htm)
- Todd, R. (2001). Transitions for preferred futures of school libraries: knowledge space, not information place; connections, not collections; actions, not positions; evidence, not advocacy. Keynote address: International Association of School Libraries (IASL) Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 2001.
- Keynote paper, IASL conference 2001 virtual session: paper from Ross Todd, available online at IASL: school libraries online [website]: <http://www.iasl-online.org/events/conf/virtualpaper2001.html>
- Todd, R. (2008). The evidence-based manifesto for school librarians. *School Library Journal*, 54 (4), 38-43. Available at: <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6545434.html>
- Todd, R., Gordon, C., & Lu, Y. (2011) Report on Findings and Recommendations of the New Jersey School Library Study Phase 2: Once Common Goal: Student Learning. Rutgers University. CISSL.
- Todd, R. & Kuhlthau, C. (2005). Student learning through Ohio school libraries, Part 1: How effective school libraries help students. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 11(1), 89-110.

# Enhancing the role of school libraries through Evidence Based Practice

by Lisa Oldham, RLIANZA, MLIS, Development Specialist, School Library Futures, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa

In July the inimitable Dr Ross Todd returned to New Zealand to share more of his wisdom about school libraries' impact on student learning.

With my focus on the future of School Libraries in New Zealand, I have no doubt that a bright future is predicated on an evidence based approach to the practice of school librarians.

Ross is really clear that school libraries can have a positive impact on learning outcomes. It is the evidence of this positive impact – correlated to intentional practice in the library – that will inform the future of school libraries in New Zealand.

In the seminar, Ross focused on why we need to gather evidence, what kind of evidence to gather, how to gather it and of course what to do with it.

The goal: to provide convincing evidence that answers: “What differences do my library and its learning initiatives make to student learning outcomes?” And, “What are the differences, the tangible learning outcomes and learning benefits of my school library?”

In a slide share I once viewed about Evidence Based Practice by Keith C Lance, based on Ross's work, he asks: [“If being an effective school librarian was a crime, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”](#) The suggestion of a forensic approach really made me stop and think about what that evidence would look like.

Ross's seminar helped us to understand how to get that evidence of practice and how to use it to both inform our future practice and to advocate for the library's role in supporting students through out the school and community.

Our government and Ministry of Education have made it clear that literacy and the successful completion of NCEA level 2 for 85% of students are national goals. These are clearly goals that we, in school libraries, can align ourselves to; incorporate into our planning, into our instructional interventions, collecting evidence of our impact as we go.

Ross talked about starting small, considering the evidence for practice that relates to our specific goals. Finding the evidence for practice, the information and research that will guide us is quite straightforward. The Services to Schools site provides a wealth of information. If your focus is on literacy, consult the [Creating Readers](#) section. Here, you will find ideas, suggestions, evidence and more about how school libraries can impact on literacy and creating readers. Is enabling 24/7 access to resources supporting the curriculum the project for you? Check out [Your library online](#) to find help with creating a library website.

Regardless of what the focus of your next intervention or project or collaboration, you will likely find evidence for practice to get you started on the Schools website.

Another source of evidence for practice as well as a community of practice is Ross's Facebook pages. Ross along with Lyn Hay in Australia has set up a Facebook group: [Evidence-based practice for School Libraries](#). You can join the group and share your EBP ideas and reflections. Ross and Lyn moderate the group and put up related links. Librarians from Ross's seminars in Australia have already loaded up plans for EBP projects they are working on or have completed that you can look at. Ross also maintains a [Facebook page for the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries](#).

If you Like the page, you will see the posts from CISSL related to their work, research and related content about school libraries and their impact on student achievement.

While the focus of the seminars was Evidence Based Practice, Ross also shared a great deal of wisdom and information gleaned from years of research into the impact of School Libraries, especially the recently published: One Common Goal: student learning; Report of findings and recommendations of the [New Jersey School library Survey Phase 2](#). There are some key outcomes from this study which highlight the specific characteristics of schools where libraries have a positive impact on student learning.

These include:

- A school wide vision of the library as a pedagogical fusion centre
- There is a pedagogy of inquiry in the library
- Library as a rich interdisciplinary learning space
- School library as leader for school wide digital citizenship education
- Evidence based practice in the school library
- Library staff are information specialist educators
- Provision of tailored instruction to enable educational success
- Library develops students as discriminating consumers, users and producers of digital information
- Librarians provide PD expertise in digital inquiry and digital citizenship
- Libraries are community connectors
- Libraries are inclusive and provide equity of access
- Libraries are centres of experimentation
- School librarians collaborate with other educators across the curriculum

Ross inspired and challenged us all to incorporate an Evidence-based approach to our work, to keep the focus on the learners and to share our practice and grow our local evidence base.

# An evidence gathering exercise

## Lessons learned

by Bridget Schaumann, Librarian, Kings High School Dunedin

Every year I do a couple of sessions on effective web searching and web evaluation working alongside the Year 10 drama teacher. Students in the class are about to begin doing a large assignment looking at the different types of theatre. They have our information literacy workbook to complete, and they do their work in the workbook to avoid our constant problem of copy and paste. They have to create correct bibliographies and use quality websites for their information. At the end of the assignment they make a presentation to the class.

I was scheduled to speak to the class the week after I had attended Ross Todd's EBP workshop. I thought it was a great chance to find out if my presentation to the class made a difference to their knowledge and skills.

I surveyed them the lesson before I was due to have them and then surveyed them a few days after the lesson. Results are shown in the table below.

Things we covered in the lesson were:

- a discussion about how Google works
- Image search with an unknown image
- 'Who Is' search, using the name of the loudest boy in the class
- Info pane in Google search
- Google maps and street view to find out what a location looks like from the ground
- using quotation marks to stick search terms together
- BibMe.org
- DHMO website and Male pregnancy website (their favourite) to look at false information which looks legitimate.

Question	Before answering yes! n=20	After answering yes! n=20	Difference (% change)
Who clicks on the top link in Google most times?	7	4	43%
Can you tell if you are looking at a dodgy website?	18	14	22%
Do you think you know as much as you should about searching the internet?	14	9	36%
Have you been taught how to find quality information on the internet?	8	12	50%
Can you tell what is quality information on the internet?	12	12	0%

This survey shows I made no difference to their perception of quality sites, despite this being the main focus of the lesson! Fewer students could tell if they were looking at a spoof site than before. They were *less confident* searching after my lesson than before! These are areas for me to work on.

On a positive note I did help them realise there is much to learn about searching the internet. I made them think about whether clicking the top link is always the best option.

The boys all felt that they had learned some new skills to use when searching, I asked them what they thought were the most valuable things they had learned. This is what they said:

- The side arrows on the search results which give you a preview of the page. They hadn't realised it was there.
- Image search - paste an image into Google images and Google will identify that image.
- Search by name: They had no idea there was that much information on the internet about them as individuals.
- The male pregnancy site. Some showed their families when they went home. "Frankly Miss, that is disgusting!"
- Bibme.org - they were impressed with how easy it was to make bibliographies with it.

### What did I learn?

- I learned that students don't take in as much as you think they are absorbing.
- I was pleased that they had become a little more sceptical about websites overall.
- I was disappointed that they hadn't 'got' my spiel about how to evaluate websites, or that they may have got it but it wasn't the big take-away from the lesson.
- On reflection I think that I am trying to cover too much ground too quickly and will adjust my plan to cover less, and do it better.
- I learned that you can gather information really quickly and easily but then the trick is to use it to assess and change your practice, and that takes the time!

All in all, an exercise worth doing, for my own benefit, but also for the benefit of students I will work with in other classes this year.

The links I showed the students are stored within this Livebinder [www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=413299](http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=413299)

# Pedagogy in the school library

## A team effort

by Adaire Hannah, Teacher Librarian, Wellington High School

Ross Todd's recent visit to New Zealand was a valuable reminder of the critical role school libraries can play when library teams are an integrated part of the school's primary focus. Schools need multiple skill sets to enable them to function as learning centres. No one skill set (or profession) can act as though its skill set is above all other skill sets.

### **School libraries are not mini public libraries**

School libraries are part of an educational institution whose primary focus is pedagogy. The library has to integrate with the teaching staff and this requires an experienced specialist teacher to have a key role, along with a librarian, to determine how a library contributes to the school's pedagogy.

Integration recognises that the value of the role of the two professions involved in school libraries, librarianship and teaching, lies in supporting and developing pedagogy. It is the duality of the professional skills of a trained teacher librarian and a librarian as joint heads of the library that has led, in my school, to the library having a very prominent profile. Late last year a Deputy Principal said he had not been in a school where the library had such a prominent profile.

Our library is a social and learning centre. One senior student recently said he had not realised just how good it was until he visited another school library. Last year a group of our senior Maori students were interviewed about the library. They all felt enthusiastic about the library and that it fully served their needs which is why they were comfortable using it.

### **Information Literacy and Evidence Based Practice**

Since 2004 I have been employed as a fulltime Teacher Librarian. One of my responsibilities is teaching information literacy skills in context. In the last few years a number of colleagues have become competent teachers of inquiry and they have made real contributions to our process. This full engagement of classroom teachers with inquiry gets communicated to students. It is very satisfactory to work with colleagues who value inquiry. I start the year by gathering evidence of what our year 9 students understand about inquiry. All year 9 students are surveyed at the beginning and end of the academic year and again at the end of year 10.

The results are collated after each survey and graphs created. These graphs are submitted to the Heads of Faculty, the Principal and Board of Trustees. The surveys identify what we as teachers delivering inquiry skills are doing well and what we need to do better. An inquiry begins with students and their core subject teachers deciding on a theme such as pandemics. A lot of time is spent in the classroom developing good questions. As a teacher acknowledged last year, good questions make for fewer frustrations later on and the highs and lows of inquiry are more tolerable. Each class has a minimum of two teachers working with them most times.

