

SCON

- Encyclopaedias
- The 4th and 5th R's
- Computing Studies 11-12



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scan is a journal published by the NSW Department of Education which supports the effective use of resources and information services in the school curriculum.

scan is published 8 times per year and is available on subscription for \$32 from:
Subscriptions Section Government Printing Office Harris Street Ultimo 2007

Contributions and correspondence are welcomed and should be addressed to:
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This issue was edited by Tim Knowles and Ingrid Simpson. Typist Rosanne Shepherd. ISSN 0726 4127

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We would like to thank the teacher-librarians who have taken the time to phone or write to us regarding their views and concerns for 1989. This is a general response to them, in which we outline Library Services' position.

Judging by the letters and phone calls to Library Services, many teacher-librarians are in a changed situation this year. Many of these changed situations have resulted from the decisions schools have made based on 1989 staffing allocations. Our contact, however, has also revealed that the situation in the library in some schools is unchanged.

Library Services, as a body whose function is to represent and interpret government policy and also to gather and represent schools' needs to Head Office administration, is responding to this varied situation according to its brief and resources. Assessing individual school situations and recommending solutions is beyond both the Library Services brief and its resources. Providing general information and problem solving strategies which can be adapted to individual school needs is the main direction that Library Services can take.

Such information and strategies supplied by Library Services will always be given within the context of the **Libraries in New South Wales government schools policy statement**, as it is this policy which mandates the transformation of the school library from a repository of resources to an active participant in the school's teaching/learning program. The staff of Library Services and members of the Library Policy Curriculum Implementation Coordinating Group (CICG) believe that this active role of the modern school library must be promoted and preserved in whatever dimension the school can manage.

It is hoped that *scan* and materials produced by the CICG will help schools to clarify directions or at least alert them to issues that should be discussed in 1989 and beyond.

In summary, the staff of Library Services believes that, at all levels, Head Office, region and school, there is a need to regularly go back to our philosophy on school libraries, refocus ourselves, then reinterpret our position as necessary. Then we will make the best educational decisions in accordance with our resources.

Library handbook updates

Library Services has devised a timetable for 1989 to update some of the sections of the **Handbook for school libraries**. Copies of the Handbook, bound in a large orange folder, were sent to all schools some years ago and should be a part of the school library's management tools collection, along with Dewey, **ASCIS subject headings list**, etc. As a preliminary step to updating the Handbook, we are interested to hear from schools which are unable to locate their original copy of the Handbook. Principals of those schools can write outlining circumstances of the loss and requesting a replacement copy. Library Services may have to seek approval for a new print run and would like to finalise figures by 1 May 1989. Letters requesting a new copy should be marked Handbook reprint and directed to Janet Hansen Principal Education Officer Library Services Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112.

Janet Hansen is Principal Education Officer at Library Services

We're at Ryde

Surrounded by a smart new office, we are all enjoying the new surroundings. Parking is plentiful and you are welcome to visit us. The address is 3A Smalls Road Ryde, just off Quarry Road, near Top Ryde.

An added bonus is that Resource Services, the Film and Video Library and the Inservice Education Library are all here as well. Please call us before you visit, our phone number is (02) 808 9455.

Areas of Emphasis in 1989

As in 1988 the Director-General has issued a document which highlights the areas in public education which should be emphasised in the current year. This means that some resources of the Department will be reallocated to ensure that these areas receive sufficient resources in 1989. Likewise the school and the school library program should reflect these emphases. The document was sent to all schools. Listed below are the nine areas:

- * excellence and choice
- * equality of opportunity
- * teaching and testing the basic skills
- * standards, discipline and pride in citizenship
- * professional opportunities for teachers
- * parent, community and business/industry links
- * the learning environment
- * technology in teaching and administration
- * efficient management and accountability

School Assistant (Library)

In secondary schools all library clerical assistant's time has been reduced to 31 1/4 hours in line with the other assistants and the name changed to school assistant. (There have been several Memorandums to Principal about school assistants.) The department is aware of the need for training of school assistants in the library and the Staff Development Unit (Observatory Hill) recently developed a course for them. This course will soon be available within your region. You will find information in the regional staff development newsletter.

School manual on educational management

This document is being distributed to all schools and is a collation of policy documents, including the Library Policy, and other information previously issued by the Department of Education. This is one of a series of manuals which includes the **School manual on financial management**.

Cooperative program planning and teaching

You may remember in 1986 that Carol-Ann Haycock visited Australia from Canada to conduct a three day workshop on how to initiate, plan and implement cooperative program planning and teaching. As a result of that workshop many NSW teacher-librarians and teachers have planned and taught cooperatively ensuring that students learn information skills in the context of the classroom program. Since then there has been a Library Association seminar, publication and a number of Departmental course and articles in *scan*.

Carol-Ann has further refined and developed her workshop and has conducted it across Canada and the States since 1986. She will run another course in Sydney on 29-30 April and present a lecture on 1 May at Services Directorate at Ryde. Both functions are organised by the Schools Section of the Australian Library and Information Association. For further information telephone Murray McLachlan (02) 808 9455 or Alison Glasscock (02) 439 5200.

Managing Change

Managing a school library is never easy but this year there are changes in resource allocation which require us to rethink what we are doing and how we do it. Changes in teacher-librarian time in primary school and school assistant (library) time in some secondary schools have had an impact. Such changes can often force us to reevaluate traditional methods and old habits that were valid but now no longer appropriate. Just as politicians are aiming for a lean public service which delivers those services deemed a priority, so too the school library program needs to focus on the essential services at the expense of the important but non-essential. How do we know what constitutes a 'no frills' library program? What do people value most in the school library program? What do we value most? If the answers are different, why is this?

Merran Dawson's article suggests some ways in which the school library program can be adjusted to reflect available resources.

☆ Reasoning and research: the 4th & 5th Rs



Dr Shirley Smith was Associate Professor of Education at the University of New South Wales. This paper was presented at the Teaching of Critical Thinking Conference held at the University of Sydney on 27 May 1988. The Conference was sponsored by the NSW Institute for

Educational Research and the Australian Institute of Philosophy for Children. Another paper from this conference, presented by Helga Rowe, was published in scan vol 8 no 2.

1 Introduction

In this paper I am advocating that the teaching of reasoning and research skills should be incorporated in the program of every primary school in Australia. They should be explicit parts of the content, along with the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic, subjects in their own right - not merely thought of as methods to be used in the teaching of other subjects.

Every Department of Education in the country should be preparing primary courses in the 4th and 5th Rs, for two sets of reasons. One set is related to social and economic factors, the other to personal and psychological factors.

I shall touch upon each set in turn, starting with that which is getting the most publicity at the moment and threatening to overwhelm our consideration of people as individuals - the economic-social imperatives.

2 Economic-social motives

For economic reasons the time is right for encouraging the teaching of reasoning and research skills in our schools. Recommendations in the Green Paper on Higher Education have implications that reach right down to the first years of schooling. The Commonwealth intends its new schooling and youth policies to produce a more creative workforce, which it is believed will make Australia more prosperous.

Thus the Green Paper, none too subtly, is encouraging increased participation in science and technology courses at university level. However secondary science and industrial technology courses are still enrolling only a minority of students by years 11 and 12; and according to surveys the

general feeling among students in earlier years is that science is too esoteric, too remote.

If we are to aim for greater participation in science and technology in higher education, schools will have to develop an educational climate that fosters interest in science and technology. To achieve such a climate schools should become places of inquiry; and the teaching of reasoning and research skills will be the way to start this process.

There are other equally compelling social arguments for introducing the explicit teaching of reasoning and research; but I have put this one first to be a small light at the end of the tunnel that our political masters are peering down. It would seem they can see very little outside the tunnel of the vast social upheavals going on around them. Because of their tunnel vision too many politicians are failing to see that we are changing from an industrial era to a post-industrial one.

Computer-based technology is bringing about changes at least as profound as those of the early industrial era, and we are living through those changes right now. Let me give one obvious example. Since 1975 the developed countries have been experiencing a series of economic recessions and recoveries, but they have been different from earlier falls and rises, because they have been accompanied by a steadily rising rate of unemployment. In Australia, unemployment had been between 1 and 2% throughout the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s; but since 1975, whatever the direction of the economy - up or down - unemployment has gradually risen from 3 to 4 to 6%, and has been hovering around 8% for some years now (March 1988, Australian Bureau of Statistics).

When they are in government both of our major political parties pretend that this crisis is only temporary, and that they are stimulating economic growth, which will reduce unemployment in the long run. They have been saying this for nearly fifteen years. Yet unemployment has not even gone back to the 6% that it was in 1982, before the last big upwards surge (and 1% unemployment now represents 80 000 people who want work).

This phenomenon appears to have baffled most politicians and economists, so much so that they try to ignore it. But many other analysts have recognised it as part of the changeover period from the industrial to the post-industrial era.

We are going out of the industrial era, the era of manufacturing, when people were needed to work the machines, into the post-industrial, the computer era, when large workforces will no longer be needed to do this work. In the industrial era the manufacturing industry, plus the retail and clerical sectors employed almost all the working population; but in this new era there will never again be enough jobs in factories, shops and offices to keep all the would-be workers occupied throughout the week, or throughout their lives.

The hallmark of the industrial era was the factory; the hallmark of the post-industrial era is computer-based technology, which takes the work out of the hands of factory workers, pen pushers, filing clerks and sales people. Computer-based technology can produce more goods, process more office work, oversee more sales than ever before, while using fewer and fewer people.

The concept of work as the centre of the average person's life is going. One in five workers are already working part-time, and another group as big is waiting on the sidelines willing to start work when a job arrives, but not working at all at present. Post-industrial people will have to work out different values and relationships between work and leisure.

There are two important points to keep in mind whenever we consider any social issues today:

(i) The industrial era (1775-1975) is being left behind, and we are already starting to live in the post-industrial era; we are already starting to become post-industrial people.

(ii) The post-industrial era (1975 -) will not go away. It is not just another difficult period in the industrial era. It is a completely new time, just as the industrial era was 200 years ago, and requires different strategies for tackling social issues.

Computer-based technology is creating changes in all areas of our lives at a rate still not understood by most of us. In a future where change is the only constant, new styles of living will have to be worked out, if the changes are to be beneficial to everyone in our society. And schooling will have to provide new skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable people to adapt to whatever changes occur; and more than that, to enable them to guide society through to equitable futures.

These new times require qualitatively different solutions to all social issues, including education. Unfortunately at the moment most of the departments of government (and not only in

Australia) are developing policies that grow from an industrial era viewpoint. Education policies are tied to the industrial era policies of the economy and industry; and whenever education bosses want to be seen to be taking a firm stand, they jump backwards into the industrial era for their solutions.

Yet now more than ever before, education should be looking at radical change - a change of direction never before attempted. At the policy level and right the way down to the classrooms, education should be changing over to a post-industrial stance, not waiting for other sectors of government. In this era education needs to be at least a decade ahead, instead of the two generations behind that was fairly normal, even expected, in pre-industrial and industrial era schooling.

Education for the future cannot be the same as the education we have at present; our schooling of today is already quite inadequate for the future. However what many politicians (and others) are suggesting is that we go back to the education of the past; and that would be disastrous. In particular those who are mouthing the back-to-basics platitudes also use the phrase 'the 3 Rs'; but if we stick with the 3Rs of yesteryear, even of today, we are guaranteeing that today's children will be undersold.

Australians are not receiving enough of the basics that are now necessary in our post-industrial era, because they are still receiving industrial era education. The 3Rs was schooling for an industrial society; even if the old schooling had been adequate for life in a factory, office or shop, it cannot be adequate for today's children.

At the very least the basics should now include the 5Rs, if tomorrow's adults are to cope with the changes that are already present in our society. Reasoning and research are the 4th and 5th Rs, and they can be taught as skills and used in all other learning just as the other 3Rs.

3 Personal-psychological motives

It is not only for reasons of social change that today's children should be equipped with reasoning and research skills.

Because of these increasingly complex changes in technology, work, social structures and private life, people are being called upon to make individual decisions and to act upon them. More than ever before individuals will need to be able to think for themselves, to be self-starters. They will need to be able to ask the relevant questions, to look for appropriate evidence, and to come to independent conclusions based on the evidence. These are

reasoning and research skills, which can be developed and refined in every normal person, although this fact is not generally understood in our society.

It was long thought that teaching according to the logic of academic subjects was the way to promote reasoning in the few who would become the educational elite. There are many academics who still believe that only a small minority of human beings is capable of higher-level reasoning, and that this is taught through the rational ordering of traditional subjects.

However these academics have little or no knowledge about human learning and how it develops from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. It must also be admitted that because of shortcomings in some teacher education courses, there are teachers in our schools today who have only a vague understanding of the general nature of human learning. This is why it has been so hard to change the content and methods of teaching and organising in our schools.

For too long schools have instructed children in what to think, and how to think without encouraging their reasoning skills. Much lipservice is given to educational aims of developing critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and so on. Objectives are set out showing methods for achieving these aims.

But because each teacher only has about 40 minutes to get across a certain amount of pre-packaged knowledge each lesson, most teaching, at least at high school level, is based on teacher talk and student note taking. Later, students are rewarded with high marks for repeating as closely as possible what the teacher or the books have said. This is not the way to develop critical thinking or analytical reasoning, for it is learning by memorising, not by thinking.

Learning is made up of extremely complex processes, but the main points for teachers to note is the difference between rote learning and conceptual thinking, since these are two different types of learning.

Theorists have set out three levels of learning: association, conceptual and creative.

* **Association learning** is memorisation or rote learning, and it is this that makes up the bits of our knowledge. Associations are the building blocks of further learning and are vital for the more complex learning.

People with good memories used to have it all over those with poor memories - such as in quiz shows. But today resource centres and computers allow everyone access to the bits of knowledge; and technology is making so many bits of knowledge out of date even as it is providing many new bits, that it

is impossible for even the best memorisers to remember all they need to know as well as to wipe off outdated memories and to program in new ones.

This has helped to even the difference between those with a good memory and those whose memory is not so good. Memory is no longer as important as knowing where to find the right information; except in schools, where the system still equates good memory with intelligence and regurgitation with intellectual rigour.

Having thus dismissed the cherished beliefs of thousands of years of schooling, I must emphasise that first level or association learning needs to be seen as the necessary prerequisite, the foundation on which all other learning must be built. Association learning is necessary as the basis for second-level learning, which is where reasoning starts.

* **Conceptual learning** grows almost imperceptibly from first-level learning, as we develop and start to draw relationships with our association bits. We start to ask questions, to look for answers and to reason (to work out the similarities and differences, for example, between a bird, a plane, and Superman). As our store of association and conceptual learning grows, we start working out ideas that are new to us. This is what has been called creative learning for it allows us to go beyond the associations and concepts, to express ideas in new ways and to extend the ideas in new areas.

* **Creative thinking** is a distinct development from conceptual thinking. It is here that the main principle in the whole practice of teaching can be stated, and it is this: that both conceptual and creative learning can only be performed by whoever is doing the learning.

In a classroom where the teacher is presenting concepts already laid out, the students will only be

The 3Rs was schooling for an industrial society; even if the old schooling had been adequate for life in a factory, office or shop, it cannot be adequate for today's children.

memorising the teacher's concepts, not learning conceptually for themselves. And memorising of course is association learning not conceptual learning; it is level one, rote learning which requires no reasoning.

Concepts are very often taught to be rote learned because it takes schools less time and effort to present the material as bits of knowledge - associations - and because this sort of teaching is easier to assess when the time comes to find out what the class has learned. If children started to do their own thinking in a class of 25 there would very likely be 25 different sets of learning, and how could this be assessed?

So standardised learning is the expectation - students must all learn the same facts, and the opinions of the experts, no matter how much face value is given to discussion methods. Standardised learning, learning other people's concepts, is rote learning, memorisation, level-one learning, where the students are not required, nor even allowed, to use their own conceptual powers.

Such teaching of concepts to be learned by heart does not allow students to incorporate the learning into their own conceptual scheme in their own way, nor does it give them practice in forming their own concepts. This is one reason why so many of the facts learned at school are completely forgotten - often by the end of the next holidays. The bits of learning have never had a chance to come to rest somewhere in a student's personal map of the world, for they were learned by heart, crammed and regurgitated for the exam, and allowed to drop out of sight and out of mind after it.

Whenever there is teaching that gives too many explicit directions, and whenever there is too little encouragement for the learner's own creative solutions, the development of conceptual thought is hindered.

So far I have dwelt on the *methods* of teaching in schools, which have been modified considerably since the advent of compulsory schooling in the nineteenth century. Before that there were no concessions - all pupils in all subjects were expected to learn exactly what the teacher taught them. In those days the teacher dictated from book or memory, the pupil copied word for word, and recited back the lesson by heart. Even in question and answer lessons the conversation followed a stylised form which the pupil had to learn by rote.

It was the perfect example of first-level association learning.

One of my favourite quotes is of a popular joke in the late 17th century which said that the result of schooling was not an educated man - but a parrot, a creature with endless capacity for conversation but quite unable to think. But by the late 20th century it is no longer a joke. The methods of teaching and organising our schools continue to discourage the development of thought. The truth is that schooling hampers the development of reasoning in many people.

Reasoning and research are the 4th and 5th Rs, and they can be taught as skills and used in all other learning just as the other 3Rs.

Reasoning develops in humans spontaneously, although in the early stages it is unconscious and haphazard. Before they start school, children are asking questions endlessly and using trial and error learning to come to more reasoned learning.

Even for the first year or two in school the lack of strict structure enables continued questioning and trial and error learning. But in most schools by the second or third year children are sat behind desks, all facing front, quiet,

still, safe. Fairly soon they learn that if they ask too many questions they are reprimanded; they learn to put up their hand and wait, often missing out, and often losing interest in finding out. Children learn that to think for themselves does not result in high marks; high marks come from parroting what the teacher says or writes.

As the school years pass, those with the best memories go to the top of the class, those who are slower to recall drop back. The prizes go to those who have remembered best, not asked too many questions, not thought too much for themselves, but have told the teacher what the teacher had said. When some children don't do so well, it is judged to be because they are not so intelligent. No one stops to ask whether they may be thinking about things more deeply and slowly because they are more intelligent.

Sadly, most teachers know about the differences between memorisation and conceptual-creative learning, but because of age-grade classes, and because teaching time is divided into small slots, conceptual-creative learning cannot be catered for.

Big changes need to be made to the methods of teaching and the methods of organising classes and the school day. However if it is too much to hope that these changes could be implemented in the next half decade, it is not too much to expect that every primary school in Australia could implement the

teaching of reasoning and research skills as subjects the same as reading, writing and numbers.

When we look at curriculum content, teaching-learning material has long been divided into skills, knowledge and attitudes. Skills are put first because they are the tools that people need in order to go on to further and more complex learning, both in school and throughout life.

The basic skills have long been called the 3Rs, although literacy and numeracy denote more than reading, riting and rithmetic. But as I have already said, we should be signalling to the community that the basic 3Rs of industrial era schooling must now become the basic 5Rs. Reasoning and research can no longer be left to chance, to the hope that the right people will catch on.

I have already invoked one powerful reason for this, namely that in today's world Australia needs a creative workforce if we are to maintain a place in the world. We need as many creative people as we can get, and we should be encouraging questioning and thinking children from the first years of school. We can start to develop their reasoning skills from the beginning.

Reasoning skills include questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating and reflecting. These skills can be taught just as reading and writing can be taught, and can be used in all further learning in the same way that reading and writing are.

