Scan

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currents ≈

Janet Hansen is Principal Education Officer at Library Services

Getting to know you
During the Easter holidays we had the opportunity to meet new teacher-librarians and renew friendships with 130 teacher-librarians at courses and workshops held at our new Ryde site.

Regional visits
Merran Dawson and Joy Wilkinson spent 4 days in the Riverina Region working with teacher-librarians and principals at Wagga Wagga, Albury, Griffith and Hay. Principals and teacher-librarians enjoyed working on problem-solving exercises together.

Courses for primary and central schools
The School and Executive Development branch will offer a school-based support course twice in 1989. Course A: 4 June - 20 September, (includes 2 residential sessions 4-7 June and 17-20 September). Course B: 12 July - 28 October, (includes 2 residential sessions 12-15 July and 25-28 October). An additional course will be funded by Metropolitan South West region and run for this region's teacher-librarians, beginning in the July holidays and ending in the October holidays with a 4-day residential in each.

Do you want to attend?
You may not be aware that every teacher can apply for funds to attend conferences or courses organised by the Department or professional associations . You must complete a standard form for attendance at conferences, available from your regional office and then send it to the Staff Development Committee at the regional office. You can also request funding from the Committee to fund a course. It is expected that at least half the course time would be outside school hours and possibly all of the time. In addition to requesting funds from the regional Committee, it is important to discuss your plans with the inspector and consultant responsible for school libraries in your region:

Hunter- Sandra Lloyd, inspector: (049) 67 8999.
Metropolitan East- Mandy Tunica, inspector: (02) 309 1666; Laraine Lucas, consultant: (02) 597 2266.
Metropolitan North- Patricia Morgan, inspector: (02) 887 3266 or 887 2711; Kathy Schmitt, consultant: (02) 439 5409.
Metropolitan South West- Trevor Wootten, inspector: (02) 644 6976.
Metropolitan West- Brian Harrison, inspector: (045) 87 7366; Jane Robinson, consultant (02) 683 9666.
North Coast- John Quill, inspector: (066) 21 1701.
North West- Theo Van Der Veen, inspector: (067) 672385.

Riverina- Sandra Lucas, consultant: (069) 23 0653; Jan Aveyard,Principal Education Officer: (069) 23 0653.
South Coast- Chris Carroll, inspector: (042) 26 8111.
Western Region- Pam Peelgrane, inspector: (063) 334222.

Carrick Review
The committee for the review of schools chaired by Sir John Carrick, held public meetings at which the Department, groups and individuals were asked to speak to their submission. One of these groups was the NSW Schools Section of ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association).

Do you want to write?
scan is your journal. We are looking for ideas, suggestions and your thoughts on any topic however brief. Thank you for the positive feedback we have had so far this year. Please adress your contributions to: The editor *scan*, Library Services, Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112.

In study
A record number of teacher-librarians are studying teacher-librarianship, 128 are enrolled at Western Australia CAE (NSW is the largest group), 130 at Riverina Murray Institute of Higher Education and 30 at Kuring-gai CAE. If you are in the country and need some local support contact me and I might be able to link you with someone from another institution. The Inservice Education Library is well organised to assist you in your studies. Ring (02) 808 9512 or 808 9515. If you are thinking about a course for next year an information day will be held during the holidays on 26 September, at Ryde. If you are currently doing a course a special seminar on new Departmental developments will be on 25 September.

So you want to work in libraries and information services: courses in librarianship, information science and archives administration in NSW and ACT, 1989. One blue copy of this useful ALIA guide to courses has been distributed to each secondary school. Additional copies are available on request. Please address your request to: The SYWTWIL Clerk at Library Services, Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112.

Information skills
The senior management group of the Department has discussed a draft Information Skills K-12 document and requested some ammendments. Upon completion of these, the document will be resubmitted for approval. The status of the document will be as support to the Library Policy.

features ☆

☆ Integrating information skills and technologies into the curriculum - part 1

This is the first part of a 2-part article by Toni Downes, a lecturer at Macarthur Institute of Higher Education. Part 2 will appear in the next issue of scan.

Current social and economic conditions are placing increasing demands on schools to examine and change their curriculum. These demands involve a re-examination of the purposes and methods of developing information- handling skills both within the context of the traditional resource collections found within schools and their communities, and within the wider context of electronic information systems. These demands increase the pressure on teachers and teacher-librarians to find ways of integrating both an information skills development program and the new technologies themselves into the daily classroom curriculum.

Kirk (1988) has clearly identified attributes of a sound, school-based information skills program. She argues that the program be needs based - arising out of the information needs of the students as they work on a variety of tasks, problems and investigations. This approach fosters the integration of the skills program into the classroom curriculum. It requires cooperative planning and teaching of those units of work in which students have major information needs. It also requires an appropriate resource collection, physically and intellectually accessible to all students. One of the greatest requirements of this approach is TIME! Time, not only for teachers and teacher-librarians to talk, to plan and to evaluate, but for teachers to extend the duration of the unit of work so that information skills can be developed hand in hand with the central concepts and knowledge component of the unit.

Many schools have such a cooperative, integrated approach to information skills development. Some are also beginning to integrate new information technologies into this program. Two common approaches for integrating the new technologies into classroom curriculum involve using simple database software on microcomputers and accessing remote databases through telecommunication facilities. While access to telecommunication facilities may not be affordable or appropriate for many schools, most primary and secondary schools own microcomputers which support simple database management packages that can be used in libraries and classrooms. A wide variety is available across the different curriculum areas and grades. Some, such as **The First Fleet database** come with data files and management software, some, such as Appleworks or Carefile, are management packages that students and teachers can use to create their own collections and some are simply data files that can be loaded into different database management software. All of these packages can be valuable resources for the development of information skills within the context described above. As with any resource however, the crucial factor in its success, is the way staff and students plan for its use.

Two studies which investigate the use of database packages in the classroom are Freeman, Hawkins and Char (1985) and Guttormsen (1986). Both make a number of statements about database use, the former in secondary schools, the latter in primary schools. Their statements are based on observations of a number of classrooms where teachers and students were using databases. Both reports were encouraging in their findings, but clearly indicate that there are many issues that require attention, as schools begin to integrate this particular technology into their curriculum. One common finding was that there are a variety of purposes and of ways that teachers and students use databases within their classrooms. Some of the more significant findings include:

* that some teachers lacked a clear perspective or agenda for teaching research and information-handling skills. Thus the role of the database was also unclear (Freeman et al, 1985)

* the extent of teachers' exposure to the use of the computer and the degree to which they were comfortable with this software influenced their ability to use the database in creative ways (Freeman et al, 1985)

* children needed a basic level of computer awareness before being introduced to databases (Guttormsen, 1986)

* children as young as 7 developed an awareness of databases (Guttormsen, 1986)

* manipulation of databases required the application of a range of problem-solving skills as yet not well developed in primary school children (Guttormsen, 1986).

These are just a few of the issues that would need to be addressed as teachers and teacher-librarians considered the use of databases in classrooms or libraries.

The following list presents just one way (Downes 1987) of describing the different ways that database packages can be used by teachers, teacher-librarians and students:

1 as both a source of information and a tool for retrieving that information

2 as a tool for storing and organising information

3 as a tool for reorganising information and for presenting information to an audience.

This delineation is in some ways artificial, as on many occasions teachers and students will use database packages in all 3 ways within the same task. However, it represents a useful guide when viewing the use from the perspective of an integrated information skills program. This article will expand on the first 2 uses of database packages and also discuss relevant issues and successful classroom practices associated with each of these ways. The next issue of *scan* will examine the third point.

1 Using database packages as both a source of information and a tool for retrieving that information

Database management software, when combined with existing data files, provide yet another source of information for teachers and students. This electronic source of information belongs in the same category as factual texts and reference works such as encyclopaedias. Like these other sources the very nature of data files and the features of their management packages constrain the types of information that can be stored in them. With the simple packages found in schools, this means files are made up of records which have a limited number of fields containing category headings and data. The data itself is usually confined to a certain number of characters. If the data file has been designed to facilitate retrieval of information about groups and subgroups as well as individuals then the data is further constrained to 'common' descriptors or keywords and to common units of measurement.

Many data files found in schools have not really addressed issues of combining 'common descriptors' in order to facilitate searching and sorting for subgroups and detailed descriptors to 'best' describe the individual case. For instance **The First Fleet database** reduces the richness of the information about an individual's previous trade in order to facilitate the sorting of convicts into subgroups of common trades. On the other hand **The Australian wildflowers database** is rich in descriptors of size and colour but does not facilitate the sorting of flowers by these characteristics. The nature of abbreviated and categorical data also places unique constraints on the information that can be retrieved from the data file. These constraints are not necessarily weaknesses, but must be recognised by the teachers and teacher-librarians as they plan information-handling activities around the available sources of information.

The following issues are just some of those needing to be considered by teachers and teacher-librarians as they plan to use databases as sources of information within an integrated information skills program.

* Databases should not be used in isolation from traditional sources of information.

* Unfamiliar database packages require the same preparation/introduction as any unfamiliar factual text.

* Teachers and teacher-librarians should be familiar with the structure and nature of the information contained in the data file - some databases are best used for retrieving information about individuals, others for finding out about groups and subgroups for comparing and contrasting.

* Students will need to understand the structure and nature of the collection and the principles of retrieving information for them to be independent users of a database system. Initially they need to know the categories and types of information (numeric and text) and the meanings of the various terms used. The retrieval task itself becomes one of asking questions of the database through a series of commands. Students need to develop some of their existing intuitive search strategies into formalised procedures in order to 'tell' the computer what to do. The efficiency of their search strategies improves with understanding but even beginning users have a sufficient repertoire of strategies to answer simple questions. The development of the knowledge and strategies, need not necessarily be a prerequisite to the actual task, it could in fact be an outcome of that task.

* Students can easily become immersed in the data contained in the package by answering their own and each other's questions. In fact the sharing of the responsibility of formulating questions tackles an often neglected skill of question asking. The notion of having the students develop their own questions comes from the NSW Department of Education draft of the **Information Skills K-12 Document**. It is also commonly mentioned in 'problem solving' literature as an initial step in defining a problem. This strategy has been used by Dianne Kerr, a history teacher, in her work with historical databases (Kerr, 1985). She reports that in general these questions are simple in nature and allow students to immerse themselves in the details of the information being studied while at the same time learning how to retrieve this information from a database.

Classroom practices: case study

* Additional time will need to be added to the duration of the unit so that students can have adequate opportunities to learn how to use a particular package.

Several of these issues were taken into account when two Year 4 classrooms were planning a social studies unit in early 1988. The teachers added to their traditional collection of resources, a database package of a set of cards, each listing information about a convict, a set of tables listing certain information about all convicts and the computerised database **The First Fleet**. The information handling skills grew from the needs of the students to collect information in order to develop generalisations about the convicts of the First Fleet. These generalisations would help them answer the question 'who were the first European settlers in Australia?'

The activities planned to support the specific contributing question, involved:

* children formulating their own questions about the convicts

* children manipulating a set of cards and reading information from tables and accessing the database in response to their own, others' and teacher-generated questions

* children accessing a wide range of other sources of information about the convicts.

Formulating questions
Students in the Year 4 class were introduced to question asking through some small group card activities. As children became more familiar with the information on the cards, they wrote a set of draft questions which were to be placed into a question

box. This box became the source of questions when children were working with the convict data file. Initially quite a few children had difficulty in structuring questions which were to be answered in their absence. The teachers and students engaged in a number of specific language activities designed to develop the necessary sentence structure and vocabulary for question asking.

The students formulated 3 main types of questions about:.

* individuals - how old was Mary Lawrence?
* quantity - how many people were sentenced to death?
* exceptional individuals - who was the youngest convict?

The nature of the questions and the difficulties students had in framing these questions revealed much about the children's interests, understandings and abilities. The range of questions provided a rich basis for an exploration of the convict data file. Kerr (1985) who was working with older students, followed this with teacher-generated or class-generated questions relating to comparing and contrasting groups within the collection.

Understanding the nature and structure of the data file
The students were introduced to the database package through some card and table activities. The card activities were based on those of Sutton (1985) who suggested a range of activities that can be used to develop children's understanding of what a computerised database is and how it works. Among her suggestions is the use of a card file in searching and sorting activities. These Year 4 students:

* read the information on their card to a partner

* compared their information with a partner's and with all members of their group

* sorted the group's cards according to a particular category eg age

* formed groups based on a match in one category eg ship

* formed groups based on a match in 2 categories eg ship and sex

* formed groups within groups as a series of matches were performed eg ship then sex

* arranged all the cards according to age

* asked each other questions about information on a particular card

* asked each other to find the card that contained the answer to a particular question.

The students also used the tables to ask questions of each other and to locate specific bits of information in response to each other's or teacher's questions. The work with the cards and tables was designed to increase student awareness of the range of information contained in the collection, the structure of a record card, and the vocabulary used to describe the convicts. Many of the activities provided opportunities for students to sort and search the cards for specific pieces of information.

The students had little trouble interpreting each other's questions. They could easily locate the answer and/or show you how they would find the answer using the cards or a table. However, many had trouble verbalising their strategy, especially naming the column or row on the table where they would begin their search. Intuitively they knew what to do, but many students had trouble 'formalising' their search procedure. This inability to tell someone else what they had done or to instruct someone else how to do it, proved crucial when it came to using the computerised database.

Using the database to answer questions
The convict file was accessed on Apple computers through an Australian public domain management package called Fredbase.

When at the computer the students used a variety of procedures for finding answers to questions about individuals. The 3 main strategies were:

* BROWSE then FLIP stopping when the correct record appeared on the screen

* SEARCH field contains or equals 'xxxxxx' eg surname contains Hall

* FIND..... most commonly used when looking for a particular person.

,A pair of students were observed to SORT on Surname and then BROWSE (when questioned they claimed it made it just like a telephone book!). The students believed that all of these strategies were faster than a manual card search. Very few students answered more than 10 of these types of questions during the unit so it is not surprising that those with less efficient procedures were unwilling, or unable to improve their strategies when prompted.

Initially many students had difficulty in formulating their SEARCH procedures to answer questions about individuals. Invariably this type of question contained information from 2 fields eg how old is James Murray? Many students targeted the wrong key field. This was a common event at the computers in the early stages. Sometimes I would intervene with a question, 'here are the cards, how

would you do it with these? Tell me what you did? Can you now tell the computer to do that?' Other times nearby students would tell one another what to do, 'use SEARCH, or use FIND!'.

By the end of the unit most students could use the SEARCH command to retrieve information about individuals although some still chose not to!

The 'how many' questions were by far the easiest for the students to translate into successful procedures. Almost all children readily used the SEARCH command to find the information. Some of the 'how many' questions required a further step in the procedure. Questions such as 'how many females are in the Friendship?' required students to identify a subset of those who travelled on the Friendship. No student was observed using AND to link SHIP and SEX. The optimum observed strategy was to search on SHIP begins F (Friendship) and count the number of females.

The third type of question was handled very inefficiently by all students. These questions eg 'who is the oldest convict?' were invariably answered through the BROWSE and 'keep a mental note' procedure. This approach mirrored accurately a search through the cards. Most students felt that doing it this way on a computer was quicker and were content to leave it at that. In fact experience with manual strategies confirms that if you are asking only one of a certain type of question then the BROWSE and 'keep a mental note' strategy is more efficient than arranging the cards in order so that you can locate a specific card. Through discussions about dictionaries, phone books and fiction and non-fiction books on library shelves, a small number of students were prompted to look for other procedures that would be more efficient when used on the computer. This led to an elementary understanding of the power of rapid sorting on different categories. One student became very comfortable with this procedure and began to use it quite successfully. In response to the question 'who is the oldest convict?' he explained his procedure:

I put the white light on SORT then I put the other white light on AGE. When I did 1-10 the answer was at the end, so this time 10-1 will put it at the beginning because the computer puts the biggest number first.

At a later session, in response to the question - 'how many convicts were animal thieves?' he outlined a similar procedure:

I put it on SORT and I got the computer to sort out crimes from A to Z then I pressed BROWSE and counted the animal thieves .

Throughout their use of the database package these Year 4 students displayed a range of strategies and understandings. It was encouraging that within the boundaries of their understandings all students found a strategy that retrieved the necessary information from which they formulated answers to their questions. It became obvious that development towards more efficient strategies required not only a deeper understanding of the data itself but more time and experience in using the package.

Time as a factor
The focus question of the unit of work was 'Why and how did the first Europeans settle in Australia?'. One of the unit aims was to enable students to make generalisations about the early convicts in answer to the question 'Who were the first European settlers in Australia?' The timetable provided for 2 afternoons a week over the 10 week period to be allocated to the whole unit, although considerably more time was used because of integration with other curriculum areas and a day excursion. Each morning in Reading time various groups worked with a variety of resources gathering information related to the focus question. A number of whole class activities were also undertaken to introduce the software, to introduce concepts and to discuss findings. The balance of time and activities within the unit was not significantly altered in order to accommodate one resource - the convict database. Within this framework, manipulation of the database did not get beyond the retrieval of specific information to answer simple questions. Even though most students only used the database about once a week, almost all were able to use the database to retrieve specific information, albeit some with very inefficient strategies. Students felt confident about using either the cards or the database to locate information though many still had difficulty describing their strategy.