From 2005 junior school reports have included an Information Literacy report. These reports inform our community of the importance the school places on students developing good information literacy skills.

I mark all the junior inquiry assignments and write an individualised report for each student. For the last two years I have met with each student for about 10 minutes to discuss my report and then we examine the evidence on which I have based my assessment. This process ensures that the students have the opportunity to challenge my assessment. It allows students to take the time to carefully re-evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. This style of reporting is time consuming but it is worth every minute. Students know that their work has been respected, they have time to clarify points and they return to class knowing they can develop their inquiry skills and thereby increase their understanding of how the world works.

### **Cultural Hub**

It is important for a school library to be the cultural hub of a school. We hold many successful promotions in the library and our Library Lunchtime Lectures (LLL) held during the winter terms are an example. The intent of the LLL is to expose students to creative and inspiring people who are contributing to the intellectual life of our world. We have invited physicists, mathematicians, geologists, historians, plastic surgeons, film makers and political activists. Some recent speakers have included Sir Paul Callaghan, Nicky Hagar and Professor Swee Tan.

At the beginning of the LLL programme we were lucky to get 20 students and a teacher or two along. Now we regularly have over a hundred students and many colleagues attending. Several colleagues comment on how they really enjoy this programme. The number of students who attend and engage with the speakers is proof that this is a successful programme because we are competing with other lunchtime activities such as sports, local cafes, sunshine and sometimes even Sports Awards. We report on these events in our school newsletter and intranet. Last year, being election year, we invited the Youth Affairs spokespersons from five political parties for a lunchtime meeting. Four parties attended and they each had 5 minutes to convince the 130 plus students present to vote for their party. The debate that followed the presentations was vigorous and many students still speak of this event as a highlight of the year. The students were engaged and fully challenged the MPs to defend their political policies. If the MPs had any illusions that the audience would be docile they were quickly disabused. Our Acting Principal attended this event, his first, and was blown away by what he witnessed. The library is not a place to be ruled by librarians or teachers, but by an integrated team that includes pedagogic and library expertise — library-sensitive teachers as well as teacher-sensitive librarians.

# A letter from the other side

## What can public libraries add to the evidence based practice discussion?

Donna Watt, Technical Services Manager, Invercargill City Libraries

**Ross Todd got me thinking. Again. He does that. He rattles the cage. Ruffles the feathers. And mine are still rattling and flapping, respectively.**

He made me think about the way we (meaning public libraries) often run our programmes for schools. We run them our way. And we probably give the impression that it's that way or the highway.

It may be that 'our way' is guided by an understanding of the New Zealand curriculum and the information needs of students. Wouldn't it be interesting to test that, though?

A great place to start would be having a learning conversation with a teaching colleague prior to the visit. Asking what their student learning outcomes are in relation to the visit, what links do they wish to make to the curriculum, and finding out about the research skills of the students themselves - all useful starting points. Is the visit simply about extending reading, and engaging students with literature? What activities have they planned to do, before and after the visit?

Having established what the teacher expects students to learn on the visit, we might then begin to frame some simple pre-test questions to put to the students on their arrival. Questions don't always need a written answer, either.

The answer might be a show of hands, or allowing students to take their place on a knowledge or confidence continuum. We could photograph the response, and repeat the exercise at the end to measure the learning. Or we could work with the teacher and students to do mini interviews, and obtain audio and video clips to put on our website.

We might ask teachers to complete evaluation forms so that we can reflect on the success or otherwise of our programme, and modify future programmes accordingly.

We might also volunteer to do a quick observation of the students' information literacy skills during the visit, and feed the information back to teachers. That might inform plans for future visits, or provide a focus for further learning back at school.

The biggest learning curve for public library staff will be in gaining some familiarity with the curriculum, and developing the confidence to have learning conversations with teachers and students. It is a big ask, and a significant shift in practice.

Would it be welcomed? If we can work together to build transferable skills, and help to create the confident, connected, critically literate students that our New Zealand curriculum demands, then surely it will be worth the effort.

[Donna's article in Library Life](#)



The screenshot shows the header of the LIANZA website with the logo and navigation menu. The main content area features a blog post titled "Do Public Libraries Make A Difference? Where Is The Real Evidence, And What Should I Do With It?". The post is attributed to Sinead Eyre and dated 10 Aug 12. The text of the post discusses a workshop by Dr Ross Todd and lists three types of evidence: evidence for practice, evidence in practice, and evidence of practice.

**LIANZA** | Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa  
Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa

home | about us | news & events | blog | community | awards | career | registration | re

### Do Public Libraries Make A Difference? Where Is The Real Evidence, And What Should I Do With It?

Posted by: [Sinead Eyre](#) | Posted on: 10 Aug 12

Dr Ross Todd recently visited Auckland and Wellington to deliver one-day workshops to school library teams on evidence-based practice. The title of the workshop says it all: *School libraries making a difference: What is your evidence and how do you get it?*

The programme was divided into three parts - nicely encapsulated by one of Todd's slides -

- Evidence *for* practice (the body of existing research that provides evidence that libraries *do* make a difference),
- Evidence *in* practice (gathering data as you go about your daily work), and
- Evidence *of* practice (data is analysed and evidences the difference we make, allows us to seek

# Pay dirt

## What Todd's disciples intend to do about evidence based practice

A summary of your feedback

by Donna Watt, Technical Services Manager, Invercargill City Libraries

After the workshops were over, National Executive went out to participants and asked them what they had decided to do first as a result of attending the workshop. The responses were varied, as you would expect. The attendees came from a broad range of schools and some worked in cross-sector libraries. It was also clear that there were varying levels of existing collaborative relationships with teaching colleagues. Some saw collaboration as the beginning, saying “[I will] identify a supportive teacher and work in with her to analyse the effect that library-only work has [had on helping] her students.”

There were some common themes, with many proposing to access EPIC statistics, and to follow up EPIC training sessions with a review of student bibliographies in order to measure student uptake of databases.

Some were looking at extending the great work already being done, by simply adding pre- or post-tests to measure student learning. “We are into our third module teaching information literacy skills. It is a new unit this year for Year 9's. We have informally evaluated it and tweaked it as we have gone along but now have tools to evaluate for student learning outcomes, so will introduce a pre and post student reflection.”

One participant identified a resource created by Todd and others to measure student learning outcomes in guided inquiry, and said “As a result of the seminar I am using the reflection sheet from the SLIM Handbook. I have tweaked it to suit our school, age level and task and [am] using it as part of the Year 7 research task that they are currently [...] completing. I will use the sheet at the beginning, middle and end of the inquiry unit to gather evidence on how their information literacy skills are improving and evolving.”

Along with gathering data and analysing it, some of the participants had clear plans for sharing the results with the school community. One person saw an urgent need to have their web-master create a library page for the school website, and another said, “[Data] will be analysed and incorporated into the annual library report to the BOT and Principal. I also plan to look at our library mission statement and revise it to emphasise student outcomes instead of the library.”

A similar survey of some members of your National Executive recorded interesting responses, as well. Miriam Tuohy took the big picture path, reflecting on potential ways to keep the conversation going for participants, and all members of SLANZA. “For me, one of the most useful things about the day spent with Ross Todd was when people attending discussed what they propose to do next. Ross has given us so much information, and his “EBP Action Plan” document to use, but I suspect I'm not the only one finding it a bit daunting - what will I put on that action plan?”

Luckily for me, many of the school librarians there were happy to share their terrific ideas, including some quite specific details of what and how they will gather and use evidence in their own library. It reinforced for me how important the SLANZA network can be when we work together to achieve shared goals. So, my plan of action is a bit tangential for now – making sure that as part of our EBP journey, we make good use of that support network. I'll try to make sure that our Virtual Learning Network (VLN) group “[SLANZA Members](#)” works as a place to support each other: where we can share ideas, ask (and answer!) questions, store resources, and showcase examples of EBP in action.”

Fiona Mackie is working across Year 7, teaching targeted sessions on questioning and note-taking skills, and using email as a method of quick response. “Before the end of each lesson, we ask the girls to send a brief email outlining what they have learned as a result of the lesson, and how the library staff has helped them. This has proven to be a quick way to gather evidence and feedback.

I discovered a great way of teaching question formulation, which many students struggle with. The [Question Formulation Technique](#) provides a step by step process that students can use to devise a suitable question for inquiry.

The next sessions will focus on searching [Te Ara](#) and Oliver, as well as using the desk copy material to locate information and bibliography creation as a part of note-taking. At the end of the term, we will ask all the girls the following question: How did the library and library staff help you with your inquiry? We are really looking forward to their responses!”

My take of course reflected the public library lens: “Listening to Ross made me think about the way that public libraries, ours included, have a tendency to just assume that their programmes ‘deliver’ what the customers want. In the case of school visits, I was left pondering ways that we can work more closely with teachers to ensure that our programmes send messages that are consistent to those delivered in schools. We also need to up-skill our staff with the language of pedagogy and the curriculum, so that they can contribute to learning conversations with teaching and school library colleagues. If we can combine this with some carefully crafted pre-test questions, and post-programme evaluations, we can start to build a real picture of the value that we add to our customers’ learning journeys.

Ross also made me consider the topic of life-long learning - if public libraries believe that they are institutions that support life-long learning, it is time to put our money where our mouth is, and begin to measure that learning and its benefits to our communities. This isn't an easy task, but if we are looking to advocate for ourselves, our data gathering must go beyond visitor counts and circulation statistics.

In this respect, I think that we need to strategically interview customers who use our facilities and resources for a range of reasons, and build up a collection of stories that show the value of a library. We would aim to share these via social media, website, indeed wherever our customers and community are. If the public library perspective interests you or you want to find ways to work with them to help your students in learning truly transferable information skills, you might like to read my recent contribution to [Library Life: Do Public Libraries make a difference? Where is the real evidence and what should I do with it.](#)”

Bharathi Char, too, engaged in some big picture thinking. “Ross Todd’s EBP seminar made me reflect on the day-to-day decisions that we (School Librarians) make in the school library and the importance of empowering ourselves as educators on par with our teaching colleagues. We need to keep abreast of the changes in the curriculum and more importantly have a good understanding of the multifaceted nature of the learning landscape. We need to believe in the contribution we make towards student learning and that school libraries are dynamic learning centres.