In Australia we are lucky in having the Institute of Philosophy for Children, which has well-researched and trialled programs for teaching reasoning; there are other programs available. The sooner these skills are put on State syllabuses along with the traditional 3Rs, the better for Australia, for national and personal reasons.

I have called research skills the fifth of the 5Rs, although research is one of the processes I have quoted among the reasoning skills; however research skills are so necessary in this new era that they deserve a niche of their own.

The post-industrial era is also being called the Information Era, and information is fast becoming a highly significant commodity in the economy of the developed countries.

Even more important for the education profession, the pace of technological change has rendered useless the acquisition of a large number of facts (that is association learning), for so many facts become obsolete today even as children are learning them in the classroom. What is necessary is knowing *how* to find and gather up-to-date information.

Knowing how and where to find answers is more useful than a good memory for facts in the Information Era. Computers can store information, wipe off old information and program in new, in ways that no human brain can do. This is why everyone should learn research or information skills formally, during their schooldays, for these skills can be used to update and upgrade their knowledge, throughout their lives.

Several education systems in Australia have already issued policy documents and curriculum syllabus materials on the teaching of information skills throughout primary and secondary schools, and across all subject areas. These documents should be promoted in every primary school, so that every teacher becomes aware of them and learns how to use them. Especially should they be incorporated in the subject to be introduced - the teaching of reasoning skills.

Research skills and reasoning skills are so closely linked that it is virtually impossible to teach the one set without actually teaching the other at the same time. In fact the draft **Information skills curriculum statement** of the NSW Department of Education combines the teaching of reasoning and research skills in the one document.

Conclusion

This presentation has ranged rather widely, for I have tried to show just how necessary it is to think urgently about introducing the teaching-learning of the 4th and 5th Rs, reasoning and research. The reasons given have ranged from economic and social to personal and psychological.

If our children are to be educated for more than slotting into the workforce, we shall have to insist that primary and secondary schooling provides a good, basic general education. They will need such a grounding in order to be able to tackle a future about which we know little beyond the fact that it will be different and there will be constant change.

A narrow vocational, or even academic schooling will not prepare people to cope with these changes. The schooling we give our children today will have to be the basis on which they can build the learning they will undertake throughout their lives; and first among that basic education is the group of skills I am calling the 5Rs.

Reasoning and research skills are not yet taught widely, but we should work to have them put into the curriculum of all Australian primary schools and incorporated in the methods of teaching in every subject area of all schools.

☆ OASIS Library: user friendly online enquiry

This article was written by Paul Drayton who is currently working as a deployed teacher-librarian with Management Information Services Directorate. Paul is involved with writing documentation for the OASIS library module, with the development of the software and with running inservice courses for teachers, teacher-librarians and clerical staff.

Of all the improved services that the OASIS library automation package can bring to library users in Government schools in New South Wales, the online public Enquiry feature is the most exciting in its potential impact on students' understanding of the use of technology in information retrieval, and in facilitating students' development of skills which form part of the information skills program in our schools.

What is OASIS Library Enquiry?

The Enquiry function of OASIS is an example of an OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) service. As described by Robyn Owens in *scan* vol 7 no 8 November 1988, 'An online catalogue provides access using the computer terminal to the complete bibliographic record of all the library's holdings...' p13. It is further described as a system '... in which the user is connected directly to the information source (the catalogue) and in which responses occur quickly enough to enable the search request to be modified dynamically as the session progresses.' This is certainly true of OASIS Library Enquiry as its user friendly presentation and wide range of access points provide the user with great flexibility in pursuing various search paths.

Overview of the Enquiry function

The Enquiry function has the following purposes :

- * To provide students and staff with easy access to bibliographic information about all items in the school library.
- * To enable enquirers to obtain lists of resources on demand, on a chosen topic.
- * To facilitate the search process for all levels of user, thereby encouraging more students and staff to use the library to meet their information needs.

As a result of using the Enquiry function, students are given the opportunity to develop information retrieval skills using a system with online search facilities.

What will Enquiry allow users to do?

By entering a word or number in full, or in a truncated form the enquirer may initiate a search of the entire library data base within the following files:

- * Subjects
- * Titles
- * Authors
- * Series
- * Keywords
- * Barcode number
- * Classification number
- * Accession number

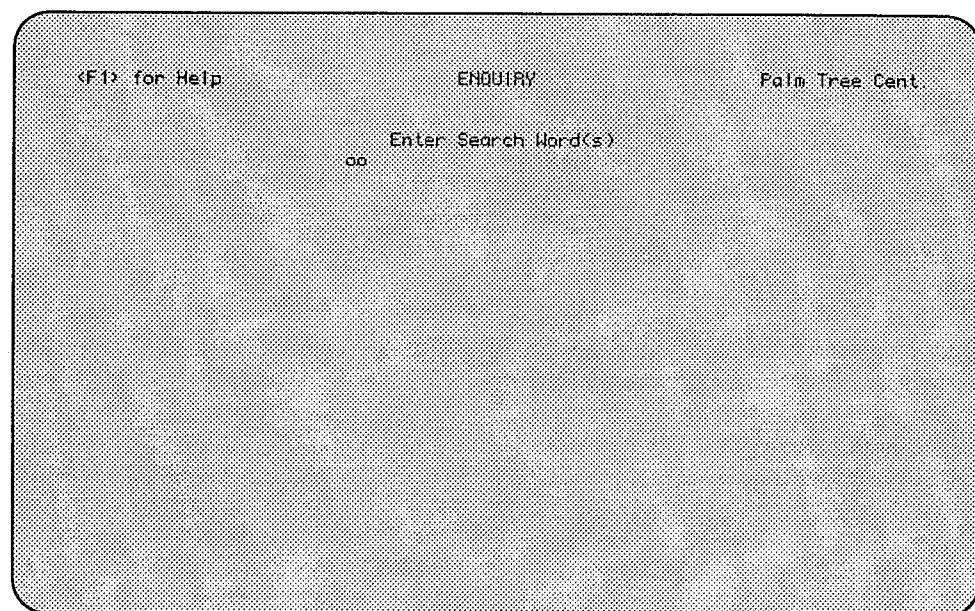
In a basic search the enquirer may:

- 1 Identify the match that OASIS has chosen as closest to the nominated search word. A flashing pointer is displayed next to this choice.
- 2 View an expanded range of choices in any of the eight files listed above.
- 3 Obtain on screen lists of items linked to any chosen subjects, authors, series or keywords.
- 4 Obtain print-outs of the above lists.
- 5 View full bibliographic details for each item located and obtain a screen print for each.

For an **Advanced search**, the enquirer, in addition to the above listed options, may :

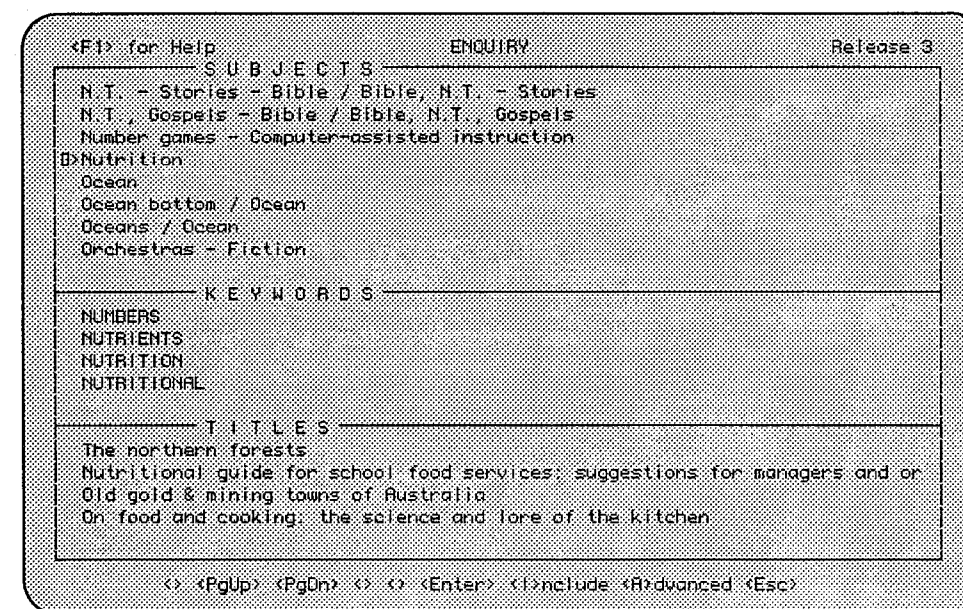
- 1 Tag headings from any of the 8 files listed previously, to include in a Boolean search.
- 2 Use the Boolean connectors 'and', 'not', 'or' to link search terms to either expand or refine the resulting list of resources.
- 3 Conduct the advanced search on all types of resources or restrict the search to one type of resource by nominating a General Material Designation (GMD) eg limit the search to all videocassettes only.
- 4 View the results of the search on screen.
- 5 Obtain a print-out of the results of a search.

The simplicity of the Enquiry entry screen shown below illustrates that OASIS seeks to demystify and simplify the online search process for all users.



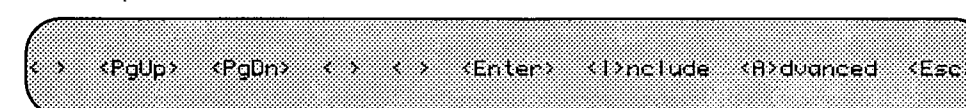
Enquirers need only enter all or part of a word or number related to their search for an enquiry to begin. A range of possible matches is presented for selection. There is no need for enquirers to first nominate the type of access points they will use to conduct a search such as subject, author or series. The chances are therefore minimised that a user will prematurely terminate a search because of a series of nil results.

In response to an entry on the first Enquiry screen, OASIS presents the user with a range of possible matches, highlighting with a flashing pointer the closest match to the term entered. For instance, an enquirer searching for information on **nutrition** may decide to enter only the letters *nutr*. In response, the following screen would appear (note all examples are from the OASIS Library Tutorial which uses a fictitious school library collection, that of Palm Tree Central School).



The enquirer would then be viewing one of the three screen pages on the Enquiry Access Screen of OASIS. In this case, a match is highlighted in the subjects file. The user is able to scan on the same screen page possible matches in both the keywords and titles file. The screen page of Enquiry Access that will be revealed first is determined by where OASIS locates a match in the files searched. If a match is found in the subject file, this screen page will always be presented first, regardless of whether matches are also found in other files. This is because information about a subject or topic is most often the goal of an enquirer. However a message at the bottom of the screen will let the user know if an exact match is also present on other screen pages.

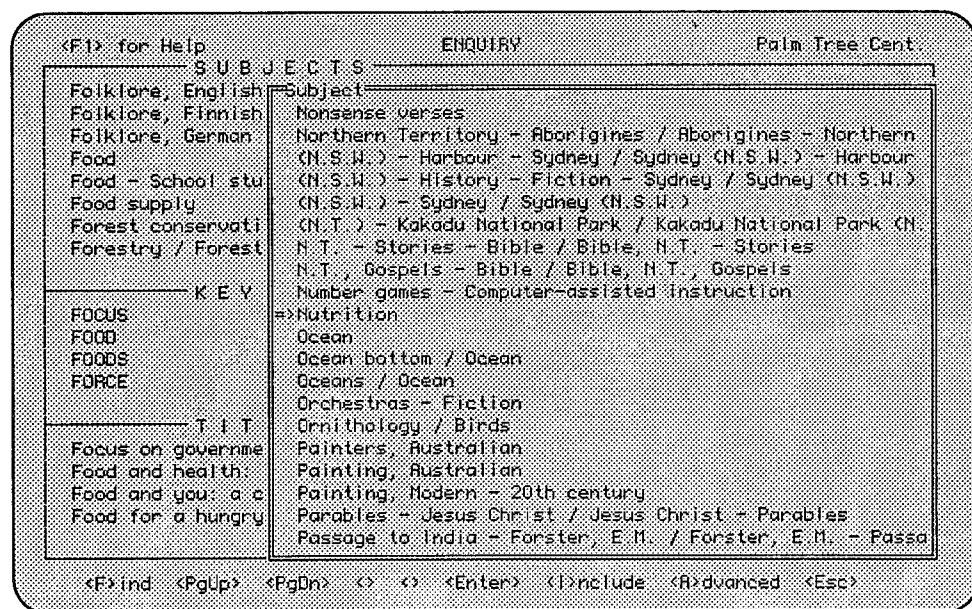
OASIS offers users a number of options as to how they will pursue their search. These are displayed at the bottom of the screen on an option bar like the one shown below.



The options include:

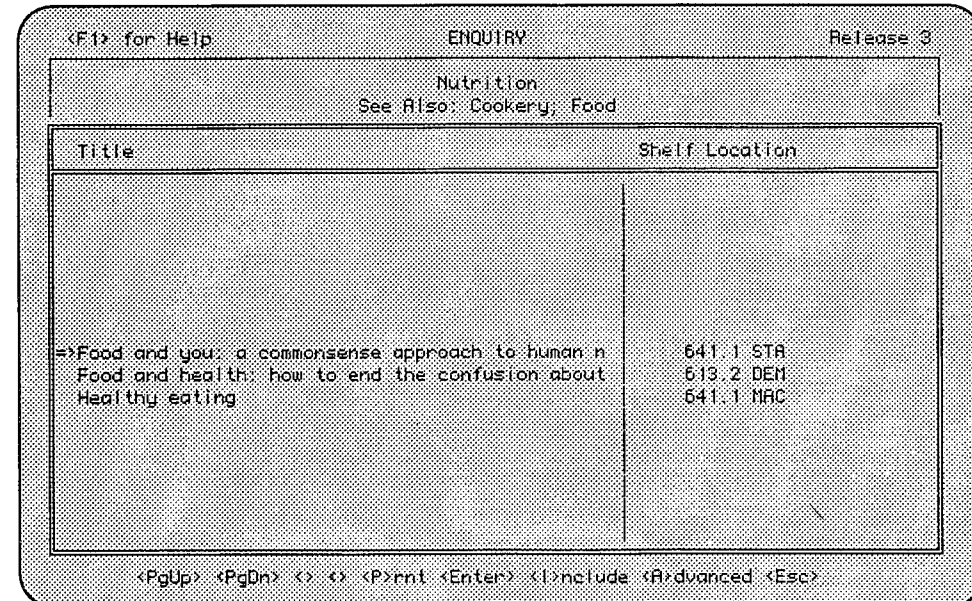
- * Viewing other screen pages.
- * Moving the pointer up or down the current screen page to reveal more information about choices on that screen.
- * Obtaining an expanded view into one file currently on the screen so as to search for further choices.
- * Initiating an Advanced or Boolean search by tagging terms for inclusion and then moving to the Advanced Search screen.
- * Pressing <Enter> accepts the choice currently highlighted by the pointer thereby obtaining more information about that choice.

An example of expanding the view into one file on the Enquiry Access Screen is shown below.



With the pointer next to the subject **nutrition**, pressing the appropriate key opens up a window into the complete subject file through which the user can scroll or elect to search for a specific subject.

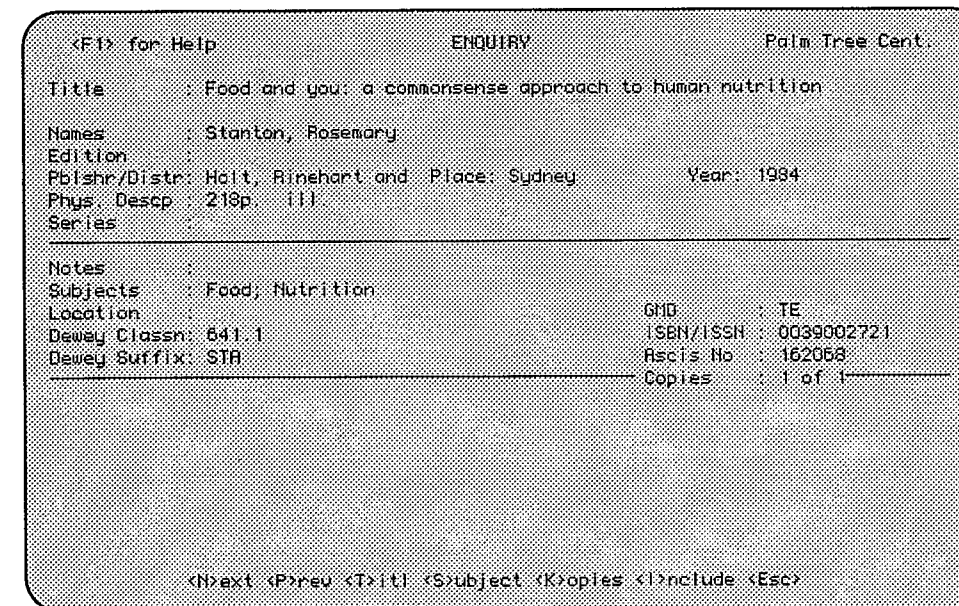
Should the user instead choose to accept the original match of the subject **nutrition**, a new screen is revealed.



This is called the Resource List Screen and it lists all the resources linked to the selected subject which are held in the library. Equally, this screen would be reached if the user had accepted a choice from the author, keyword, or series files. From this screen enquirers can:

- * Obtain a hard copy of the list from a printer attached to the system.
- * Note any *See Also* or *Scope Note* references which have been entered for the subject which will appear at the top of the screen, to guide them with their search.
- * View more information on individual titles on the list.

For instance, in this example, choosing to see more details on the first title listed would reveal the following screen with information about that title. Included on this screen is information on the number of copies of that title currently held by the library and the number currently available for loan. This screen is called the Bibliographic Details Screen and is also displayed directly when a choice is accepted on the Enquiry Access Screen that comes from the title, barcode, accession number, or classification number files.



Keyword searching

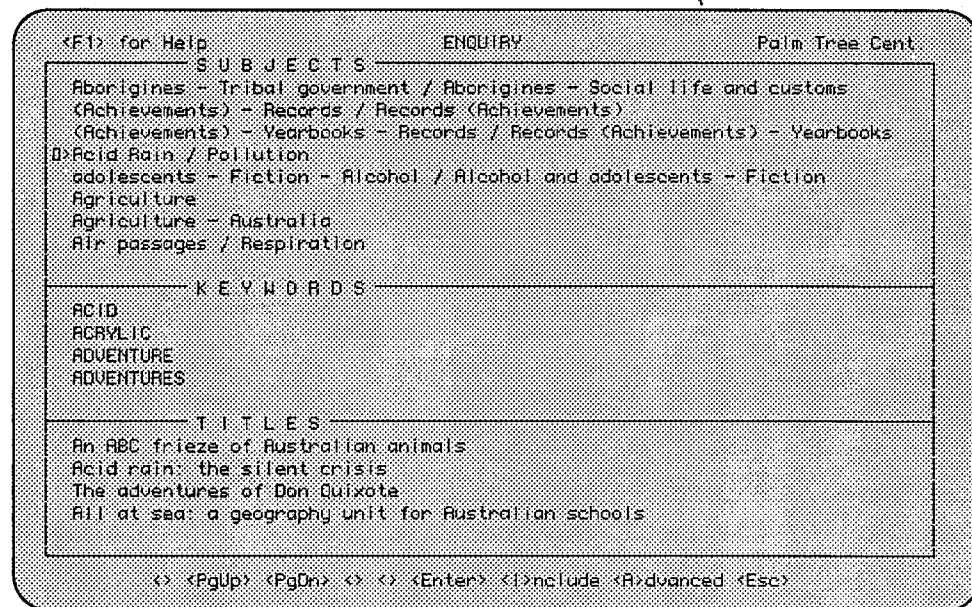
OASIS allows keyword searching of all words or numbers in a title as well as any words or phrases in the notes which have been manually tagged. All words in a title may be automatically keyworded except for those in a user-defined stopped words list. By providing access to all subjects and their subdivisions, a form of keywording is available in subjects. This means for example, that the subject **Aborigines - Art - Exhibitions** would also be accessible under **Art - Exhibitions - Aborigines** and **Exhibitions - Aborigines - Art**.