Overall the staff and students described the unit as successful. Both teachers and students found the highlight to be the students' question box. In fact students were often found leaving the computer to locate the students whose question they were answering, or commenting on which of their friends had answered their own questions. The teachers were surprised at some of the difficulties students had formulating questions. The interrelatedness of language and thinking skills were highlighted in this process. The students enjoyed the use of the database package and continually stated than it was much faster than doing it with cards or books. The teachers, though, questioned whether an extended use of cards and tables as a source of information might prove equally as successful given the time constraints and the stage of development of the students (early term 1, Year 4).

In an integrated information skills program, which is needs based, this question cannot go unanswered. It is not sufficient to say that the students need to learn about computerised databases - so they will do so now! The teachers' final assessment was to integrate cards and tables as a source of information for the same unit at the same time for 1989's Year 4, and would consider using a computerised database later in Year 4 if the need arose.

2 Using database packages as a tool for storing and organizing information

Database packages provide yet another way for storing and organising information. In schools, the database files are generally stored on floppy disks. It is a relatively cheap and space saving media but has a few problems associated with loss of information through improper care of the media or through accidental editing, deleting or over-writing of the file. One of the most powerful features of this media is the ease of updating, modifying or reorganising the information for other uses.

In the common packages found in schools, the information is organised using files, records and fields. A file contains a number of records, each having the same field names. Fields contain field names, eg sex, age and the matching data.

Just as traditional methods and media have unique characteristics that determine the appropriateness of their use, so too do database packages. Teachers, teacher-librarians and students need a clear picture of their information-handling task prior to deciding on the appropriateness of the database as a tool for storing and organising the information they have collected. In general, the use of databases in this way has proved most appropriate when similar information is being collected about a number of individuals in order to answer questions about the group as a whole or about subgroups within the collection. Such a use also takes advantage of the powerful searching and sorting functions of the database package.

To make most effective use of databases in these situations teachers and teacher-librarians need a clear picture of how a database system manipulates the data. Some properties of database systems that often trap novices include:

* the way they handle numerical and non-numerical (everything else including a mixture of numbers and letters) data differently. When numbers are evaluated they are done so from right to left. When words (non-numbers) are evaluated they are done so from left to right. Adding the unit of measurement

to the value eg 4.32kg in the field changes it to a non-numeric field. If records were sorted by such a field in ascending order, 110kg would be placed before 12kg, being evaluated from left to right as in letters within words.

* the limit on the number of characters (letters) in a field reduces amount of text one can enter about a characteristic. Some characteristics are often difficult to adequately describe in a few words, eg distinctive markings of birds or the storyline of a book. This could lead to inadequate descriptions for the defined information task.

* some packages do not allow the user to redesign the record form. In these packages rearranging or adding fields results in loss of entered data. Beginning users often need to redesign their record as a clearer definition of information needs emerge in the retrieval and analysis stages.

* searching relies on matching characters or groups of characters eg words or numbers. If searching is to be used to form groups or subgroups based on common characteristics, a controlled vocabulary must be used. The system cannot 'recognise' trees, shrubs, bushes and flowers as plants. The records would all need to contain an identical descriptor such as 'plant eating' or ' herbivorous' before it could create a subgroup of like records.

An understanding of such properties of database systems combined with a clear information need, facilitates the effective uses of databases in classroom settings. Students will discover or can be made aware of these properties as the need arises or as they come across unexpected results within the information-handling process. It is of little benefit to alert students to these properties unless they can have direct experience of them and witness the consequences of poorly organised records within an information-handling task where the 'meaning' of the data has been clearly established.

The initial organisation of the information prior to designing the record and entering the data is itself possibly the most important factor in determining the value of the stored collection. During this stage students and teachers need to make explicit their information needs and evaluate the range of information available in terms of the questions that need to be answered. In fact, the structure of the database system forces the information handlers to immerse themselves in the details, to structure the information in some agreed-upon way and to transform much of the information (from prose to word- or phrase-descriptors or from various units of measurement and qualitative descriptors to standard units). Many of these transformations are unnecessary in more traditional situations where information-handling tasks are often limited to transcribing and presenting information without that information being 'worked' over. This need to 'rework' the information into a different form provides an opportunity for such information to become the personal knowledge of the students. This occurs as students grapple with the 'meaning' of the information.

Classroom practices: case study

Some of these issues were faced by a primary teacher working with 4 senior classes during term 2 1988. Two Year 5 and two Year 6 classes had one hour a day in an Investigation Centre where all classes worked within certain curriculum areas including science. Two one-hour sessions each week were devoted to science. All 4 classes were involved in a 12 week unit 'how do we classify animals?'

The objectives of the science unit included the following explicit references to information skills:

* develop research skills, including the gathering of information

* refine, collate and sort information about animals

* understand the purpose and workings of a computer database

* develop a database for animals,

as well as statements about content.

With the support of both the teacher-librarian and the teacher, the students set about completing the following tasks:

* locating print resources about specific animals (of their choice)

* reading and comprehending factual texts - taking notes, undirected

* reaching class agreement about what specific information helps characterise an animal as unique

* locating further information to fill gaps in notes

* checking each other's information

* sorting/organising the information into specific headings

* analysing information about specific animals in order to categorise characteristics eg oviparous vs viviparous, or converting values to set units of measurement

* presenting information in record-card format

From here the information was to be fed into a database. The database was to be used by the students to further analyse their information. The set of cards from which the database was created was to be used for introductory and parallel tasks to help the students become familiar with the workings of database systems.

Collecting and organising information

The students investigated a wide range of animals, from single-celled amoeba to insects, lizards, seahorses and whales. Almost all of the students had little difficulty with note taking. Within class groups they entered into spirited debates about appropriate lists of headings under which to organise their information. The final list was

Common name
Scientific name
Class - eg vertebrate
Order - eg mammal
Colour - main colour or significant markings
Weight (g)
Height (cm)
Length (cm)
Home - physical environment eg river, or in trees
Habitat - geographical location eg African continent
Food - herbivorous, carnivorous, omnivorous
Babies - viviparous, oviparous
Life span (years)
Enemies
Active - nocturnal, diurnal

A number of these were only accepted after much discussion. Discussion aided both the clarifying of terms and the decision making about titles and units of measurement. Discussions included how best to describe the colour and markings; refining titles, eg age to life span, taking note of the difference between average age, maximum age and expected life span; and ways of classifying specific eating habits into general terms such as herbivorous. The introduction of specific vocabulary for fields such as food, babies and active, not only aided concept development but would allow grouping at a later date, by searching and sorting the database.

As students began the task of transforming their notes into words, phrases or values for specific headings, it became obvious that an unexpected number of students had difficulty comprehending some or most of their text and notes. Students investigating animals such as lions and elephants had few difficulties, but others had major problems that needed to be worked through. The student investigating the gecko, found that in her factual text most paragraphs mixed information about all lizards, some lizards, most lizards and the odd sentence about a specific lizard eg the gecko. These phrases could easily have been echoed in a continuous-prose report. However they posed problems when it came to completing the record card. Similarly the student investigating seahorses had a most difficult time. She encountered the following sentences in her factual text:

most seahorses are only a few centimetres long but some Australian species grow up to 30 cms in length

their habitat preference varies, but in general most live on shallow coastlines, particularly bays and estuaries. They may be found around jetty piles, in beds of sea grass or on seaweed on reefs.

seahorses are widespread from the British Isles and the Mediterranean through all the tropical and warm temperate oceans

the mother lays eggs into the father's pouch, he fertilizes them and nourishes them. Two months later he 'gives birth' to tiny replicas of the adult.

Each of these sentences posed a complex comprehension task as the student made decisions about appropriate entries in her record card. Other students' comprehension problems arose from lack of prior knowledge, or existing incomplete or inaccurate knowledge. Some were hindered by the complex language structures they encountered. In all, most of these problems were solved through discussion with peers or teacher. An intermediary stage that may have helped students identify the transformation process and offered them a strategy for handling the transformation is having them record their findings in table form using the following headings:

Heading	What I found out	Entry

Other specific strategies could be developed from the 'Extracting and Organizing Information' stage in the ERICA model developed by Morris and Stewart-Dore (1984) or from the **Keywords and Learning** MISLIP Project in Scotland (1986).

What is also worthy of note is that these problems were not apparent as the students were reading, making notes in continuous prose or in initial conversations with each other. The comprehension problems only became evident as the students set about the tasks of transforming their collected information.

A second problem emerged as a number of students found that the category headings or the units of measurement were inappropriate to the animal they

were investigating. A very able student investigated single-cell animals and found that most of the headings best suited vertebrates. Students with very large or very small animals spent much time converting values from meaningful numbers such as 30 tonnes to 30 000 000 grams. This problem generated much discussion and the final decision was to leave values in their appropriate units and enter both value and unit into the field. Because of the limits of the database package this decision would stop students being able to sort weight, height and length as numerical fields. Other problems were encountered as students met a variety of ways of conveying meaning about size:

* *geckos range from 6-25 cm*

* *possums are generally about the same size as domestic cats*

* *the biggest is a brown bear which grows to a height of 5.5m*

* *the common length is a few centimetres.*

The occurrence of these problems was not seen as a stumbling block to the completion of the unit but as an excellent opportunity to develop information skills within a needs-based context. However taking time to solve these problems created a further problem of **time** running out.

Time as a factor
The complexities of the information handling tasks and the decision to take time to resolve problems as the need arose significantly increased the duration of the unit. As the 12 weeks (2 hours per week) came to a close most students were just completing their first animal record card. This left no time for further development of the unit. Although the unit was not completed as planned, many valuable learning experiences occurred. The conceptual framework of the unit was possibly explored in unintended ways as debates were held about headings and as problems of analysing information about individual animals in terms of the headings were solved. Whether these provided the same degree of content learning was not explored. Other questions that remain unanswered relate to the degree of difficulty experienced by the students. Using factual texts as sources of information is inherently more complex that collecting information from direct experience or surveys and questionnaires. Both the K-6 Social Studies and Science curriculums emphasise direct experience as a major source of information. However it cannot be denied that senior primary students in particular need to develop the information skills to make meaning from factual texts. Similarly they need to experience the use of databases as a tool for storing and organising information.

One important outcome of this classroom experience is the realisation that **extra time** will need to be allocated to traditional content-based units of work if information skills are to be developed hand in hand with the knowledge and concepts. The addition of new information technologies and their inherent structures add further requirements for time.

References for part 1
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☆ *Australian Children's Book of the Year Awards 1989 short list*

Marjorie Lobban is editor of **Perspectives** *and was a judge for the 1989 Australian Children's Book of the Year Award.*

The selection of titles for this short list is an Australia-wide process and the culmination of 6 months of reading and deliberation.

There are 7 judges, one from each state and each judge is appointed for a 2 year term, with half the judges being new each year. The materials are centrally handled by a judges' secretary who was this year based in Hobart. When publishers wish to enter a book for the awards they supply 8 copies of the book plus pay an entry fee to the judges' secretary. S/he then organises books into consignments of about 10, each judge receiving the same consignment, accompanied by a set of report forms for the judges' comments.

Each judge reads the books, nominates for which award they consider each most suited and writes a brief evaluation. When evaluating books the prime consideration is literary merit encompassing such things as cohesiveness, plot, theme and style, but child appeal is also an important consideration. For picture books, artistic and literary unity or for wordless books, story, theme or concept unified through the illustrations are the considerations. Book design and production also become factors when final decisions are made.

Eight copies of the reports for each consignment are returned by judges to the judges' secretary who collates them into consignment bundles which are then sent to each judge.

Thus judges have some feedback and way of evaluating their own approach to the task. Entries close on the December 31 and when all books have been distributed and reports circulated, individual judges draw up a list of their 10 preferred titles in each category of the award ie Older Readers, Younger Readers and Picture Book. The most frequently occurring titles on these lists form the basis for discussion at the judges' meeting, which was held this year in Hobart, on April 1 and 2. This is the only time all the judges are together and at this meeting the short lists are established, winners and honour books chosen and the judges' report written.

In 1989 an unusually high number of books were judged - 174 - the reading and report writing taking place from October to February.

So although you and your students may not always agree with the judges' decision, I hope this brief account gives an insight into the amount of work and thought that lies behind the selection of the books.

The following titles were reviewed at Library Services over the past few months and are arranged alphabetically by author or illustrator. Some books on this list may be for mature readers.

Older readers

RUBINSTEIN, Gillian **Answers to Brut.** Omnibus Books, 1988 (An Omnibus/Puffin book) ISBN 0-14-032754-1

The fierce strength and independence of Brut, a bull-terrier, appeal both to Caspian, his owner. and Kel, a local boy who 'borrows' him for a weekend. Brut is later sold to engage in bull-terrier fighting, forcing the children to confront a fearful adult world in attempting to save him. Rubinstein's short novel uses simple language and authentic dialogue to raise complex moral questions. Adult characters, not the middle class parents often depicted, provide a background for Caspian's gradual character development. A multi-layered story, suspenseful build-up and realistic view of child-adult relationships contribute to a powerful novel.
J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95   ASCIS 417733

RUBINSTEIN, 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

O'NEILL, Judith **Deepwater.** Hamilton, 1987
ISBN 0-241-12362-3

Highly recommended
Deepwater is a small rural community in the grips of severe drought. When 14-year-old Char's brother enlists, she has to leave school to help her father on their farm. O'Neill has vividly and accurately captured life in the Australian outback during World War I. In this absorbing story we experience the hardships of country life, the results of misguided nationalism and persecution because of anti-German feeling as well as the tragedy brought to many families after Gallipoli. Char is a believable and likeable character whose understanding and maturity is evident in her relating of these incidents. A. Gill
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: $19.95   ASCIS 413223

MacDONALD, Caroline **The lake at the end of the world.** Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82274-4

In 2025 the world is inhabited by small, isolated groups of people. Diana lives with her parents by the shores of a mystical but dangerously polluted lake; Hector lives underground with a group of people whose every

need is catered for an an apparently benevolent leader. When these 2 meet, their perceptions of their lives and futures are challenged, their understanding of the importance of truth is deepened and eventually their worlds are brought together with fundamental changes for both. This is an engrossing story of a believable possible future, strengthened by finely drawn characters and evocatively presented settings. M. McLachlan
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 436533

BAILLIE, Allan **Megan's star.** Nelson 1988
ISBN 0-17-007183-9

Megan's life is ordinary - school, a brother to mind, a worn-out mother, an absent father - but not satisfying. Cries for help no one else can hear lead her to a ruined house where she rescues Kel. Kel, on the run, possesses rare powers and believes Megan does too. Together they use their minds to explore their world and the universe. Kel finds his solution, but Megan realises she risks losing her ordinary world. This is an unusual and compelling story which, although satisfying, leaves the reader with many questions. N. Kallenberger
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 427070
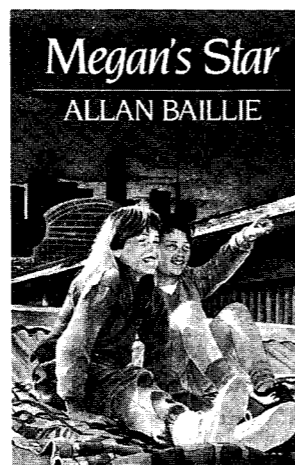
PERSHALL, Mary **You take the high road.**
Penguin, 1988 (Puffin plus)
ISBN 0-14-032706-1

Fifteen-year-old Samantha has had plenty of changes lately : the move to an outer suburban area, the grandmother she's always been close to moves overseas and now a baby brother means she's no longer an only child. But just as things fall into place and Sam begins to settle happily into her changed life, a careless accident results in her brother's death. The

aching grief and family stress are portrayed realistically and with sensitivity, as is the support, and at times, frustration of Sam's friends and teachers. This is a moving story, told in a most approachable style. N. Kallenberger
LEV: Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.99   ASCIS 434984

Younger readers

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 information retrieval. The work covers Australian geography, history, economics, sociology and aspects of culture. The emphasis is on people, targeted specifically at 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

RODDA, Emily **The best-kept secret.** Angus and Robertson, 1988
ISBN 0-207-16040-6

A mysterious carousel which travels through time brings adventure and challenge for its travellers. Jo is able to spend an hour observing life in her neighbourhood 7 years in the future. Her insights change her attitudes and expectations. This well-written story builds a sense of mystery and excitement. It portrays a range of adult characters as well as warm family relationships. The dramatic focus of the story is the way in which the carousel ride makes Jo obey her instinctive feelings. Themes of time and maturity are developed in this fantasy adventure. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 431115

PARK, Ruth **Callie's family.** Angus and Robertson, 1988
ISBN 0-207-16139-9

Callie is 12 now. She is growing too big for her castle, the cupola Grandpa Cameron fixed up for her. She will soon have to pass it on to her brother Dan, and is afraid her privacy will go with it. Dan and Gret are growing up too and have their own problems. Dan tries to become the 'man of the house' while their father is in Denmark. Gret, like Callie, needs her own private place. As they try to come to terms with their individual concerns, family conflicts arise. They are eventually resolved within this close family environment. The simple style is well suited to the young independent reader, who will sympathise with each character in turn. A. Brown
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $12.95   ASCIS 438800

RUBINSTEIN, Gillian **Melanie and the night animal.** Omnibus Books, 1988 (An Omnibus/Puffin book)
ISBN 0-14-032753-3

Melanie learns to open up to those outside her family circle in this understated yet complex work. Coping with a new house, school and neighbours challenges Melanie's self perception. The night animal, eating household scraps, becomes the focus for Melanie to try out her new confidence. The mystery to be solved adds to the theme of personal growth. Rubinstein's perceptive view of children and endorsement of a variety of approaches towards friendship add to the warmth of this work. Simple language and realistic dialogue offer newly independent readers a satisfying experience in a short novel. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95   ASCIS 419016