Ross made me realise that EBP is an essential part of my work as a school librarian and I have to establish priorities and make time for gathering this evidence. We need to constantly evaluate the library sessions that we conduct to gather evidence on student learning outcomes. We should assess the quality of the library services and resources that we provide. In addition to this, I need to also collect evidence of learning from the one- on-one instruction sessions that I have with students. The evidence should be reported, celebrated and advertised.

Underlying all these, should be the conviction that school libraries’ impact on learning is irrefutable. We need to position ourselves in our schools as key educators of the future and share our success stories with teachers as we pursue a common goal of making our students critical thinkers and independent 21st century learners.”

What a powerful way to end this summary of our learning. That’s pay dirt, indeed.



Lisa Salter  
@raupo2



#SLANZA @RossJTodd #EBPNZ

How do I analyze evidence to support outcomes?

Kids involvement with informational texts is not the sole responsibility of the teacher.

It’s not about finding stuff, but the intellectual engagement that builds deep knowledge.

How do I communicate the library value?

School Libraries can and should develop digital citizenship capabilities

We need to create people who are capable of doing new things, not repeating the past or regurgitating information.

Are you situating your library for learning outcomes?

Your school library website is a portal to the information to knowledge journey.

Are you helping to creating confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners?

Don’t talk about your library as a place, talk about it as an experience.

Your mission statement must reflect learning outcomes, not process or what you do.

The Library website should be a portal to ‘How do I’ rather than ‘Where do I find?’.

Is your library a place for multiple viewpoints and perspectives?

Use student’s reflections on their learning to show how the library goes beyond resources in support of their learning.

Let the negative feedback work for you. Use survey results to open conversation towards improvement.

Evidence Based Practice often fails because we’ve collected too much or the wrong type of data.

Use your students (or users) to tell the story for you. Use multimedia tools for reflection.

Evaluation shows “How has this helped you and what difference will this make for you in the future”.

Make the library the hub showcasing learning. Open it up to all departments to show off what they are doing well.

# School library review

## Resourcing sinkhole or hub of teaching and learning? How would you know?

by Michele Whiting, Principal, Corinna School, Porirua

As I started to leave for work wearing a new outfit recently, my sixteen-year-old daughter commented favorably with the words, “You look nice, Mum”. Unaccustomed to compliments about my appearance from that particular direction and as someone experienced in evaluation, I wondered, “Why do you say that? On what basis do you make that judgment? What criteria for ‘nice’ are you using?”

The relationship of the library to the rest of the school is a bit like that of a vulnerable parent ego to the views of a teenage daughter. Sometimes we need positive feedback, but to get it we may have to demonstrate our value. We just can’t assume that they can see it. That’s where evaluation, self-review and evidence-based practices come in.

The terms ‘evaluation’, ‘self-review’ and ‘evidence-based practice’ are becoming common in the education sector as we have become used to the work of the Education Review Office (ERO). The terms are all about measuring the effectiveness of what we do. Schools are beginning to recognize the value of reviewing their own practices to determine what works for raising student achievement and providing a safe and caring environment. For this article, evaluation is the assessment of the quality, merit or worth of something in its entirety, self-review is the process or processes that we take to support the judgments about the final evaluation, and evidence-based practice refers to the gathering of information to contribute to the review.

ERO’s key question when evaluating a school is “How effectively does this school’s curriculum promote student learning – engagement, progress and achievement?” (Framework for Reviews, ERO 2011.) Underpinning this question is the relationship to the New Zealand Curriculum’s vision to have young people become “confident, connected, actively involved and lifelong learners” (NZ Curriculum 2010). To answer this question an ERO evaluation pulls back the layers of self-review that every school develops to check its own progress.

Self-review should gather quantitative and qualitative data about student achievement and well-being and analyse that information in order to provide the evidence to make a judgment about the effectiveness of classroom programmes, systems and structures, school climate, and relationships with parents and whanau. One of the most important points to be made here is that if school principals are looking for the perfect 10 out of 10 score they are seriously misguided. The real value of evaluation is the affirmation of what is going well and the next steps for improving.

So what are the implications of this approach for the school library?

People often say “what a great library” without understanding whether that judgment has a sound basis or not. We need to adapt ERO’s big evaluative question to “how effectively does the school library promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?” That is what should guide your self-review process to determine whether your library is “a sink hole of resources” or an essential hub in the school’s 21st century learning environment. You not only need to find the evidence that supports its existence but you also need to determine what changes are necessary to improve learning outcomes for students. Libraries must evolve to meet the diverse needs of students in a rapidly changing world.

Where to start?

If the school library is not part of the school strategic plan then you must ensure it has a place in the school’s long-term goals. In that way, the board and principal are also committed to reviewing the extent to which the library, and its personnel, “promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement”.

Those of you who attended Ross Todd’s seminar will have a set of guidelines to help develop a library review. Also, have a read of the ERO Review Framework and Evaluation Indicators (ERO, 2011) on their website. Decide which aspects of the library you intend to review and establish your key review questions and how you intend to gather the data. Set about analysing the data to make judgments about what you know about the success or otherwise of the library and what you need to do next. Present your evidence to staff, leadership and Board of Trustees.

If you are not getting any affirmations about your library then you could be invisible to the rest of the school! Do something about proving its value. Ensuring the library is integrated into the school’s self-review process is an important step in highlighting your work, the library’s value and how it can be improved. Eventually someone will say “what a great library”, and with an effective self-review programme, using evidence-based practices, you will be able to tell them why.

# Keys to effective collaboration

## Accessing a teacher perspective

By Senga White, Library Manager, James Hargest College, Invercargill

Librarians are natural collaborators. We readily share ideas and resources with one another. We ask each other for advice and provide collegial support as well as celebrating our successes and triumphs together. Many of us are good communicators and we invariably know lots of things about lots of things. In our schools this will include knowing what our students are reading, what their favourite games and movies are, what's hot and what's not and most importantly what's going on in the life of our schools.

However, one thing we're not always very good at is recognising just how valuable all that knowledge we possess is to the other team of professionals in our schools, our teaching colleagues. Contributing to this is the fact that most of us are working as the sole librarian in our communities. Imagine how amazing it would be to work in a team where you can easily bounce ideas off one another. It's very difficult to have a brainstorming session with just one! Being part of a librarian network is imperative to our own professional development and growth, but in order to implement many of our fantastic ideas into our own schools, we need to bring our teaching colleagues on board for the ride.

School librarians know how integral the library is to the learning and well-being of our students but often we hesitate in approaching our teaching colleagues, unsure of our place and how to establish those important liaisons. Sadly, few of our teachers realise just how valuable all that librarian knowledge and expertise is to enhancing their teaching and lesson planning. So it's up to us to find those ways to make a connection.

Why not consider this approach:

- List the teachers on staff who regularly use the library
- Now think about the teachers on your staff you already have a good relationship with
- From this group, create yourself a short-list of teachers who use the library and who you have already established a connection with
- Now list the types of lessons you'd like to try with a class. Maybe it's how to use Google effectively, introducing them to a new database, working with encyclopaedias or maybe you want to try some book talks
- Once you have decided on something, plan how to approach your target teaching colleague. Maybe you could offer to do something with a class they have already booked in or alternatively, pitch your idea to them and ask them if they'd like to help you with it. You can find more strategies on my website

For several years now I have had the great pleasure of working with some amazing teachers at James Hargest who have been very open and willing to working with me in a variety of different ways.

With some it's just been one-off lessons, but with others it's been developing whole units with embedded information literacy skills. They have all been very generous in allowing me to work with their classes as well as being receptive to any ideas or suggestions I've made. Many have contributed to my understanding of how information literacy fits into our New Zealand curriculum and been kind when I've excitedly bombarded them with my latest scheme or plan. Some are great listeners and have made pertinent comments and suggestions to help pull together the [current Hargest programme](#).

However, I want to stress that this didn't happen overnight! In the beginning it was about having conversations, sharing general observations about student ability in the areas of finding and using information, asking questions, listening to the answers and seeking advice. Everything else sprang from there.

One of the most powerful and rewarding parts of working with teachers in this way is to reflect and evaluate on how the lesson has gone. Here are some reflective questions to consider asking yourself or your teacher as part of your evidence based practice targets:

- Was the lesson objective met?
- Did the lesson work for the students?
- Are there different or better ways of delivering the information?
- Is there an activity you could develop to reinforce the lesson?

As part of the evidence-based practice component of any lesson or unit I am involved with either planning or teaching, or in many cases both, I use the questions above as a reflective tool for myself, but I also use any comments from teachers and the evaluation pages from my Info Lit booklets from students to assess the process used and the outcomes achieved to refine and inform any further planning and teaching of these lessons.

Many valuable ideas can be brainstormed with teaching colleagues in either a planned or informal way. One of the best ways I have found for me to ensure I don't lose any valuable ideas, insights and feedback is to use Microsoft OneNote, which is part of the 2010 Office products. I start a new page in my Info Lit notebook for each collaboration or conversation, where I can summarise the discussion or planning, and I can then email to the staff I worked with so they also have a copy. I can then also refer back to this note at any time and continue to add to it as well. A great way of keeping track of input from multiple teachers.

So how is that collaborative process for the teachers? I asked teachers I have worked closely with over the past twelve months to describe some of the benefits they experienced. I decided it was best to let them speak for themselves, so here's a selection of the responses I received:

"It was brilliant. I was able to meld the learning I wanted to achieve with Senga's expertise and ideas of resources available in the library. The brainstorming and fine tuning between us enabled me to achieve more than what I would have alone. The evaluation with Senga afterwards allowed me to improve it even further for next time. Your librarian is able to help with the search for suitable research material, can contribute to the formatting of tasks as well as having the experience in the best ways to teach research tasks such as note-taking, finding and evaluating information AND is able to team teach these skills."