See references

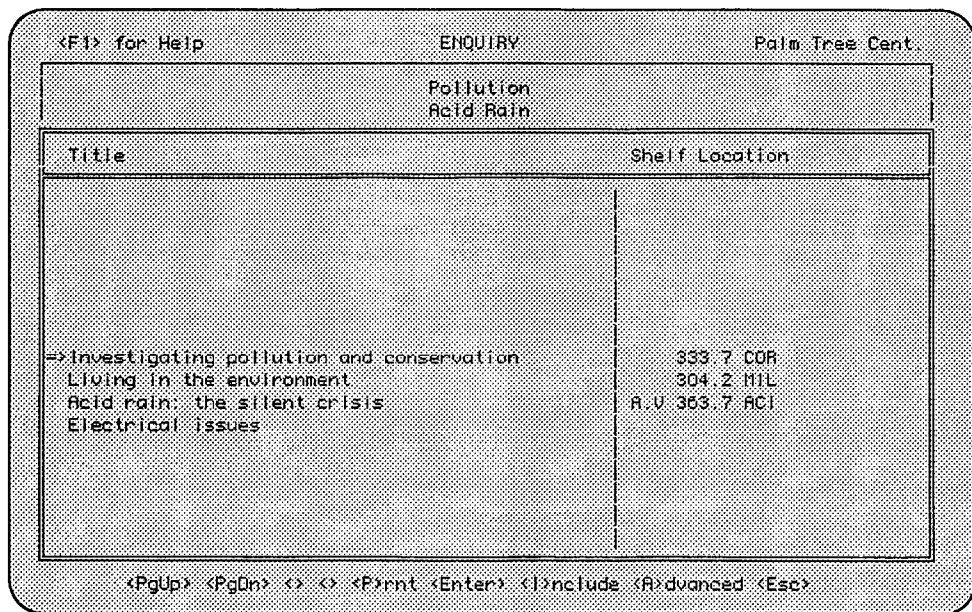
Another helpful feature for users is the facility for library staff to enter *See References* into the system in a way that assists and guides the search without frustrating the user. In a manual system, when students and staff search under a non-standard term and are directed to a preferred term elsewhere in the catalogue, they can sometimes lose interest and may not continue the search.

In OASIS the enquirer is taken directly to the nominated term in the subject file even if this is a non-preferred term. The preferred term is displayed beside the non-preferred term on the Enquiry Access Screen. For example entering the term **Acid Rain** would bring up a screen such as the following.

Acid Rain is followed by a slash and the term **Pollution** which is the preferred term. However there is no need to return to the entry screen and enter pollution.



Accepting the non-preferred term, **Acid Rain**, takes the enquirer directly to the list of resources under the preferred term, **Pollution** as shown below.



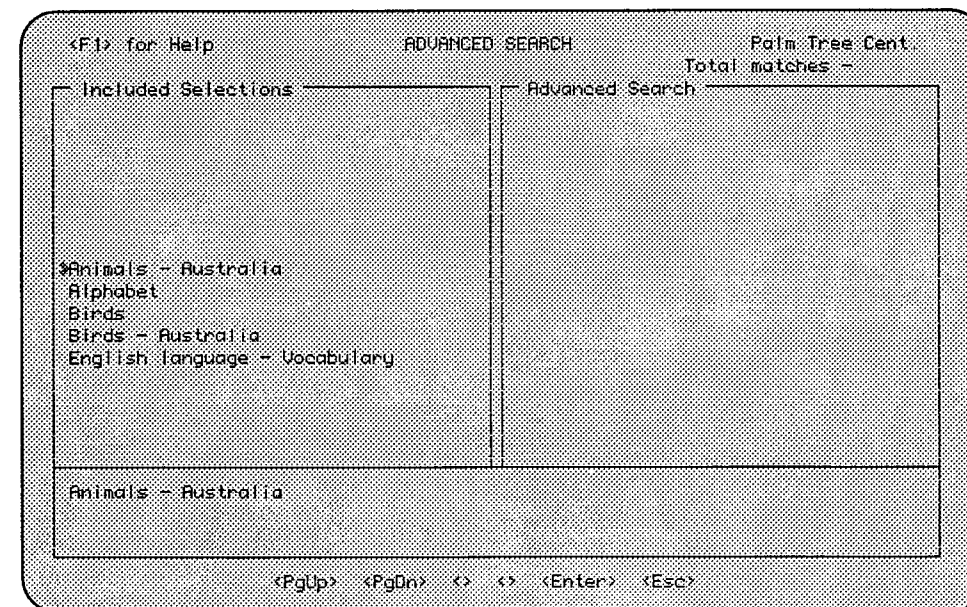
Acid Rain is now displayed on the screen under the heading **Pollution** indicating that this was the term under which the enquirer began the search. Searchers are not dismayed by the sudden display of a term they were not actively seeking.

The Advanced or Boolean search facility

Although this facility will, at least initially, be used more by teacher-librarians and teachers, it does provide students with opportunities to develop higher order information retrieval skills. In order to expand or refine the potential results of a search an enquirer can set up a series of search criteria by which OASIS will locate resources. To assist the user in constructing such searches Boolean connectors 'and', 'or', 'not' can be used to combine search criteria.

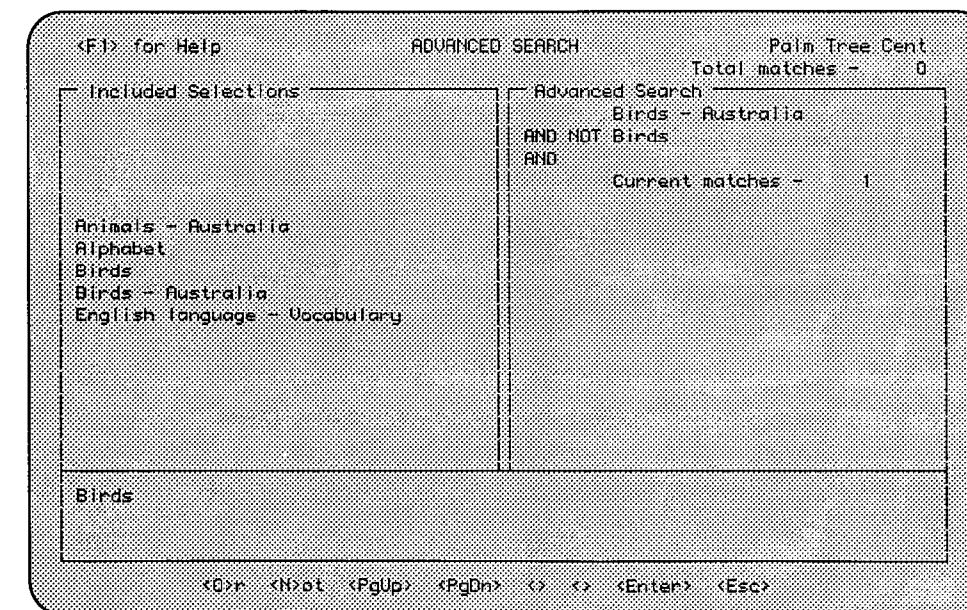
The use of the <I>nclude key from the option bar of Enquiry screens tags any terms by which the enquirer chooses to search. At this stage the proposed connections to be used between terms do not need to be taken into consideration, nor does the order in which terms are included.

Once terms have been selected, choosing <A>dvanced search will take users to the advanced search screen. Users are first asked to nominate whether they will be searching for all types of resources or only specific types. The latter choice allows OASIS users to select all the videocassettes on a topic, or all the kits, if this is appropriate. Below is an illustration of the Advanced Search Screen.



This screen is divided into three sections. The left hand side of the screen is headed Included Selections and contains the search terms that the enquirer has tagged to be included in the Advanced Search process. In this example there are five. The right hand side of the screen is headed Advanced Search and is where each search term is placed to initiate a search, either singly, or in combination with other search terms, using Boolean connectors. The rectangle across the bottom of both sections shows the search word that is currently highlighted in the included selections section.

As the search proceeds the current and total matches are displayed for the user. The results of each search are displayed as on the Resource List Screen.



Access to the Enquiry module of OASIS is organised in such a way that students and staff will only be able to access that part of OASIS Library. This means that workstations can be dedicated to Enquiry without fear that users can use them to gain access to other parts of the system, and alter or corrupt information in the catalogue.

Library staff however are given access to Enquiry, quickly and easily from within most sections of OASIS library. This feature greatly assists the entry and maintenance of data in the system. For example, *similar titles* or existing reference structures can be verified easily while the operator is still in data entry functions. This flexibility also assists library staff in the provision of reference services and resource planning for users.

The online enquiry feature of OASIS Library provides an opportunity for teacher-librarians and teachers to apply online technology in a creative way to benefit learning in NSW schools.

☆ Where to see OASIS

Teacher-librarians in a number of schools throughout the state who have been implementing the Oasis Library module have indicated a willingness to discuss and demonstrate the system with fellow teacher-librarians. They are listed below.

Please be aware that the most efficient way of using your own and their time will be to examine the system with a group, perhaps your inspectorate group, rather than an individual, one-to-one basis. It is suggested that your initial approach be through the school's principal.

Alstonville High School
Ph. (066) 28 5222
Teacher-librarian: Ros Sharpe

Jasper Road Primary School
Ph. (02) 639 6801
Teacher-librarian: Trish McGrath

Batemans Bay High School
Ph. (044) 72 7233
Teacher-librarian: Lyn Hay

Oak Flats High School
Ph. (042) 56 1888
Teacher-librarian: Doug Jenkins

Byron Bay High School
Ph. (066) 85 8188
Teacher-librarian: Peter Mair

South Sydney High School
Ph. (02) 349 3868
Teacher-librarian: Ann-Maree McKewan

Calare Public School
Ph. (063) 62 3803
Teacher-librarian: David Woodside

Wingham Public School
Ph. (065) 53 4186
Teacher-librarian: Margaret Sparkes-Carroll

Double Bay Primary School
Ph. (02) 32 2823
Teacher-librarian: Pamela Winkless

☆ ASCIS and OASIS demonstrations

Teacher-librarians and teachers in government schools will have the opportunity throughout 1989 to examine ways in which ASCIS and OASIS can be used to improve a school's library and information services.

Demonstrations, discussions and hands-on experience will be available at Library Services on the first Wednesday of each month during term time from 4-6pm: 3 May; 7 June; 2 August; 6 September; 1 November; 6 December. For attendance at any of these times, please advise Murray McLachlan on (02) 808 9461. It may be necessary to limit the number of participants in each session.

Library Services is organising a similar program for those regions outside the Sydney area. Details of this program will be provided as they are finalised.

teaching learning

Using the school magazine in the classroom

Jill Isbister is support teacher (Learning Difficulties) at Auburn Public School.

The **School Magazine** is available to every student in our primary schools and over the years has retained its literary quality. Although there are many glossy magazines available today, more visually appealing and with more variety of activities and information texts, the **School Magazine** gives the teacher a selection of quality writing and a wealth of available resources.

Responding to Literature

As teachers, we have in the past been too prescriptive in our methods of teaching, and tried to teach skills and strategies rather than to assist students to develop and investigate their own process of learning. We have provided them with their response to literature assuming there is only one way to respond critically. However, we are discovering the ineffectiveness of teaching students a knowledge bank and teaching skills in a hierarchical order. The explosion of knowledge has made it impossible to cover a knowledge bank, and we now know that students don't learn in a serial fashion but in a parallel way. We all know the frustration of watching students write, talk to their friends, and listen to a story all at once. We may become furious when they provide the answers to questions we ask of them about the story because we assume they could not have been listening.

Literature allows us to explore what might be possible, rather than just providing 'the right' answers to our questions. Students need to constantly read, write, listen, speak, contemplate, reflect, rethink and revise. As we discover in maths, problem solving is about exploring more than one answer, and looking at the many different ways of finding an answer. Similarly, literature allows students to respond, reflect, and learn to critically discuss and write about their ideas.

Jack Thomson in his book *Understanding teenagers' reading*, writes, 'If learning means making knowledge for ourselves and if in turn this means shaping, exploring, clarifying and developing our own thinking in our own language, then informal conversations with others about books and instant, exploratory jottings in response to first readings have an important place in the classroom.' p253.

Thomson has offered strategies for encouraging students to respond, 'Many of the classroom activities ... are designed to make students more conscious of their own identities and reading processes. Reflexive exploration of their own reactions to texts and of their

own strategies for making sense of them is essential for the development of self understanding and reading power. It is only by testing their initial responses to literature against the responses of others (as can happen in small groups) that students become aware of a range of possible alternative responses, and it is this awareness of possible alternatives that can lead them to see their own reactions as personal and to subject them to closer scrutiny' p342.

Students need to be immersed in an environment where, as Helga Rowe describes, they 'are able to see themselves as being in the decision making role; decide on the strategies they will use to accomplish given tasks; determine on the correctness or error of an answer based on data they themselves are producing and are able to validate; are involved in the setting of their own goals and means of assessing accomplishment of those goals.' As Thomson has emphasised, students need to respond to each other in group situations, and Rowe writes 'Research has shown that allowing students to work cooperatively promotes the use of higher reasoning strategies and greater critical thinking competencies more than do competitive and individualistic learning strategies.' scan vol 8 no 2 march 1989 p9.

In past years, some teachers have used the **School Magazine** to do written comprehensions and grammar exercises, eg underline all the nouns (or verbs etc) on this page, and unfortunately have made it just another text used to make students do boring exercises. Editor, Anna Fienberg suggests the **School Magazine** is produced for its readers to 'inspire them with the quality and magic of its literature, and help them to understand the essential ingredients that create that magic.' scan vol 8 no 2 march 1989 p13. The secret is never to allow the magic to be lost, but yet be able to use the resources available in the magazine for the teacher to extend and explore student response to literature, and critical and creative thinking. It is the balance that is important. We must not teach from the magazine but use it as a model and a springboard.

So that students can respond to literature and think critically, we need to give them enough cues, ideas and background knowledge to enable them to explore and investigate for themselves. Teachers also have to remember that students learn much from each other. We as teachers may often feel no learning is taking place if we are not directly involved in the process. As long as the teacher structures the environment, students learn best through working with their peers.

Some useful class activities and ideas to use with the School Magazine

Classroom management

Students will find many of these activities pleasurable because they are working and sharing in groups. If as a teacher you are not used to working with students in small group arrangements, it is sensible to begin with simple activities, make sure they understand your instructions and they know the rules about the level of noise allowed and how to move quietly around the room to and from groups. It is important to make sure you establish these group routines properly at the beginning so that you can later give the students a lot of supervised freedom. Make sure the lesson sections are short and students obey the class rules. Ensure that the organisation is working before trying too many variations. Students will respond if they feel responsible for helping their group, and if asked for suggestions to vary the choice of activity. You will experience exciting feedback, not only in the thought provoking questions your students will suggest, but in the group variations they will devise.

Activity 1 - Stories from the School Magazine

a Students can be asked to read silently in Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) reading time any short story from the magazine.

b The class is divided into groups of approximately five students and each member of the group is asked to write down six questions they would like to ask about the story. These questions could be directed to the author or to the class in general.

c Each student shares his/her questions with the group. At this point there can be several variations in the lesson plan according to the processes the teacher is developing.

* Students answer each other's questions either orally or in a written form, individually or as a group.

* Students in the group select six questions they consider to be the best questions. Students must justify their choice of question. The hidden curriculum taking place is that students are learning what makes a question a good question.

* These six questions are passed on to another group and the groups answer the questions they have been given, again in written or oral form depending on the teacher's objectives.

* Students write down a list of check points that they have decided is their criteria for what makes a good question.

* Groups choose only one question. Students come back together as a class group and share the question. Whole class answer the questions orally or in written form.

Activity 2

Students are asked to read stories or the teacher reads a story from a magazine. Divide the class into groups and students discuss their responses to the story. The teacher may set up some cues. Students will have had demonstrations and experience with this style of question and activity in class discussions. Questions and activities might follow lines such as these:

a * What did you like about the story? What did you dislike about the story? Does this author have a message for us?

* Can you guess the author's reason for writing this book? eg to teach you something, let you experience fear, hope, love, sadness, despair, anger, etc?

Did the author write it just for fun?

* Does the author play with words and language, eg as in the story, **A good knight for dragons** by Roger Bradfield? (Blast off! No 1 Vol 74 1989)

* Did the author use word images that you found exciting and descriptive 'I'll toast him like a marshmallow', (from above story).

* Could you draw a picture about one part of the story that is not illustrated in the magazine?

* Write up a 'mug sheet' of the main character. (See CAIRNEY, T. in reference list)

* Does the story have a repetitive sentence that gives the story character, eg 'I, Nate the Great ...', etc from **Nate the great and the snowy trail** by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat (Countdown no 1 vol 74 1989)

b * While you are reading, imagine you are one of the characters in the story, talk about how you feel to your friends and whether you might have reacted differently in the book in one situation from the way the character you are did, or meet another character in the story and hold a discussion with that character about what is happening in the story.

* Which characters do you relate to? Do you feel good about happy things that happen to them and sad and upset when bad things happen to them? Discuss with your friends.

* Imagine you are helping the writer write the book, what would you decide the characters might do next, would you suggest he/she change parts or tell you more about some of the events that take place in the book?

* Discuss whether you have learnt anything important about the world you live in from this book.

* Do you think you understand other people better because of what you have read? Give examples.

* Has the book influenced what you believe in, what you think is right and true?

* Is there anything apart from the story-line that interests you about this book?

* Drawing a group or individual picture of a part of a story not illustrated can be rewarding, as can drawing a picture of a character from the story who is not illustrated.

Many of these ideas and questions come from Jack Thomson's book.

Activity 3 - using magazine stories for model writing

* Read one of the stories from the **School Magazine** and write a story using it as a model. Using the story **Nate the great and the snowy trail**, students could write a similar story about a birthday

present, or create a completely different topic but write in the same tense, first person, or rewrite the original story into the second or third person and notice how the story changes. They could also decide to use a repetitive phrase, or play with words as this author has, eg look at the names of the characters, Sludge, Fang, and, 'This case was more ice-cold than ever. I tried to think warm thoughts.' Students might like to write a detective story, setting up clues throughout their story to help their readers solve the case. This is an enjoyable activity where students are writing and looking at techniques that successful authors have used.

* Students read a story or a poem and set up a dialogue between two characters, or have one character write a letter to the other adding new information about themselves, eg. use the poem, 'Cat - English' by Kingsley Amis (Touchdown no 1 vol 74 1989), and give the main character a name and write a dialogue between him/her and the cat, Sarah.

* Use such a story as **Fox in charge** by Edward Marshall, (Countdown no 1 vol 74 1989) or **The last coconut biscuit** by Alice Braithwaite, (Blast off! no 1 vol 74 1989) and ask students to rewrite it as a play using a narrator. These stories have a lot of dialogue so they are quite easy to write as a play. Another idea to help students work out the difference between dialogue and comments in a play or the use of a narrator, is to ask them to rewrite the story as a comic strip using speech balloons. This helps students identify the spoken dialogue physically from the rest of the text.