CARR, Roger Vaughan **The Split Creek kids.**
Martin Educational, 1988 (Bookshelf Stage 6)
ISBN 0-7253-1063-4

Highly recommended
Life in a small Australian country school is presented with warmth and authenticity in this short novel. Each chapter recounts an episode in the schooling of the three Hallam children, in particular the reluctant Nipper. The interests and activities of country children, as well as the universal emotions of friendship and family are realistically depicted. The perceptive story displays great insight into the concerns of childhood. Simple language, realistic dialogue, well-paced action and black-and-white line drawings of dramatic moments encourage younger readers. This involving yet unsentimental story would be valuable in promoting discussion about rural life. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 455762

FIENBERG, Anna **Wiggy and Boa.** Dent, 1988
ISBN 0-86770-084-X

Boa has a cheerful approach to life, despite the rigours faced in living with her grandfather, a retired admiral. His obsession with shipshape routine makes her life difficult. Wiggy also faces difficulties at home, in his case the frustrations caused by obsessively musical parents. Boa accidently calls back from the past 4 fierce pirates seeking revenge upon her grandfather. She and Wiggy seek a solution to this dire situation. This fantasy adventure uses economical language and a strong narrative voice to assist newly independent readers. Lively black-and-white illustrations by Ann James are well integrated into the text. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 436942

Picture Book of the Year

EARLY, Margaret **Ali Baba and the forty thieves.**
McVitty, 1988
ISBN 0-949183-16-4

Highly recommended
This is a superbly illustrated version of one of the most popular of the tales from the Arabian nights. Ali Baba discovers the robbers' secret cave filled with great treasure, but then he must escape the vengeance of the robber chief. The illustrations, based on authentic Persian miniatures, are exquisite. The intricate patterns, rich lush colour and finely patterned gold borders around both the text and the full-page

illustrations make this book a visual delight and enhance the appeal of this exciting story. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 435661

BAILLIE, Allan **Drac and the gremlin.** Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82271-X

Drac, the Warrior Queen of Tirnol Two is in terrible danger, and must capture the Gremlin of the Groaning Grotto. As a tyre swing becomes an Anti-Gravity Solar-Powered Planet Hopper and a dinky a Supersonic Jetbike, the brother and sister protagonists of this story engage in a brisk fantasy adventure across their backyard universe. Allan Baillie's raucous text is well matched by Jane Tanner's dynamic and wryly humorous illustrations; author and illustrator alike have captured the exuberance and involvement of the children in their game, where imagination needs no expensive props. S. French
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.99   ASCIS 437418

KNOWLES, Sheena **Edward the emu.** Collins, 1988
ISBN 0-7322-7266-1

Highly recommended
Edwards finds life tedious, feeling that he lacks the crowd appeal of other zoo animals. He sets out to emulate other popular animals, pretending to be a seal, lion and snake in turn. His fickleness brings him no pleasure, finally discovering that emus have their own appeal. The strongly rhythmic text gives great punch and verve to the story. Colour illustrations by Rod Clement focus on facial expressions and convey emotions. The pages are uncluttered and are well set out. The theme of self acceptance is carefully developed in this humorous and cohesive work. J. Buckley
LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 455773

BASE, Graeme **The eleventh hour : a curious mystery.** Viking O' Neil, 1988
ISBN 0-670-82325-2

Highly recommended
Base presents a complex mixture of clues and puzzles in this challenging work. Horace the elephant's birthday feast has been devoured before his extravagantly attired guests could eat it. The question is, by whom? Stunning illustrations abound with

jokes, clues and references. Readers must study these and the rhyming text with care to solve the mystery. This multi-layered work offers much to readers at all levels. Its subject matter - birthdays, food, games and detection - and its unusual format make this an exciting book to puzzle and pore over. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: $18.99   ASCIS 437530
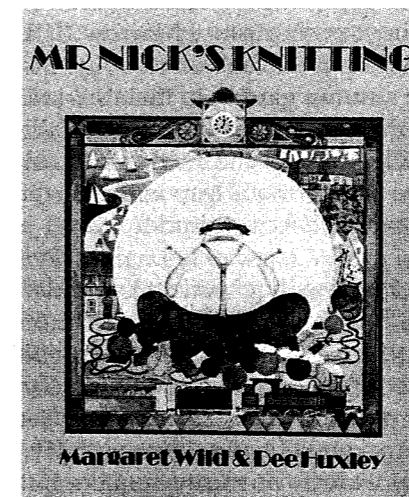
WILD, Margaret **Mr Nick's knitting.** Hodder and Stoughton, 1988
ISBN 0-340-41932-6

Highly recommended
Mr Nick and his good friend Mrs Jolley enjoy knitting together during their morning train trip to the city, as they look out at the changing city scenes. When Mrs Jolley becomes seriously ill, Mr Nick is distraught and knits a special gift for her. The close, warm friendship between these 2 characters is conveyed through a simple story, beautifully complemented by colourful illustrations, featuring humorous caricatures. The illustrations by Dee Huxley become appropriately subdued, at times stark, when Mrs Jolley finds herself alone in a bare hospital room. The value of friendship is very sensitively portrayed. A. Brown
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: $15.95   ASCIS 439124

HIRST, Robin **My place in space.** Five Mile Press, 1988
ISBN 0-86788-173-9

Highly recommended
Starting from the personal focus of the child and his address, this picture book moves outward to

encompass the place of planet Earth in the universe. In discussing where they live, Henry and Rosie present an ever widening picture of our planetary location. This simple device successfully conveys accurate scientific information in a well integrated, appealing form. The straightforward text works well with full page colour illustrations which combine the quirky humour of Roland Harvey with striking airbrushed graphics by Joe Levine. Harvey's detailed foregrounds of an Australian country town are set against accurate and exciting backgrounds of the universe. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary Lower Secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 437514

Award winners

Australian Children's Book of the Year Award winners will be announced in Children's Book Week July 22-29. The theme for the 1989 Book Week is Dream Time.

Acknowledgements

☆ *An interview with Jan Mark*

Jan Mark was interviewed by Marion Henry formerly a lecturer at Sydney Institute of Education

Q   Jan, you have written for young children, adolescents and adults and you have won numerous awards, including the Carnegie Medal twice. How did it all begin, have you always wanted to write?

A   I'd always written. From the time I learned to write I was writing stories, all through school, college and on and off while I was teaching and always imagined I would write the occasional book. I never supposed I'd end up like this doing it professionally. I never imagined what was entailed either. I thought when you wrote books, you stayed at home and wrote books. Instead of which I've travelled the world and been all over England lecturing and visiting schools.

Q   In terms of travel I've never been to Norfolk but after **Thunder and lightning, Under the autumn garden** and **Handles**, which is my favourite, I was not only able to see the Norfolk countryside but to feel the atmosphere of those villages and with your later work I've also got to know Kent and Oxford, the Oxford I didn't see as a tourist. How important is place setting to you as a writer?

A   To me it's essential. Even the most unlikely ones, you know the ones that are passed off as fantasy, are based on real places. The others are actual towns usually. I say which towns they are; I mean with Oxford it would be silly to describe it because the fun is it's the Oxford nobody sees, it's the Oxford we live in. I write about Ashford, but Ashford has changed so much that I write about it as I remember it. Nobody living there now would recognise it. Sometimes the setting's as local as a staircase, a cupboard, a corner above a staircase and it's somewhere I can see and know the geography. I've been in Sydney for a week but that's no time in which to know Sydney well enough to write about it.

Q   So obviously there is a clear visual image in the writer?

A   Yes very much so. I know the stage set, I have this sort of mental film of the reaction very often, I just keep showing it like a loop.

Q   It seemed to me that the books culminating in **Handles** reveal some clear lines of development. For instance marrows with human characteristics that appeared in your short story **Marrow Hill**, which I loved, and it's not too far from the Angel boys in **Under the autumn garden** to Elsie's workshop, but if we take the ones that as you say are called fantasies, **The Ennead** and **Divide and rule**, that seems to be an enormous leap in the current jargon a quantam leap of that magnitude?

A   No, because they weren't particularly late books and they happened alongside the others. **The Ennead** was the third book, then I wrote **Divide and rule** and about 3 years later, I wrote **Aquarius** and again they pursued a particular line of thought and I stopped. I reckoned I had said enough for the time being. They were by no means sequels, but they deal with the same ideas intentionally. I wrote **The Ennead** partly because I like science fiction. I wanted to see if I could write it, and I'd also seen a review quoted on the back of one of my books that described it as another family novel from Jan Mark, and I foresaw a lifetime of family novels, which is not what I saw myself as doing. I thought right I'll risk trying something completely different and if I get away with that I shall be OK. I enjoyed writing **The Ennead** but of course I had no idea if Penguin would take it.

Q   Did they react in any sort of negative way?

A   They knew it was going to be something different, but they didn't know how different.

Q   So you'd softened them up on that?

A   Slightly. They had no idea I could write like that or about those subjects and I thought they've got to find out soon and it was very strictly edited, far more than anything else I'd written. This was a good thing and I learned a great deal about cutting from that. They would have taken it anyway, whether I'd cut it or not, they said after I'd done it! Then I did **Divide and rule** and I could see then that they weren't too keen on too many of these because they didn't sell very well at the time. They have never been paper-backed. **The Ennead** was, the others weren't, because they couldn't be Puffin

Books and Penguin didn't think they were really adult books because I'm not a *real* writer you see.

Q   That's interesting because, and this has turned into a discussion and not an interview, but through a stroke of fate **Divide and rule** was the first of your books that I'd read, and I'm not a science fiction person. People seem to either like or hate it. I always thought I was a hater, but I couldn't put the thing down. What I was thinking of the whole time was, not how your readers, young readers are going to respond, or even adult readers who just like science fiction, but the critics. How are the critics going to respond to **Divide and rule**? Did they like it as much as **The Ennead**?

A   A lot of them liked it more. Those who did like it, really did. I'm very fond of it, it's one of my favourites, I mean it came out as I wanted it to. It was the book I intended to write. Which isn't always the case. A number disliked it intensely, because they were expecting another **Under the autumn garden** and accused me of being pretentious and of Penguin falling from grace for encouraging this kind of nonsense. A 'have to have for kiddies' somebody called it. Which is partly why I wrote **Aquarius**, because I wasn't going to let anybody think they could put me off writing something like that. But I think it was valid, I had something to say about manipulation and I said it. Perhaps they thought that was pretentious. It's an opinion they were entitled to.

Q   Do you find criticism of your work and reviews helpful?

A.   I did, it was a long while before I felt really confident that I knew what I was doing and I was going to be able to keep doing it. I used to read reviews avidly just to remind me that I really was writing, because I still thought sometimes I was going to be rumbled and exposed as a fraud - it was the others who were the real writers.

Q   Even at this stage after all those wonderful accolades?

A   Occasionally, yes. I very rarely see reviews now. I may turn them up by accident if I'm reading a magazine and that's a nice surprise usually. There were one or two things said in the early days that were valuable. You don't normally expect anything helpful from a review. I mean either it will tell you just what you thought about yourself, or it'll say something you violently disagree with. There was one guy, I wish I could remember who he was, who just in passing remarked on my weakness for a particular style, which infuriated me at the time, then I thought, actually he's right! I made sure I haven't done it since.

Q   So occasionally something useful can come out in a critic's comment.

A   Yes. But I think I'm on my own now. If you can't investigate your own weaknesses at this stage, nobody else is really going to be able to help.

Q   What about comments from children, Jan? Are they generally along the lines of 'I loved this'? Sometimes I find they're the best critics, that's why I was asking.

A   Up to the age of about twelve, thirteen they can tell you with great sincerity whether they liked something or not but they can't explain why. It's unfair to go on probing, because they simply can't articulate what was unsatisfactory. But when they sometimes write and say 'this was the first book I finished' it is wonderful. You actually kept them reading. It's usually **Thunder and lightnings** which is actually a book without a plot, there must have been something there, and that's nice to hear.

Q   There's a wonderful friendship in **Thunder and lightnings** isn't there?

A   Well I think that is plot, but in general terms it's not, I suppose.

Q   Yes, quite, but in plot-driven terms it's not.

A   But occasionally they say why did you do so and so, why did you make somebody do this? Then of course the answer is the book wouldn't work if I hadn't. But it's reasonable you've got to justify what you were thinking. But I'm not much swayed by children's comments. I mean I know what I'm doing.

Q   How do you feel about the division between 'literature' and 'children's literature'. In other words do you see yourself as a writer or a children's writer?

A   I see myself as a writer, most of us do. We get called children's writers by other people, who seem to think there is a difference.

Q   So you don't use that yourself - the difference is external.

A   No. If you write - you write. I put as much intellectual energy into a children's picture book as I do into a hundred thousand word novel. It doesn't last too long but I mean the writing skills you acquire, you use. You don't fire on two cylinders because it's a children's book.

Q   No. But that wouldn't preclude you having a sense of audience I suppose? When you began **Fun** did you have young children in mind?

A   I had parents in mind. It's a children's book with lovely pictures and a story about a little boy. But books like that get read by adults to children so there's a story in there for the mother as well.

Q   So you had the reader aloud in mind?

A   I do with picture books because they're not read by the audience they're read to the audience. We all know what it's like reading a book we don't enjoy to a child who wants it 3 times in an evening.

Q   I've done a lot of reading to students and tertiary students and it interests me that the reader aloud can put a particular interpretation on the text that mightn't be the listener's and certainly mightn't be yours. Do you think it makes a different thing out of it when it's read aloud?

A   I don't know. It can do. But the stuff of mine I have heard read aloud by other people has usually been very much as I would read it myself, because I use so much dialogue. I don't think it's difficult to stick to what I intended because you know it's people talking. So it's either been much as I would read it or a really ideal reading aloud voice. Which is I think what blind people would recommend. They don't want a dramatic rendering. They want a flat delivery, as if they were reading. Which I couldn't do. I'd be hopeless at reading one of my novels. I can do a short story because it's a virtuoso piece. But I would not be a good reader aloud of a novel. We leave it to the experts, the radio actor is the ideal person for reading and we've got some wonderful radio actors.

Q   You mentioned your short stories. I loved them, the earlier ones such as in the **Nothing to be afraid of** collection and the later ones like **Feet** and **Frankie's hat.** What different constraints and parameters operate between a short story and a novel?

A   It's fundamental actually. A lot of novelists don't write short stories, or else they write adequate short stories. It's fascinating discovering that they were two entirely different disciplines when I began writing short stories. I do prefer doing it actually.

Q   You prefer the short stories?

A   It's much more of a performance piece. It is far more difficult and a lot more fun, I think. I like a novel from time to time, but the short story's so demanding. The real demand is in the selection of the material. Getting the exactly right moment to isolate. The novel is examining development; for short stories picking up the seminal moment. After that nothing's going to be the same again. That's where the development starts, and you've got to get that moment. You know that's why it's so hard to demand short stories from children.

Q   Which is often done isn't it?

A   It's done everyday in the school. Write a story, then they ask to write a novel, that is what they do. They try to cram everything from a great novel into 400 words which isn't even a short story.

Q   Your school stories and **Hairs on the palm of the hand** seem to indicate strong feelings about school and schooling and its effect on kids and the possibilities of children creating their own subculture to overcome it. Is that a true inference? Are there strong feelings?

A   They're certainly subversive. That's what school is for. It's such an unnatural environment in forcing children into proximity where they've got nothing in common but their age and insisting on an orchestrated response to everything. We keep talking about developing the individual, but right from the start they all say good morning in unison. What do we think of that. We have to do the thinking. We have to answer. It's got nothing to do with personal reaction at all. You gear your responses to the other 30 in the class. And I see it my duty to write school stories to drop in about how you might actually subvert this system.

Q   Elaine certainly has it beautifully in **Chutzpah.**

A   Oh yes, and Adison and his mates in the other one. Yes, school is a necessary evil. It's not necessarily an evil. It can be great fun and we must all be educated. I'm very distrustful of systems with mass responses to things. Team spirit is OK in its place: in the team.

Q   I heard you say recently that you like your books read rather than used in schools. I'm going to ask you to elaborate on that. Are there valid ways of using books, in other words?

A   The valid way is for the teacher to have liked the book so much s/he wants to share it and talk about it, and if s/he can communicate that enthusiasm to the kids they can take off. It's quite clear that a lot of teachers will read books to children that they don't themselves enjoy very much, or sometimes haven't even *read* themselves. I once had the book **Nothing to be afraid of** reviewed by a teachers' magazine at home, and 7 of the stories were commended, highly praised and 3 were discounted utterly, not because they were weak, or unsatisfactory, badly written, but because you couldn't do anything with them, and I realised that the other 7 had been praised because they were useful to teachers as groundwork for projects, class discussions and essays which was not why they were written. They were written to be read, and I've never forgotten that, 'you can't do anything with them' I think the term used was 'useless'. I never knew which 3 they were, but I can guess. I thought it was an appalling way to judge anything even if you are a teacher.

Q   Yes. It's functionalism applied to literature, to education and for heaven knows why.

A   Applied literature!

Q   Yes, like applied science. What I like most about your books, is that they're very accessible to young people. They're funny and they're fast paced. You mentioned the dialogue yourself, but to a reader like me what comes across is your wonderful creativity with language, the wit and the irony, and structure, the framing in **Dreamhouse** between the two episodes of the soap opera. I thought that was very nice. But in **Enough's too much already** the collection of stories there you almost do away totally with telling. The narrator is reduced to 'he said' or 'she said' and I was entranced with it. The telling is done by characters. It is coincidence that it's dedicated to another great experimenter with words and structures in Aidan Chambers.