**Year 9 Science teacher**

"It was great – fantastic to have an informed and up to date professional to bounce ideas off. This was a very worthwhile experience that benefitted me as a teaching professional and the children I work with. It gave me more tools to use and increased my skills and knowledge."

**Year 7 & 8 GATE teacher**

"When working through a new assessment requiring Information Literacy, Senga and I worked through a planning process which helped clarify what was meant, what was needed, and what the end product would look like. The professional conversation brought up all kinds of 'red herrings' and different ways of working towards the final product. So much easier than trying to struggle through a task that had limited structure around it as it was still only a draft. The professional conversations that continued over a period of 6 to 8 weeks were invaluable. They gave me the confidence to deliver a task which otherwise I would have been struggling with."

**English teacher**

"Working with the librarian when teaching research skills is invaluable as she knows so much about efficient ways to search, particularly using online databases through EPIC."

**Teacher in charge of Drama**

"When you have made a research worksheet and you give it to the librarian before you go to the library, they will look over it and tell you whether your questions are actually searchable (which is fantastic) and they can hook you up with books/websites suited to your activity. The librarian can save you time and make your activity flow better – which in turn helps the students achieve to a higher standard ☺"

**Science teacher**

"The issue with teaching researching skills to students is that, as teachers, we have a way we have always used and tend to pass that on to students. The fact is, "we don't know what we don't know". Having someone such as the librarian do some work with students on researching means they get another perspective on how to do it and, sometimes, in ways that we had not considered."  
**HOD Phys. Ed.**

"For a history/social studies teacher, a good working relationship with a librarian is essential. The information that comes across your desk in terms of new titles available, new research techniques etc. is invaluable. Also, a collaborative approach to teaching HOW to research, both in the library and on the internet, really targets the students who think they know but really have no idea where information is and how useful it can be."

**HOD Social Sciences**

And finally, a teacher I have collaborated with several times in her role of Head of Junior English actually wrote me an essay on her take on school libraries. It's too long to reproduce fully in this article so I have used a small quote from it.

"Our school library is a very important organ to the way in which the body of our school operates. Students and their older counterparts are encouraged to research and explore new ideas. Most importantly, teachers of all subjects are encouraged to use the library and the librarians, particularly during the planning of their units. Aside from having subject-specific knowledge about a unit of work or text, our librarians have up to date knowledge about what is happening in all facets of school life. Therefore, working collaboratively with the librarians contributes to our ability to teach cross-curricular units of work."

I love what she has to say so much I've added it in full as a blog post.

I hope some of the strategies at the beginning of this article help you feel able to take another step in your collaborative efforts and that the words from these teaching colleagues give you the confidence to know you're on the right track.

On a final note, here is a wonderful quotation which was given to me by one of my teaching "partners in crime"

*"The only true equalisers in the world are books; the only treasure-house open to all comers is a library; the only wealth which will not decay is knowledge; the only jewel which you can carry beyond the grave is wisdom."*

*J.A. Langford*

# Te Ara: teaching more than history

## Lessons in website design

by Heath Sadlier, former Team Leader, Design and Development,  
Manatū Taonga – Ministry for Culture and Heritage

*In October last year we released a redesign of Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand – the first major visual change to the website since its launch in 2005.*

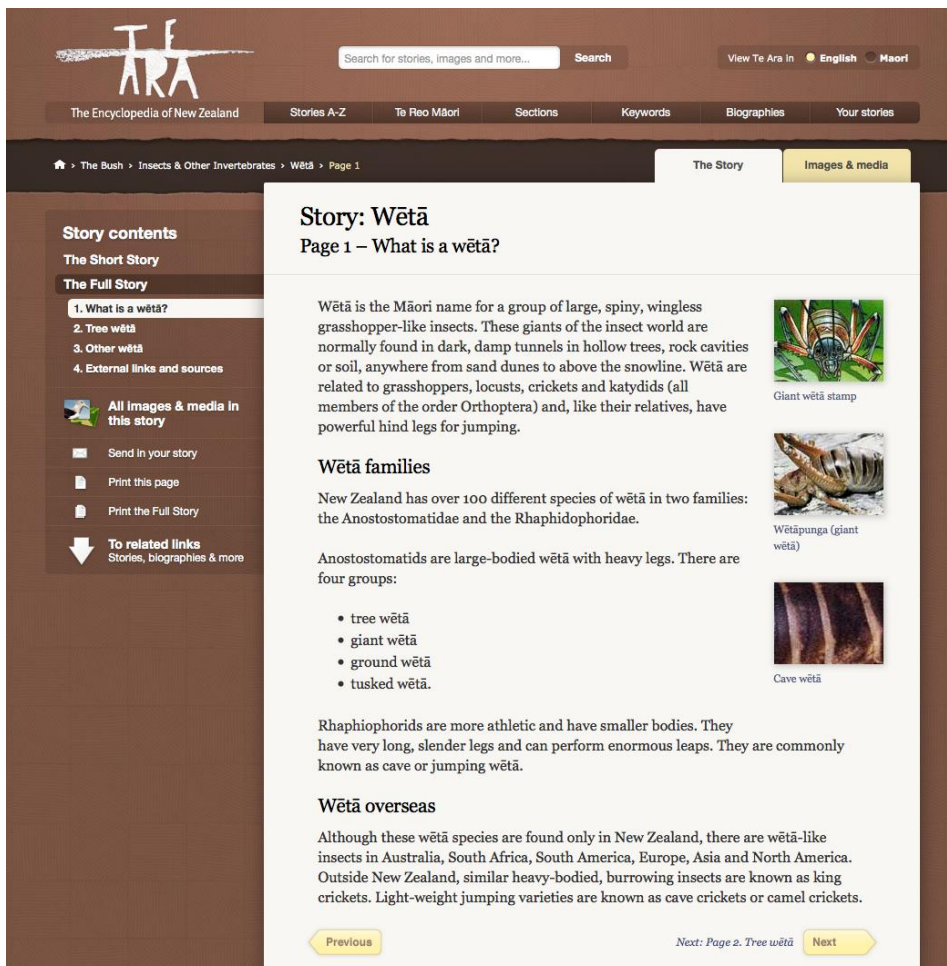
The redesign was deliberately not drastic. The changes were about improving the presentation of content, making stories easier to discover and to simplify the site, especially for younger readers.

The redesign project began as we started seeing more people having trouble using the site. People were often confused when navigating within our multi-page stories. Also, the internet had evolved since the site was launched, and Te Ara needed to evolve with it to remain vibrant and relevant.

The redesign focused on improving six main areas.



Te Ara's homepage after the redesign



### The presentation of content

By enlarging the size of the page area, we could increase the size of text. As well as increasing the font size, we also gave the stories larger margins, more generous line spacing and made a few other changes to make the text easy to read or scan through. Also, the new off-white background of the text area reduces eye strain during long stints of reading, while maintaining ideal text contrast. Further, by increasing the content area, we could make the images much larger.

The new site design, showing the improved text presentation.

# 2

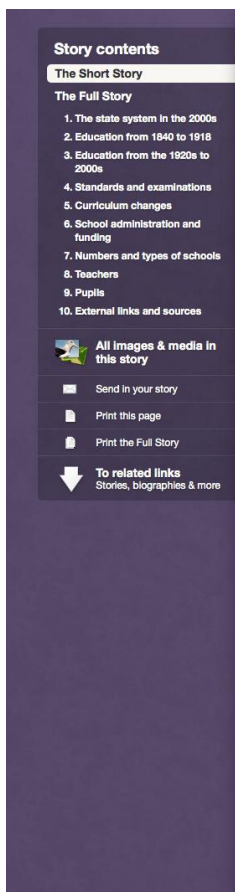
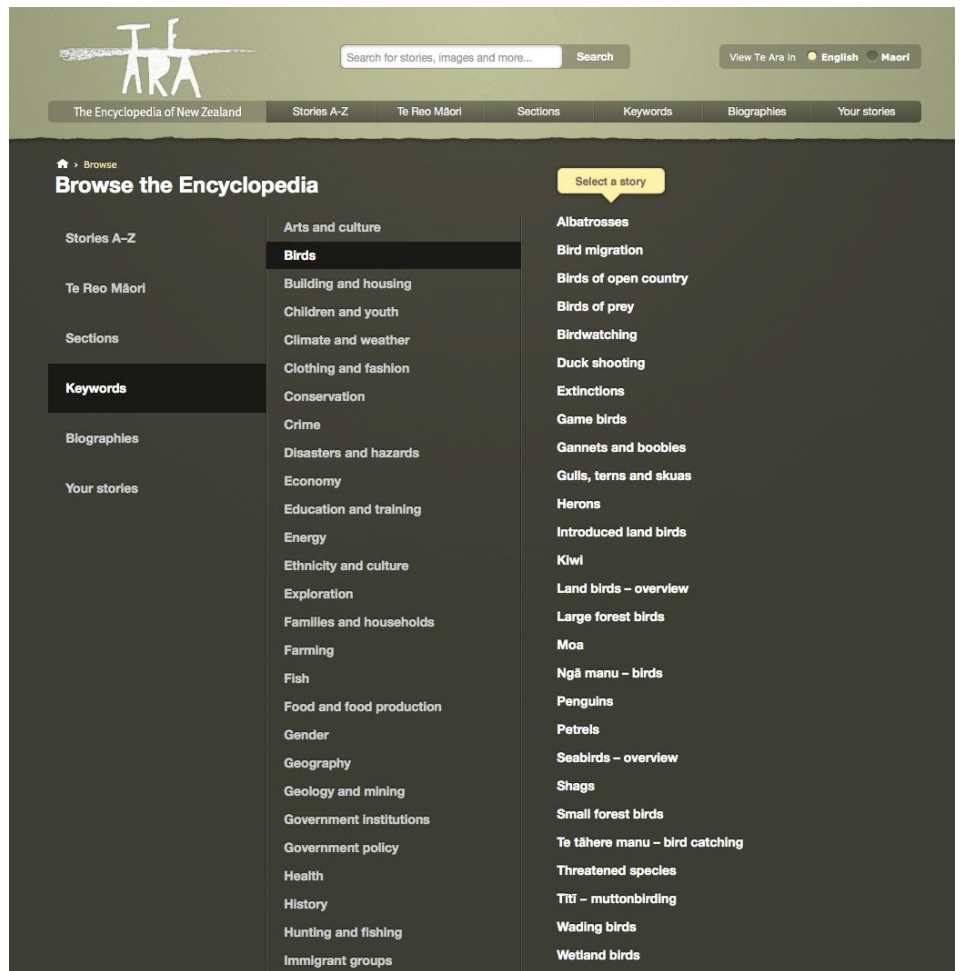
## The main navigation

Te Ara has a really handy multi-column browser that allows you to find Te Ara's stories through different categories. However, few users opened it before the redesign.