* Read such a story as **The piskie threshers** by Eric Quayle (Orbit no 1 vol 74 1989). Students in

The secret is never to allow the magic to be lost, but yet be able to use the resources available in the magazine for the teacher to extend and explore student response to literature, and critical and creative thinking ... we must not teach from the magazine but use it as a model and a springboard.

groups talk about the similarity of the story to the well-known fairytale **The elves and the shoemakers**. Students may like to research the similarities of fairytales from different countries, having noted that this is from a book of Cornish legends.

* Students may be asked to write a fairytale using the above story as a model. Students asked to note the use of the Cornish dialect in the tale and use this dialect in their tale. Students may like to look back through old magazine collections and find tales where the author has used a dialect, eg American deep south, and write this into a story. Students will understand the type of research often required to write a story.

* Students read or have read to them legends.

Students discuss what a legend is and then write their own.

* Encourage students to look through their magazines and note famous authors and illustrators they already know, eg Michael Palin, Ruskin Bond, Margaret Mahy, Joan Phipson, Pat Hutchins, Max Fatchen, Michael Foreman, Noela Young, and research other items they have written and any interesting information about them. Students could produce a 'literary passport', (see JOHNSON, T. & LOUIS, D. in reference list)

* Using *Bookshelf* as a model for a book review for class or library. This review is less daunting than other book review formats. The student needs to balance telling part of the story to arouse interest against spoiling the story by telling too much. Students will learn to develop short character profiles and

interesting clues that will excite other students to read the book. Make sure students are given the opportunity to review a book they don't like and allow them to be truthful.

* Using the *Bookshelf* introduction and the extract of the book **Seasons of splendour** by Madhur Jaffrey (Touchdown no 1 vol 74 1989) as a model, students from different countries may like to share some of their own famous stories told by their families. A story telling and sharing time helps students accept their differences and enjoy some of each other's culture as well as add another wonderful and important life skill.

Activity 4 - the retelling strategy

Using the magazine means that students are working with both fiction and non-fiction texts and each student has a readily available copy of the texts. This strategy effectively allows students to

take part in listening, speaking, reading and writing activities in the one lesson and incorporates sharing and comparing where groups of students listen and evaluate others' use of language and interpretation of meaning. It allows for what Brown and Cambourne call 'reading flexibility', 'by this, we mean the ability to change reading 'gears' from almost casual skim-reading to a very intense and deep engagement with the text.' (BROWN, H. & CAMBOURNE, B., *Read and retell*)

Lesson Plan Headings are:

Part 1

* Predict a plot.

* **Predict some words**, key words or phrases from your story plot idea. If using articles with diagrams and other ways of presenting information, ask students to predict these, eg photographs, graphs, scaled drawings, charts, maps, time lines.

* Share and compare.

* Make a comment.

Part 2

Read text: skim, scan, read carefully.

Part 3

Retell, orally or in writing without reference to the text. Students have a go at reproducing diagrams etc used in the text.

Part 4

Share and compare

If using non-fiction texts, check to see if any sub-headings or main ideas are left out? Are all key words used? Is the writing in the same style or genre as the original text? Is the tense the same? Is the text factual like the original or are personal ideas added? Are the diagrams properly labelled?

In monitoring this work the teacher will move around the group to help students be positive in their criticism of each other's work. The teacher can direct the discussion towards the teaching strategy she/he wants the students to address and listen and observe the discussions.

Using an expository text the teacher is well able to evaluate a unit of work: the knowledge the student had of the subject before there was any input, the prediction section of the lesson, and the knowledge the student had at the end of the lesson.

Activity 5 - key words strategy

The lesson is more effective if students have time restrictions placed upon them for each section of the lesson. This strategy is suitable for all genres of writing. This lesson can be given as a whole class lesson or more successfully, in groups.

* The teacher chooses approximately 20 key words or phrases from any text. Students are given this and the title of the text. The teacher may also supply the genre of the text to help the students if it is a familiar one to the students.

* Students predict the text using all the key words making sure tenses and persons remain the same.

* Share and compare texts in groups. An exciting variation to this lesson is when groups are given a text such as 'The giant pandas' from the magazines, no 1 vol 74, 1989, and each group reads and prepares a list of twenty key words or phrases from the text. The groups swap lists and continue the lesson as before. In the share and compare section, each group will evaluate the other's work by commenting on the texts produced and by the appropriateness of key words chosen. This encourages positive peer evaluation as each group relies on the ability of the other.

Activity 6 - talk to the author sessions

Use a suitable text from the magazines. After a class demonstration of the text, students will try individually using their own magazine copy of a text. Students are asked to write in pencil in the margin, questions and comments about the text. This is to help students move beyond the literal understanding of the text, to differentiate between fact and opinion, search for the author's bias as well as their points of view. The students can interact with the author as they read, recording their questions and comments in the margin. For example a student might ask for more information about a part of the story that is not clear to them. (See CAIRNEY, T.)

Activity 7 - semantic outlines

This strategy is to help students organise information from a text and then be able to write a summary of it.

* Students read or have read to them a text from the magazine and offer suggestions for the main idea of the text. These are recorded on overhead or blackboard.

* Students choose one of these topics, then offer ideas from the text which tell something about this topic. These are recorded.

* Students must then organise all these ideas and the previous ones into categories using some form of code, eg colour.

The final step is to turn these outlines into a summary. (See CAIRNEY, T.)

Activity 8 - road systems

A similar strategy is organising information into a road system model.

* An expressway is the main idea. Highways, ideas that give more information about the main idea, turn off the expressway. Main roads branch from a highway will then give information about the highway, minor roads that branch from the main roads will be more detailed information about the main road.

* Students have fun building a road system and find

it easier to relate the importance of the information to this model. Students then write a summary using the plan.

The Australian Reading Association has offered a variety of ideas for presenting your students with learning challenges. Learning challenges are a method of classroom organisation where learning space is created for students to explore, think, create and respond. The *School Magazine* can be used in many of the above ways where an individual, group of students or the whole class can work on some of the above ideas as learning challenges. This allows time for the teacher to move to groups that have a common need or allows time for more individual attention. Last but not least the magazine is a marvellous resource for parents to use to share with students at home, and also provides them with a list of well chosen quality literature that they may like to purchase for their child. You may like to arrange a list of all the books appearing in *Bookshelf* for the

☉ Experience is the best teacher : evaluating cooperative ventures

Niki Kallenberger is a Senior Education Officer at Library Services

Evaluation is the process of ascertaining the value of something. In the context of cooperative program planning and teaching, that something is two-fold: the products and the processes of the cooperative venture. Evaluation involves identifying and gathering appropriate information and making decisions and judgments. Such decisions may shape future action, provide future directions for pupils and fulfil administrative regulations. As cooperative partners, both teacher-librarians and teachers have important roles to play in the evaluation process.

Products : Student learning

The products of a cooperatively taught unit will be both the unit itself and student learning outcomes. The involvement of the teacher-librarian in evaluating student learning is crucial, although sometimes ignored. Teacher-librarians, as cooperative partners, must be involved in this phase, just as they are involved in all phases of a cooperatively taught unit. At this point important information about the progress of individual students, or groups of students, is gathered. Such information gives feedback on the appropriateness of the planning, but also helps determine directions for future learning activities.

Evaluating student work is easier and much more meaningful if parameters (what will be assessed and

year to go home. Each year the last issue of *scan* contains the *Bookshelf* titles for the following year. This list also appears in the first edition for the year of the Education Gazette.

References

BROWN, Hazel & CAMBOURNE, Brian *Read and retell*. Methuen, 1987
ASCIS 405533

CAIRNEY, Trevor *Helping children to make meaning - ten literature based activities for developing literacy*. Literacy Centre, Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, 1986
ASCIS 393959

JOHNSON, Terry & LOUIS, Daphne *Literacy through literature*. Methuen, 1985
ASCIS 202052

THOMSON, Jack *Understanding teenagers' reading*. Methuen, 1987
ASCIS 398927

how) are established at the planning stage and students are told. Since many cooperative ventures have an important skills emphasis, it is vital that skill development is assessed. New or alternative evaluation techniques eg observations, contracts, may be most appropriate when evaluating skill development. Such results may be more appropriately expressed in qualitative, rather than quantitative terms.

Teachers will undoubtedly welcome the help of their cooperative partner in evaluating student learning. In fact, an offer of help with assessment is often a good selling point for establishing a cooperative partnership. The third important partner in evaluating student learning, the student, should not be forgotten. Students should evaluate not only their finished products but their learning processes and skill development as well. This provides an excellent opportunity for students and teachers to share their learning. Students may need some help at first, since evaluating your own effort can be daunting. Given guidance, students quickly become good at evaluating their own work and some of their most valuable insights into skills and processes may come at this stage. As Robyn Laverack points out in her article 'Information skills in action' (*scan* vol 7 no 6), evaluating the task is an essential phase in the information skills process.

Products: The cooperative unit

There is a wealth of research and theoretical work on educational evaluation. It is beyond the scope of this article to go into evaluation methodologies in detail. The Inservice Education Library has an extensive collection of resources in this area available for loan.

Any meaningful evaluation, however, should:

- * be consistent with the unit's aims and objectives
- * be planned at the same time as the rest of the unit
- * take place both during (formative) and at the end (summative) of the unit's implementation
- * attempt to identify the extent to which intentions become reality; and the causes of any mismatches
- * seek to identify any unplanned outcomes (such as outcomes are often known as the hidden curriculum)
- * result in decisions about
 - . the value of this unit;
 - . changes to be made the next time the unit is taught;
 - . aims or objectives for the next or future units;
 - . the value of resources used;
 - . resource 'gaps' which need filling;
 - . the value of teaching-learning strategies, student groupings, venues, timing.

Evaluation need not be a highly formalised activity. Most teachers gather appropriate information for evaluation without even being aware of it. Many times all that is necessary is simply a conscious effort to stop, share and reflect on all this information and ask one another what it means. In discovering such meanings, decision making (the essence of evaluation) becomes an inevitable next step.

Involving someone else at some point in an evaluation (or ideally throughout the process) can be both useful and rewarding. Not only can the vision of an outsider be valuable to a close-working partnership, but that person may well benefit from seeing some or all of the dimensions of a cooperative venture at close hand.

The process

A major difference between a cooperatively taught unit and any other unit is that two or more people have planned, implemented and evaluated the unit. This process of working together should be evaluated, too. Working together may be a new process for some of those involved, and undoubtedly some learning will have occurred. In evaluating the cooperative process, the partners may want to answer questions like these:

- * What helped us work together?
- * What hindered our efforts?
- * What strengths did each partner bring to the venture?

- * What strengths does the partnership (as opposed to the individuals) have?
- * How equally balanced was the partnership? (Equality isn't essential, but participants should feel comfortable with the balance)
- * Next time, what capacities could be brought into play, or developed further?

There are many methods by which information for this side of evaluation can be gathered. The literature on 'process consultation' is full of ideas. However, it may well be that open, honest communication between partners in a sympathetic atmosphere is all that is necessary.

Documentation

Record the plans and outcomes of evaluation just as you'd record any other component of a unit. The decisions about next time or next year may be clear at the time they're made, but considerably cloudier when the time arrives to implement them. The people implementing the decisions may have changed, too. Documentation ensures the decisions will be clear when they are needed. Documentation also provides evidence of accountability.

There are a variety of planning aids currently in use which provide space for evaluation. Notes from an evaluation meeting could be included in a file or folder with the rest of the unit details. If the paperwork seems too much, decisions can be recorded on audio or video tape or as word processing files on a disk. Whatever the means selected, it is important that documentation remains a means and does not become an end in itself.

Making the most of experience

Evaluation assumes many guises throughout the cooperative venture. In the planning stage, evaluation is focused on decisions about how to evaluate, who and when to evaluate, how to document the unit and underlies decisions about how the teaching process will proceed. At the implementation stage, observations, informal feedback, quick conferences between partners and necessary modifications provide essential information for evaluation. At the closure of the unit, all these things are pulled together as partners evaluate both the processes and products of the unit, and reflect on their experiences.

The old adage 'Experience is the best teacher' is undeniably true. Evaluation is the process through which we make the best use of our experiences. Conscious, planned evaluation ensures our learning from experience is purposeful and meaningful rather than serendipitous and haphazard - and that we and our students benefit from the learning experiences we share.

search <

< ASCIS looks to the future

Georgina Cane is Executive Director of ASCIS.

July 1989 will see the fifth anniversary of the delivery of products and services to Australian schools by ASCIS. It is a good time to review past performance and, more importantly, to look to the future.

The rapid change experienced by the education and wider community has been shared by ASCIS. In 1984 the brief for ASCIS was to develop and share a quality database with the systems and schools of the nation. While this is still the goal today, the developing needs and expectations of the schools have ensured that a flexible approach to product and service development is adopted by ASCIS. During the planning stages of ASCIS a batch computer system producing microfiche, catalogue cards and magnetic tape was envisaged. These products are still vital to the Company, however, they have now been joined by a further 12 different products and services.

In addition to expanding the offerings of the Company in order to meet the developing needs of a diverse user group, ASCIS has had as a major objective the containment of costs. This is true both for the 11 education authorities which own ASCIS and for the schools which purchase services. To control prices in a volatile economic environment, certain management strategies have been adhered to tenaciously. In short these are:

(i) Keep it simple

The cost of a high volume production service can be substantially effected by the cost of staff time and the impact of non-routine operations. To avoid these traps, ASCIS services are delivered in an economic fashion. Payment is required with orders to reduce the high cost of issuing and following-up invoices. Orders for products which, for example, do not have a cheque or which have key information missing are returned to schools. By adopting what may appear to be rigid policies, an affordable service can be offered to the nation's schools. Five thousand microfiche subscriptions each year and hundreds of card orders each day are processed by the equivalent of 1.5 full-time staff in the ASCIS office;

(ii) Keep the overheads low

ASCIS employs eight staff, which is a relatively small number given the scope and growth of the service. Time and skills are contracted when needed rather than a large empire being built.

The message is that substantial planning is devoted to delivering a service which schools can afford.

A cost-conscious attitude has not been adopted at the expense of development. ASCIS is much more than a cataloguing service and is now being used by the nation's education systems as a vehicle for broadly based information services. The trend began with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum Information Network (ACIN). ACIN has been joined by, to name a few, the National Computer Software Review services and a range of state level information services including NCIN.

To use the current jargon-these value-added, free-text services build upon cataloguing information to explain the possible use, audience and content of resources. In the information age all libraries and library networks must aim to do more than tell a user that an item exists, where it is shelved, and provide a brief physical description. It is quite appropriate that library users now want to know what the item contains and how it can be applied to their needs.

A future growth of information services is, therefore, pivotal to the health of ASCIS and its value to schools. The current year will see the addition of more information subsets to the ASCIS database. The Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Curriculum Information Service and an Asian Studies service are two that are at present being planned.

Although the information services are added to (and become part of) the one ASCIS database, a separate microfiche product for each will also be available.

In addition to developing value-added information services, attention also is being given to providing a selection of library and information management support services to suit schools of all sizes. To outline the ambit of current ASCIS operations, 2 contrasting new developments are discussed:

(i) Batch Reconversion Service

This project is aimed at helping schools with the onerous task of converting from a card catalogue to a machine-readable catalogue. On occasion the laborious and expensive task of building a database of school resources is underestimated when the planning for automation is being undertaken. Costly

equipment is, however, useless or de-valued if a cohesive and comprehensive database is not constructed.

The ASCISRECON Service will help schools build a database at an affordable price. This can be achieved because schools will support the labour intensive part of the exercise by keying the order on their own microcomputer. Unit costs will also be contained by setting a minimum order level of 1400 records for the ASCIS 80 (machine readable record) service. These two strategies mean that expensive handling costs are kept in check. This, combined with the fact that orders submitted on a floppy disk which can be processed by the ASCIS computer bureau at off peak times, means the service will be offered for less than 10 cents per record.

The order disk will also be used to request so-called 'low-tech' book catalogues. These will be output on either paper or microfiche or both. As well as providing a low maintenance catalogue for small schools this service also will be of use to larger schools with decentralised collections in, for example, subject departments. These satellite collections could have a book catalogue using the same standards as the central library, thereby providing a consistent and familiar retrieval device for teachers and students.

Irrespective of the final product, there is great value in the order disk which captures the information describing a school's collection. The disk will be returned to the school with the finished product so that it can be updated for future use. This provides a realistic conversion tool for schools which may request a book catalogue one year and opt in a subsequent year to request machine readable records instead of an up-dated book catalogue. This service could help to ease the pain of retrospective conversion. The good news is that this substantial development task is well underway and the service will be made available to schools during the latter part of term 2, 1989.

(ii) Gateways to other databases

The speed of change experienced by the education sector and the community at large requires access to relevant information so that sound decisions can be made and learning occur.

Realistically, the burgeoning and rapidly changing information which is available can only be managed on computerised databases. The very existence of a multiplicity of databases containing valuable information can be an obstacle and disincentive to use. ASCIS has identified, as part of its Corporate Plan, a role for the Company in expediting this

process. The two main areas where ASCIS can be of help are:

(i) Telecommunications

The complexities of linking to many different databases with their varying telephone numbers, protocols, etc can be eased through the provision of electronic gateways. It is planned for on-line users to dial-up the ASCIS service and be presented with a menu of databases. Connection will be made by the selection of a number. The telecommunications to connect the user to the selected database, inside or outside Australia, would occur behind the scenes.

(ii) Cost

It is probable that the combined, and substantial, purchasing power of Australian schools represented by ASCIS will mean that competitive rates for database access will be able to be negotiated.

The two examples of service development outlined in this article are indicative of the future offerings of ASCIS. The scale of developments will vary, some will rely on 'high-tech' solutions and others will have immediate appeal to schools of all sizes. The one inescapable factor will be the need for change and a flexible response to Australian schools' educational information needs.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO *scan*

scan offers you an opportunity to share your opinions, ideas, experiences, position on major and minor issues.

We welcome your contribution typewritten, double-spaced, with your name, school and a contact number. There are approximately 1200 words per page of text and a suggested maximum size for articles is four pages. The Editors maintain the right to edit for space and style.

Please also express your opinions through the forum of the letters page, *viewpoints*.

Address all correspondence and contributions to:

The Editor, *scan*
Library Services
Services Directorate
Private Bag 3
Ryde NSW 2112

< **Microfiche-phobia**

Maxine Rennie is the NCIN coordinator at Library Services

Making the NCIN/ACIN microfiche work for you

Have you ever felt reluctant to use microfiche, or found resistance to it among the staff in your school? If the answer is yes, then here are some strategies to promote the service and encourage staff to help themselves.

1 Organise to have time at an executive meeting and demonstrate how to use the NCIN/ACIN microfiche index. A short guide has been prepared for users (new and old) and is available from Library Services. Perhaps you could use the NCIN flyer (page 25 *scan* vol 7 no 6 August 1988) in your introductory remarks focussing on the various types of material found on the database, such as:

- * support documents for schools, teaching strategies and units of work with specific subject references;
- * school-based policies and programs - focus on the policy documents currently being drafted, or reviewed, in your school this year;
- * materials produced by teachers and regional consultants in NSW and other states.