A   Well he was really the godfather. The first 3 stories were written earlier. I did one then I used the same characters again because as you say I have never described them. They do the telling, there's no ethereal voice at all and because of that I used them as I would not normally do with characters in other stories and usually that's it and I'm finished. Aidan was the anthologist who used children's stories. I wrote them for him, and he said they should be in a book. Bodley Head wanted a book anyway and I got the chance to do it. Of course it had to be dedicated to Aidan, who has been very encouraging and also nudges me occasionally into trying something different. The way I did **Dreamhouse** was the first novel I'd written with more than one viewpoint. You know that was partly Aidan's hints in a review I saw. I thought I really should risk something else and he does it all the time. He's an enormously generous writer, unstinting in his offers on behalf of the rest of us and with his praise as well.

JAN MARK

enough is too much already

Q   Yes, he is a very fine critic as well as a fine writer. But now, what comes next? Is there something in the melting pot?

A   Well there's a book I'm halfway through which is 6 stories about 6 different people but they all interlock. It's one day and there's 6 kids, they're the kids who live on the campus of the college where their parents are lecturers, and gardeners and mature students and they're all kicking round the place. Each one has a story because the others are in and out a bit and what is enormously important to one child is a mere detail, a corner of the eye to another, and by the end you've still got 6 individual stories. There's no grand design. It's just they weren't all there at the same time.

Q   And of course that's all realistic, it's exactly what happens.

A   Oh yes. One child loathes wearing glasses, she loses them, gets them locked into the college for the weekend. She's as blind as a bat without them so she's crawling around the place trying to retrace her steps looking for her lost front door key and is seen by various other people, who simply think she's off her rocker. Meanwhile the glasses are not locked in. There's another child fooling around on the roof who's climbing through the window, and so it goes on. They never actually meet each other, they're just passing. I've done two of them and I've got the other four to do.

Q   That sounds like something to look forward to.

Thank you.

teaching learning ⓪

⓪ *The new 2 unit contemporary English syllabus*

Mark McFadden is English 7-12 consultant, Studies Directorate, NSW Department of Education, and is a member of the Year 11-12 Syllabus Committee.

In term 4 1988, the Board of Secondary Education introduced 2 Unit Contemporary English, to be examined at the HSC for the first time in 1989, for students in Years 11 and 12.

The new syllabus is offered in addition to the 2 Unit General and 2/3 Unit Related syllabus.

Status
The Univeristy of Sydney, Macquarie University, the University of Technology and the University of New England have accepted Contemporary English as a matriculation subject and will count marks awarded in the course towards the students' Tertiary Entrance Score.

Clientele
Contemporary English will be useful for students from backgrounds where a language other than English is spoken, for students who for one reason or another are not interested in pursuing literary studies and for students who are mainly interested in practical studies and the appropriate application of language skills.

Intention
Courses developed from the syllabus will aim to enable students to be more effective communicators. Students will be interested in what it is that influences effective communication and what it is that gets in the way of effective communication, ie that detracts from or leads to a loss of comprehension.

Students will gain experience in both formal and informal situations and will examine not only verbal and written cues in communication but non-verbal cues as well.

Overview
The course focuses on developing skills for successful communication in all language modes for a wide range of purposes and audiences. The proportion of time allocated to each of speaking, listening, reading and writing will be determined by students' needs.

Students will concentrate on how to speak clearly and present ideas and opinions coherently and fluently. As well, students will be taught how to identify main ideas in a text (spoken or written) and also how to identify the intent of a speaker or writer.

Students will learn how to locate and use detailed information from a variety of literary and non-literary sources. They will be required to express their ideas in writing and develop skills including the use of appropriate grammatical structures, the ability to organise ideas, the capacity to edit their own work and the work of others, and the ability to summarise.

The focus for literature study in the syllabus is reading for understanding and enjoyment and exploration of contemporary issues, rather than close literary study. Students will choose a minimum of two texts, each from a different Contemporary Issue, of which there are four. Choice of prescribed texts is made from a range of books offered for each issue. The syllabus encourages students to read more than the minimum number of texts.

Assessment and Examination
Assessment of the course will be 60% on reading and writing skills and 40% on listening and speaking skills. Assessment will be in terms of the Student Objectives and should reflect the extent to which students have achieved the objectives.

At the HSC, students will sit a 2- hour Reading and Writing paper worth 50 marks, a 1 1/2- hour Contemporary Issues paper worth 40 marks and a 1/2- hour Listening paper worth 10 marks. All papers will be common to all candidates.

Resource Implications
The Content section of the syllabus points to the need for certain resources to enable teachers to adequately satisfy the syllabus objectives and to cater for the needs of the students in their classes.

The Speaking and Listening activities suggested on page 9 of the syllabus indicate the active and participatory nature of the syllabus. Both formal and informal situations are mentioned as being important here.

In this context, the need to have on hand relevant material from a variety of sources, like radio and television, to which students can listen and respond, should be stressed. Interviews, talkbacks, monologues, lectures and readings will all be useful in allowing students opportunities to practise and extend their skills.

Kits like N*ewcast*, which encourage the use of language for a stated purpose, are available from Resource Services, Smalls Road Ryde. The Film and Video Library, also at Ryde, offers teachers a wealth of material from which to choose, not just in the subject of English. There are opportunities like the Mock Trial competitions and debates in which students might also become involved.

Page 10 of the syllabus refers to the variety of reading material required to successfully fulfil the reading objectives on page 6. The reading done for the course will include fiction, non-fiction, verse, prose and texts of varying lengths, from short articles to complete works.

Suggestions are made as to the material which will be most readily available:

* Literature
* Newspapers
* Popular magazines
* Radio and television scripts
* Extracts from reference books
* Reports, instructions, explanations
* Graphs, diagrams, cartoons.

If possible, students should have access to more than the minimum number of prescribed texts from the Contemporary Issues. A book box to encourage wide reading is desirable.

In the course students will view their writing as a process, directed to a specific purpose. An analysis of the variety of reading material available above, which itself reflects writing for a variety of purposes, will inform the students' own writing when select pieces are used as models of writing for particular purposes.

There should be available in the classroom a range of reference works like dictionaries and thesauri to help students during the process of writing, especially when they are revising and editing their work. Books like **Look it up** by Peter Forrestal and **The Macquarie student writers guide** will be invaluable in the Contemporary English classroom.

The syllabus encourages teachers to keep folders of student writing, reflecting both the process of writing and the developing craft and style of individuals as writers. Writing folders can easily be made or are commercially available through the English Teachers' Association of NSW, PO Box 187, Rozelle 2039.

Students should be encouraged to find audiences for their writing outside the classroom. The Sydney Morning Herald Young Writer of the Year Award offers one such opportunity. A book of previous winning entries titled, **If you lose you're dead**, has been published by Millenium Books. A relevant unit of work appears in the ETA Newsletter, October 88 Vol 5, pp 39-42.

HSC Bibliography 1989

This issue of *scan* contains an annotated bibliography of resources listed in **Prescribed texts, topics, projects and works** for 2 Unit Contemporary English.

∞ *Primary teacher-librarians providing RFF*

Janet Hansen is Principal Education Officer at Library Services.

There have been a number of enquiries from schools about the provision of release from face to face teaching (RFF) by teacher-librarians and consequently the management of timetabling and the curriculum content of those lessons. Guidelines provided by the Department of Education in memoranda are available and can be referred to when decisions are made about the use of teacher-librarian time.

It is stated that

* A maximum of one hour release time from face to face will be provided by either the teacher librarian and/or the part-time teacher.

* Teacher-librarians will still be provided with adequate time for preparation and administration of the library.

* Teachers will take that time for release while the students attend library and/or the part-time teacher's classes.

* Full-time teacher-librarians are entitled to 2 hour release from face to face teaching. Permanent part-time teacher-librarians are entitled to a proportional allocation of the 2 hour release. similar considerations should be given to casual (supply) who are working less than the full week.

* It is intended that release time is for the purpose of preparation for classes and cooperative planning. **Memorandum to Principals 86/078** lists a number of possible teacher/teacher-librarian activities in release time:
    . development and evaluation of curriculum
    . development and evaluation of a particular program following consultation with personnel such as Librarian, ESL Teacher, School Counsellor, Part-time Teacher.
    . staff development- discussion with Principal or supervisor
        - professional reading and research for inservice programs
        - observation in other classrooms
    . development of resource materials for class or school use
    . activities associated with pupil assessment and the development of individual programs of work
    . activities designed to foster school-community relationships
    . pupil counselling
    . liason with parents

Memoranda to Principals and other documents

Relevant excerpts of memoranda sent to principals in 1988 are included here for your reference.

1   88/147 1988/89 Budget - Department of Education
    ... major consequences of the budget reductions.
        Teachers will be required to take part of their release time from face to face teaching during the time that students attend library and/or classes taken by part-time (craft) teachers.

2   88/149 Fact sheet No. 3 Changes in primary teaching staffing
    Release Time in Library and Part-time Allocation
        All classroom teachers are currently given two hours release from face to face teaching and they will continue to receive this entitlement. Primary teachers will, however now take part of that release time during the time that students attend Library and/or classes taken by part-time (craft) teachers.

3   NSW Education 1988/89 Budget measures Primary Schools
    This is a 9 page booklet with an orange cover that brings information from previous memoranda (88/147, 148, 149) together and 'seeks to clarify the changes in the staffing of schools'.

4   86/078 Release from face to face teaching
    Use of release time.

∞ *What works*

RESEARCH: THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Research finding:

The development of student competence in research and study skills is most effective when integrated with classroom instruction through cooperative program planning and team teaching by two equal teaching partners - the classroom teacher and teacher-librarian.

Comment:

Minimal gains in research and study skills can be achieved through instruction by the classroom teacher or the teacher-librarian(TL) alone. Effective instruction depends on the cooperative effort of both teacher and TL; stated another way, scheduled library skills classes taught solely by the TL are not as effective as integrated, cooperatively planned and taught programs.

Students in flexibly scheduled schools believe that the resource center is more useful in their school work than students in scheduled schools. Flexibly scheduled resource centers provide greater academic benefits.

The TL and school resource center can have a significant effect on student achievement in information skills development and content areas when used effectively.

The use of the TL to provide spare periods or preparation time for the classroom teacher negates the possibility of a successful school program.

The term 'library skills' is misleading since many of these same skills are taught by classroom teachers in various areas of the curriculum but are labelled differently (information skills; research and study skills; problem-solving skills; etc.).

Educators of TLs need to provide more leadership and instruction for TLs in cooperative program planning and teaching and in articulating and teaching research and study skills. TLs should have teaching qualifications and classroom experience prior to further training as a TL.

References:

BECKER, Dale Eugene. Social studies achievement of pupils in schools with libraries and schools without libraries. University of Pennsylvania, 1970. 172 pages. Ed.D. dissertation. (2411-A - #70-22,868)

HODSON, Yvonne D. Values and functions of the school media center as perceived by fourth and sixth graders and their teachers in compared school settings. State University of New York at Buffalo, 1978. 188 pages. Ph.D. dissertation. (39:3-4, 1172-A - #7817042)

SMITH, Jane Bandy. An exploratory study of the effectiveness of an innovative process designed to integrate library skills into the curriculum. George Peabody College for Teachers, 1978. 1974 pages. Ph.D. dissertation. (39:8, 4569 - #7902510)

Volume, issue, page and document numbers are from **Dissertation abstracts international**. The terms teacher-librarian (TL) and resource center are used in descriptions for consistency even though they may not have been used in the original research study.

search <

< *Using NCIN/ACIN at Bennett Road Public School*

Nigel Paull, formerly teacher-librarian at Bennett Road Public School, is currently a deployed teacher-librarian at Library Services working in the NCIN area.

When I initially subscribed to the NCIN/ACIN microfiche I did not fully appreciate all the benefits and advantages it offered. NCIN is the New South Wales Curriculum Information Network and ACIN is the Australian Curriculum Information Network and both are subsets of the ASCIS database.

Once I was in possession of the NCIN/ACIN microfiche I started to realise its full potential. The NCIN/ ACIN database allowed me access to over 4000 curriculum resources, from NSW and other states of Australia. The documents include:
* school-based policies and programs
* regional documents
* Head Office material.

All NCIN/ACIN records contain statements indicating where they can be obtained and their cost. Copies of NCIN resources are available for loan through the Inservice Education Library or can be purchased in microfiche format for a small charge ($3.00 for government schools, $6.00 for others).

After familiarising myself with the microfiche format, I set about promoting it to other staff members via staff meetings. Several staff members became interested and we collaborated on searching the microfiche. Word gradually spread as to the worth of NCIN/ACIN and it was being used to provide information for staff development days, writing or updating policies, teachers involved in tertiary courses and teachers seeking assessment for promotion. The microfiche proved useful for checking policy documents and helping to build up a relevant, current professional collection.

In complying with NCIN/ACIN requests for school-based material for the database, the library policy from Bennett Road Public School was sent to NCIN.

I attended several in-service courses where NCIN/ACIN was available on-line. It became apparent that this format offered significant advantages:
* documents were available as soon as they were entered on the database
* searching could be done under a number of terms
* search terms could be combined for a specific and rapid search.

For metropolitan teacher-librarians who wish to take part in an on-line NCIN/ACIN search, Library Services holds monthly demonstrations of online searching and provides the opportunity for hands on experience. For details see *scan* vol 8 no 3 page 16.

Any teacher-librarian who is not familiar with NCIN/ACIN on microfiche should contact the NCIN/ACIN coordinator at their Regional Office and arrange to use a set of microfiche. The local inspectorate meeting of teacher-librarians may also be a useful informal source. Remember that *scan* carries regular articles concerning NCIN/ACIN.

The Inservice Education Library will conduct an on-line NCIN/ACIN search for its members, ie all teachers in NSW government schools. Results of these searches are held in the No Frills file for future use by others.

Useful addresses
For more information on NCIN/ACIN make enquiries through your regional office to your regional NCIN coordinator or to:

NCIN Coordinator
Library Services
NSW Department of Education
Private Bag 3 Smalls Road
RYDE   2112   PH: (02) 808 9446

Inservice Education Library
NSW Department of Education
Private Bag 3 Smalls Road
RYDE   2112 PH: (02) 808 9512

< *Implementing OASIS*

Pamela Winkless is teacher-librarian at Double Bay Public School

When I started at Double Bay Public School the non-fiction collection was accessed by a catalogue consisting of shelf list cards only. I considered starting a dictionary catalogue but was advised by library consultants to wait for automation.

Automating really was the only sensible way to go, but of course financing the project was a major stumbling block. Although it took some time convincing the P & C of the value of the system and campaigning for funds, this time allowed me to research various library software packages. The time involved in planning for automation is however, extremely useful, as a lot of preparation should be done prior to installation of the equipment including:

* developing a realistic budget which I divided into three sections
    . initial setup
    . ongoing costs
    . optional extras
* planning where the system should be positioned, considering security, access to a telephone and access to power points
* thoroughly culling the collection
* organising volunteer help
* recording ASCIS numbers on shelf list cards.

The decision to implement OASIS in preference to other software packages was easy. OASIS was particularly attractive as the software is free of charge to government schools and both initial training and support are provided. Most importantly however, the OASIS Library program is as good, if not better, than any other program I have seen. The program is extremely efficient for managing resources, but the most outstanding feature is the educational value for children from the Enquiry module.

We registered our interest in installing OASIS with Management and Information Services Directorate (MISD) and waited for them to notify us as to when the system would be installed. MISD advised us about the purchasing of hardware and ergonomic furniture. Soon after OASIS was installed, the school assistant (library) and I went to a 2 day training course which provided us with sufficient knowledge to operate the system.

The 2 day training program seems rather intensive at the time and a case of information overload. On returning to school it is recommended to work through the inbuilt tutorials. Whilst working through the tutorials, all the training magically falls into place. Parent helpers with no previous computer knowledge also completed the tutorials and soon learnt to input data.

Of course there were occasions when I needed help and I telephoned MISD who always answered my queries obligingly. However, most of my questions I could have answered myself if I had taken a little time to refer to the manual (often much quicker than waiting for a phone line from the school switchboard). The thickness of the manual was rather daunting at first, and I felt intimidated by its size. But I now realise that the manual should be used as a reference tool, not a book that should be read from cover to cover.

I had made the decision to enter the fiction collection manually so as soon as I felt competent my assistants and I started entering data. Meanwhile our first ASCIS records on disk were in the mail. As soon as the disk arrived we were ready to download the records into OASIS, a simple procedure when following the steps set out in the manual.

At this stage I would like to mention that teacher-librarians should be aware that the system is user friendly, but it is a sophisticated system which takes time and patience to become familiar with it and to be aware of all its capabilities. Be prepared to take time to learn how to use the various functions that the system has to offer. Be aware that the circulation system cannot run until items have been entered and barcoded.

The Enquiry module is the best feature of OASIS. I was keen to connect an additional terminal to the data entry machine to allow children to search the data base. Even though only a small section of the collection has been entered the children are able to search with a lot of success. Instructing the children is minimal - they teach each other, particularly in the primary school. Even children as young as Year 1 students have had success searching.

To inservice staff, our principal suggested dedicating part of a staff development day to OASIS, which took place early in Term 2.

As the library services are operating as usual whilst implementing OASIS, we still have a long way to go, and we are still learning as we go. Although the process of automating is costly and time consuming I believe the project is most beneficial for both the management of resources and educationally. The support we have received from MISD has been commendable. Personally, I have found the task to be challenging, interesting, educational, and lots of fun!

