

Information Literacy: Primary Practice

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What is Information Literacy?

Information Literacy is defined as the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand.

ALA

Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information.

ALA Association of College and Research Libraries.

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The American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy (January 10, 1989, Washington, D.C.) says:

“Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organized, how to find information, and how to use information in such a way that others can learn from them. They are people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand.”

Primary School Curriculum

- To enable children to come to an understanding of the world through the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes and the ability to think critically
- to enable children to apply what they learn to new contexts in order to respond creatively to the variety of challenges they encounter in life
- to enable children to become lifelong learners through developing positive attitudes to learning and the ability to learn independently
- *Curaclam na Bunscoile. Réamhrá. 1999. p. 34*

Principles of learning in the curriculum

- Integrated learning starts in the school library.
- The school library fosters and facilitates collaborative learning.

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- The teaching of information literacy should be an essential component of any school curriculum. A school which has a well-organized library has the best chance of delivering a successful information literacy programme.
- Such a programme should help students at all levels to become competent library users and independent learners. They should learn how to identify and locate sources of information; to organize, record, present and evaluate information effectively.
- In line with international best practice, an information literacy programme should be devised and taught by a team which would include the school librarian and members of the teaching staff.

The School Library in the 21st Century: an Agenda for Change. Policy Statement.
SLARI 2004.

Information Literacy

- Research skills
- Study skills
- Thinking skills
- Problem solving skills
- Library skills
- Reading skills
- Numeracy skills
- Writing skills
- IT skills
- Presentation skills
- Time management

Since the concrete denotes thinking applied to activities for the sake of dealing with difficulties that present themselves practically, 'begin with the concrete' signifies that we should, at the outset of any new experience in learning, make much of what is already familiar, and if possible connect the new topics and principles with the pursuit of an end in some active occupation.

- John Dewey (1933) *How we think*.

There is more to be learned from the unexpected questions of children than the discourses of men.

John Locke (1690) *An essay concerning human understanding*.

- A shift from the reception of knowledge to the creation of knowledge
- A shift from the acquisition of knowledge to the management of knowledge
- A shift from thought systems to the use of thinking tools

Jeffries & Hancock (2002) *Thinking skills: a teacher's guide*

Emphasis on process rather than outcome.

Development of competencies.

Learning Styles

Personal construction and negotiation of meaning.

Alone, with a peer or teacher, or in a group?

Micro or macro approach?

Auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, verbal?

Does one's method of learning stay the same in all circumstances?

Michael Marland

The Nine Steps

Information skills in the secondary school 1981

Different models

- P.L.U.S. (Purpose, Location, Use, Self-evaluation)

Herring (1996) Library Association (UK)

- EXIT (Extending Interaction with Texts)

Wray & Lewis (1997) *Extending Literacy*

Where do YOU go for information?

- Library: school, public, special, college/university
- Internet: Google, Wikipedia; Are these reliable?
How are reliable websites identified?
- Books: currency, reliability
- Organizations: how to find them –
telephone directory, internet, IPA Yearbook
- People: experts – how are they identified?
Family, friends

- What do you need to find out?
- Why do you need to find out?
- What do you already know?
- Where will you go for information?
- Who will you ask?
- When will you do this?
- How will you record your findings?
- What have you found out?
- How will you present your information?
- What happens to this information?

Does your school have an
Information Literacy Policy?

Recommendations

- Adopt an IL model throughout the whole school.
- Incorporate aspects of IL (e.g. mind-mapping, brainstorming, evaluating information) across the whole curriculum.
- Inform parents of IL strategies.