2 Contact your school staff development co-ordinator and discuss a demonstration with a focus on staff development and inservice materials which are indexed on the database. Perhaps you could link this to the school-based policies that have been scheduled for development or review in your school during 1989.

3 Suggest a session or workshop at your next whole school staff development day.

4 Visit a faculty or grade meeting and outline the materials you have identified that may be of use to that group for program development or revision and classroom teaching. Remember that most of the NSW curriculum material on the NCIN/ACIN index is available for loan from the Inservice Education Library, now at 3A Smalls Road Ryde 2112, ph. (02) 808 9512. One person in each faculty or grade may be prepared to ring and request items for subsequent use in group planning. Many teacher-librarians focus initially on one faculty or grade.

5 Address a staff meeting - outline how individual staff can make a valuable and significant contribution by sending copies of school-based materials to the NCIN/ACIN co-ordinator for inclusion on the database.

6 Write cryptic comments near the sign - on book such as:

- * Why re-invent the wheel?;
- * Why not share your great ideas?;
- * Make your fingers work for you - save time;
- * Be up-to-date with current educational trends and classroom practices;
- * Learn what your colleagues are doing in the next school, region, across the state and nationally;
- * Make your day - discover NCIN/ACIN!

By now you should have received your first issue of the microfiche for 1989, perhaps you could try some of these strategies!

Subscriptions

If your school has not yet subscribed, it is not too late, so send your form today!

Subscription forms are available from Library Services
Services Directorate
Private Bag 3
Ryde NSW 2112

management

Managing with less: Cutting down on library administration.

Merran Dawson is a Senior Education Officer at Library Services

In this world of declining resources, the school library is finding itself to be no exception. Along with other school staff, teacher-librarians are discovering that workloads are increasing and, in addition, that strains on library staffing may be produced as side effects of the new directions taken in school-based allocation of school assistants.

Apart from collecting information on the impact of such side effects (in preparation for further school-based discussion at the end of the year) and participating wherever possible, in positive school discussion of better options for 1990, the teacher-librarian, as the person hired to teach, and to manage library systems, will no doubt make every effort in 1989 to make the library's allocation of funds and staff work to best effect for the school's program. If there have been changes to library staffing and roles, the teacher-librarian must also ensure that the assigning of workloads - his/her own, and those of school assistants - reflects the *new* allocation of staff.

Workloads based on immediate needs and priorities

If it happens that you are one of the people facing the dilemmas of reduced clerical time and/or changes to your teaching role which require greater face-to-face commitment, the rest of this article should provide some food for thought regarding the adjustment and reallocation of library staff workloads. If you have found yourself in 1989 with minimal or no significant changes to roles, workloads and programs affecting the library, then the rest of this article could still provide one or two ideas for improving things, or for suggesting to other teacher-librarians that you know who are attempting to find solutions to new situations.

1 Map the current situation.

It could be a useful exercise to answer the following questions as honestly as you can. If necessary do some research. It is important that you feel you know the facts and reasons for your current situation if you are going to feel motivated to do something about it.

(i) How has the situation changed for me in terms of:

My teaching role in the school? | My management role in the library?

Under each of these headings list all the facts of the situation eg Under **My teaching role in the school**, one of your comments could be: 'Now timetabled to teach 2 extra hours'; Under **My management role in the library**, one of your comments could be 'Supervision of senior free period library use has increased by 10%'

(ii) How has the situation changed in terms of school assistant allocation?

Previous allocation was | Current allocation is:

(iii) Why did these changes come about? Was I personally responsible?

If it happens that your school has decided to reallocate resources from the library to some other area, it is important that you appreciate the reasons why that other area was considered deserving, and try to understand the problems that were faced by the principal and his/her advisers in considering the claims of all staff, and making a final decision.

If you are able to perceive the decision as a reallocation of resources to another worthy area, and not as an indictment of you personally, then you will find it much easier to examine your staffing, program and workload, and remake them into something positive which fits the resources that you have been given.

2 Based on your map, plan how the library fits into the school's teaching program.

New times bring new plans and strategies. Rather than hearkening back to the way things were prior to 1989, take a new look at the possibilities for your library, using:

-the answers to the questions above as boundaries

-the Library Policy (or the Library Policy Concepts list, see *scan* vol 7 no 4 p 23) as a guide to setting priorities for activities where time/resources are still negotiable

Here is one example of how school-set boundaries can be interpreted in terms of the Library Policy. It may be that in some primary libraries, the boundaries set by the face-to-face teaching allocation to the teacher-librarian mean that the cooperative planning and teaching of information skills advocated by the Library Policy is scaled down to a purely cooperatively planned program, with the teacher-librarian and classroom teacher teaching information skills separately.

3 Based on the way the library fits into the teaching program: revamp library systems

At this point, you should have a clear idea of:

*teacher-librarian management time;

*school assistant time;

at your disposal, to provide the library collection and manage it. If you have very little of either teacher-librarian or school assistant time, it is most important for you to clarify:

*which are the *most important* management systems to maintain? (and, by inference, which are the ones which must be abandoned?);

*what are the most efficient ways of keeping the selected systems going?

Which are the most important?

Below is a sample (and by no means exhaustive) list of priorities for library management systems, which could provide inspiration for compiling a list of your own. If, for example, I had half an hour per week to manage the library, I would attempt to implement priorities (i) and (ii) of the list, and would leave the rest until I could make a case for more help. Which would be your highest priority?

(i) Selecting and acquiring the right resources.

This is my first priority because any services provided by the library stand or fall on the quality of the resources held by the library. Consulting teachers and reviews is an important part of this. Borrowing resources from other libraries and agencies could supplement my collection if my budget was small.

(ii) Accessioning, pocketing and carding the resources for loan. Circulating the resources .

This is my next priority, because getting resources into the hands of those who want to use them, when they want them, is for me, a very important function for a library to fulfill. I would ensure that I met auditor's requirements before circulating, but otherwise would not be concerned about further processing until time/staffing were available. I would use volunteers/students wherever possible to carry out accessioning, pocketing and carding. With staff shortages, I would install a self-serve or teacher-operated circulation system.

(iii) Stocktaking

If time for stocktaking had not been provided I would ask my principal for guidance, as the principal is responsible for seeing that stocktaking takes place. I could recommend the option of progressive stocktaking (one section of the collection is closed for stocktaking at a time) if closing the library for longer periods is a problem. I could also recommend the use of parental or student help to speed up stocktaking.

(iv) Cataloguing the resources (ie locating a Dewey number) using ASCIS microfiche.

I could get reliable volunteers to do this, or a school assistant. I would never do this myself, as I would have more important professional tasks to do. If I had to do any original cataloguing, I would look for cataloguing -in-publication information on the item as a starting point, and limit myself to 5 minutes cataloguing time per item. I would train volunteers/school assistant to maintain an abbreviated shelf list (author, title, publisher, date, call number, accession number and ASCIS number only on the card). The shelf list and spine labels would be handwritten for speed.

(v) Providing subject access to resources eg through a Subject Index.

In a small library, with little management and school assistant time, I would not attempt to provide a card catalogue. Invariably, resources are more easily found by browsing a small collection than spending time on the catalogue. I would spend time teaching students how to use subject indexes and how to browse, bearing in mind that card catalogue skills will soon be replaced by those required for automated systems in the larger high school, public and tertiary libraries. Supporting this option with the bibliographies of option (vi) (which follows) would be a logical step for me.

(vi) Providing lists of resources based on units being taught.

I would ask students/school assistant to compile these for me in preparation for planning sessions with teachers. I would use them as a basis for adding to, as I discovered other useful resources, borrowed additional resources from other libraries, or purchased more. Such lists, and notes from planning sessions, coupled with teaching aids, stencils etc, would make up a resource bank of unit ideas to refer to. The resource bank could be kept in manilla envelopes in a filing cabinet drawer. Handwritten lists would suffice as they are quicker.

(vii) Purchasing ASCIS cards and maintaining a card catalogue OR, in preference, purchasing ASCIS records and operating an OASIS online catalogue. I would only do this if I was assured of sufficient school assistant time to free me of having to undertake filing, or inputting and other machine operator tasks.

(viii) Reinforcing books with contact, staples etc.

I would purchase hardcover non-fiction in preference to covering books. Paperbacks would be stapled only, as the pages usually fall out before the covers go. In most schools I would hesitate to spend library budget on large amounts of contact and plastic, and be loath to use school assistant time (let alone my own time!) to cover books. Any surplus funds would go to purchasing other requisition items, ASCIS products (also on requisition and a great way to free staff from some onerous jobs) and more resources, if I were allowed to translate part of my requisition money into the general library resource budget.

(ix) Chasing overdues.

Generally, I would only ever do this if I and my staff had nothing to do. I would feel justified in putting effort into recalling resources for stocktaking and at the end of the year.

(x) Overseeing services/participating in activities that do not directly relate to the library's role in the school curriculum.

I would withdraw from providing photocopying services and money collection, fine collection, operating the clothing pool, baking the weekly staff meeting cake and other such tasks. (I would hold on to grade/faculty meeting and staff meeting attendance until the bitter end, as they provide essential links with the curriculum, and confirm the teacher-librarian's rights and privileges as a normal school staff member.)

Staffing the priorities.

Having compiled your priority list (which may or may not be similar to mine), think about the amount of time and effort required for each of the systems that you have written down. (A good way of analysing and evaluating such systems is suggested in Robyn Laverack's article, *scan* vol 7 no 7). Can you streamline any of the systems? Are there any short-cuts or compromises on standards that you can make?

Work out the number of hours per week that would be required of school assistant and teacher-librarian time to operate the systems. Some simple maths will tell you which systems, lower on your priority list, will have to be abandoned, given your current staff allowance.

What you now have before you is a priority list with staffing allocations, and a list of activities to be abandoned. You have done what is required of a professional manager: planned according to your resources. (The list of abandoned activities can now be relabelled - something along the lines of 'for future action when additional resources received' - and should, once ratified by the school staff, be filed away.)

Communicating the priorities.

Now that you have made some decisions yourself about your priorities, you will need to check with other school staff that they agree with your decisions. Your supervisor and/or principal should be consulted, and perhaps the whole school staff.

Obviously, the school staff cannot ask you to add extra systems into your final list - you won't have the library staff time - but they could ask you to substitute one of your chosen systems for one of the ones that you decided to drop.

In the majority of cases, I am sure that the major reaction of staff will be one of surprise: that they had not suspected that so much is involved in managing a library. Such a reaction could be an excellent opening for giving further information about the workings of the library as the year goes by, and open up the possibility of a sympathetic hearing when next year's staffing is being negotiated.

resources**■ Computing Studies syllabus: Years 11-12**

Bob Baker is a Senior Education Officer with the Curriculum Development Team at the Computer Education Unit at Erskineville

In February 1988, the Board of Secondary Education approved the Computing Studies 11-12 Syllabus for implementation in 1989 and to be first examined at the HSC in 1990. Computing Studies is now a full 2 year 2 unit course, carrying accreditation towards the tertiary entrance score.

The course is designed for a range of students: those who are academically gifted, those who intend to pursue tertiary studies, not necessarily in computing and those who intend to enter the work force on completion of the HSC. There are no prerequisites for the course, and there is no assumption that students will have undertaken the junior computing studies course or a computer awareness course.

Emphasis

There are two major areas of emphasis in this syllabus: the first is technical - relating to the use of computer systems and including some study of particular hardware and software. The second is on applications of computer technology and the implications of such use. Students are required to have extensive 'hands on' experience with a variety of applications and to move from classroom examples to real world applications.

■ Resources to support the new syllabus

This is a select list for use by teachers and teacher-librarians. Book assessments include a code indicating their relevance to particular areas of the syllabus. The codes, taken from the syllabus itself (p6) are listed below. Items relevant to most or all areas of the syllabus are referred to as 'General'.

Core topics

- CT1 Basic operational skills
- CT2 Computer based systems
- CT3 Programming
- CT4 Social implications

Option topics

- OT1 Text processing
- OT2 Database systems
- OT3 Electronic spreadsheets
- OT4 Computer graphics
- OT5 Computers and communications
- OT6 Computer controlled systems
- OT7 Further programming

Aims

The aims of this course are to develop in students:

- * the abilities necessary to become competent, confident, responsible and discriminating users of computer systems as problem-solving tools;
- * an awareness of the interaction of people and institutions with computer based systems.

Structure

The course is divided into two sections: core and options.

The core topics are; basic operational skills, computer based systems, programming and social implications. These represent a total of 60% of the course, and are compulsory.

The option topics are; text processing, database systems, electronic spreadsheets, computer graphics, computers and communications, computer controlled systems and further programming. Students must study four options, representing a total of 40% of the course.

Resource implications

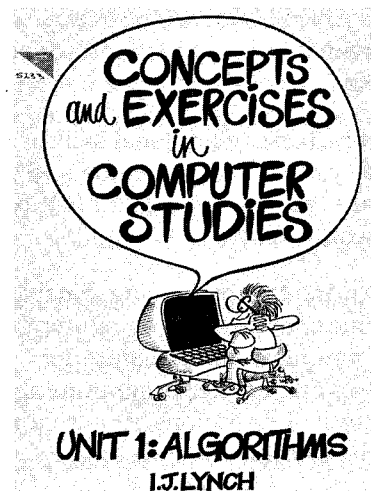
In *scan* vol 7 no 2, March 1988 I raised the issue of resources for Computing Studies, in discussing the years 7-10 syllabus. The resource list in this issue, is part of the bibliography mentioned there.

All resources are suitable for use with or by upper secondary students. The resources are listed alphabetically by title.

Preparation of the bibliography has been coordinated by Murray McLachlan, with reviews contributed by Clancy Benson (Yanco Agricultural High School), John Farmer (East Hills Boys High School), Howard Gould (Penrith High School), Murray McLachlan (Library Services), Johanne Male (Hurlstone Agricultural High School), Jim Smith (Westfields High School) and Carmel Walker (Wee Waa High School). The assistance of Bob Baker (Computer Education Unit), Martha Heeren (Computer Education Unit), Fiona McAllister (Computer Education Unit), Susan Samuels (Cronulla High School) and Mavis Sourry (Computer Education Unit) is acknowledged.

BITTER, Gary G. **Addison-Wesley computer literacy : awareness, applications and programming.** Addison-Wesley, 1986 (Computer literacy)
ISBN 0-201-20274-3 [001.64]

This is a good, basic resource which employs a textbook approach with questions and exercises at the end of each chapter. C. Benson
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: \$24.95 ASCIS 232873
RELEVANT TO: CT3, CT4, OT1, OT2, OT3, OT7



LYNCH, Ian J. **Algorithms.** Mentone Educational Centre, 1986 (Concepts & exercises in computer studies)
ISBN 0-949102-01-6 [001.64]

Highly recommended

The series deals mainly with the programming aspects, and to a lesser extent the communications section, of the syllabus. The books are well laid out, clear and precise, with many excellent examples, worksheets and assignments. All the books have overhead originals for reproduction, making them a valuable resource for the classroom. J. Farmer
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$24.95 ASCIS 239195
RELEVANT TO: CT3, OT5, OT7

In the same series
Computer codes.
ISBN 0-949102-17-2 [001.64]
ASCIS 427344

Computer communications.
ISBN 0-949102-25-3 [001.64]
ASCIS 423107

Further algorithms.
ISBN 0-949102-49-0 [001.64]
ASCIS 448281

Number systems.
ISBN 0-949102-09-1 [001.64]
ASCIS 386893

TINGEY, Richard **BASIC : a problem-solving approach.** Addison Wesley, 1988
ISBN 0-201-21191-2 [001.64076]

This is a thorough approach to the subject, providing useful examples and exercises. The layout, with effective use of colour backgrounds for the text of programs, assists use. An accompanying resource book is available. H. Gould
AVAIL: \$29.95 ASCIS 417306
RELEVANT TO: CT3, OT7

Computer basics. Time-Life Books, 1985 (Understanding computers)
ISBN 0-7054-0910-4 [001.64]

Highly recommended

The titles in this series cover a wide range of elements of computer technology and use, including languages, software, security, robotics and social implications. Each title is attractively presented, making excellent use of comprehensive and carefully laid-out text and frequent, clearly labelled diagrams and illustrations. M. McLachlan
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Time-Life Books 15 Blue Street North Sydney NSW PH (02) 929 0933. \$25.95 plus \$4 postage ASCIS 418491
RELEVANT TO: General

In the same series
Artificial intelligence.
ISBN 0-7054-0915-5 [001.53]
ASCIS 428649

Computer images.
ISBN 0-7054-0912-0 [001.64]
ASCIS 393395

Computer languages.
ISBN 0-7054-0916-3 [001.64]
ASCIS 428646

Computer security.
ISBN 0-7054-0914-7 [001.64]
ASCIS 397125

The computerized society.
ISBN 0-7054-0923-6 [001.64]
ASCIS 449297

Memory and storage.
ISBN 0-7054-0922-8 [001.64]
ASCIS 432373

Robotics.
ISBN 0-7054-0918-X [001.64]
ASCIS 415799

Software.
ISBN 0-7054-0911-2 [001.64]
ASCIS 429259

WOLFF, Arnold V. **The Computer connection : the link between high technology and people.** CCH Australia, 1984
ISBN 0-86903-856-7 [001.64]

Although it may be a little dated, this book has good sections on the history of computers and input and output methods. Overall, the item is well presented and readable. J. Smith
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$17.00 ASCIS 162769
RELEVANT TO: CT2, CT4

HOFEDITZ, C.A. **Computer programming languages in practice.** Heinemann, 1985 (Made simple computerbooks)
ISBN 0-434-98400-0 [001.64]

Presenting considerable detail on BASIC and COBAL, while also looking at other languages this is a quite worthwhile resource. It is readable, if somewhat detailed in sections. J. Smith
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 ASCIS 220225
RELEVANT TO: CT3, OT7

SAMWAYS, Brian **Computers.** Collins, 1983 (Basic facts)
ISBN 0-00-458890-8 [001.603]

Students would find this a good, quick reference source. Although the small format can make using the item difficult, the concepts and terms are clearly explained and well illustrated. The entries are arranged alphabetically, and a list of acronyms is included. C. Benson
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$5.95 ASCIS 221702
RELEVANT TO: General

SPENCER, Donald D. **Computers : an introduction.** Merrill, 1986 (The Merrill series in computer information systems)
ISBN 0-675-20559-X [001.64]

This is a readable book with sound content, an index and a glossary. It contains appropriate colour photographs and diagrams. The details on computer applications cover a wide area. J. Smith
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$26.95 ASCIS 426454
RELEVANT TO: CT1, CT2, CT3, CT4, OT1, OT2, OT3, OT4, OT5



SZYMANSKI, Robert A. **Computers and application software.** Merrill, 1988 (The Merrill series in computer information systems)
ISBN 0-675-20904-8 [001.64]

Highly recommended

Student oriented, this is an excellent and comprehensive resource. It is clearly organised and easy to follow with summaries and exercises in each chapter. Detailed appendices, an index and a glossary are included. An accompanying instructor's resource manual is available. C. Benson
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$32.95 ASCIS 421748
RELEVANT TO: CT2, CT4, OT1, OT2, OT3, OT4, OT5

FUORI, William M. **Computers and information processing.** Prentice-Hall, 1986
ISBN 0-13-165515-9 [001.64]

This well-organised and well-presented American oriented publication looks at many areas related to the

syllabus. Each chapter includes a summary, key terms and exercises, with suggestions for problems, projects and a crossword. Appropriate pictures, diagrams and illustrations supplement the information well. A glossary is provided, and the information is easily accessible. C. Walker