< *OASIS Library - a school-based perspective*

Doug Jenkins is teacher-librarian at Oak Flats High School

My first contact with computers was during retraining at Kuring-gai CAE in 1982. As a former English/History teacher, I was not impressed. Nevertheless I struggled onwards to get 51% in the computer section of the teacher-librarianship course.

Come 1983 with the responsibility thrust upon me for library management and a dictionary catalogue that was totally out of control, I began to reassess my hostilities towards 'those machines'. I could see that many routine housekeeping tasks could be more easily managed using a computer. For example the school library had no audiovisual index - audiovisual material was not catalogued - another task for computers?

By the beginning of 1984 we were using an Apple IIE to compile overdue lists, an audiovisual index, vertical file subject headings, curriculum document index, student lists, labels for borrowers' cards, pro-forma letters etc. By the end of that year we were using the software program The Librarian's Apprentice to produce catalogue cards, labels and accession register.

I was hooked! Computers made life easier, our efficiency was greater and the job more interesting. We made a lot of mistakes but learnt a great deal with lots of help from students and support from computer education teachers.

I started to evaluate the automated systems that were beginning to appear on the market. I applied for a Computer Education Program grant to buy a modem and teach students how to use telecommunications. We accessed Viatel, bulletin boards, Keylink and eventually ASCIS.

I began to talk to other teacher-librarians at cluster meetings and local groups about what we were doing. Eventually I made contact with Management Information Services Directorate, and learnt what the Department was doing about automation and offered to get involved. Trials of some systems such as Micmarc and Ocelot had started and we followed their progress with interest, getting to see as many as possible.

By Term 3 1988 we were included in the OASIS trial. We started with a fileserver, a workstation and 2 user terminals. The fileserver was to be dedicated to data entry, the workstation to circulation and the user terminals to student enquiries.

I wanted both students and staff to have the benefits that automation would bring, as soon as possible.

We started with some 2 000 records that the School Administration Unit converted from The Librarian's Apprentice to OASIS format.

Immediately, students could use the terminals to find an item, a bibliography of the most recent books on a subject, or simply a location number for a specific subject eg Ancient Egypt - 932. There may be only one book in the data base so far but the student had successfully located a shelf number and could browse in the appropriate area. It was heartening to see students with poor dexterity and alphabet skills who were handicapped by their inability to locate information via the card catalogue, locating specific topics via the terminals. For example, a string of 3 or 4 letters would help them make a successful search. To locate books on Aboriginal people, ABOR would lead them into the subject file - they did not have to be able to spell the whole word! Then it led them on to more specific choices eg Aborigines - Art. When asked a question by students I could now confidently get them to check the terminals for information knowing that their search would be successful. Only if that failed would I offer further assistance - something I could not do with a card catalogue with thousands of 'dud' entries.

My other priority at this early stage of automation was to get as much data into the system as soon as possible. I soon realised that this was not a viable strategy. The school community needed to see automation as a positive step to improved library services. Although they might experience some inconvenience and diminution of services in the early stages, it was important that they reap some early rewards. The two user terminals and faster service for loans as barcoded borrower cards were issued made this a reality.

I had some fears that the transition to MS DOS machines for students who had always used Apples might be difficult. I made a poster that outlined a simple search strategy for student users and highlighted the important command keys. Most students used the terminals with no real difficulty at all. Within minutes 'hackers' were testing out the system trying to find passwords: they haven't found them yet! Most students I have talked with find searching much easier and are, more importantly, successful at the terminals. They stress the important advantages that OASIS has for them and the ease with which they are able to write down a shelf location without having a juggle with pen, paper, and fingers in the appropriate place in a card catalogue. This is another sound educational rationale for using OASIS!

Our strategy for data entry has been:

* to order all new records in machine-readable form from ASCIS (if they are not available then we undertake original cataloguing)

* to convert all records from the last 3 years that were catalogued using The Librarian's Apprentice into OASIS format

* while waiting for ASCIS to develop their bulk retrospective service we have captured returns and anticipated items likely to be borrowed frequently, for example Year 7 wide reading scheme books and study guides for HSC English set texts. Once identified our approach was to purchase ASCIS machine-readable records or to undertake cataloguing for those items without ASCIS records.

With circulation, we made the decision to issue barcoded cards to each member of the school community. In Term 1 of this year, cards were issued to Years 11 and 12 and members of staff. Year 7 started getting their cards during library introduction lessons. Years 8, 9 and 10 received their cards when their teachers booked them into the library for lessons. When a booking was made I asked to be able to speak to the class for at least a period to explain OASIS, then I went through the process of issuing cards while the students completed their library assignment work. In a school of nearly 1350 students, the largest in the South Coast Region, it will take to some time in Term 3 before everyone has a card.

Student information was converted by the School Administration Unit from Appleworks into OASIS format. Meanwhile, we plan to keep a dual circulation system going for some 4 to 5 years until all data is incorporated into OASIS. In this time we will be making decisions about journal and vertical file materials. It is essential that anyone contemplating automation look at it as a fairly long-term process. Such a major task cannot take place simply or overnight. It is however, a lot easier with ASCIS services, valuable support from the School Administration Unit and a willingness and enthusiasm from library staff and the school community to see the process through to full implementation.

OASIS price information

Details for schools purchasing hardware for implementation of OASIS Library have been provided by Management Information Services Directorate. These prices may vary and should only be used as a budgetary guide.

Stand alone machine	**$2995.00**
1 Hyundai 40 Mb hard disk drive	
File server (for a 1-4 machine network)	**$4925.00**
1 Hyundai 40Mb hard disk drive	
1 Interface card, cable and connector	
1 Network software	
1 RAM card 512K	
1 Terminator kit	
File server (for a 1-8 machine network)	**$5721.30**
1 Hyundai 40 Mb hard disk drive	
1 Interface card, cable and connector	
1 Network software	
1 RAM card 512K	
1 Terminator kit	
File server (for a 1-100 machine network)	**$6859.30**
1 Hyundai 40Mb hard disk drive	
1 Interface card, cable and connector	
1 Network software	
1 RAM card 512K	
1 512K RAM upgrade	
1 Terminator kit	
Work station (no disk drive)	**$1063.40**
1 LAN PC workstation	
Work station (disk drive)	**$1258.40**
1 LAN PC workstation	
1 Floppy disk upgrade kit	
Work station	
(disk drive, with cassette backup unit)	**$2572.40**
1 LAN PC workstation	
1 Floppy disk upgrade kit	
1 Internal tape cassette backup unit and software	
1 Pack of 5 cassette tapes	

Printers
Schools can purchase from a range of printers:

Toshiba 80 column, built in tractor feed	$ 791.00
Toshiba 132 column, built in tractor feed	$1012.00
Toshiba 80 column, built in tractor feed, single bin mechanical sheet feeder	$1098.00
Toshiba 132 column, built in tractor feed, single bin mechanical sheet feeder	$1319.00

Barcode reader

Databar barcode reader	$ 720.00

Modems
Contact the School Administration Unit for information about modems.

More detailed information regarding specifications for OASIS hardware can be obtained by contacting School Administration Unit, Management Information Services Directorate, Level 10, 50 Hunter Street Sydney (02) 240 8711.

The School Administration Unit has a timetable for the installation of OASIS Library. Schools should not purchase equipment prior to notification that they will receive OASIS Library.

< *Services of the Film and Video Library*

The Film and Video Library has been relocated to Services Directorate, at 3A Smalls Road Ryde. All bookings and enquiries for films and videos should be directed to library staff on (02) 808 9503, 808 9504, 808 9505, 808 9506, or 808 9507. The automation of the Film and Video Library has ensured a more efficient service to NSW government schools in 1988 and continues during 1989.

The MEDIANET system of booking and resource management is a computerised method of handling the processing of all information associated with the management, cataloguing and booking of film and video titles. This means that the Film and Video Library's resource information on titles, prints, curriculum areas and annotations will be stored in one combined database. The system replaces a number of separate card index files used previously. The MEDIANET system was developed specifically for use in the management of libraries, comprising film and video materials, and possesses a number of advantages over other library automation systems which will ensure a speedy and efficient service to schools:

The booking system includes - the ability to schedule different modes of delivery to schools, resolve date conflicts, permit alternative date and title processing, update client addresses, place reservations and calculate variable transit times automatically.

The *shipping/returns* componet includes the automatic daily printing of delivery lists, confirmation labels, packing labels/slips and overdue lists. It also provides projections of workloads in shipping which allows for effective utilisation of staff time and numbers. The shipping and return of library resources will be completed using barcodes and light pens to automatically inform the computer (and clients) of the status of any item. Film officers will be notified by the system whenever a returned item is needed for a future booking.

MEDIANET is designed as an online method of providing constant client feedback and control over library operations. The *reports/notices* module includes the automatic daily production of confirmations, refusals, overdues and cancellation notices, plus a variety of feedback reports from the users. This module also permits the production of library catalogues in specific subject areas. During 1988, some 14 catalogues were produced in major curriculum areas. These are available on request from the library.

* The *evaluations/acquisitions* component includes procedures for tracking the evaluations of films and videos and their ultimate ordering or rejection for the library's collection.

* The *catalogue* module permits online retrieval of titles by any phrase in the title or by keyword, subject term or curriculum descriptive information. This has proven very helpful with teacher enquiries.

* *Inter-network communications*. The flexibility inherent in the MEDIANET system extends to its networking capability. This system has the capabilty to allow clients to have direct access to the database via terminals or personal computers (with communications software) to perform their own searches for available titles.

MEDIANET provides a number of advantages over the previous manual system. Library staff perform a variety of functions ranging from client consultation and title previewing, to booking, filing and typing. MEDIANET facilitates all of these in a number of ways:

* Provisions for immediate response to client queries, or update of bookings, clients, titles.

* Elimination of errors such as double or overlapping bookings.

* Provision of immediate confirmation of bookings to clients and listing unavailable dates and alternative dates for clients.

* Allowance for flexibility to encourage telephone and direct personal bookings.

* Efficient use of all resources, thus ensuring a reduced number of refusals to clients.

Clients are encouraged to recommend suitable titles for consideration for purchase by the library. Recommendations may be directed to Mr Barrie Brown, Officer In Charge, Film and Video Library, Information Services Branch, Private Bag 3, Smalls Road, Ryde 2112 Phone: (02) 808-9520.

management △

△ *The information society: can our bodies stand it?*

Merran Dawson is a Senior Education Officer at Library Services

School offices and libraries have changed dramatically in the past few years. The automation of systems, contact with remote databases such as ASCIS, communication through Keylink, and the corresponding need to teach a more diverse range of information skills are among the many changes which reflect the demands and bonuses of the sophisticated information society that we live in.

However, as we know, with the bonuses of progress can also come new problems. Our human bodies, originally designed for running, digging and a multiplicity of other physical activities, were not designed for the many sedentary roles and pursuits of our age. 'Sure, sure,' you say thinking ahead, like all intelligent readers about the intention of this article. 'I go to my aerobics class/football training/tennis regularly. I'm keeping fit. I know how to balance my work with exercise.'

Most people are aware now of the larger physical needs of their bodies, but how about the small ones - those tiny, little everyday needs that we hardly spare a thought for - those little needs which, if they aren't met, surreptitiously grow until they force themselves to be known in the long-term pain and debilitation of RSI (Repetition Strain Injury) also referred to as Occupational Overuse Syndrome?

A media/union myth?

A person whose long business record and knowledge I greatly respect recently confided that he thought RSI was a trade union fabrication, supported by the media: a plot to undermine employers. He had never had any typists complaining of RSI in years gone by, so why should so many be complaining of RSI now?

I pointed out that office conditions, workloads and workpace have greatly changed over the last few years. Employees of the past were also less aware of their rights and far more cautious about asserting them: workers would hardly be induced to complain about working conditions and work-related injury or pain if the result could be hostility or indifference from the employer, or even loss of job.

These days most employers, and the Department of Education in particular, are well aware of the causes, incidence and treatment of RSI, and are of course very eager to prevent it.

What is RSI?

To quote from **RSI and you. Some basic principles**, a pamphlet published by the Public Service Board of NSW:

RSI covers three types of injury which are caused by continuous and/or prolonged overuse activity (including repetitive tasks), involving both static and dynamic muscle loading.

*Static muscle loading is necessary to maintain a fixed position (e.g the arm held in the position required for keyboard work)

*Dynamic muscle loading is required to perform the task (e.g movement of the wrist and fingers necessary to operate the keyboard)

Symptoms of RSI may be experienced in the neck, shoulders, upper arms, forearms, wrists or fingers.

RSI and you goes on to describe the 3 stages of RSI:

Stage 1:
Reversibility: satisfactory.

Duration - usually weeks.
Aching and/or fatigue of the affected limb occurring during the work shift. Symptoms settle overnight and on days off. No significant reduction of work performance. Usually no physical signs.

Stage 2:
Reversibility: reasonable, if treated early.

Duration - usually months. Recurrent aching and fatigue shorly after start of work shift and persisting longer. Reduced capability for repetitive work. Physical signs may be present.

Stage 3:
Reversibility: poor.

Duration -months to years. Persistent aching, fatigue and weakness at rest and pain with non-repetitive movements. Inability to perform less arduous or light duties. Difficulty with household and other physical tasks unrelated to work.

RSI happens in big offices, doesn't it -not in schools?

As school office and library systems become more sophisticated we won't be able to shelter behind that great old assumption: 'It couldn't happen to us!' Our school assistants are being called upon to spend considerable time doing tasks which are repetitive. Think about the amount of time school assistants spend word processing, or typing letters and accounts, or inputting records to databases.

I visited a school recently where a school assistant enthused about the automated system that the school's computer buff had introduced to streamline clerical work. As we spoke it became clear that a lot of thought had been given to the work output requirements of the system, but little thought to the input conditions required for the health of the school assistant. She was spending hours at a time at the computer without breaks, was operating the computer at an ordinary office desk which was too high for her, and was working in a badly lit and poorly ventilated area. I could see that if she continued to work in those conditions RSI was a real possibility.

Preventing RSI

The painful effects of RSI can be so easily avoided by using:

1 Ergonomically sound computers

The computers which are on Departmental contract specifically for office use should be selected, and those listed for educational, ie short-term student use, such as Apple IIs, should not be used by school assistants for administrative work.

2 Correct furniture and work environment

Fortunately, ergonomic furniture, designed to adjust to individual body and work needs, is now available through Government Supply. Ergonomic furniture and an ergonomic environment (correct lighting,ventilation etc) are required for schools where the Department's OASIS system is being installed, and this example should be followed in those schools where interim computer systems are in place.

3 Healthy work practices

Supervisors of school assistants should be alerted to and constantly reinforce good work practices. Such work practices include
* identifying correct furniture heights and positions for each individual

* establishing practices to avoid eyestrain and ensuring that school assistants using computers as a major part of their job have regular eye checks

* minimising glare from overhead lighting or windows

* ensuring that all personnel operating computers for extended periods of time take regular breaks -ten minutes each hour- and encourage them to learn and do exercises to relax tired muscles during the breaks

* devising rosters so that school assistants' tasks are varied through the day.
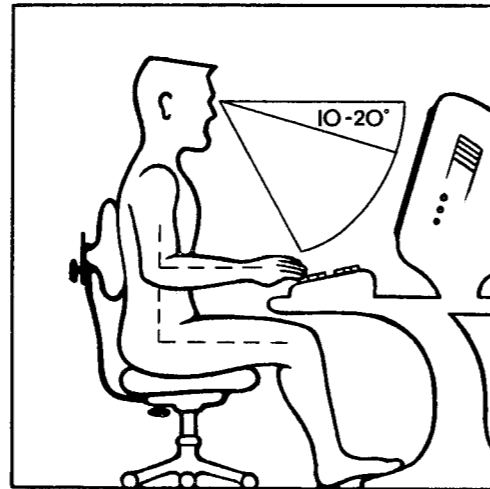
The Occupational Health and Safety Unit can supply brochures and other information about RSI and its prevention. With a little information and some sensible changes to our work environment and practices, we should all be able to protect our sensitive and sophisticated bodies from the primitive machines which dominate this marvellous information age.

The Occupational Health and Safety Unit
35 Bridge Street
Sydney 2000

(02) 240 8133

△ *Telecommunications and the ASCIS Database or Terminal Emulation is not fatal*

Allan Ferguson is an Education Officer with ASCIS in Melbourne

This is the first of 3 articles which have been written on the selection, configuration and use of telecommunications software suitable for accessing the ASCIS database by means of a personal computer and modem. In this article the selection of appropriate software will be considered.

In general, telecommunications software can be said to fall into 2 categories:

i   videotex software such as that used with Telecom's Viatel service

ii   terminal emulation software which, as the name suggests, allows a personal computer (PC) to 'emulate' or mimic one or more of the various types of dedicated terminals used to communicate with a mainframe computer.

Since videotex software is unsatisfactory for use with the ASCIS database, for the purpose of this article, only terminal emulation software will be considered. However, even within terminal emulation programs there can be variety of types of emulation. At this point it might be worthwhile to explain what is meant by terminal emulation.

Prior to the advent of the PC, the way to access a mainframe computer was by a dedicated terminal directly attached, by a data line, to the computer. With the arrival of PCs however it was thought desirable to find some way of using them as an alternative means to access mainframe computers. The means to achieve this came about with the development of telecommunications software, for PCs which had terminal emulation capabilities.