But now the first column of categories is displayed as horizontal navigation items, making it much easier for users to find and understand.

The categories take you to a new full-page browser, which allows for much larger text and longer story names.

Te Ara's multi-column browser allows you to quickly look through the more than 700 stories on the site



## Story: Primary and secondary education



The best years of your life, or a time of boredom and restrictions? People have different experiences and memories of the school years, but since 1877 education has been compulsory for all New Zealand children. Over time schools have become less authoritarian and more diverse, and assessment has shifted from exams to internal assessment.

Full story by Nancy Svarbrick  
Main image: The students of Tutarumuri School, Wairarapa



### The Short Story

A quick, easy summary

Read the Full Story

#### The state education system in the 2000s

In New Zealand children must attend school between the ages of six and 16. There are three levels of schooling:

- primary (Years 1–6)
- intermediate (Years 7–8), which is often at stand-alone intermediate schools, but is sometimes included in primary and secondary schools
- secondary (Years 9–13).

State primary and intermediate schools, and many secondary schools, are co-educational, while some state secondary schools are just for boys or girls.

#### Other school options

Specialist state schools include kura kaupapa Māori, where teaching is in the Māori language, schools for students with disabilities and the Correspondence School.

# 3

## The 'short story'

Every story on Te Ara has a 'short story' – an easy-to-read summary created for younger readers, but which also serves as a quick overview of the full story.

The short story was hidden away and only a small percentage of users found it. To simplify the structure of the stories – and to help people find the short story – we merged it with the story front page. Of all the changes, this has received the most positive feedback, primarily from school librarians. It puts the simplest, easiest-to-understand information in the easiest place to find it.

Perfect for young readers.

The front page of each Te Ara story contains a 'short story': a quick, easy summary of the full story

4

## Usability

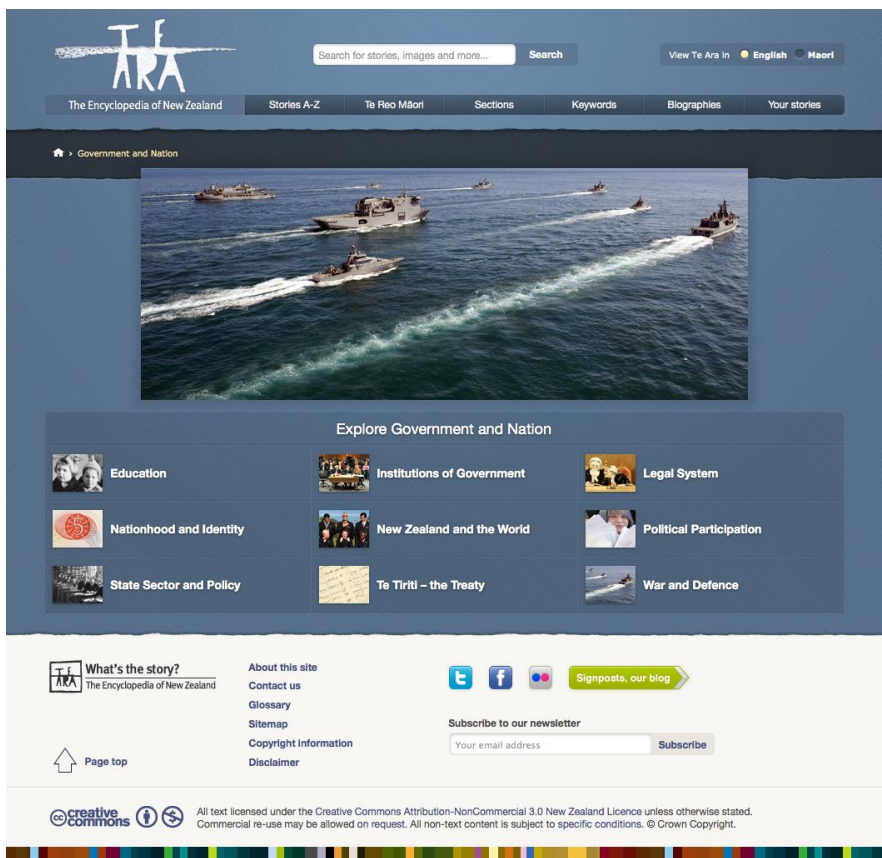
Improving usability was the most complicated of the changes. We were lucky to work with Optimal Usability, who helped us resolve the issues with the site. (That said Optimal were surprised that during user testing, despite some users getting lost on the site, the users were always enthusiastic about what they found instead.) We ended up making a lot of changes to the way you navigate each story and how your position in the story is displayed.

5

## The look and feel

After attending a workshop – ‘Creating simple: techniques for simplifying your UI and your CSS/HTML’ – by Daniel Burka, one of my design heroes, at Webstock last year, I started considering ways of simplifying Te Ara. I could go into a lot of detail about the changes, but the main change I made was to remove as many unnecessary elements as possible.

In the new design the only ‘containers’ (boxes) left outside the main article space are there to group menu elements and increase the text contrast. This goes a long way to making the design feel clean and simple, as well as help users make their way around the different sections of the page.



Te Ara's latest section, Government and Nation, which added close to 100 stories in June, including stories on education

Since the release of the redesign we have had plenty of positive feedback and seen a significant increase in traffic. But, we here at Manatū Taonga – the Ministry for Culture and Heritage still meet people who haven't heard of Te Ara.

So please go browse the site, read a short story, read a full story or two, explore the images and media, and share them with your students, friends, whānau and teachers!

6

## The performance

At the same workshop, Daniel showed us a way to use PHP to generate CSS, allowing the use of variables ... whoops, I'm getting a bit technical! The essence is that Te Ara's 50 colour schemes could be generated in a much simpler way.

We also moved to HTML5 and CSS3, which allow us to drastically reduce the amount of code – this makes the web pages load faster in your browser, and makes it easier for us to change things behind the scenes. CSS3 features such as opacity and rounded corners are only supported by the latest browsers, but degrade gracefully in older browsers.

There are a lot of other techniques we used to improve the performance of the site and we're still looking at ways to better optimise the new design.

# Using your LMS to gather evidence

## Some examples from Oliver

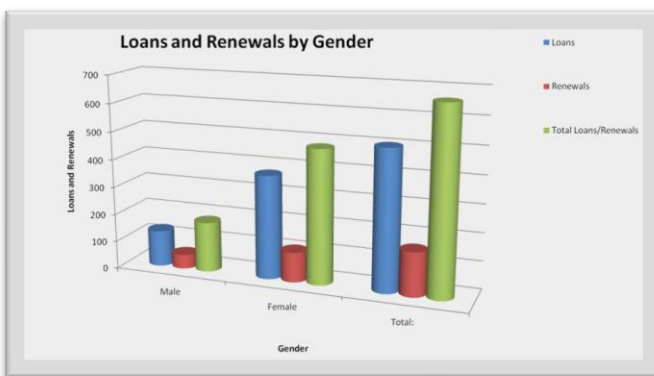
by Hilary Greenebaum, Ph.D., New Zealand Educational Sales and Training Consultant, Softlink

Best practices now encourage all of us to expand our view of the library and look beyond the traditional view of library as an isolated, disconnected, storage facility. School libraries are critical hubs of learning, knowledge creation, passion, and fun!

As professionals orbiting the world of students at school, we all share one common goal: that is student engagement. If we can engage, enrich, and empower students then we have won their attention and can offer them resources, research support, specific skills, guidance, praise, or a supportive shoulder.

Students want to feel emotionally connected. We want students to love the library and what we have to offer. Therefore, making evidence based decisions in the school library simply must revolve around students.

Supporting student engagement, reading for pleasure, and supporting assorted learning goals/ competencies are the justification for the existence of any school library. Using evidence is simply one piece of the puzzle for effective schools. For example, when you compare boys' versus girls' (or any group, roll class, or year) loans and renewals in an Excel created chart you offer a visually appealing, and easily understandable presentation. Natural questions emerge which enable you and your colleagues to address the issues you see before you.



Present your library data in an easy to understand, visual, graphic representation

Softlink's Oliver also enriches students' experiences using the library. Much of library usage is about personal or work related enquiry, and enquiry drives engagement and learning. Students can log on and take charge - anywhere anytime. Students can use their own experiences and records as evidence of their efforts. In Oliver, students have the capacity to log in 24/7 and manage their loans, alerts and messages, online profile, specific searches, and even their own catalogue. According to their projects and interests, students can share their evidence with teachers, parents, caregivers, and peers via email or social media like Facebook and Twitter. Using Oliver enables students to take charge and be more responsible. Connecting, and empowering students enables them to use evidence of their own work for their own purposes. We know that engaging, enriching, and empowering students in today's world is essential.