AVAIL: \$32.50 ASCIS 448237
RELEVANT TO: CT1, CT2, CT3, CT4, OT5, OT6

SPENCER, Donald D. **Computers and information processing.** Merrill, 1985
ISBN 0-675-20290-6 [001.64]

Despite a heavy American emphasis, there is a most comprehensive and thorough presentation of material in this worthwhile resource. Illustrations and photographs are well used throughout the text. In addition, there are profiles of individuals in computer-related industries and real life situations. J. Male

AUD: Professional
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 426050
RELEVANT TO: CT2, CT3, CT4, OT4, OT5

SELKIRK, Errol **Computers for beginners.** Writers and Readers in association with Unwin Paperbacks, 1986 (A Writers and Readers documentary comic book)
ISBN 0-04-001011-2 [001.64]

This is a general introduction to computers which looks at the historical context, how computers work, and political and social implications. The information, supplemented by black-and-white pictures, diagrams and cartoons, provides good stimulus material. Unfortunately there is no contents page, although the presentation and layout are generally clear. C. Walker
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$13.95 ASCIS 384894
RELEVANT TO: CT1, CT4

CAPRON, H.L. **Computers: tools for an information age.** Benjamin/Cummings, 1987
ISBN 0-8053-2249-3 [001.64]

A structured, colourful layout comprehensively covers this sizable book's topics in an easy-to-follow way. Summaries, bold key words, a large index and a glossary are included. H. Gould
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$34.95 ASCIS 382394
RELEVANT TO: General

JANKEL, Annabel **Creative computer graphics.** Cambridge University Press, 1984
ISBN 0-521-26251-8 [001.64]

Highly recommended

This large-format book has excellent illustrations and useful non-technical information. The treatment of application areas such as video games, feature films and science and simulation is excellent. This is a very useful reference. H. Gould

AUD: Professional
AVAIL: \$49.50 ASCIS 205422
RELEVANT TO: OT4

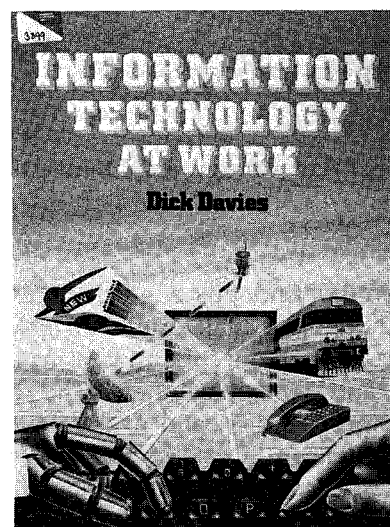
COLLIN, S.M.H. **Dictionary of information technology.** Peter Collin, 1987
ISBN 0-948549-03-3 [001.603]

This useful resource for teachers provides concise and precise definitions. Students may find the text-based layout and lack of illustrations and detail a problem. C. Benson

AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 448227
RELEVANT TO: General

SPENCER, Donald D. **The illustrated computer dictionary.** Merrill, 1986
ISBN 0-675-20528-X [001.6403]

Thorough and well-presented definitions and explanations make this a useful dictionary. The illustrations are clear and support the text well. J. Male
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$35.95 ASCIS 390694
RELEVANT TO: General



DAVIES, Dick **Information technology at work.** Heinemann Educational, 1986
ISBN 0-435-45500-1 [001.64]

An excellent, comprehensive resource, clearly organised and well laid out with appropriate tasks and activities for students. The case studies are based on real life (albeit English) situations. C. Benson
AVAIL: Paper \$17.95 ASCIS 389241
RELEVANT TO: General

LONGLEY, Dennis **Macmillan dictionary of information technology.** Macmillan, 1985
ISBN 0-333-37261-1 [001.603]

Although the use of illustrations may be limited, this is a comprehensive coverage, in readable form, of information technology terms. Where necessary, each definition begins by making reference to the area of application, such as 'communications' or 'library science'. C. Benson

AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$27.95 ASCIS 219344
RELEVANT TO: General

REINECKE, Ian **Micro invaders.** Penguin, 1982
ISBN 0-14-005976-8 [303.4]

This is a fairly detailed examination of the influences of new technology in such areas as factories, supermarkets and homes. The information is from a specific point of view, warning of the possible dangers associated with the electronic revolution. Although fairly dense, the analyses are useful for examining the social implications of computer technology. C. Walker
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$11.95 ASCIS 129194
RELEVANT TO: CT4

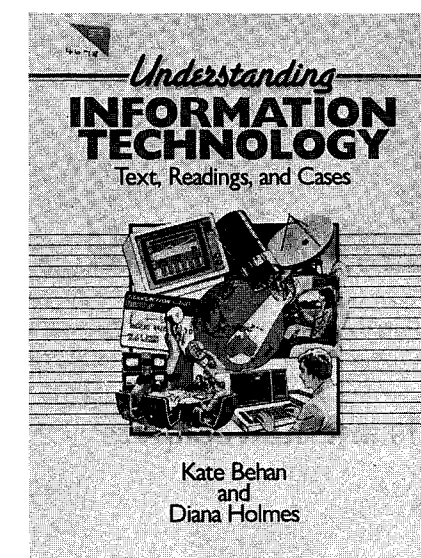
SIMKIN, Mark G. **Microcomputer principles and applications.** Wm. C. Brown, 1988
ISBN 0-697-00993-9 [001.64]

Well organised and comprehensive, this resource discusses hardware, software and usage of computers by looking at such areas as word processing, electronic spreadsheets, database management systems and special applications and issues. The chapters include useful summaries and key terms, review questions, exercises and projects. Appropriate diagrams and illustrations support the information. C. Walker
AVAIL: Paper \$39.95 ASCIS 434501
RELEVANT TO: CT1, CT4, OT1, OT2, OT3, OT4

CHANDOR, Anthony **The penguin dictionary of computers.** Penguin, 1985 (Penguin reference books)
ISBN 0-14-051127-X [001.6403]

Sound and comprehensive with its definitions, this dictionary also includes longer articles on some topics. Terms and concepts are explained for either the novice or the more technically oriented. The lack of illustrations and text-based layout may limit its appeal for students. C. Benson

AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 434896
RELEVANT TO: General



BEHAN, Kate **Understanding information technology: text, reading and cases.** Prentice-Hall of Australia, 1986
ISBN: 0-7248-1239-3 [001.64]

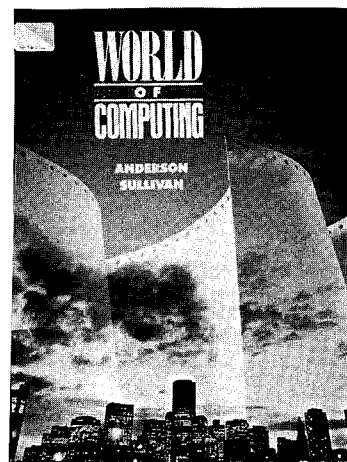
This comprehensive text contains some valuable case studies and readings and extensive bibliographies. Australian content is included. H. Gould
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: Paper \$31.95 ASCIS 231438
RELEVANT TO: CT2, CT3, CT4, OT2, OT5

ANDERSON, Ronald E **World of Computing.** Houghton Mifflin, 1988
ISBN 0-395-43554-4 [001.64]

Highly recommended

This up-to-date reference book includes excellent colour illustrations and photographs, with well-structured, well-laid out and differentiated content. This is a large, comprehensive book, with an American

emphasis in the case studies. A sound, non-specific treatment of the major application areas is provided throughout. H. Gould
AUD: Professional
AVAIL: \$49.95
RELEVANT TO: CT2, CT3, CT4, OT1, OT2, OT3, OT4, OT5



Journals and newspapers

Journals

The computing teacher

Produced by the International Council for Computers in Education, this journal aims to emphasise teaching about computers, teaching using computers, teacher education and the impact of computers on curricula. Articles relevant to classroom use of computers and reviews of software and texts make for a useful resource.

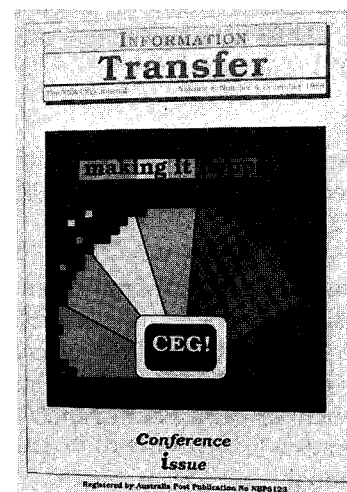
AVAIL: Bennett-Ebsco Subscription Services 35 Mitchell Street North Sydney NSW 2060
 9 p.a. \$45.96

Information transfer

Highly recommended

The journal of the New South Wales Computer Education Group, **Information transfer** contains articles, letters and reviews, written by and directed towards teachers and computer educators. Its practical orientation and relevance to the NSW education system make it extremely useful reading. Subscription is by membership of the NSW Computer Education Group which also entitles members to newsletters, eligibility to attend the Group's inservice courses and annual conference, copies of the national

journal **Australian educational computing**, occasional papers and access to public domain disks.
AVAIL: Computer Education Group 179 Beecroft Road Cheltenham NSW 2119. Ph (02) 868 1533
 4 p.a. \$40 (membership fee)



Online currents

Updates on developments in online technology and systems, product information and reviews, updates on conferences, exhibitions, meetings and training courses, and articles on the use of computers by individual librarians are gathered together in this newsletter-like journal.

AVAIL: Online currents PO Box 471 Roseville NSW 2069 Ph (02) 465290; (02) 467 1127
 10 p.a. \$96

Newspapers

Both **The Australian** and **The Sydney Morning Herald** produce weekly sections on computers. The section in **The Australian** appears on Tuesday, the **Herald's** on Monday. Several pages of information are included, providing updates on developments in computer technology and discussion of issues related to computer use in the home, school and workplace.

Films and Videos

The Resource Services Branch of the NSW Department of Education has produced a **Film/videography for primary and secondary computer education** (ASCIS 406100). It lists and annotates items suitable for use by teachers or with students and includes recommended levels of applicability. Copies are available from: Film and Video Library, Services Directorate Smalls Road Ryde NSW 2112 Ph (02) 808 9444 Keylink: FILMVID.LIB

■ Animals bibliography

This bibliography, collected around the theme of animals, contains material suitable for a range of age levels and has been selected from resources recently received at Library Services for review. Items are arranged alphabetically by title.

COOK, Brenda **All about farm animals**. Kingfisher Books, 1988
 ISBN 0-86272-324-8 [636]

Consider before buying

The illustrations, depicting a typical traditional English farm as well as the accompanying information will give young children little indication of Australian farm life. Teachers could, however, selectively use some general information, such as the milking process. An index and contents page are included. V. Nursey
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 437971

MINELLI, Giuseppe **Amphibians**. Facts on File, 1987 (The History of Life on Earth)
 ISBN 0-8160-1557-0 [597.6]

Part of *The History of Life on Earth* series, this publication provides a scholarly text supported by extensive diagrammatic and artistic presentations. Being artistic, rather than photographic, the illustrations risk confusion of the scale relationship between subjects presented and the accuracy of details of physical appearance. The diagrams and charts are dense with information. The table of contents precedes the title page which may confuse the reader. There is no index which diminishes the accessibility of the information contained within what is essentially a reference source book. H. Bruce
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 424898

In the same series:

MINELLI, Giuseppe **The Evolution of life**. [575]
 ISBN 0-8160-1555-4 ASCIS 425305

MINELLI, Giuseppe **Mammals**. [599]
 ISBN 0-8160-1560-0 ASCIS 424902

MINELLI, Giuseppe **Marine life**. [597]
 ISBN 0-8160-1556-2 ASCIS 425302

MINELLI, Giuseppe **Reptiles**. [597.9]
 ISBN 0-8160-1558-9 ASCIS 424905

SMITH, David **Animal tails**. Penguin, 1988
 ISBN 0-14-011170-0 [590]

This collection of essays and articles aims to raise questions of interest in zoology in an entertaining and

accessible manner. It is a combination of Smith's media broadcasts and interviews with 6 other zoologists from around the world. Chapters deal with the origin of Australia's plants and animals, whales, endangered species, palaeontology and Antarctica. Black-and-white illustrations and photographs are included. Language is straightforward, with scientific terminology simply explained. Smith's approach makes science interesting to a non-specialist.

J. Buckley.
AUD: Parents Professional
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$12.95 ASCIS 424778

FELTWELL, John **Animals and where they live**. Hutchinson Australia, 1988 (Windows on the world)
 ISBN 0-09-168990-2 [591]

Animal habitats throughout the world in air, sea and land are covered in this clearly illustrated and written book. The uncluttered, brief, yet informative text is arranged in an appealing manner. A table of contents and index are included. V. Nursey
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 421363

CARTER, Ray **Australian spiders**. Gould League of Victoria, 1988 (A Survival publication)
 ISBN 0-909858-43-8 [595.4]

This book deals with the distinguishing characteristics of the spider and its living, feeding and breeding habits. Descriptions of individual spiders are used to illustrate particular characteristics. Clear, well-labelled, black-and-white drawings are integrated into the text and stickers are included to provide colour pictures of some spiders. There is a contents page but an index is lacking, which is partially compensated for by the clear headings at the top of each page. A bibliography is included. M. Ellis
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$4.00 ASCIS 448947

In the same series:
 BREIDAHL, Harry **Crabs**. [595.3]
 ISBN 0-909858-37-3 ASCIS 448785

Seabirds.

ISBN 0-909858-71-3

[598.29]
ASCIS 413732**GRIEVE, Prudence Backyard bush and beyond.**

Hyland House, 1988

ISBN 0-947062-18-1

[574.5]

Highly recommended

This is a guide for children which will alert and inform them about the creatures they are likely to find in their own backyard and just a little beyond. The text is simple and factual; illustrations exact and stunning. The book answers many of the questions children are likely to ask about these insects and animals and will entertain them with its beauty and story as well.

M. Ayoub

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: \$14.95

ASCIS 423245

BURTON, JOHN Close to extinction. Watts, 1988 (Survival)

ISBN 0-86313-730-X

[591]

Introductory information is presented for younger or less able readers in an attractive, easy-to-use format. Clear, well-labelled illustrations and colourful photographs add to the informative text, which covers the general topic of animal extinction. Examples are provided from all continents. A balance is provided in discussions on successful conservation practices. A basic index and table of contents make this a useful reference resource. V. Nursey

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: \$16.95

ASCIS 435102

BENDER, Lionel Crocodiles and alligators.

Gloucester, 1988 (First sight)

ISBN 0-86313-763-6

[597.98]

Highly recommended

This series provides introductory information that is presented in an inviting, easy-to-use format. There is an abundance of colour photographs, many full-page, and clear well-labelled illustrations. The print is large and is at a level appropriate to younger or less able readers and boxes of additional interesting information are also provided. As well, codes indicate the size of the illustrated creature and if it is in need of protection. Each title describes the types of the species, their physical characteristics and habits. Conservation aspects are also briefly discussed. A basic index, identification guide and a simple activity are added bonuses. A. Gill

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$16.95

ASCIS 435092

In the same series:**CHIVERS, David Gorillas and Chimpanzees.**

ISBN 0-86313-613-3

[599.88]

ASCIS 395309

BENDER, Lionel Kangaroos and other marsupials.

ISBN 0-86313-765-2

[599.2]

ASCIS 435091

BENDER, Lionel Lions and tigers.

ISBN 0-86313-766-0

[599.74]

ASCIS 435089

BENDER, Lionel Poisonous insects.

ISBN 0-86313-764-4

[595.7]

ASCIS 435095

MACKNESS, Brian Dingoes & dragon lizards.

Ashton Scholastic, 1988 (An Eyespy book)

ISBN 0-86896-398-4

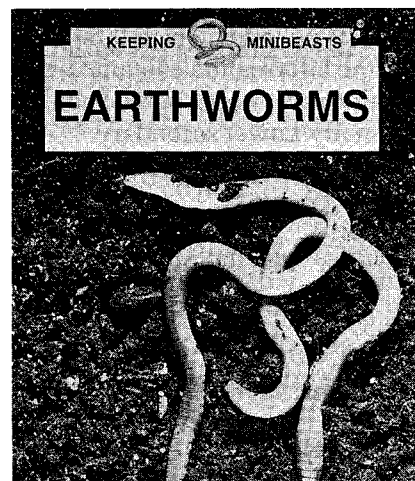
[574.5]

This collection of activities provides a wealth of ideas for many areas of the primary curriculum, such as art, craft, science, music, language and social studies. It would be a useful resource for teachers planning an integrated unit on desert ecology. An appropriate language level and clear directions should encourage independent use by students. V. Nursey

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: Paper \$3.95

ASCIS 428418

**HENWOOD, Chris Earthworms.** Watts, 1988

(Keeping minibeasts)

ISBN 0-86313-692-3

[595.1]

Highly recommended

This book provides a very good introduction to earthworms and the way in which they can be successfully collected, kept and observed. Included are the directions for building a very simple but effective wormery. Simple explanations accompanied

by clear close-up photographs show the parts of the worm and the way in which they move and breed. Large text, clear headings and contents and index pages assist the reader to find information. M. Ellis

LEV: Lower primary, Middle primary, Upper primary

AVAIL: \$14.95

ASCIS 436316

In the same series**HENWOOD, Chris Frogs.**

ISBN 0-86313-693-1

[597.8]

ASCIS 448568

HENWOOD Chris Snails and slugs.

ISBN 0-86313-691-5

[594]

ASCIS 436313

PENNY, Malcolm Endangered animals. Wayland, 1988 (The Animal kingdom)

ISBN 1-85210-415-5

[591]

The principle dangers to the conservation of animals are examined in this book on endangered animals. The book is arranged under headings covering the main threats such as the falling forest, and poison in the sea. Colour photographs and illustrations accompany each page of text. Examples of endangered animals are taken from all continents including Australia. The information on the Australian Aborigines and the thylacine is erroneous, as is the illustration of the rhinos, but, on the whole information is factual. Contents and index pages are included. M. Ellis

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$14.95

ASCIS 432850

LAMPTON, Christopher Endangered species.

Watts, 1988 (An Impact book)

ISBN 0-531-10510-5

[591]

In this factual study on the disappearance of species, the author explains clearly and succinctly how the diversity of living species came about, why diversity is disappearing, why we should do everything possible to stop this process and why it is already too late to save many species. As a reference tool, this book is easy to use. There is an index, useful headings are used in the body of the text and a section tabling all endangered and threatened wildlife is included. There are black-and-white photographs complete with informative captions. A lack of Australian content is not a drawback if a general book examining the concept of extinction is needed. V. Nursey

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$18.95

ASCIS 429196

WOOD, Tim Farm animals. Watts, 1988 (Spotlight on)

ISBN 0-86313-658-3

[636]

The topic of farm animals is dealt with in an easy-to-read manner. Although based on European farming there is some Australian content and most of the facts given are also relevant to Australian farms. The information is presented in short sentences with simple language and large print type. A well set out contents page and simple index and glossary are included. Colour photos and drawings add further information to the text. K. Tulich

LEV: Lower primary

AVAIL: \$16.95

ASCIS 425815

BRIGHT, Michael Giant panda. Watts, 1988 (Project wildlife)

ISBN 0-86313-793-8

[599.74]

Some of the problems of conservation are addressed through a discussion of the problems facing the giant panda. The first section of the book focuses on their distribution and the reasons for their threatened extinction. The second section looks at the various schemes devised to save the panda. A fact file covering such areas as appearance and feeding concludes the book. Large, clear headings and clearly marked and labelled maps, illustrations and diagrams accompany the text. Extensive use is made of colour photographs. Small inset boxes contain additional or unusual facts. A contents page and comprehensive index are included. M. Ellis

LEV: Middle primary, Upper primary, Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$16.95

ASCIS 448574

In the same series**BRIGHT, Michael Tiger.**

ISBN 0-86313-792-X

[599.74]

ASCIS 448580

SEYMOUR, Peter How animals and plants grow.