One type to be developed was TTY emulation software. TTY stands for teletype and the software mimicked the action of terminals such as those used to send telex messages. These are little more than glorified typewriters with messages being sent and received by a teleprinter which prints out line by line onto paper in much the same manner as a printer attached to a PC does. It has no monitor and any message sent to it only becomes visible when printed out on paper. With the arrival of PCs with their own monitors, it became possible to read text on a screen instead of having to print it out.

The introduction of PCs with monitors therefore allowed for more flexible ways of displaying transmitted information and eliminated the need to restrict output to paper copy. Instead it became

possible to use the whole of the monitor screen to display information and this in turn led to the development of full screen editing, which enabled text to be inserted and edited anywhere on the screen. One could liken this to the difference between using a word processing program and a conventional typewriter to create a document.

Some communications systems, including Telecom's Keylink and Austpac services, still expect information to be sent and received as though being transmitted to a teletype terminal. ASCIS on the other hand has developed its database to take full advantage of full-screen editing capabilities. For example, the ASCIS modules: Quick Search, Product Ordering and Electronic Mail all require the cursor to be moved around the screen. As TTY emulation does not allow for such cursor movement, any telecommunications software which supports only TTY emulation is unsatisfactory for use with ASCIS online services. More sophisticated (though not necessarily more expensive) telecommunications software is required to take advantage of the potential of full-screen editing and display.

Quite a number of such programs are available and many offer 2 or more types of terminal emulation. These forms of emulation are generally named after the dedicated terminal types which they are designed to emulate, such as DEC VT100, DEC VT52, IBM 3270. Any of these would work quite satisfactorily with the ASCIS database, if their parameters have been set up correctly.

Generally such programs have names which do not immediately reflect that they are able to imitate such terminals and a careful reading of the accompanying manual or questioning of computer software suppliers may be necessary to determine which emulations the programs support. Names such as Procomm, Red Ryder, Apple Access II and Crosstalk do not readily reveal the kind of emulations which are possible yet all of these can be used quite satisfactorily to access the ASCIS database. Some may work on some computers and not others. It is therefore necessary not only to establish which emulations they support but whether they are compatible with a particular type of computer.

It is hoped that this article has helped to clear up some misunderstandings about types of telecommunication software suitable for use with ASCIS. In a subsequent article the matter of setting up the software will be considered.

resources ■■

■■ *Poetry K-6*

The items in this bibliography have been selected by Joy Wilkinson from titles recently received at Library Services. While each book has been evaluated as suitable for use in primary schools some are also appropriate for secondary students. Entries are arranged in 2 alphabetical sequences - collections and stories in verse.

Collections

BOULT, Jenny **About Auntie Rose.** Penguin in association with Omnibus, 1988
ISBN 0-14-032600-6　　　　　　　[A821]

This collection of poems takes a gently humorous look at the ordinary things and events of everyday life, such as the phone that stops ringing before you can answer it, the prolific zucchini plant that provides zucchinis for months, and the perverse shopping trolleys that go in the opposite direction. Black-and-white illustrations enhance the wry humour of these short poems. M. Ellis
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95　　　　　ASCIS 410831

Another first poetry book / compiled by John Foster. Oxford University Press, 1987
ISBN 0-19-917119-X　　　　　　　[821.008]

Poetry on a variety of themes including family, animals and school is contained in this collection. Some poems reflect a northern hemisphere origin but the majority have universal appeal. The text is larger and the poems are simpler than other collections in this series. A number of illustrators using a variety of styles add interest to the collection. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $10.95　　　　　ASCIS 448975

In the same series
Another second poetry book.
ISBN 0-19-917121-1　　　　　　　[821.008]
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　ASCIS 431133

Another third poetry book.
ISBN 0-19-917123-8　　　　　　　[821.008]
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　ASCIS 427407

DEVLIN, Esther **Australian folklore in verse.** Great Western Press, 1988
ISBN 0-86901-058-1
[A821]

The catalyst for this collection of verse is Australia's past, the people, the events, the symbols of the last 200 years. This is uninspiring as a poetry collection but is a useful resource for Australian history covering people and topics such as Marjorie Jackson, Gold Rush

days, and the Bicycle Brigade of WWI. Full-page illustrations accompany each poem. A notes section at the end fills in more obscure historical detail. M. Ellis
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $12.95　　　　　　　　ASCIS 435655

AKISTER, Finola **Before you grow up.** Viking Kestrel, 1987
ISBN 0-670-81712-0　　　　　　　[821]

Whimsical nonsense poems on many childhood interests and situations are presented in this small format volume. Poems are short with strong rhymes. Black-and-white line drawings by Colin West accompany each poem, adding to the work's appeal. Poems are untitled and there is no contents page or index. Pages are tightly filled with both verse and illustrations. This collection presents a humorous look at childhood, combining poems and comic illustrations well. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95　　　　　　　　ASCIS 420299
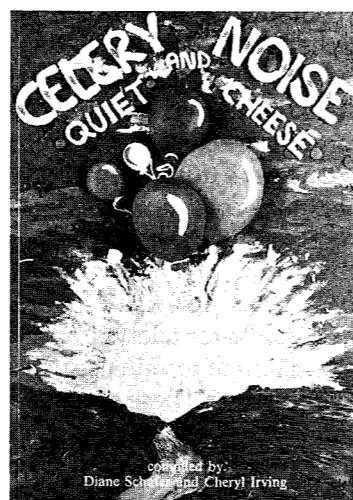
Celery noise and quiet cheese / compiled by Di Schafer. Oxford University Press, 1988
ISBN 0-19-554872-8　　　　　　　[821.008]

Highly Recommended
Poems in this collection are arranged under a large number of popular themes such as pollution, me,

feelings and peace. The poems range from the humorous and witty to the sad and poignant. A variety of poetry forms and age levels in each theme and the inclusion of child contributors alongside established poets, such as Doug Mcleod and Shel Silverstein make it a most useful resource for a study of poetry or as a stimulus to writing. Black-and-white illustrations add to the appeal of the collection. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $17.95　　　　　ASCIS 432772

SCANNELL, Vernon **The clever potato.** Hutchinson, 1988
ISBN 0-09-173442-8　　　　　　　[821]

Food is used as the catalyst for this collection of poems that range from the funny to the very moving. Wit and humour abound in poems such as *The fable of Aunt Mabel*. Gradually however, a serious note is added and the collection finishes with several poems constrasting the affluence of the rich, well-fed nations with the hunger of the third world. Black-and-white drawings echo both the wit and humour of the first poems and also the seriousness of the later ones and add to the impact of the collection. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $19.95　　　　　　　　ASCIS 430098

WORTHY, Judith **Eyes.** Ashton Scholastic, 1988
ISBN 0-86896-437-9　　　　　　　[A821]

Simple rhyming text focuses on the characteristics and expressions of the eyes of various animals in this picture book. Animal behaviour and camouflage are considered in an extended poem format. Each short verse is combined with a striking, full-page colour illustration which enhances the text. This attractively presented work would be a useful resource for both science and poetry. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $4.95　　　　　ASCIS 447784

SCOTT, Bill **Following the gold.** Omnibus Books, 1989 (Omnibus Puffin poetry)
ISBN 0-14-034006-8　　　　　　　[A821]

Tall tales of the Australian outback combine with gently fanciful tales of ghosts and bunyips in this warm and cheerful collection. The simple language and engaging approach of the author contribute to the work's appeal. Black-and-white line drawings by Kerry Argent define and draw attention to the poems. This collection would contribute to classroom work on many aspects of life in Australia, as well as providing

readers with an insight into the author's whimsical view of life. J. Buckley
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.99　　　　　ASCIS 451604

Four and twenty lamingtons / compiled by Jane Covernton. Omnibus Books, 1988
ISBN 0-949642-76-6　　　　　　　[A821.008]

This is a collection of short, mostly humorous poetry from a wide cross-section of Australian poets, including C. J. Dennis, Doug MacLeod and Max Fatchen. Subjects covered range from Australian animals to an Aboriginal lullaby. The shortness of the poems and their rollicking rhythms and rhymes make them ideal for reading aloud. The layout is consistent throughout: one poem occupies a whole page and is accompanied by colourful illustrations. Indexes to titles and first lines are included. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $24.99　　　　　　　　ASCIS 438144

Island of the children : an anthology of new poems / compiled by Angels Huth. Orchard, 1987
ISBN 1-85213-062-8　　　　　　　[821.008]

Highly recommended
There is something for every mood in this anthology from 51 modern poets including Allan Ahlberg and Roald Dahl. Some poems are witty and humorous, others are poignant or nostalgic, still others examine serious subjects such as nuclear destruction. The many styles and formats of poetry in the collection make it suitable for a poetry writing unit as well as a source for poetry on various themes. The overall design and the illustrations enhance the enjoyment of this anthology. A table of contents and index to poets and first lines are included. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $27.95　　　　　　　　ASCIS 412564

DIGANCE, Richard **The jungle cup-final.** Penguin, 1988
ISBN 0-14-032676-6　　　　　　　[821]

Nonsense poems about such animals as the broken-hearted crocodile, Alan the ape and the one-eyed snail, form the core of this collection. While most poems focus on funny situations from the animal's viewpoint, some are gently ironic at people's use of animals. Most of the animal world is represented in recognisable human contexts. The lengthy poems are in small print with some black-and-white illustrations. J. Buckley
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $5.99　　　　　ASCIS 453430

Let 'er rip, potato chip! a fresh collection of Australian children's chants and rhymes / compiled by Peter Durkin and Virginia Ferguson. Oxford University Press, 1988
ISBN 0-19-554912-0   [398]

This new collection of children's chants and rhymes does not measure up to previous collections. The freshness, wit and originality have been dissipated in this latest collection. The black-and-white illustrations, still outrageously amusing, carry the main impact of the collection. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $10.95   ASCIS 438225

Off the planet a galaxy of cosmic verse / compiled by Jane Covernton. Omnibus Books, 1989
ISBN 0-14-032999-4   [A821]

Funny poems by well-known Australian poets including Fatchen and MacLeod contribute to this fast paced collection. Poems deal with the unknown possibilities of life in space. Black-and-white line drawings by Kerry Argent complement and extend the poems. Pages are clearly set out. The short verses, strong rhythms and humorous content of the poems make them suitable for reading aloud. Indexes of title and author aid access to the poems. This collection is suitable both for classroom work on space themes and for individual readers. J. Buckley
LEV: Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.99   ASCIS 452045

The Oxford treasury of children's poems / compiled by Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark. Oxford University Press, 1988
ISBN 0-19-276055-6   [821.008]

Approximately 200 well-known poems appropriate for early and middle childhood are included in this anthology. The frequently anthologised English classics are interspersed with more recent American and some Australian works. Pages are well set out, with colour and black-and-white illustrations which set the mood for the poems. A contents page and combined author and title index provide access to the poems. A subject index or ordering of the poems into thematic groupings would however, improve accessibility for school use. This well-presented volume provides a comprehensive and traditional starting point for exploring poetry with young children. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $24.95   ASCIS 452942

Shadow dance : poems of the night for young people / collected by Adrian Rumble. Cassell 1987
ISBN 0-304-31493-5   [821.008]

Night time, with all the creatures and emotions it inspires, forms the basic theme of this anthology. Poems are from traditional and contemporary English and American sources. A range of styles is included, covering various narrative and nonsense forms. Black-and-white illustrations add to the mood and impact of the work. An index of author and first lines is included. This thematically based anthology would be a useful resource for school libraries. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 433590

Sing a song of popcorn : every child's book of poems / selected by Beatrice Schenk De Regniers. Scholastic, 1988
ISBN 0-590-40645-0   [821.008]

Well-known poems, as well as some new material, form the basis of this American anthology, which is a reworking of an earlier collection. Poems are organised into 9 thematic chapters, with titles such as *Spooky poems*, *Mostly people* and *Mostly nonsense*. The collection is distinguished by the contribution of 9 Caldecott Medal winning illustrators, including Sendak and Lobel, who provide a fresh visual interpretation for each chapter. Poems are indexed by author, title and first line, although not by subject. This well-presented anthology offers a conservative collection of poems illustrated with variety and style. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 433947

Singing in the sun / chosen by Jill Bennett. Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-81710-4   [821.008]

Well-loved American and English poems are included in this small-format anthology. They cover such themes as animal life, weather, seasons and nonsense. Black-and-white line drawings on each page complement the poems and increase the work's appeal. A table of contents, index of first lines and author index aid ease of use. Pages are tightly filled with both verse and illustrations. This collection presents popular poems in compact form. J. Buckley
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $18.95   ASCIS 425081

BRADMAN, Tony Smile, please! Viking Kestrel, 1987
ISBN 0-670-81585-3   [821]

This small format collection focuses on short humorous poems. The concerns of childhood, for example siblings, school and Christmas, are expressed in lively and funny verse. Black-and-white line drawings accompany each poem, adding to the work's appeal. Pages are tightly filled with both verse and illustration. A contents page aids access to the text. The ups and downs of life, from the child's viewpoint, are comically expressed in this collection. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 422803

McNAUGHTON, Colin There's an awful lot of weirdos in our neighbourhood : a book of rather silly verse and pictures. Walker, 1987
ISBN 0-74450750-2   [821]

Brightly coloured humorous illustrations, large text and uncluttered layout make this a well-presented collection of humorous verse. The poems range from witty 2-liners on subjects such as crocodiles to longer ballads on weird neighbours and giants. Rhythm, language and the stories in the poems combine to make them suitable for reading aloud. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $22.95   ASCIS 434300

PRELUTSKY, Jack Tyrannosaurus was a beast. MacRae, 1988
ISBN 0-86203371-3   [811]

The appearance and behaviour of 14 dinosaurs are presented in Prelutsky's fresh and lively poems. The picture book format with full-page colour illustrations by Arnold Lobel adds to the charm of this collection. Each dinosaur is treated to a well laid out double page. Simple and rhythmic language is used. Factual information about dinosaurs, with emphasis on their eating habits, is conveyed through the vivid humorous poems. The clear contents page, pronunciation guide, brief time line and good presentation add to the book's appeal for young dinosaur lovers. J. Buckley
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 438501

Vile verse / compiled by Jane Covernton. Omnibus Books, 1988
ISBN 0-949641-85-5   [A821]

A range of old favourites and 50 new works are included in this collection. Contributors include Max

Fatchen, Mem Fox and Margaret Mahy. Poems vary in length from 3 lines to 4 pages, all in large print. Black-and-white illustrations underline the indelicate nature of most of the poems and add to the humour. While the subject matter may not meet everybody's criteria for good taste, evidence from **Cinderella dressed in yella** suggests that these naughty topics excite children's interest in experimenting with their own rhyme patterns, rhythm, alliteration and humorous verse. A table of contents and author index are included. K. Channells
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $12.95   ASCIS 418515

The Walker book of read-aloud rhymes for the very young / selected by Jack Prelutsky. Walker, 1987
ISBN 0-7445-0770-7   [821.008]

Brightly coloured, humorous illustrations and short, rhythmic, imaginative poems make this a very inviting read-aloud collection. Here are poems the reader may already know combined with the new and humorous on subjects that are very familiar to small children, from bath time, birthday parties, teddy bears and picnics to pretending and bedtime. Layout and large print size enhance the appeal of this collection. Indexes of titles, first lines and authors are included. M. Ellis
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: $32.95   ASCIS 418519

EDWARDS, Richard Whispers from a wardrobe. Lutterworth Press, 1987
ISBN 0-7188-2683-3   [821]

Highly recommended
Poetry is fun. Poetry has surprises and delights. This companionable book of light verse has all this for child, teacher and parent with its laugh-out-loud, smile-to-yourself and share-with-a-friend funny poems. John Lawrence's pen and ink drawings, reminiscent of E. H. Shepherd, unobtrusively complement the poems. P. Ward
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $12.95   ASCIS 402981

CAWTHORNE, W.A. Who killed cockatoo? Margaret Hamilton, 1988
ISBN 0-947241-00-0   [A821]

Highly recommended
This is an Australian version of the poem **Who killed cock robin?** turned into a feast for the eyes and the mind. Images from the last 200 years of Australian

history fill and echo on each page. Underlying the myriad of images, and glimpsed only briefly is the sense of Aboriginal history during this time. The superb illustrations by Rodney McRae using Aboriginal motifs in bright colours subtly combined with the red, black and yellow of the Aboriginal flag make this a wonderful resource for visual arts and encourage the reader to come back and search for image and meaning. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 428786
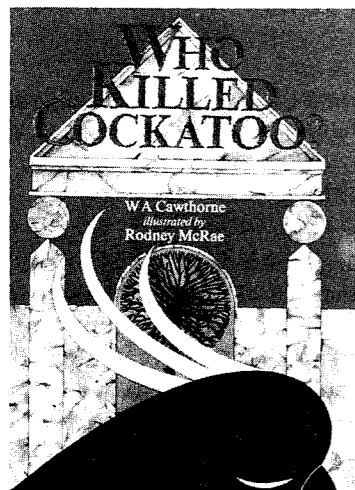
FISHER, Robert **Witch words : poems of magic and mystery.** Faber, 1987
ISBN 0-571-14559-0   [821.008]

Poems in this collection are drawn from different periods and poets, from Shakespeare to Ted Hughes, and provide a useful resource for a theme on witches. The poems cover a wide variety of subjects, from magic brews to removal of warts, and range in mood from the humorous to the eerie. The inclusion of 2 poems by children makes the collection useful as a resource for stimulating writing. Black-and-white drawings on slightly yellow paper help create the atmosphere. A table of contents and author and first line indexes are included. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 425080