We all use evidence every day in our daily decisions. Library offers a large amount of data that you can format into interesting vital information for your school community. The combination of reports about resources, people, and time are useful for you to make evidence based decisions. The data is there for you to use wisely, collaboratively, with sensitivity and discretion.

Softlink, a world-leading developer of Knowledge, Content and Library Management software are pleased to be a SLANZA Top Shelf business sponsor.

[www2.softlinkint.com/?nz/welcome](http://www2.softlinkint.com/?nz/welcome)

**Softlink**  
Our Experience, Your *i*Centre

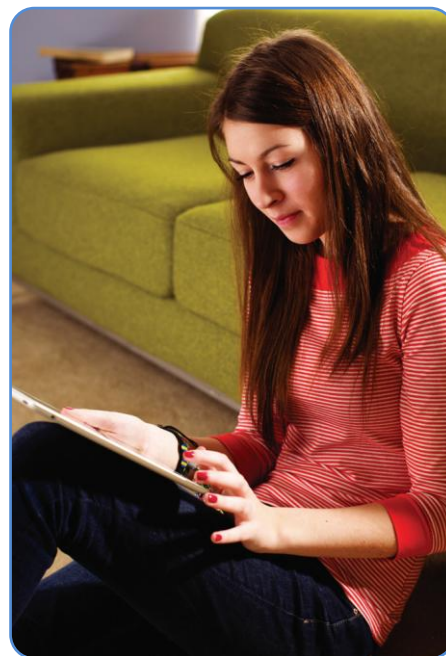
# What's ahead for eBook lending and the ePlatform

According to Wheeler's Paul du Temple, a glance into the near future of ePlatform reveals bigger publishers, new technology and lower costs. Since launching 12 months ago, improvements have been made to ePlatform's user-experience; many features have been added as well as new connections to most library management systems – but more is yet to come.

## Within the next 12 months Librarians are likely to see:

- 1. Browser based reading.** This will complement ePlatform's current approach to downloading eBooks. Put simply, you will soon be able to read books through a web browser (e.g. Internet Explorer). It's very useful for classroom situations when there is a restrictive IT environment at the school - as students can read an eBook through a browser on a class computer then download the book for home use. The browser App, that's being developed by Wheelers, can take notes; enable note sharing with fellow students or teachers; allow highlighting; dictionary and Google 'look-ups' and, says Paul, "... include all the features not yet thought of!"
- 2. Cost-free ePlatforms?** Paul du Temple believes the cost of using an eBook platform will trend towards zero. "We've recently reduced the hosting fees and will look at further reductions going forward. Even our set-up fee is given back as a content credit, so the ePlatform itself doesn't really cost anything." Paul expands on this: "No one has to pay to use a book website, so the same will apply for using an eBook platform".
- 3. A single sign on.** Authentication of patrons borrowing eBooks is probably the most challenging area of eBook lending. Variations exist between library management systems and between schools' IT environments. Wheelers have recently developed a free module enabling self-registration by students to help with speed and ease of set-up. They also see a further opportunity to interface with single sign-on platforms (e.g. Moodle). This will make things easy for library customers and of course the students/library members using ePlatform. Paul explains, "In the next year, we'll be working hard to facilitate single sign-on options for students accessing a school's electronic resources."
- 4. Content from the big publishers.** Whilst Wheelers continue to sign about three new publishers a week, a number of big publishers don't yet make their eBooks available to libraries and schools for lending. Wheelers feel the publishers' position should/will shift when it comes to schools (and hopefully for libraries too!). If 'Johnny' at school borrows a book it's unlikely that stopped him from buying it, it probably just stopped him from playing on his Xbox! "Thousands of school librarians want to encourage reading amongst kids. If the big publishers do not support school librarians and school libraries in general, then who do they expect will be buying their books in 5 years time when these students leave school?", says Paul. "We believe that the big publishers will soon recognise the importance to them of school libraries and school librarians – and will make their eBooks available for lending".

More than 200 schools and 50 Public Library groups have signed on for ePlatform within New Zealand, Australia and the UK. "We really appreciate all the support and dialogue we receive from our local librarians," says Paul du Temple. "It helps us to plan and develop for what's coming next!" So watch this space.



For more information please go to [www.wheelers.co.nz/info/ebooks](http://www.wheelers.co.nz/info/ebooks). For a 30 day free trial of the demo site <https://eds.wheelers.co>, email [info@wheelers.co.nz](mailto:info@wheelers.co.nz) or Ph 0800 890 333



**ePlatform**  
by wheelers books

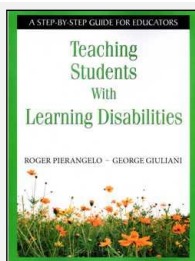
# The IHC Library

The IHC Library has one of the largest and most up to date collections in New Zealand of resources on all aspects of intellectual disability.

Resources cover family life, children's literature, siblings, communication, education, transition, health, syndromes (autism, Down Syndrome, Fragile X, etc) and related conditions.

We have some fantastic resources for teachers of children with special needs and would like to encourage you to take advantage of our service. The library is free and open to anyone in New Zealand. We pay for the outward postage - the only cost to you is the return postage to the library.

Below are a few books that have been rated highly by our borrowers.

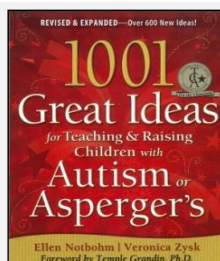


## Teaching students with learning disabilities: a step-by-step guide for educators

By Roger Pierangelo and George Giuliana  
*Published by Corwin Press, 2008*

“Learning disabilities (LD) vary with each student, and teaching strategies for learners with LD must be responsive to individual differences. Written in an easy-to-read format by experts in special education, this step-by-step guide presents a comprehensive look at learning disabilities such as cognitive deficits, social-emotional problems and dyslexia, and discusses appropriate academic instruction, behavioural interventions, and classroom accommodations for learners with LD.” — BOOK JACKET

Reader Rating — 5 out of 5

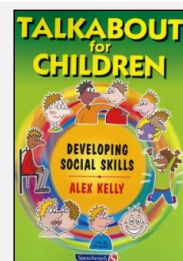


## 1001 great ideas for teaching and raising children with Autism and Asperger's

By Ellen Notbohm & Veronica Zysk  
*Published by Future Horizons, 2010*

“More than 600 fresh ideas join tried and true tactics from the original edition, while many ideas pick up where the first edition left off, offering modifications for older kids, honing in on Asperger's challenges and enhancing already-effective ways to help your child or student achieve success at home, in school and in the community.” — BOOK JACKET

Reader Comment: “Fabulous resource of practical advice. Very useful across a broad range of topics. It really does have 1001 great ideas.”



## Talkabout for children: developing social skills

By Alex Kelly  
*Published by Speechmark, 2012*

This is a new title in the “Talkabout” series from the speech and language therapist, Alex Kelly. This is a practical resource packed with activities and games for developing self awareness and self esteem which are essential prerequisites for developing social skills making this book an excellent first step to any social skills programme.

Designed specifically for young children (aged 4 and above) or children with special needs (aged 5-16).

To find more teaching resources available, please download the catalogue for Primary / Intermediate Schools or Secondary Schools, or access our full online catalogue from the [Library pages of the IHC website](#).

For further information about borrowing these resources please contact the IHC Library.

If you are in Wellington we would love to have you visit us on Level 14 Willbank House, 57 Willis Street – open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm.

Email: [librarian@ihc.org.nz](mailto:librarian@ihc.org.nz)  
Phone: 0800 442 442  
Online Library Catalogue: [ihc.org.nz/resources/our-library/](http://ihc.org.nz/resources/our-library/)

**ihc**  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

# Magazines within schools

## Expanding the minds of students

While science and technology are core learning areas of the curriculum, the topics are just so intriguing and relevant that they also form the only independent recreational reading some students do. Collecting facts about weird and wonderful things has long appealed to students, who like to whip them out to amaze, delight or 'gross out' their family and friends. In the process, they are learning how the natural world works, how different cultures live and interact with their surroundings and how science is progressing in our world today.

Recent mainstream news coverage of the Transit of Venus and the NASA image of the South Island blanketed in snow were natural scientific phenomena, captured through the use of rapidly developing technology. Both events spurred minor media frenzies as journalists attempted to explain the events and the technology that captured it all. These events are just the tip of the scientific iceberg that ordinarily go unreported by mainstream media, but are covered in-depth within our range of leading science and nature titles.

Discovering a passion for a particular subject area, whether that's astronomy, geology, food, photography, woodworking, architecture, or IT, sees students hungry for more information to satisfy the who, what else and the how.

In New Zealand we are fortunate to have more magazines available than in any other English-speaking country in the world, to help satisfy that quest for knowledge and inspiration. In addition to the major internationally famous magazine brands, New Zealand publishers are producing magazines featuring world-class editorial, photography and design.

TMMC has seen a steady increase in demand for science and technology titles over the past two years. For this reason, we have decided to dedicate our 2012 publication of Subnews – Magazine Subscriptions Services Newsletter – to this subject area. On offer is a mixture of quality local and international magazine titles, to push the boundaries and expand the minds of students.

In this year's issue of Subnews, we are also offering an abundance of exclusive schools' rates – saving school libraries on magazine subscriptions.



Through the Subnews booklet, we also hope to promote the use of magazines within schools and help kids learn to read from an early age, with the use of wonderful publications like National Geographic Kids, Wacky But True and Kidz Mag.

This year we are also offering a consolidation service, where schools can consolidate their subscriptions with TMMC to receive a free six-month subscription to both Popular Science and Science Illustrated. This service means less paperwork – saving schools both time and money – as well as ensuring the access to New Zealand's best school subscription rates.