British Museum (Natural History), 1988 (A Step-by-step dials book)

ISBN 0-565-01052-2

[574.3]

This publication is an excellent example of paper engineering used to its best effect in a reference source for young children. Each page features the stages of growth of a plant or animal. The stages are illustrated on a wheel divided into 5 sectors corresponding to the 5 points discussed by the text. The young reader can turn the wheel to reveal each step in the growth process. H. Bruce

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$9.95

ASCIS 421607

SOMME, Lauritz **The penguin family book**. Picture Book Studio, 1988 (A Michael Neugebauer book)
ISBN 0-88708-057-X [598.4]

An abundance of good, clear colour photographs, many of them close up, and a story-like approach in the text invite browsing. The text provides information on the breeding and feeding habits of the chinstrap penguins of Antarctica. However, its use as an easily accessible information resource is limited since it lacks contents and index pages, page numbers, headings, maps and diagrams. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 424361

STODART, Eleanor **Snails**. Bimberi Books, 1988
ISBN 0-7316-2649-4 [594]

Factual information on the garden snail's habitat, how it moves and what it eats are provided in this book, but the lack of heading, contents and index pages, and page numbers seriously limit its value as a teaching resource. The close-up black-and-white photographs lack clarity and definition. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$11.50 ASCIS 425447

HENWOOD, Chris **Spiders**. Watts, 1988 (Keeping minibeasts)
ISBN 0-86313-694-X [595.4]

Consider before buying

On the surface, this book matches the other excellent titles in the series. Text is large, headings are clear and the information is well organised. However, this title, which lacks any mention of Australia's venomous spiders, needs close examination. The text warns that spiders must be handled carefully, that the best way to pick up a spider is with a scoop and that spider bristles can cause allergies, yet, the accompanying large, close-up photographs show bare hands. One questions the wisdom of suggesting such handling of spiders by children. M. Ellis

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 448529

PALMER, Joan **The superbook of cats**. Kingfisher Books, 1988
ISBN 0-86272-374-4 [636.8]

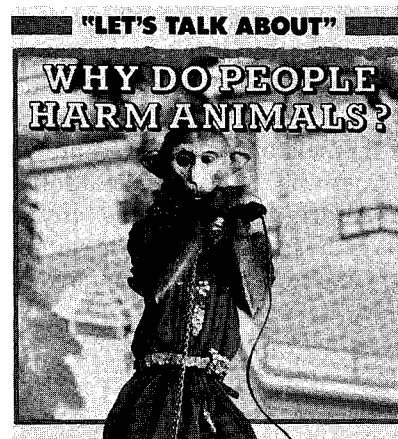
This publication is divided into 3 sections: about cats, breeds, a cat of your own. This is not a superbook of cats as the title implies, but it does provide an easy-to-read text and a large number of colour prints that should enlighten and charm the young reader. The

book includes a compact index and glossary of terms to provide ready access to the text. H. Bruce
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.95 ASCIS 437882

MORRIS, Jill **Whose pouch?** Curriculum Development Centre, 1988 (Aussie swag)
ISBN 0-642-53285-0 [599.20994]

Consider before buying

This book looks at the different forms that the pouches of Australian marsupials can take from forward opening pouches to folds of skin. Simple definitions of terms such as marsupial are provided within the text or in the glossary. Language level is relatively simple but the layout is poor and misleading particularly in the positioning of illustrations. A contents page is provided but the lack of an index limits its value as an information skills resource. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper \$4.50 ASCIS 448968



BARTON, Miles **Why do people harm animals?** Gloucester, 1988 ('Let's talk about')
ISBN 0-86313-774-1 [179]

Much material for debate and discussion is provided in this thought-provoking book which poses questions, but provides no firm answers. Young readers are challenged, for example, to question their reasons for wishing to keep pets. The negative aspects of keeping animals in zoos and on farms and using animals in experiments are also explored. Children are stimulated into thinking what they can do about any issue they feel strongly about. High visual appeal is achieved in the colourful layout. A simple index is included. V. Nursey

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$15.95 ASCIS 435107

■ Encyclopaedias

The reviewed encyclopaedias are part of the encyclopaedia review collection held at Library Services. This collection may be consulted by visiting teachers and teacher-librarians.

The Australian encyclopaedia. Australian Geographic, 1988
ISBN 1-86276-000-4 [994.003]

Content and scope

Derived from the original 2 volumed **Australian encyclopaedia** of 1925, this 5th edition offers a quality, readable, well-illustrated, multi-volumed reference book on Australia for the student and the lay reader. There has been extensive revision of articles from previous editions with some 400 new entries reflecting current concerns and preoccupations, for example, AIDS, Aboriginal movements, future studies, information technology, leisure and sport, and maritime archaeology.

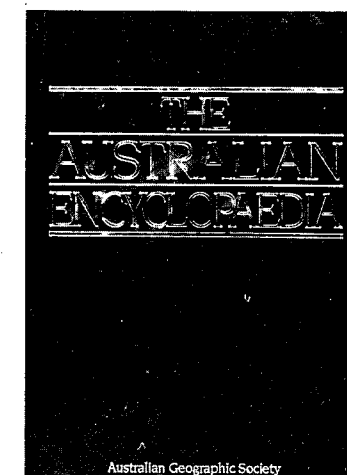
Biographical entries reflect a shift away from traditional nineteenth century biographies, assuming reader access to the **Australian dictionary of biography**. Replacing these are biographies on a broader scale - Australian people who have made contributions to the arts, science, technology, entertainment, sport and contemporary figures in the news and political world such as Ita Buttrose, Harry Butler, Sir Peter Abeles, Faith Bandler, Robyn Archer and Sallyanne Atkinson.

There is a new introductory section of essays headed 'Australia and the world' covering broad topics such as the 'Geological formation of the continent', 'Migration of peoples - The arrival of the Aborigines' and 'Australia in the world economy'.

The multicultural composition of Australia's population is acknowledged with the inclusion of 61 ethnic immigration entries, in articles such as 'Poles in Australia' and 'Mauritians in Australia'. Ethnic newspapers currently published in Australia are included in such entries.

As in the previous 4th edition a main entry gives extensive coverage to Australian Aboriginal people. For schools this entry is currently the most accessible and authoritative encyclopaedic entry available. The article has 15 sections under subheadings such as the female role in economy and technology, health, oral literature, languages, and Aboriginal people since 1788. Where relevant, geographical entries, particularly those for cities and towns include information on Aboriginal occupation before European settlement; biographical entries include prominent Aboriginal people (Mum Shirl, Kath Walker, Kevin Gilbert, Charles Perkins); entries on the

arts carry Aboriginal contributions (Robert Merritt in drama, Jack Davis in literature); and articles such as those on place names and plants acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal context. Readers should be aware that information on Aboriginal people both in traditional and contemporary periods may give the misleading impressions that all Aboriginal people are identical in lifestyle and culture.



Authority

A wide field of consultants and subject experts has been involved in writing for the encyclopaedia. These contributors have been listed in volume 1 with details of qualifications, positions at the time of writing and titles of articles. Major and specialised articles are signed. A further reading list footnoting many entries, refers to periodical articles as well as monographs, carefully selected from such authoritative sources as the **Australian national bibliography**, **Australian public affairs information service (APAIS)** and the **Australian science index**.

Arrangement

9 volumes: volumes 1-8 are arranged in alphabetical order of subject headings. Volume 9 has an index and appendix. As in the 4th edition substantive entries have clearly identified numbered section and subsection headings which help student readers access relevant information. These are also points of referral for the index. There is good cross-referencing.

A user-friendly statement prefaces the index (a page that could be usefully enlarged for school libraries and placed above the encyclopaedia shelves). The index indicates in bold type the major entry on a particular subject. The reader is referred, not to a page, but to an alphabetical code and numeral for relevant entries, that in turn lead to the alphabetical lettering of a particular volume. For example, index entry for **Captains Flat** is **CAP 130**. Initially young readers will need guidance and encouragement to persevere with this retrieval system. The encyclopaedia well warrants this initial help in its usage.

The appendix, as in the 4th edition, features useful ready reference information such as common abbreviations and acronyms in general usage in Australia; chronological listing of Governors-General, State Governors, Prime Ministers and Premiers; Australian cultural awards in art, music and literature; population statistics and in-depth listing of sporting events and winners. The appendix also includes the often hard to find Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Graphics

Most pages open to an illustration of some kind. Photographs, maps, charts, diagrams, cartoons and reproductions of advertisements offer a variety of forms of illustration. These are well captioned and near the relevant article. The colour illustrations with their excellent definition and selectivity reflect the professional commitment of the publisher, the Australian Geographical Society.

There is a shortfall and inconsistency in the provision of maps needed to convey information or location. Examples are entries for explorers such as Cook, Flinders and Sturt; important places such as Norfolk Island, Kangaroo Island and Torres Strait have no map illustration; and entries like Canberra and ACT and the Gold Coast would be more meaningful having small inset maps to put them in their geographical Australian context.

Robert Ingpen has designed a colourful evocative Australian alphabet for the endpapers.

General assessment

This edition makes a welcome appearance for use in schools, public libraries and the home. Coverage is remarkably good and the general level of accuracy high. It is well bound, opens well and presentation is inviting.

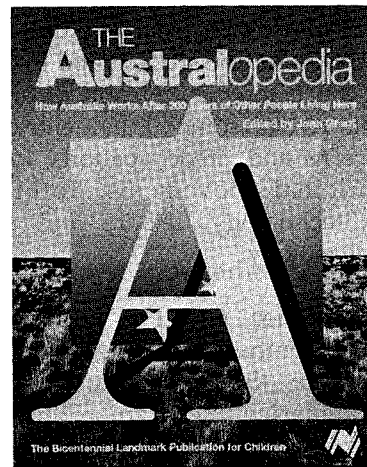
It is an essential reference source for secondary schools and valuable for teacher reference K to 6.
M. Ellis, P. Ward

AUD: Professional

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$595.00 less 15% on school orders (\$505.75), or less 20% for schools paying cash (\$476.00). Plus \$15.00 for shipping and insurance. ASCIS 448073

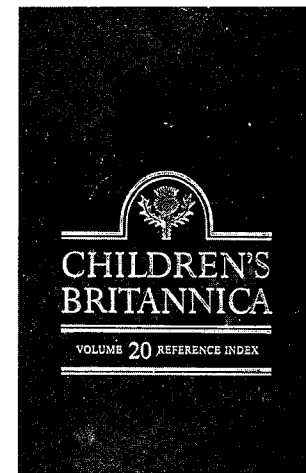
Refer also to review article by David Jones in *INCITE*, Newsletter of the Library Association of Australia, Vol 9 No 21, Dec 1988.



The Australopedia : how Australia works after 200 years of other people living here / edited by Joan Grant designed by Keith Robertson. McPhee Gribble/Penguin, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82253-1 [994]

Highly recommended

This comprehensive reference on Australian social history focuses on Australian identity. Information is arranged in small sections with chapters, rather than alphabetically. A comprehensive index supports informative retrieval. The work covers Australian geography, history, economics, sociology and aspects of culture. The emphasis is on people, and specifically targets 12-year-olds. Complex issues like conservation are presented from a variety of viewpoints, using cartoons to highlight social debate. It presents positive multicultural images, only occasionally marred by such generalisations as 'Aborigines believe...'. Clear layout, well-used colour graphics and photographs and varied presentation add to the work's impact. This excellent resource will promote thoughtful discussion on many social science topics. J. Buckley
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$39.95 ASCIS 431028



Children's Britannica. Encyclopaedia Britannica International, 1988.
ISBN 0-85229-206-6 [030]

Content and scope

A basic general rather traditional encyclopaedia with a broad range of subject matter including history, reading and literature, art and music, social studies, science and industry. The articles are generally short and descriptive, in no way analytical, but adequate for the readers for whom this encyclopaedia is intended. There has been an attempt to broaden the scope from the emphasis on subjects of predominately British interest in previous editions. Content on Australia is generally superficial, and the entry on the Australian Aboriginal people does not reflect current perspectives or knowledge. Statistical information varies from 1981 to 1987.

Authority

Volume 20 has a list of text authorities. This refers to individual writers (which vary from the academic to the skilled practitioner) and their positions, to journals and to public and private organisations and commercial enterprises. Articles are not signed.

Arrangement

20 volumes: volume 20 being the index. Arrangement is alphabetical by subject. Text is in double columns with clear good size print with bold headings. A 96 page atlas with index is part of volume 19. The index is the encyclopaedia's best feature. Excellent in layout, entries pinpoint basic information for student ready reference. Citations in the index have been graded (main, major and references in) to help students. Main entries are prefaced by definitions identifying the subject with some extending into a fact file.

Graphics

Well illustrated with photographs, diagrams, sketches and maps, some colour, integrated with the text.

General assessment

Although published for the northern hemisphere market this could be a useful general reference encyclopaedia. M. Ellis, P. Ward
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$595 ASCIS 427654

Lexicon universal encyclopedia. Lexicon, 1988
ISBN 0-7172-2021-4 [030]

This is a comprehensive general encyclopaedia, broad in scope with a significant biographical content, designed for student use and reflecting the curriculum in American high schools and colleges.

Authority

The majority of articles are signed. Over 2000 contributors are listed in volume 1, including their current positions. They appear to be predominantly American.

Arrangement

21 volumes: volume 21 being the index. The encyclopaedia is arranged alphabetically word by word, rather than by topic, and is generously cross-referenced. In general, it is a short entry encyclopaedia. Article headings are in bold type and underlined, a format which helps to compensate for the small cramped type design. Longer articles are subdivided by smaller, bold face, one word, topic headings. Guide words and page numbers are prominently displayed for rapid access. Pronunciation guides are given in the article headings for foreign or unfamiliar words.

The index volume has an initial explanation for usage. Index entries guide the reader to specific volumes and pages. Subject breakdowns are clear and easy to use. Entries include references to illustrations, maps, tables and bibliographies.

Like *The world book encyclopedia*, fact boxes for quick reference on countries of the world, North American States, and US presidents are provided at the beginning of articles. Both metric and standard notational systems are used.

Graphics

The encyclopaedia is generously illustrated in colour and black and white. Graphics are integrated and well captioned often providing a short summary. Maps are particularly prominent, well selected and information specific.

General assessment

Content and presentation are substantially the same as the edition reviewed in scan 86/2 with general updating on statistics, biographical entries and world events. Accepting the predominance of American material this could be a useful general reference encyclopaedia. P. Ward, M. Ellis

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$760.00 ASCIS 448311

The new book of knowledge. Grolier, 1988

ISBN 0-7172-0519-3

[030]

Content and scope

Basically this is a curriculum related encyclopaedia prepared for American elementary and junior high schools. While emphasis is on American topics, there is world coverage.

Authority

Most articles are signed by authors, credentials and current positions given at the end of each entry and a complete list appears in volume 20.

Arrangement

21 volumes: volume 21 is a general and classified index. Arrangement of entries is alphabetical by topic. Each volume contains its own index (blue pages) and cross-references to other volumes. It also includes brief biographies and summaries of subjects not in the main articles. The dual indexing system could prove an unwieldy mechanism for young students.

Graphics

Clear format. Large print and generously illustrated.

General assessment

American in perspective and selection of material, the encyclopaedia has limited value and use for the Australian student. However, the attractive format makes it inviting for browsing. P. Ward, M. Ellis

LEV: Lower primary Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$499.00 (New edition to be released mid-year, approx. \$575.00) ASCIS 448271

The world book encyclopedia, World Book, 1988.

ISBN 0-71660-088-9

[030]

Content and scope

The edition is the fourth major revision since *The world book encyclopedia* was first published in 1917. This is reflected in a complete new typeface and page design, a 70% increase in the number of colour

illustrations, and increased coverage in text and maps of countries and cities. Material in the Australasian volumes (which covers Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and some South Pacific Islands), has been updated. Revision of such articles as the history of Australia acknowledges the significance of the 1988 Australian Bicentenary. These volumes carry a good general coverage on Australian Aboriginal people, though there is a shortfall on information on health problems, child mortality and the sub-heading 'drinking to excess' is discriminatory.

Authority

Volume 1 has a list of over 3000 contributors and consultants indicating current positions and article responsibilities. Contributors and reviewers to the Australasian volumes are similarly listed. Articles in the main volumes are signed, but not in the Australasian volumes.

Arrangement

24 volumes: volumes 1-21 arranged in alphabetical order, volume 22 is the research guide and index, volumes 23 and 24 are the Australasian volumes without an index but with cross-referencing between the 2 volumes and some referrals to the main volumes. Index references referring to a specific volume and page are clearly set out and include useful identifiers and references to illustrations.

Graphics

The additional illustrative content and functional use of colour in maps, diagrams, graphs, fact boxes make the entries inviting and informative. Illustrations are well captioned and integrated with text. The new typesetting format in some sections is less easy to read than earlier editions and narrow gutters of the larger volumes present difficulty for easy opening and reading. With the lines of text being closer, and no space between entries, the lower case entry headings are not readily clear to the reader.

General assessment

It continues to be a comprehensive general world encyclopaedia with good reader reference accessibility. The United States content bias is tempered by the provision of the 2 Australasian volumes. M. Ellis, P. Ward

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$699 ASCIS 413147

Recent fiction

This is a list of recently reviewed fiction resources which contains titles for students in years K-12. Items are arranged alphabetically by title.