Stories in verse

CHAPMAN, Jean **Blue gum ark.** Ashton Scholastic, 1988
ISBN 0-86896431-X   [A821]

Catchy, simple rhyme patterns add to the enjoyment of this poem, very loosely based on Noah's ark. Here the

tale has been turned into a vehicle both for Australian animals and counting 1 to 10. The bold, bright colours and humorous illustrations enhance the appeal of this picture book. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95   ASCIS 434663

SILVERSTEIN, Shel **A giraffe and a half.** Cape, 1988
ISBN 0-224-02612-7   [811]

Silverstein's cumulative poem is well set out in this picture book. His cartoon style black-and-white illustrations contribute much to the impact of the work. The poem accumulates absurdities on the initial situation of a boy and his giraffe, then returns to its starting point. The repetitive element of the poem makes it suitable for reading aloud, although some readers may find the repetition excessive. The humorous situation, strong rhyme and bold graphics provide an enjoyable experience for young readers and an introduction to Silverstein's work's. J. Buckley
LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 440819

WEST, Colin **I bought my love a tabby cat.** Walker, 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0798-7   [821]

This is a gently humorous story, told in verse form, of a bride-to-be who gives her bridegroom various animals as wedding gifts. He attires them in unusual finery for their wedding day. Humorous, soft watercolour illustrations in this picture book enhance the verse. The use of repetition and the visual clues provided in the illustrations make it suitable for beginning readers. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary
AVAIL: $19.95   ASCIS 428404

KLEIN, Robin **I shot an arrow.** Viking Kestrel, 1987
ISBN 0-670-81467-9   [A821]

Both illustrator, Geoff Hocking, and the writer have combined to give us an irreverent, humorous version of Longfellow's **The arrow and the song.** Medieval England has become Australia in the 1850s. The poem rollicks along with the small boy managing to shoot arrows into anyone of importance. Colourful, historically accurate but comic illustrations add to the humour of the verse. A glossary of medieval words at the end of the poem makes it very useful as a language resource. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 404766

AHLBERG, Allan **The mighty slide : stories in verse.** Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-81677-9   [821]

This collection of 5 amusing stories in verse form tells of a wonderful slide on a frozen playground, a strange hairy creature who inhabits the boiler room, a man with the talents of Bradman, Einstein and Rin Tin Tin all rolled in one, and a pair of baby skinners. The humour, drama and the rollicking rhythm, make them particularly suitable for reading aloud or adaptation for readers' theatre. Black-and-white drawings add to the appeal of the collection. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary, Upper primary
AVAIL: $16.95   ASCIS 427086

MacLEOD, Doug **The monster.** Viking Kestrel, 1988
ISBN 0-670-81104-1   [A821]

The original Frankenstein was never like this, but there are similarities in this Australian version. The Birdsville Cemetery supplies the body parts and Nurse Frankenstein and Dr Drac assemble them to create the monstrous Doug. But Doug's familiar bits and pieces prevent him from scaring the folks of Birdsville and Nurse Frankenstein and Dr Drac find their plans have backfired. MacLeod's rhyming couplets tell the story with gusto; Peter Thomson's illustrations are subtle but expressive. This good-humoured interpretation will be appreciated by readers who know the story. N. Kallenberger
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 429544

INGAMELLS, Rex **Platypus and Kookaburra.** Collins, 1987
ISBN 0-00-184482-2   [A821]

This time Percy Trezise has collaborated with Mary Haginikitas to illustrate a humorous rhyme about the bunyip of the Dreamtime stories. The book is the same in layout as others by this illustrator with double-page colour paintings accompanied underneath, by brief lines of text in large print. The illustrations are eyecatching, varied, humorous and enhance this simple poem from earlier this century. A. Gill
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 386906

O'BRIEN, John **Said Hanrahan : a bush poem.** Angus and Robertson, 1987
ISBN 0-207-15372-8   [A821]

'We'll all be rooned' echoes from the pages in this newly illustrated version of the popular bush ballad of

the 1900s. Bold, humorous, watercolour illustrations and a comic Australian animal help to carry the wit and gentle satire of this ballad presented here in picture book format. M. Ellis
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 398635

COLE, Babette **The smelly book.** Cape, 1987
ISBN 0-224-02486-8   [821]

From the end papers at the beginning of this picture book to the end papers at the back, this book shows the wit and humour we have come to expect from the author of **Princess Smartypants** and **The hairy book.** In rhyme and illustrations the book explores smelly things from whiffy socks to rotten eggs on the science master's head. Large text and colourful humorous illustrations in Babette Cole's distinctive style add to the appeal of this book. M. Ellis
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 407563

MacLEOD, Doug **Ten monster islands.** Omnibus Books, 1987
ISBN 0-949641-65-0   [A821]

Highly recommended
Lord Raymond's butler, James, arranges a shooting trip to the Monster Islands: Lord Raymond is beside himself with delight but little does he realise what James really has in store for him. The text is in verse and is fun to read aloud while Terry Denton's colour illustrations not only follow the story but add a host of additional dimensions from counting to social commentary. P. Hall
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $14.95   ASCIS 398036

AYRES, Pam **When dad cuts down the chestnut tree.** Walker, 1988
ISBN 0-7445-1007-4   [821]

Two children start by imagining all the wonderful things their father will make from the chestnut tree when he cuts it down. Slowly the realisation comes that all these wonderful things will cost, they will lose their tree house, their swings and their shade. The story is told in simple verse form. Full-page colour illustrations complement the poetry and add to the appeal of the picture book. The setting is English but the simple conservation message is universal. M. Ellis
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: $15.95   ASCIS 437647

■ *Reprint round-up*

Reprint round-up was prepared by Patricia Ward. Entries are divided into non-fiction and fiction and then arranged alphabetically by title.

Non-fiction

CANNON, Michael **Australia, a history in photographs.**
Viking O'Neil, [1983] 1988
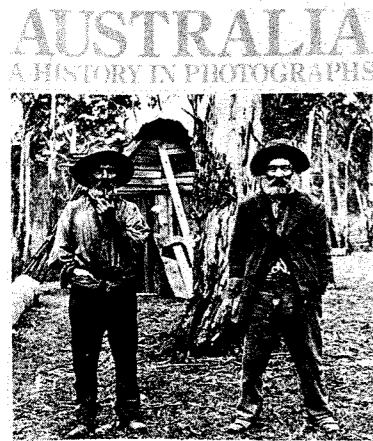ISBN 0-670-90085-0   [994.0022]

A broad sweep of Australian history since white settlement in 1788, especially in its usual context is told through an evocative collection of black-and-white photographs with captions.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $29.95   ASCIS 430541

MICHAEL CANNON

CASS, Joan **A book of dragons.** Arrow, [1985] 1988 (Beaver books)
ISBN 0-09-954830-5   [820.8]

A collection of light-hearted stories and poems about dragons, particularly suitable for reading aloud, illustrated by David McKee.
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 429809

CHAPMAN, Jean **Cockatoo soup.** Hodder and Stoughton, [1987] 1988
ISBN 0-340-42574-1   [808.8]

An illustrated anthology of stories, poems, rhymes, songs and pastimes, flowing on a broad time line and reflecting Aboriginal, British and Australian cultures with a storyteller's running commentary.
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $12.95   ASCIS 428969

NISH, Dale L. **Creative woodturning.** Viking O'Neil, [1975] 1988
ISBN 0-670-90142-3   [684]

An illustrated text on the machinery, tools, materials, processes and techniques of woodturning. Step-by-step procedures of the operations are well defined by photographs as is the innovative project section.
AUD: Professional
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $35.00   ASCIS 439753

BAKKER, Robert **The Dinosaur heresies.** Penguin, [1986] 1988
ISBN 0-14-010055-5   [567.9]

For the student with a specialist interest and enthusiasm for dinosaurs. This is an authoritative and provocative text that sets out to debunk the theory of the dinosaur as a 'cold-blooded, mush eater in the swamps' and a case for Dinosauria as a class by itself.
AUD: Professional
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $24.95   ASCIS 434527

SPLATT, William **The Heidelberg school the golden summer of Australian painting.** Viking O'Neil, [1986] 1988
ISBN 0-670-90061-3   [759.994]

This new edition includes a fuller account of the activities and working environment of the famous School of Australian painters. Additional photographs, many archival.
AUD: Professional
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: $45.00   ASCIS 424743

MANLEY, Deborah **It's fun finding out about Bible times.** Kingfisher, [1980] 1988
ISBN 0-86272-365-5   [220.9]

Stylised but informative illustrations and simple inset text tell the story of Biblical times up to the New Testament with emphases on how people lived.
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $9.95   ASCIS 429969

BASE, Graeme **My grandma lived in Gooligulch.**
Penguin, [1983] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050941-0   [A821]

Redoubtable she was, with eccentricities that became legend beyond the outback town. Grandma's adventures romp along in verse with bright illustrations of Australian animals, especially birds.
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $7.99   ASCIS 437415

GREEN, Jonathon **The slang thesaurus.** Penguin, [1986] 1988 (Penguin reference books)
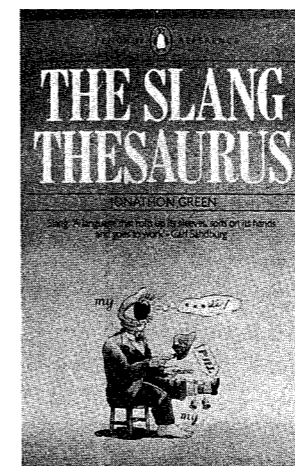ISBN 0-14-051205-5   [427]

A slang dictionary in reverse, that is, it offers the slang for the normal word. It covers English, American and Australian contemporary expressions. Arranged topic by topic, categories include 'crime' 'drug' and 'commerce' . Indexed.
AUD: Professional
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $12.95   ASCIS 447622

ORMEROD, Jan **The story of Chicken Licken.**
Walker, [1985] 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0989-0   [398.20942]

The popular cumulative story of Chicken Licken acted out by a cast of children before their families. Refreshing humour and effective illustrations. Useful for dramatic rendering with a class.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $8.95   ASCIS 437958

O'BRIEN, Edna **Tales for the telling: Irish folk & fairy stories.** Penguin, [1986] 1988
ISBN 0-14-032293-0   [398.209415]

A splendid collection of 12 tales steeped in the classic

Celtic tradition, well told and enriched with the artwork of Michael Foreman.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $16.95   ASCIS 437315

RADIC, Therese **A treasury of favourite Australian songs with complete words and music.** Viking O'Neil, [1983] 1988
ISBN 0-670-90102-4   [784.4]

Complete with index, bibliography and historical notes on each song, this is a comprehensive and authoritative collection of Australian songs, traditional, folk and popular. The songs are grouped by theme, for example, settlers and shearers, gold seekers and women.
AUD: Professional
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $19.99   ASCIS 427052

Fiction

BAILLIE, Allan **Adrift.** Murray, [1984] 1988 (Gryphon books)
ISBN 0-7195-4511-0

A brother and little sister afloat in a wooden crate are caught in the strong currents off the NSW coast - an ordeal and survival that tests character and emotions. Short listed 1985 Children's Book of the Year.
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 423642

HUGHES, Shirley **Another helping of Chips.**
Collins, [1986] 1988 (Young lions)
ISBN 0-00-672745-X

Four stories make for popular reading with the successful combination of comic strip and the writer's discerning eye for everyday life and sense of fun.
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95   ASCIS 423093

MITCHELL, Adrian **The Baron rides out: the adventures of Baron Munchausen.** Walker, [1985] 1988
ISBN 0-7445-0948-3

Excellent production in text and illustrations of one of the tall tales from the legendary exploits of Baron Munchausen.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 437528

RIDDELL, Chris **Ben and the bear.** Walker, [1986] 1988
ISBN 0-7445-1066-X

Ben wants a companion and some fun. He finds both in the big brown bear he meets in the snow and invites home for tea. Simple text, clear-cut illustrations.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95 ASCIS 437714

BYARS, Betsy **The Blossoms meet the vulture lady.** Pan, [1986] 1988 (Piper books)
ISBN 0-330-29975-1

Another simple, joyful story of the Blossoms (The not-just-anybody family) where an ingenious invention of Junior's backfires, leaving him stranded in the woods until he is rescued by an old recluse, the Vulture Lady, and an enriching friendship ensues.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.50 ASCIS 431037

ALCOCK, Vivien **The cuckoo sister.** Heinemann Educational, [1985] 1988 (New windmill series)
ISBN 0-435-12327-0

Fifteen-year-old Kate reviews her life influenced, first by the discovery that she had an elder sister snatched from her pram as a baby and then having to face the strange situation when she turns up, disbelieving and hostile.
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: $8.95 ASCIS 430874

LOBEL, Arnold **Fables.** Macmillan Children's Books, [1980] 1988 (Picturemac)
ISBN 0-333-48090-2

An attractive edition of 20 original fables, well crafted with full-page illustrations by the author.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95 ASCIS 438854

JONES, Toeckey **Go well, stay well.** Heinemann Educational [1979] 1987 (New windmill series)
ISBN 0-435-12319-X

A little forced in style, but a revealing story of a friendship of 2 girls in South Africa, 1 black, 1 white, challenged by apartheid.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $8.95 ASCIS 430871

BURNINGHAM, John **Granpa.** Penguin [1984] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050841-4

A moving story of a happy friendship between a little girl and her granpa and of the memories of times together.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95 ASCIS 437411

DEJONG, Meindert, **The house of sixty fathers.** Murray [1958] 1988 (Gryphon books)
ISBN 0-7195-4510-2

A welcome hardback edition of the World War 2 moving story of a refugee Chinese boy (and the family piglet) and his desperate search for his parents during the Japanese invasion, and his befriending by a contingent of US soldiers.
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: $7.95 ASCIS 423990

ROCKWELL, Thomas **How to eat fried worms.** Pan, [1973] 1988 (Piper)
ISBN 0-330-25732-3

It all started with a casual offer of 50 dollars if young Billy would eat 15 worms. An hilarious account of his companions' attempts to thwart success and Billy's ordeals of consumption!
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.50 ASCIS 455127

MARIS, Ron **I wish I could fly.** Penguin, [1986] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050735-3

Bright expressive pictures carry along the story about a tortoise wishing he could do things other animals can do - climb, fly, dive - until one day he finds he can do something special.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95 ASCIS 432189

DICKENS, Monica **Is anyone there?** Penguin, [1978] 1988 (Plus)
ISBN 0-14-032544-1

A fine collection of short stories, articles and poems by established writers such as Roald Dahl, Robert Westall and Ursula Le Guin that reflect the uncertainties, loneliness and crises so often faced by young people.
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95 ASCIS 429305

HARPER, Anita **It's not fair!** Penguin, [1986] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050683-7

The arrival of a new baby in the kangaroo family continually prompts the question of 'what's fair' in his big sister's mind. A humorous picture book send-up of the reactions of the parents and both children.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95 ASCIS 424235

HUTCHINS, Pat **King Henry's palace.** [1983] **The tale of Thomas Mead** Pan[1981], 1988 (Flippers/Young Piper)
ISBN 0-330-30389-9

Simple text, matching humorous illustrations, an amusing theme, plus a fun publisher's format of two sets of stories printed from either end, this will be popular with beginner readers. For example, Thomas Read, refusing to learn to read, goes from one disaster to another when he goes out walking.
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary
AVAIL: Paper $4.99 ASCIS 425440
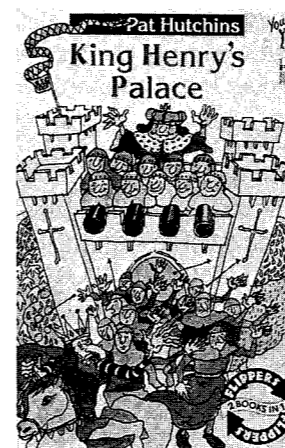
GEE, Maurice **Motherstone.** Penguin, [1985] 1988 (Puffin books)
ISBN 0-14-032361-9

Final story in the trilogy of the world of O. As Susan and Nick prepare to leave the magical land for Earth, evil forces try to ensnare them.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95 ASCIS 422339

WRIGHTSON, Patricia **The Nargun and the stars.** Hutchinson Australia, [1973] 1988
ISBN 0-09-157440-4

A special, illustrated edition published to mark the international distinction in 1986 of the Hans Christian Andersen Medal being awarded to Patricia Wrightson for Writing and Robert Ingpen for Illustration. The delicate and serene artwork of the countryside and rocks contrasts with the mystery and haunting terror surrounding the Nargun.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: $29.95 ASCIS 430099

CLARK, Mavis Thorpe **New golden mountain.** Hutchinson Australia, [1973] 1988
ISBN 0-09-157371-8

A restless 15-year-old, Louise lives in a poor rural town which was once, in 1851, a bustling gold mining centre and for the Chinese miners, the Golden Mountain. She is the central figure in the story of a missing Chinese glass painting, rivalry with two boys and a dramatic escape from a caved-in mine shaft.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95 ASCIS 419155

HUTCHINS, Pat **One-eyed Jake.** Penguin, [1979] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050724-8

Humorous story of a greedy, grotesque-looking pirate who jettisons his crew one-by-one to make room for treasure until his ship finally sinks.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $5.95 ASCIS 437406

TOWNSEND, John Rowe **The persuading stick.** Penguin, [1986] 1988 (Puffin books)
ISBN 0-14-032131-4

Sarah, youngest in the family is lacking in self-confidence, and is mousy and insignificant. She finds a stick, a 'persuading stick' which leads to a great change of character. A realistic and convincing story.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $4.95 ASCIS 424213