View Subnews online [here](#)  
Or visit our [Libraries and Schools](#) page for more information

For further details, information or schools queries,  
please contact Lisa Fenton on (09) 376 7550  
or email at [subs@tmmc.co.nz](mailto:subs@tmmc.co.nz)

You can view our website at [www.magmag.co.nz](http://www.magmag.co.nz)

# TMMC.

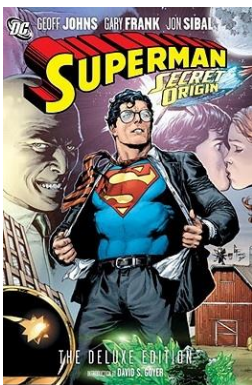
THE MAGAZINE MARKETING CO LTD.

# Contains graphic content

## A series of semi regular reviews of graphic novels

Reviewed by Greig Daniels, Librarian at Tokomairiro High School, Milton

### Four Colour Fantasies: Superhero Graphic Novels



**Superman. Secret Origin**  
By Geoff Johns and Gary Frank

DC Comics, 2010  
ISBN: 978-1401226978

A lot of books bear the title graphic novel, but many do not live up to the promise of that term. A true graphic novel is a creative work using the comics format to tell a specific story. However many books that claim to be graphic novels are often poorly made and unimaginative.

The graphic novel developed from the monthly comics format, but the monthly comics are often repackaged as “graphic novels”. This use of the term is more for marketing than anything else. Many use a monthly continued story format that relies on superhero or science fiction tropes.

Many superhero graphic novels rely on knowledge continuity. Many are updated re-tellings of old comic properties like Superman. They can be a trap for librarians. This review looks at graphic novels in my library that feature repackaged comics.

The first is “Superman Secret Origin”. It was originally published in 2010 as six 32 page comics. The original purpose was an updated retelling of the story of Superman. The story is smoothly written by Geoff Johns for a modern American teen audience. It has action, family love, romance, heroics and



Mild mannered Clark Kent proves he is no superman  
[craevonline.com/comics/previews/142130-superman-secret-origin-3-preview](http://craevonline.com/comics/previews/142130-superman-secret-origin-3-preview)

villainy. The art is by Gary Frank and is drawn in a photo realistic style. But in all apart from tweaks and modernism, it is the same story that Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel told in 1938 in Superman’s first appearance – “Strange visitor from another planet has powers beyond those of ordinary men and uses these to fight for truth, justice and the American way”.

All the tropes of the genre are here: the secret identity, mild mannered reporter, the girl who loves Superman but doesn’t think much of the mild mannered reporter, the superhero ideal of protecting the weak, the gaudy costume, and the power-hungry villain.

As I said it’s a smooth retelling of the story but it lacks heart. It’s very hard to identify with the heroic archetypes, and still harder for a reader to identify with near perfect Superman. However as an action adventure story it is well told, with some successful attempts at characterisation and some well drawn scenes and action sequences. My only quibble with the art is its reliance on the Christopher Reeves photo model for Superman.

This book is extremely popular with year 8, 9 and 10 boys. It doesn’t have the laborious continuity of many comics stories, and is a good starting point for kids who are into graphic novels and a fun and entertaining read.



Lois Lane is more dynamically portrayed as a real(?) reporter in Secret Origin  
[readdcenterertainment.com/Superman-Secret-Origin-6-of-6/digital-comic/MAR100197](http://readdcenterertainment.com/Superman-Secret-Origin-6-of-6/digital-comic/MAR100197)

# Contains graphic content

## Continued...



### Batman Chronicles Volume One By Bill Finger and Bob Kane

DC Comics, 2005  
ISBN: 978-1401204457

The second graphic novel is in a series called the Batman Chronicles. This was published in 2005 by DC/Warner, the same company that publishes Superman Secret Origin. I purchased this after a request from a student who had seen it advertised in another graphic novel. Other students looked forward to its

arrival because of the high profile of the character in television, movies and monthly comics. I did so with trepidation for a number of reasons.

The first reason was that I knew that the comics reprinted here were from the 1930s. To a comic fan like me, the primitive beginnings of the medium are full of interest. Many of the original printings sell for ridiculous figures in the thousands and hundreds of thousands. This is because of their scarcity and collectible value. In terms of quality they are a far step from today's slick comic products. Where the comics fan can see Bob Kane and Bill Finger develop a character that has huge pop culture relevance, to the average reader the stories are trite, pulpy and drawn in a primitive style.

I have issued this book, and am interested to see what the response is from my clients.

The second reason is that as publications they represent the characteristics of the time, at best a simple naïveté, with the portrayal of heroic ideals, at worst full of sexual and racial stereotypes that the world has moved on from or rejected. DC/Warner have removed the most offensive of these, but similar themes and attitudes underlie many of the stories and do cause me a little worry. Read in an informed context of the time, they may be palatable but without that context, they can be shocking to the modern reader.

The publishers know this, but because they can sell anything in a comics format, and anything with a picture of Batman on it, they go ahead. Originally much of this material was made available in hardcover and in small print runs for comics fans. But the comics business, like the rest of the publishing world, is never averse to making a buck from selling the same thing twice.

When it comes to comics reprints it is better to exercise restraint and caution. While I have read many of these stories I don't recommend them wholesale, and suggest that the purchaser be wary when considering these titles. There are good comic sites that do reviews and informed graphic novel vendors who can steer you through the maze of reprints and original work to find suitable material for your library.

I'm always interested to hear librarians' reactions to and use and provision of graphic novels in libraries. I'm happy to hear from you and answer questions at greig@tokohigh.school.nz



First appearance of Batman reprinted in Batman Chronicles Volume One



The 1930's batman was more of an urban vigilante and not averse to shooting it out with the criminals  
[www.graphixia.cssgn.org/2011/06/13/27-batman-origins-and-revisions/](http://www.graphixia.cssgn.org/2011/06/13/27-batman-origins-and-revisions/)

# Books for older readers

## SLANZA members share their reviews



### **Starters** by Lissa Price

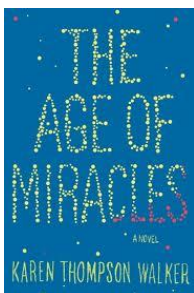
**Reviewed by Colleen Shipley,  
Marlborough College**

A disease spread by spores has wiped out the majority of the adult population leaving behind only those who had been vaccinated – children, teens and the very elderly. Many children are now being cared for by their grandparents or great grandparents in a society where the elderly live to be well over 100. With no grandparents to care for them Callie and her little brother are left to fend for themselves as squatters because the alternative is being housed in one of the terrible orphanages being run by the elderly who are known as “Enders.”

When Callie hears about the “Body Bank” where teens can rent out their bodies to “Enders” she sees it as a way to make money to buy medicine for her little brother who is unwell. The “Body Bank” provides a stunning makeover for Starters who are willing to hire their body out for short periods to an Ender, who gets to live the life of a teen for a while. Callie is a popular choice for the Enders because of her sporting abilities, but her last renter has more than a weekend living it up in a teenage body in mind. She wants Callie’s body for her shooting skills because she has murder on her agenda.

This dystopian novel has a different perspective to those that are popular at the moment and will appeal to lovers of science fiction and mystery as well. The plot has a few surprises near the end and there are plenty of moral issues to keep you thinking too. The book was an easy read because it was so compelling and I look forward to the sequel “Enders”, due out in 2013. In the meantime there are some mini prequels available in e-book format via Lissa Price’s website. The cover of “Starters” has “pick me up” appeal but even more interesting is what the cover does when you download a free app and point your device at the cover.

Starters is a young adult novel and I would recommend it for year 9 (13+) upwards with many adults likely to enjoy it, too.



### **The age of miracles** by Karen Thompson Walker

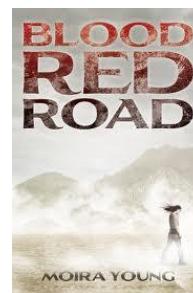
**Reviewed by Bridget Schaumann,  
Kings High School, Dunedin**

If you are over dystopia, but know that the teenagers in your library are still right into them, then I heartily recommend that you get hold of this book and read it and then share it. Julia is 11, and is an ordinary American girl living an ordinary life, but then something extraordinary begins to happen. The rotation of the earth begins to slow down - at first it is just barely noticeable. Night shift workers start to notice that it is darker when they leave work, the nights seem just slightly longer.

As time goes on however there is a marked effect. Julia’s life becomes deeply affected as her friend’s parents panic, people set up alternative off-the-clock lives, and change their houses to deal with extreme heat and extreme lives. Eventually, with no sign of this phenomenon slowing, the nights stretch for 48 hours, but the days can last that long too. Sleeping patterns are disturbed, people become anxious, and animals struggle to cope. When the crops don’t grow, and the seasons are disrupted, life is no longer anything like it used to be.

This book is a genuine cross-over novel in my opinion. Equally relevant for adults and teenagers with so much to discuss, to mull over and to make you assess your life and think “What if?” The writing is deceptively simple. Julia’s view of the world is coloured by the things she has been through and she is writing as a much older person looking back on the beginning of The Slowing. As she reflects on how her world has changed, you will become completely enraptured by her and how this catastrophic event has altered her family and her life, politics, agendas - her entire culture.

It would be a great set text for English teachers to consider.



### **Blood red road** by Moira Young

**Reviewed by Carole Gardiner,  
Queens High School, Dunedin**

Eighteen year old Saba’s world is shattered when her father is killed and her twin brother Lugh taken captive by mysterious horsemen.

Now responsible for her younger sister Emmi, she resolves to find Lugh - whatever it takes. Her quest sees her facing dangers beyond her imagining and finding some unlikely allies along the way. Saba is forced to fight for her life, channelling her rage to make it work to her advantage and discovering to her surprise how strong and resilient she actually is. Aided by the handsome (but dangerous) Jack, a revolutionary band of women called the Free Hawks and her pet crow Nero, Saba must face the full force of a corrupt and probably insane king before she can rescue her beloved brother.

The barren, dystopian setting of this novel is very atmospheric and reminded me of the movie Mad Max, with its wrecked machinery and lawlessness. You also get a sense of the author’s native Canadian heritage, for example with Saba’s father looking to the stars to guide their isolated lives. Young gives her characters a dialect that adds to the overall impression of a tough, no-frills existence, and that is totally believable as a natural evolution of the way we speak today.