ANNO, Mitsumasa **Anno's peekaboo!** Bodley Head, 1988
ISBN 0-370-31155-8

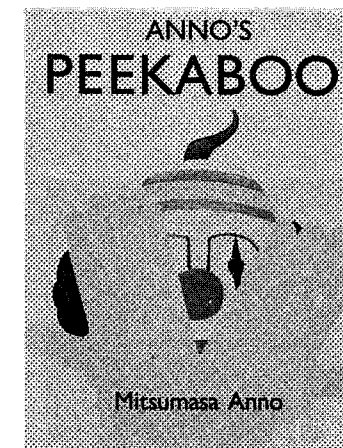
Highly recommended

Playing the favourite nursery game with his baby grand-daughter inspired the well-known Japanese author/artist to produce this wordless picture book. Cut out hand shapes open up in turn to reveal beautifully executed watercolour illustrations, clean-cut and refreshing, of the heads of animals and people. The flaps are not so easily handled by little fingers as in the Spot series but there is great fun in the variations the skilful arrangement makes possible for independent and shared viewing. P. Ward

LEV: Preschool Lower primary

AVAIL: \$15.95

ASCIS 425311



MARTYR, Andrew **Beeswax the bad.** Hamilton, 1988
ISBN 0-241-12169-8

Beeswax is a thoroughly fiendish cat whose pranks upset every member of the family. However when he finally becomes the victim of one of his own tricks he reforms his wicked ways...or does he? This is a humorous rhyming story with expressive illustrations, some of which are captioned. J. Wilkinson

LEV: Lower primary

AVAIL: \$14.99

ASCIS 431011

BOUMA, Paddy **Bertie at the dentist's.** Bodley Head, 1987
ISBN 0-370-31045-4

Thomas has taken his favourite toy, Bertie, a cuddly hippo while on a visit to the dentist. To Thomas' consternation, the hippo gets up to mischief behind the dentist's back, his naughty antics reinforcing the dentist's admonitions about brushing teeth and avoiding sweets. The illustrations, with carefully executed drawings and colour wash, carry the story well. P. Ward

LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$12.95

ASCIS 405382

RUBENSTEIN, Gillian **Beyond the labyrinth.** Hyland House, 1988
ISBN 0-947062-43-2

Highly recommended

Brenton often retreats into a world of fantasy games, where a throw of the dice decides outcomes. He feels an outsider in his own family and a sense of doom for the earth's future, and as a result uses dice to make his own real life decisions. Vicky comes to stay and easily relates to Brenton's dilemma. When they meet Cal, an alien anthropologist, both are led to make a critical life-choice. This is a complex, yet thoroughly engrossing and cleverly structured story. The author has drawn believable, well-developed characters who use very natural language - at times surprisingly strong swearing. The final effective twist is when the reader is given alternative endings. A. Gill

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

ASCIS 434502

FIENBERG, Anna **Billy Bear and the wild winter.** Angus and Robertson, 1988
ISBN 0-207-15926-2

Billy is bored during winter because it signals hibernation for all his family and friends. But he is determined to have some fun, and his decision to rouse all the bears for a mid-winter dance is enthusiastically received. This humorous story written in chapter format and illustrated with black-and-white line drawings is well suited to newly independent readers. J. Wilkinson

LEV: Middle primary

AVAIL: \$11.95

ASCIS 435164

WHITE, Robb *Deathwatch*. Penguin, 1988 (Plus)
ISBN 0-14-032881-5

Madec, a game hunter from the city, hires Ben, a 17-year-old student, to be his guide on an expedition into the desert for bighorn sheep. When Madec accidentally shoots an old prospector, he cold-bloodedly schemes to blame Ben for the murder. Ben's only chance is to make his way 40 miles across the desert - and Madec has taken his clothes, shoes, food and water. Madec stalks Ben relentlessly in a tense thriller which graphically captures Madec's ruthless menace and Ben's courageous survival. This could attract and intrigue the older reluctant reader.

M. Lobban

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 ASCIS 432370

OLDHAM, June *Double take*. Viking Kestrel, 1988 (Kestrel)
ISBN 0-670-82088-1

After Olivia Quinn plays the role, for a television news show, of the landlady of a missing girl, she embarks on a private crusade to unravel the mystery of the girl's (and her landlady's) disappearances. Oldham's elliptical and discursive dialogue, eccentric characters and the intellectual and philosophical games they play make this at best a challenging read and at times an obscure one. M. Lobban

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 ASCIS 437304

MARK, Jan *Enough is too much already*. Bodley Head, 1988 (A Bodley Head paperback original)
ISBN 0-370-31094-2

The 7 short stories in this collection are loosely linked through their narrators, 3 friends - Maurice, Nazzer and Nina. They are witty, articulate British teenagers whose repartee is the source of much of the humour. An interesting stylistic device is the fact that they are told entirely in dialogue as one recounts an incident and the others pun and comment. The intellectual energy of the 3 demands an able, sophisticated reader.

M. Lobban

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$9.95 ASCIS 428391

The Faber book of contemporary Australian short stories / edited by Murray Bail. Faber, 1988
ISBN 0-571-15083-7

This collection from 25 authors includes works by Christina Stead, Patrick White, Shirley Hazzard, Helen Garner, Peter Carey and Kate Grenville.

Although the introduction by Murray Bail effectively traces the development of the form as a major element of Australian literature, only indirect information is given as to the time of writing of the stories selected, through the acknowledgements to publishers.

M. McLachlan

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 ASCIS 410838

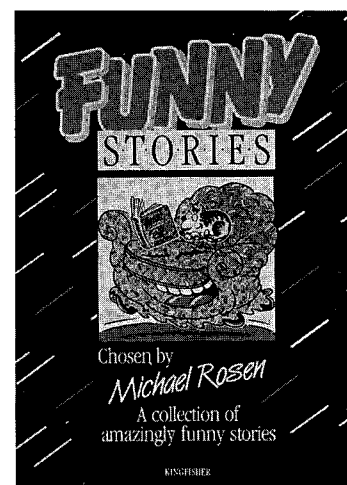
CORMIER, Robert *Fade*. Gollancz, 1988
ISBN 0-575-04402-0

Consider before buying

One male in each generation of a French American family has the ability to fade or disappear at will. Told partly through manuscripts found after his death, this is the story of the tormented, solitary life of one, Paul Moreaux. For Paul and his successor Ozzie the fade made murder easy; for Ozzie and the next heir it masks obscene acts of terror and revenge. Cormier's story unfolds skilfully through multiple viewpoints, but for the first time, the evil at the heart of the novel is personal rather than institutional. This is a violent, disturbing novel, different in tone and content from his previous work. M. Lobban

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$24.95 ASCIS 438365



Funny stories / chosen by Michael Rosen.

Kingfisher Books, 1988 (Kingfisher story library)

ISBN 0-86272-320-5

Highly recommended

Michael Rosen knows what children like. Witness his popular poetry books and their outrageous humour. There is then, a freshness and variety in his choice of 39 funny stories which reflect a broad range of authors such as Norman Hunter and Roald Dahl, James Thurber and Jan Mark, Henry Lawson and Margaret

Mahy, and include a number of folk tales and even the script from Joyce Grenfell's 'Sing-song time'. Tony Blundell's witty black-and-white sketches fit the fun mood of an exciting collection. P. Ward

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle

secondary

AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 425327

BLAKE, Jon *Geoffrey's first*. Walker, 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0825-8

At the beginning of this novel the author sets his hero Geoffrey up as a caricature - a pompous, superior, universally disliked youth from a ludicrous family of general poverty who find him as distasteful as do his peers. When Geoffrey then embarks upon his first romance it is difficult for the reader to care much about its outcome, let alone understand why the most popular girl in the class should choose him to initiate into the mysteries of sex. This is an odd novel which never seems quite sure of the relationship the reader is meant to have with its characters and events.

M. Lobban

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 438016

ARNOLD, Josie *Getting there*. Heinemann Educational, 1988 (Heinemann teenage fiction)
ISBN 0-85859-473-0

Jamie leads a Walter Mitty-like existence, daydreaming his way out of boredom with heroic exploits. When he suddenly finds himself a real life hero, life is almost too good to be true. But more complications come his way: his mother, once a pop star, is thinking about going back into the business, and then his father, still a pop star in the fast lane, reappears. Jamie, who has only faint recollections of his father, finds himself being swept along in his crazy new world. Exciting as this new world is, returning to his previously boring life seems better and better. There may be a few too many convenient coincidences to help a patchy narrative along, but this is, nevertheless, an amusing story of teenage and family life. N. Kallenberger

LEV: Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 ASCIS 425417

Ghost stories / chosen by Robert Westall.
Kingfisher Books, 1988 (Kingfisher story library)
ISBN 0-86272-323-X

The supernatural, the bizarre, the macabre and the ironic feature in this quality collection of 22 stories. It includes some of the best known writers in this genre of literature such as Saki, Phillipa Pearce, Franz Kafka and Ray Bradbury. The presentation is attractive with

clear typeface and black-and-white illustrations by Sean Eckett that add to the atmosphere and impact of the stories. P. Ward

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle

secondary

AVAIL: \$17.95 ASCIS 425293

DENTON, Kady MacDonald *Granny is a darling*.
Walker, 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0352-3

When Billy's grandmother comes to visit and shares his bedroom he hopes that she will protect him from the scary things which emerge from the shadows at night. His concerns are allayed when his grandmother's snoring frightens the creatures away. For children with a fear of the dark this book, illustrated with delicate wash drawings, is ideal to reassure them. J. Wilkinson

LEV: Preschool Lower primary

AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 429842

CLARKE, Judith *The heroic life of Al Capsella*.
University of Queensland Press, 1988 (UQP young
adult fiction)
ISBN 0-7022-2109-0

Like many 14-year-olds, Almeric Capsella is worried about being different. He is overly concerned about what he wears, his height, and in particular his eccentric parents. We view the world through Al's eyes, and thus meet a succession of strange characters: an arty history teacher, a librarian who does not want books borrowed, intolerant grandparents who are set in their funny ways and many more. Al eventually comes to realise that there really is no such thing as normal. The author's approach provides no new insight into this much worked theme. However, its brevity, first person telling and humour make it an enjoyable and easy read. A. Gill

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 ASCIS 423725

KLEIN, Robin *Laurie loved me best*. Viking
Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82211-6

Andre and Julia are bonded by their separate family difficulties and find solace and security in an abandoned cottage, until Laurie, a manipulative 18-year-old, suddenly turns up and tells each girl separately of his love for them. Alternately related by Andre and Julia, the story readably details their increasing confidence in each other and themselves, but where Andre's home life is so vividly claustrophobic, the depiction of Julia's alternative

lifestyle household as caricatured loonies is labored and irritating. Having had their trust exploited by Laurie, the twist at the story's conclusion is curious and unsatisfactory. It is however thought provoking, regarding the impact adults' lives can exact upon children. S. French

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$16.99 ASCIS 437447

IMPEY, Rose *A letter to Father Christmas*. Orchard Books, 1988
ISBN 1-85213-126-8

Charlotte likes writing - letters, lists and notes. She skilfully copies and illustrates any writing she sees, too young yet to read it. Her carefully prepared letter to Father Christmas is accidentally sent with the wrong list, causing him some worry. Charlotte's concerns leading up to Christmas Day mean, however, that her gifts turn out to be appropriate. Colour illustrations of fine detail by Sue Porter extend the simple text and build a warm family atmosphere. This picture book, suitable for sharing with children engaged in learning to read and write, accurately captures a child's view of the world. J. Buckley

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$18.95 ASCIS 435081

KING-SMITH, Dick *Martin's mice*. Gollancz, 1988
ISBN 0-575-04264-8

Martin is a most unusual cat, he does not want to catch and eat mice, in fact the taste makes him sick. Instead Martin catches Drusilla, a pregnant mouse and keeps her and her 8 children as pets in an old bath tub. Gradually through a variety of circumstances Martin comes to realise that it isn't much fun being a pet and he and Drusilla become just good friends. This is a warm, humorous story, with an occasional black-and-white illustration to add appeal. M. Ellis

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 430096

HEMINGTON, Judith *Moving on*. Bodley Head, 1988 (A Bodley Head paperback original)
ISBN 0-370-31178-7

Rachel's life is turned upside down when her mother decides they will move from London to Wales to live with her lover Llew. Slowly Rachel comes to love living in Wales so she is alarmed at the deteriorating relationship between Llew and her mother and the prospect of leaving Wales and her boy-friend Geraint. Finally she comes to realise that she must separate her life from that of her mother and take responsibility for her own future and happiness. Rachel is a very ordinary teenager who copes realistically with the

upheavals in her life in this unremarkable but reassuring novel. M. Lobban

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 ASCIS 426694

LAROCHE, Sandra *The mushroom feast*. Margaret Hamilton, 1988
ISBN 0-947241-01-9

Highly recommended

This is a fun tale involving a king and his 2 most trusted friends. They are a trio of committed gluttons whose culinary excesses entertain the court but frustrate and humiliate their wives. A scheme is hatched to convince the 3 that they have been poisoned and must, as a consequence, go on a diet. The colour illustrations parallel the characterisation of the foolish threesome and guarantee enjoyment of the plot. H. Bruce

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 434394

LOWRY, Lois *The road ahead*. Dent 1987
ISBN 0-460-07029-0

Under the title *Rabble Starkey*, this fine novel has won several American awards. Rabble is a feisty heroine, tough, wise beyond her years, living a precarious existence with her mother Sweet-Ho, who had Rabble when she was 14. When Sweet-Ho becomes housekeeper and de facto mother for a family, Rabble blossoms and imagines this will be her home for ever. Change and acceptance are constant themes running through this rich novel. Rabble grows sufficiently to meet the fearful wrench when she and Sweet-Ho inevitably must leave. Sentimental perhaps, this is also a warm and irresistible story of an enduring kind.

M. Lobban
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: \$21.95 ASCIS 439750

MASTERS, Olga *The rose fancier*. University of Queensland Press, 1988
ISBN 0-7022-2080-9

These are well crafted short stories; keen observations of both historical and contemporary Australian family life. Many of them are carefully edited versions of stories Olga Masters had drafted for this collection before her death in 1986. The collection includes short character sketches and longer, more fully fledged stories. Characters and settings are rich and varied, but may appeal more to adults than to teenagers.

N. Kallenberger
AUD: Professional
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 425713

BALL, Duncan *Selby speaks*. Angus and Robertson, 1988
ISBN 0-207-15739-1

Selby, the talking dog, is back in this collection of 18 episodic adventures. Selby is determined to keep his abilities a secret, for fear his owners, the Trifles, will put him to work or, even worse, give him to scientists for examination. Selby's determination leads to all sorts of mixed-up adventures, which will surely delight his fans. The humour is pervasive, even if it is somewhat self-conscious and contrived. These stories would be good for reading aloud. N. Kallenberger

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: \$14.95 ASCIS 431114

BATES, Dianne *The Slacky Flat gang*. Brooks Waterloo, 1988 (Kooka books)
ISBN 0-86440-088-8

The reunion of the Slacky Flat gang at their old reform school brings a big surprise: the school is now the mansion of retired headmistress Gloria Wangler, eccentric, big game hunter and traveller. She can't resist the opportunity to reform a gang of hardened criminals; they rather like the splendid luxury of her mansion. The ensuing adventures turn the town upside-down and provide readers with a fast-paced, fun-filled story. The inclusion of newspaper clippings, letters and television interviews adds variety to the narrative. The characterisation is less predictable than is often the case in stories of this nature.

N. Kallenberger
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$4.95 ASCIS 428486

State of the heart: stories about love, life and growing up / compiled by P.E. Matthews. Omnibus Books, 1988
ISBN 1-86291-006-5

Acne, infatuations, leg shaving, the stirrings of sexuality, questions of image, peer group pressure - how can this book miss? The bumpy road of adolescence is well charted in this collection of short stories by the likes of Gillian Rubenstein, Max Dann, Dianne Bates, Doug Macleod and others. The surface of these stories doesn't need too much scratching to find the humour, but the humour is unfailingly responsible and kind. And the fact that most of the stories are from a male viewpoint doesn't detract from the overall effect. This worthy collection well reflects the feelings and experiences of us all as we grow and change. S. French

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper \$6.99 ASCIS 435650

LEONARD, Alison *Tinker's career*. Walker, 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0812-6

Tina is 15, living with her father and stepmother and knowing nothing of her real mother save her name and that she is dead. Suddenly Tina wants to know more about her mother and why everything about her has been wiped so completely from her life. She traces an aunt, Louise, and from her learns that her mother and grandmother died from Huntington's Chorea and that there is a 50 percent chance that both she and Louise will develop the disease. The author explores many issues - growing up, death, suicide, family relationships, homosexuality - in a realistic, if rather grim, novel. M. Lobban

LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 437991

TOMLINSON, Theresa *The water cat*. MacRae, 1988
ISBN 0-86203-367-5

Highly recommended

Moving deftly between reality and fantasy, this is a satisfying story of a chance encounter of 3 children with a landbound merman and his alter ego, a water cat. The setting is north of England in the 1950s, a steel mill village on the coast, a community and school abuzz with the excitement of the Coronation. In helping the merman return to the sea, the children become linked with the haunting catastrophe that almost destroyed the village 400 years ago. P. Ward

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: \$19.95 ASCIS 438018

KOVALSKI, Maryann K. *The wheels on the bus*. Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82183-7

The familiar nursery song is brought to life in this simple, well-illustrated picture book. Grandma, after a shopping trip with her grand-daughters, decides to sing as a way of passing the time while waiting for the bus. Full-page colour illustrations, introducing characters and situations, accompany each verse of the song. J. Buckley

LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: \$16.95 ASCIS 432631

Faulty copies of scan

If you receive a copy of scan that is faulty, for example incomplete, please return it to Library Services indicating the name of the school to receive a replacement copy.

Publication distributed by the tobacco institute of Australia

Memorandum 89/010 (S.006) dated 24 1 89 was sent by the Director-General to all principals, its subject being a publication, *Why do juveniles start smoking?*, distributed to all Australian schools by the Tobacco Institute of Australia.

The publication has been reviewed by the Directorate of the Drug Offensive, NSW Department of Health, the Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), a member of the WHO Expert Advisory panel on Smoking and Health and the NSW Department of Education Research and Evaluation Support Unit, and is considered to be unsuitable for use in schools.

In light of this information and in accordance with the general principles of Health Education, you are advised not to use this publication as part of your school program.

Australian Library and Information Association

Many teacher-librarians will be familiar with the work of the Library Association of Australia, and in particular of the School Libraries Section through its extensive seminar and publication program. In recognition of the widening involvement of its members in other areas of information work, the LAA has recently adopted the new name of the Australian Library and Information Association. The acronym to look for now is ALIA, not LAA.

Another significant recent Association decision is to relocate its head office from Sydney to Canberra. A new building will be constructed to house the Association's activities. A local presence will be maintained in Sydney.

Enquiries regarding the activities and membership of the School Libraries Section should be directed to the Secretary, Niki Kallenberger Library Services Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112 (02) 808 9462 or 66 George Street Homebush 2140 (02) 76 7889.

Furniture

Applications for furniture should now be forwarded by the Principal to Regional Office. Schools will no longer receive an advice slip from the School Furniture Complex, but will be advised by Regional Office that the request has been approved or not. Advice about furniture can still be sought from regional consultants or from the School Furniture Complex.

Please note the above change of procedure in your *Handbook for school libraries*, section 6.17.7.

Awards

The Caldecott Medal 1989

Winner: Song and dance man Stephen Gammel (illus) Karen Ackerman(text) Knopf/Random House

The Newbery Medal

Winner: Joyful noise: poems for two voices Paul Flieschman Harper and Row
(Source: *Reading time* vol 33 no 1)

McKenzie's boots by Australian author Michael Noonan, has been included in the American Literary Association's Best Books 1988 list.

dates for your diary

ASLA XI

Please note the change of dates for ASLA XI to those advertised in the last issue of *scan*. The new dates are 28 September - 1 October 1989.

Acknowledgements

For permission to reproduce book covers, the editors are indebted to: Mentone Educational Centre for **Algorithms** (Mentone Educational); Bodley Head for **Anno's Peekaboo** (Bodley Head); Australian Geographic for **Australian Encyclopaedia** (Australian Geographic); McPhee Gribble/Penguin for **The Australopedia** (McPhee Gribble/Penguin); Encyclopaedia Britannica for **Children's Britannica** (Encyclopaedia Britannica); Merrill for **Computers and application software** (Merrill) and **World of computing** (Houghton Mifflin); Watts for **Earthworms** (Watts); Kingfisher for **Funny Stories** (Kingfisher); Heinemann Educational for **Information technology at work** (Heinemann Educational); Computer Education Group for **Information Transfer** (Computer Education Group); Prentice-Hall for **Understanding information technology** (Prentice-Hall); and Gloucester for **Why do people harm animals** (Gloucester).

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