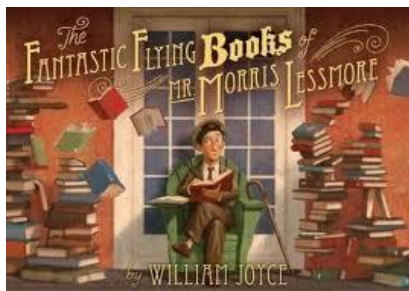
Clichéd but true, this book was hard to put down. It is the first book in the Dust Lands trilogy, book two, Rebel Heart, is due for release later in 2012.

Director Ridley Scott has acquired film rights to Blood Red Road and the novel has been endorsed by best-selling authors James Dashner (Maze Runner ) and Nancy Farmer (House of the Scorpion), so if you don’t already have this book in your libraries I recommend you get hold of a copy or three.

For voracious fans of The Hunger Games looking for their next dystopian fix, this book will be a sure-fire winner. Saba is undoubtedly a warrior to equal Katniss and with its fast-paced action, ever-present danger and a dash of romance, Blood Red Road will appeal to senior boys and girls alike.

# Books for younger readers

## SLANZA members share their reviews



**The fantastic flying books of Mr. Morris Lessmore, by William Joyce**

**Reviewed by Desna Wallace,  
Fendalton Open Air School, Christchurch**

A story about the value and power of words and books!

We all fell in love with Morris Lessmore in the short 2012 Academy Award winning movie. Now he has his own book in which to intrigue and challenge readers of every age.

We begin with Morris Lessmore as a young man and journey with him throughout his life. We share his stories with stunning illustrations that we look at over and over again, always finding something new to treasure.

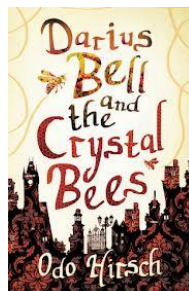
The language is just beautiful: "Morris slowly walked inside and discovered the most mysterious and inviting room he had ever seen. It was filled with the fluttering of countless pages and Morris could hear the faint chatter of a thousand different stories, as if each book was whispering an invitation to adventure".

It is, quite simply, a stunning book. If you haven't seen the movie yet, then I urge you to take a look. It is rare to find a book and movie version with equal appeal and delight. [youtu.be/19k5buV45oo](https://youtu.be/19k5buV45oo) (15 minutes) Hardback book, movie or App; each version has its own beauty and place.

While this book is recommended for children aged four to eight, adults will feel connected to Morris Lessmore by all the stories we have ever read and loved.

This is truly a beautiful book, one of those very special ones you treasure and keep forever. A must have for any library.

[morrislessmore.com](http://morrislessmore.com)



**Darius Bell and the Crystal Bees  
by Odo Hirsch**

**Reviewed by Nova Gibson,  
Massey Primary School, Auckland**

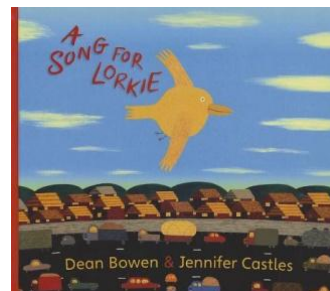
In a delightful sequel to Darius and the Glitter Pool, we encounter Darius, this time with two problems to solve. The bees on the Bell estate are dying and Mrs Lightman, the school principal, has made Darius responsible for providing costumes for his entire class. She wants to win the mayor's prize at the parade.

With no bees there'll be no more delicious honey, no pollination of flowers, no more fruit and vegetables and therefore no more of Mrs Simpson's glorious pies and cakes! Worse still, Mr. Fisher, the gardener, will have to leave the estate, along with his family.

Darius is determined that something must be done, even if the pompous Mayor is against all Darius' attempts at solving the bee problem. Then Darius has a great idea; but he will need help from his friends and family to make it work. And he must drive a hard bargain with Mrs Lightman, his science teacher and all his classmates and friends.

While being an entertaining and well-written read, this story incorporates information, in the form of conversation, about the role of bees in the production of fruit and vegetables. As in the Glitter Pool story, Hirsch takes a bit of a poke at bureaucracy and pompous men in power. I love the way the underdog (Darius) gets the upper hand and the mayor gets his comeuppance.

This is a very funny story about problem-solving, teamwork and pollination that children aged 8 to 14 will enjoy.



**A song for Lorkie  
by Jennifer Castles & Dean Bowen**

**Reviewed by Claire Cheeseman,  
Summerland Primary School**

Lorkie is one of several birds that make their home in the Valley of Roofs: a place of togetherness, safety and song. He has a friend Brian. They've been best friends since they were eggs; and Brian has a gorgeous little sister called Sweetheart.

Lorkie also has three sisters and three brothers. Their names all rhyme with Lorkie except for the last one: Deedle-ee-dle. If reading aloud to a class this would be a good teaching point: what does rhyme and what does not rhyme. Children will chuckle at the incongruous names.

Life is good on the rooftops, but Lorkie has a secret. He loves the hustle-bustle excitement of the road. He loves the highway, and feels alive when racing cars and chasing trucks. His view of the roads is depicted as a fun place.

The rooftops make him feel slow. Lorkie knows he has to leave, but how can he tell Brian? Brian views the roads as being extremely dangerous and the illustrations depict this in the cars with bonnets that look like crocodile jaws.

This is part sweet love story and partly about being true to oneself. Bowen and Castles have gone away from the 'freestyle' approach of some modern picture books. This has a more traditional style with the text all in the same font in paragraphs; and the illustrations are delightful.

Children of all ages will enjoy this. It worked for me.

# Professional Development

## Following up on our EBP Seminars

by Bharathi Char, for SLANZA's professional development team

It was great to see the turnout at the Ross Todd seminar, the PD highlight of the year. Thank you to the many respondents of our post seminar evaluation surveys!

The feedback received from the seminars in both venues indicated that it was a resounding success. The majority of the respondents felt that the seminar met their expectations, was very relevant and effective. Sixty percent of the respondents felt that they completely achieved their workshop goals, twenty percent partially and another twenty percent felt it was too soon to tell. Most of the respondents commented that attending the workshop will make a difference to their jobs. Seventy percent of the attendees appreciated the SLANZA subsidy as it enabled them to attend the seminar!

The list of strategies that the members took back from the seminar is so long and varied.

Great to know we can revisit this on the SLANZA website

I liked the way Ross acknowledged we represented many roles in NZ school libraries. Other international speakers have inferred only teacher/librarians

Feel very encouraged because Ross talked about the value of lots of things I do in my job that my school either doesn't value or is decidedly unsure about

Ross's presentation style is great –inclusive and informative and varied

A very valuable day. Useful and inspiring

Do this again please!

Follow up support very important

Need to engage at this level on a yearly basis

On the whole, the respondents came away with a number of strategies for EBP from simple checklists and 1-minute surveys, to analyzing test results, and student reflections.

Respondents also recognised the importance of analyzing the evidence and celebrating the learning outcomes with the wider community as central to its success.

Overall, the comments were very constructive and encouraging, and suggested that SLANZA members would like professional development opportunities of this calibre and perhaps in different parts of the country.

SLANZA National Executive acknowledges the increased demand for continuing education at all levels and will work to bring the best professional development opportunities to our members.

### EBP Seminars - where to next?

We are extremely grateful to Dr Todd for making his seminar materials freely available to SLANZA members. These resources can be accessed via the new "SLANZA members" group on the Virtual Learning Network (VLN). This is a closed (private) group. You will need to sign up on the VLN site, log in and join the SLANZA members group to access these resources.

#### Supporting EBP

Places you can get support and find more information about EBP

[SLANZA Members group on the VLN](#)

[EBP for School Libraries on Facebook](#)

[CISSL Impact Studies - SLIM](#)

#### About the VLN

The Virtual Learning Network, He kōtuinga ako ā-ipurangi, is an interactive resource provided by the Ministry of Education for all New Zealand educators.

Information about joining and using the VLN can be found [here](#).

# Upcoming events

Full details of these events, and registration forms, are available on our website [slanza.org.nz/events](https://slanza.org.nz/events)

5<sup>th</sup>  
September

A virtual visit to the Alexander Turnbull Library, with Paul Diamond, Curator, Māori.

Paul will talk about two upcoming projects showcasing Turnbull collections:

- a monograph about how Māori have been represented in cartoons,
- and an exhibition of watercolour portraits of Māori from the top of the South Island painted by Isaac Coates in the 1840s.

From 3.30 pm at Whangarei Girls' High School Library

Contact: Jeannie Skinner  
[jeannie.skinner@dia.govt.nz](mailto:jeannie.skinner@dia.govt.nz)

14<sup>th</sup>  
September

Aoraki region "re:Connect"  
Connecting with your local resources

The keynote speaker will be CORE Education's Derek Wenmoth.

Confirmed also are presenters from:

- The Greater Schools Christchurch Network
- DigiStore
- Toastmasters
- Christchurch City Libraries
- Gill Fisher from Bradford Primary School & Macandrew Bay Primary School, Dunedin.

8:45 am – 3:30 pm at Upper Riccarton School and Community Library

Cost: \$25

Contact: Michele Ayres  
[aym@cghs.school.nz](mailto:aym@cghs.school.nz)

15<sup>th</sup>  
September

Wellington region weekend workshop

Fiona Mackie, SLANZA president will address the meeting and then you can choose from two workshops:

- Practical Digital Tools Workshop facilitated by Senga White or
- A Book Covering Course run by Robin Dixon from Book protection products

8:45 am – 12.30 pm at Wellington Girls' College Library, Pipitea St, Thorndon

Cost: \$10

Contact: Joanna Ludbrook  
[joanna@houghton.school.nz](mailto:joanna@houghton.school.nz)