DARKE, Marjorie **A question of courage.** Murray, [1975] 1988 (Gryphon books)
ISBN 0-7195-4512-9

A 17-year-old seamstress in a poor district of Birmingham is caught up in the 'Votes for Women' campaign and its protest movement. The stormy rallies, imprisonment and hunger strike test her courage.
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: $7.95 ASCIS 423986

WESTALL, Robert **Rachel and the angel, and other stories.** Pan, [1986] 1988 (Piper books)
ISBN 0-330-30235-3

A collection of 7 mysterious, frightening and well-crafted tales.
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.50   ASCIS 425309

KEESING, Nancy **Shalom: Australian Jewish stories.** Penguin, [1978] 1988
ISBN 0-14-011226-X

A representative selection of 24 stories (with biographical notes) by Australian Jewish writers, reflecting backgrounds and inspirations that are themselves insights into Jewish life and thought in Australia.
LEV: Senior secondary Middle secondary
AVAIL: Paper $11.95   ASCIS 422594
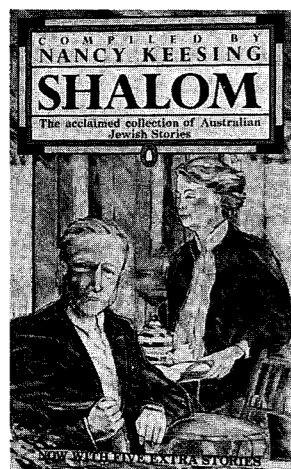
HORWOOD, William **Skallagrigg.** Penguin, [1987] 1988
ISBN 0-14-007206-3

A quest for redemptive love brings together Arthur, long ago abandoned in a grim hospital; Esther, whose intelligence insists she overcomes her cerebral palsy disability; and Daniel, a computer games genius. A powerful and fascinating window into an unexplored but uncannily familiar world.
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $12.95   ASCIS 432238

AMBRUS, Victor **Son of Dracula.** Oxford University Press, [1987] 1988
ISBN 0-19-272191-7

The story of Goldilocks and the punk bears, and life-threatening physical fitness lessons, are typical of the

school of Tombstoun, run by Professor Frankenstein. Victor Ambrus's humour and style of illustration are given free rein.
LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 438449

CHAPMAN, Jean **Stories to share.** Hodder and Stoughton, [1983] 1988
ISBN 0-340-42596-2

Thirty-one enjoyable short stories for reading aloud and sharing with young children. Contributors include experienced Australian writers - Lydia Pender, Ruth Park and Robin Klein.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 424025

CRAIG, Helen **Susie and Alfred in The night of the paper bag monsters.** Walker, [1985] 1988 (Susie and Alfred books)
ISBN 0-7445-0940-8

Happy hearted little picture book about 2 neighbouring children preparing for a fancy-dress party, their fun and typical childhood quarrels.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 429853
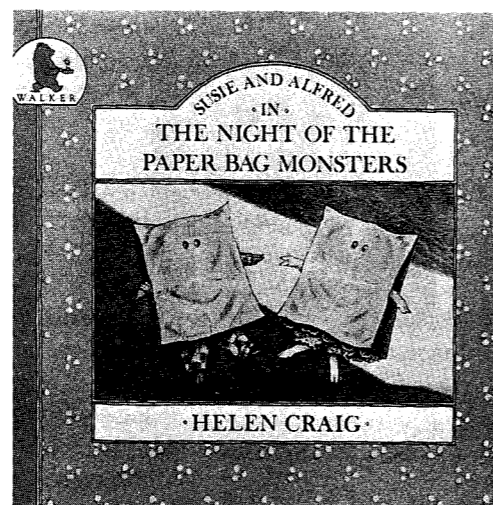
ALLEN, Pamela **Who sank the boat?** Penguin, [1982] 1988 (Picture Puffins)
ISBN 0-14-050940-2

Five animals, graduating in size from a mouse to a cow, scramble aboad a rowing boat - and it is the last passenger, the mouse, the 'last straw' that answers the title question. Ideal for shared reading. Winner Picture Book of Year 1983.
LEV: Preschool Lower primary
AVAIL: Paper $6.99   ASCIS 437414

■■ *2 Unit Contemporary English resources*

This bibliography was prepared by Joan Cobb and provides annotations for the titles listed for the new Contemporary English 2 unit course. The list is arranged alphabetically by title in the sequence of contemporary issues found in Prescribed text, topics, projects & works (for 1990 HSC examinations) pp 34-37.

The family

WATEN, Judah **Alien Son.** Sun Books, 1981
ISBN 0-7251-0003-6

In this tender and sincere account of a European family's settlement in Australia, Waten has penetrated the surface picture of the migrant - accents, different customs - and examined their feelings and fears. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 2823

MILLER, Arthur **Death of a salesman.** Penguin, 1985
ISBN 0-14-010041-5   [812]

Willy Loman, a travelling salesman in his sixties, is experiencing an emotional crisis. His past recurs to him in vivid scenes. Realising that he's lived his whole life by the false standard that you can 'lie and cheat to make your fortune as long as you are well liked', he searches to understand what went wrong. The many contradictions in his character reveal a man who doesn't know himself at all and until the day he dies Willy never stops fantasising about ways to improve his life. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 116370

KENNA, Peter **A hard god.** Currency Press, 1979
ISBN 0-86819-010-1   [A822]

Kenna presents different viewpoints which reflect the varied ways in which individuals face up to life and some of its problems. The major themes are time and religion. The author deals with the characters with compassion in this play which spans 2 generations. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $8.95   ASCIS 126154

ELISHA, Ron **In duty bound.** Yackandandah Playscripts, 1983
ISBN 0-86805-019-9   [A822]

For 4 000 and more years since Abraham fled his homeland there have been many stories told of the flight of the Jews. Elisha presents this play to his

audience as 'a parable of such fleeing.' The setting is a celebration of the sabbath in an Australian household in 1969. At times very funny, yet always there is the expectation that a time-bomb is about to go off. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $5.00   ASCIS 158764
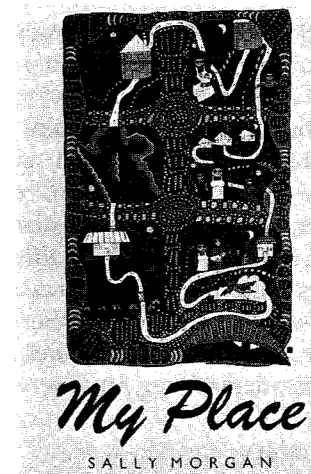
MORGAN, Sally **My place.** Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1987
ISBN 0-949206-24-5   [994.104092]

Sally begins with her own story: a story of the joys and hardships of growing up in a large, poor family. At first there is the added burden of a father suffering greatly to keep her family together. As Sally gets older she becomes suspicious of her Indian origins and provides us with a compelling story of the discovery of her Aboriginal heritage. Her uncle, mother and grandmother then relate their own stories showing to what extent each has come to terms with their past. Using a readable unadorned style, this often humorous story climaxes with the emotional return by Sally and her family to their grandmother's birthplace - my place. A. Gill
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $12.95   ASCIS 393137

POPLE, Maureen **The other side of the family.** University of Queensland Press, 1986 ISBN 0-7022-2040-X

A vivid picture of small town life in wartime Australia is revealed as we share the experiences of 15-year-old Katharine Tucker. As a safety precaution Katharine has been sent by ship from England to her mother's parents in Sydney. Her visit is cut short when Japanese submarines appear in Sydney Harbour. Again, for safety, Katharine is moved, this time to Parson's Creek, a small township. Her anxiety about living with Grandmother Tucker is overcome as Katharine seeks answers to the questions her grandmother refuses to answer. J. Cobb **LEV:** Middle secondary Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $8.95　　ASCIS 240938

JOSE, Nicholas **Paper nautilus.** Penguin, 1987 ISBN 0-14-010019-9

Set in a small town on the South Australian coast, this novel begins with Rob and Penny's wedding as young adults. The layers of Penny's life are revealed as the story develops; being brought up by her Uncle Jack who knows the truth about her birth; and her father's experience as a prisoners of war, an experience shared by her Uncle Jack. J. Cobb **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $8.95　　ASCIS 394890

HYDE, Jane **The place at the coast.** Pan, 1987 ISBN 0-330-27075-3

While her injured foot keeps her confined to home, 15-year-old Isabel (Ellie) reminisces about annual summer holidays spent at a small area of wild and beautiful beach. Because of dramatic changes, including her father's remarriage, since her last holiday at Kilkee Ellie is uncertain about returning to the family holiday home. J. Cobb **LEV:** Middle secondary Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $8.95　　ASCIS 403796

Personal choices

BLAIR, Ron **The Christian Brothers.** Currency Press, 1982 ISBN 0-86819-067-5　　[A822]

The setting is a classroom in a Catholic school in the 1950s, and against this background, the play documents the attitudes and language of the education system of the time. J. Cobb **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $8.95　　ASCIS 137922

MALOUF, David **Fly away Peter.** Penguin, 1983 ISBN 0-14-007015-X

A touching story of 3 lives linked by a common love of nature and bird life. Despite 1917's brutal carnage and destruction, one of the 3 eventually reaches towards the new life which must supersede mourning. T. Hobbs **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $5.95　　ASCIS 145690

JHABVALA, Ruth Prawer **Heat and dust.** Futura, 1976 ISBN 0-8600-7414-5

This is a love story told with compassion. Olivia, wife of a civil servant, outrages society in a small, Indian town when she elopes with an Indian prince. Fifty years later her step-granddaughter returns to unravel the enigma of Olivia's scandal. J. Cobb **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $9.95　　ASCIS 113746
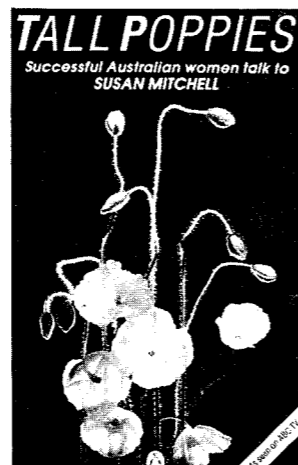
MITCHELL, Susan **Tall poppies : nine successful Australian women talk to Susan Mitchell.** Penguin, 1984 ISBN 0-14-007210-1　　[305.4]

Although this book is based upon interviews with the 9 women selected, it is not in dialogue form. Instead, each subject has in effect her own monologue. Eve Mahlab, Joy Baluch, Beatrice Faust, Robyn Nevin, Pat O'Shane, Elisabeth Riddell, Mima Stoyanovic and Maggie Tabberer: they are all engrossing in very different ways. Essentially these 9 brief self-portraits are honest and direct and provide valuable insights not only into the lives of these interesting contemporary Australian women but also into the ground rules of Australian society. **LEV:** Middle secondary Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $8.95　　ASCIS 156721

DESAI, Anita **The village by the sea an Indian family story.** Penguin, 1984 (Plus) ISBN 0-14-032505-0

Winner of the 1982 Guardian Award, this is a deeply moving but slow-paced story of the below subsistence level existence of an Indian family focussing on the way the 2 eldest children, Lila, 13, and her brother, Hari, only 12, face the challenges for survival. P. Ward **LEV:** Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $9.95　　ASCIS 426961

RHUE, Morton **The wave.** Penguin, 1981 ISBN 0-14-031522-5

This story presents an interesting look at the effects of group pressure on a class of high school students. They unknowingly become guinea pigs in an experiment by their history teacher to demonstrate the processes which led to the growth, success and atrocities of the Hitler Youth Movement. J. Black **LEV:** Middle secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $5.99　　ASCIS 139173

CLARK, Brian **Whose life is it anyway?** Amber Lane , 1978 ISBN 0-906399-00-9　　[822]

Clark poses the question of the rights of the patient whic oppose the medical profession committed to the saving of life. The central character is a quadriplegic whose future is totally dependent on a life-support system. Does he have the right to make his own decisions about his life? J. Cobb **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $10.95　　ASCIS 244165

Displacement

BOURAS, Gillian **A foreign wife.** McPhee Gribble, 1986 ISBN 0-14-009884-4　　[305.8]

We often read of the problems faced by non-English speaking migrants coming to Australia. This book relates to the reverse situation. Gillian, a Melbourne school teacher, is an Australian who married a Greek, and in 1980 moved with her family to a small Greek village. Her book is a series of reminiscences of past Australian life and present Greek life, comparing and contrasting the 2. She is entertaining and at the same time ably captures the humour and difficulties encountered when changing cultures. In the descriptions of village life we gain insights into such

aspects of modern Greek life as politics, education, religion and the role of women. A. Gill **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $11.99　　ASCIS 244511

Inside Black Australia : an anthology of Aboriginal poetry. Penguin, 1988 ISBN 0-14-011126-3　　[A821.008]

Well-known Aboriginal author Kevin Gilbert has compiled this important and well-presented collection of poetry by more than 40 Aboriginal people. All the better-known authors are presented including Colin Johnson, Jack Davis, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) and others as well as some not well known to non-Aboriginal readers. The poetry is concerned with such important issues as loss of identity, land rights and pleas for justice. A brief biography is provided for each poet, including details of literary work and involvement in Aboriginal issues. An important resource for the development of Aboriginal studies courses or readers simply concerned with such vital issues. A. Gill **AUD:** Professional **LEV:** Upper secondary **AVAIL:** Paper $12.95　　ASCIS 422731

Joseph's coat : an anthology of multicultural writing / edited by Peter Skrzynecki. Hale and Iremonger, 1985 ISBN 0-86806-186-7　　[A820.8]

Joseph's coat is a new collection of writing from Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds. It is a collection of poetry and prose that is representative of the changing nature of Australian society. Contributors include writers from many backgrounds. The collection highlights the problems

of communication, assimilation and dispossession experienced by Aboriginal people and migrants in Australia.
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $10.95   ASCIS 197881

HUDSON, Christopher **The killing fields.** Pan, 1984
ISBN 0-330-28513-0

Because of its film presentation, this story of war and friendship is well known. In Cambodia in 1973 a working relationship and close friendship between Sydney Schanberg, local bureau chief of the New York Times, and Dith Pran, Schanberg's Cambodian assistant was established. Five years later, from a position of safety in America, the newsman is compelled to find his friend and perhaps help save his life as Pran had once saved Sydney's. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $9.99   ASCIS 200098

BUZO, Alexander **Norm and Ahmed. Rooted : The Roy Murphy Show : three plays.** Currency Press, 1973
ISBN 0-86937-001-4   [A822]

Buzo makes a very clear and disturbing statement about Australian attitudes. Norm, an 'average Aussie' is confronted by Ahmed, a well-mannered, educated Pakistani student, the antithesis of Norm. The play maintains a balance of tension, savagery, comedy and pathos. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $8.95   ASCIS 40451
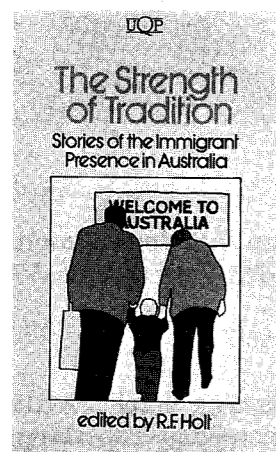
The strength of tradition stories of the immigrant presence in Australia / edited by R. F. Holt.
University of Queensland Press, 1983
ISBN 0-7022-1701-8

Subtitled **Stories of the immigrant presence in Australia**, this anthology, while including some authors already found in other works of general or similar intention, includes mainly work you will not find elsewhere, including some translations from Estonian, Hungarian and Greek. The book is arranged in 3 sections representing the first generation, the second generation, and the hosts. It can be used in combination with other media experiences, and covers writers from several generations in several senses, as well as, particularly in the last section, a variety of attitudes to migrants some of which we may now not consider totally laudable but certainly honest.
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $10.95   ASCIS 398510

JOHNSON, Colin **Wild cat falling.** Angus and Robertson, 1979
ISBN 0-207-14393-5

This book, which deals with the life of an Aboriginal youth who ends up in goal, is the first novel written by an Aboriginal person. The main character uses his time in gaol to gain an education but when he is released, finds he no longer belongs with his former companions nor with his new, shallow university acquaintances. The book however, ends on a positive note.
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 139914

MARIS, Hyllus **Women of the sun.** Penguin, 1985
ISBN 0-14-007086-9

Based on the television series, these 4 stories cover from first contact to more contemporary issues, illustrating the plight and courage of Aboriginal women. J. Cobb
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $14.95   ASCIS 193438

Challenge and endurance

CORMIER, Robert **After the first death.** Fontana, 1979
ISBN 0-00-671705-5

Like other novels by Cormier, this does not pull any punches, and is a calculated shocker. On a bridge near the outskirts of a New England town, a busload of

small children is being held hostage for the dismantling of a secret government agency. The plot is compelling and the language crisp and precise, presenting a small epic of terrorism and counter-terrorism. J. Cobb
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 116158

CROSSLEY, Rosemary **Annie's coming out.** Penguin, 1984
ISBN 0-14-005688-2   [362.4092]

Rosemary Crossley tells the story of her crusade to achieve social justice for a handicapped child, Anne McDonald, the Annie of the title. Annie was institutionalised at the age of 3, severely physically handicapped and labelled profoundly retarded. As the story unfolds ineptitude, hypocrisy and dishonesty are revealed. J. Cobb
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 392001

BALLARD, J. G. **Empire of the sun.** Panther, 1985
ISBN 0-58-606430-3

Alone in Japanese-invaded Shanghai in 1941, 11-year-old Jim at first eluded capture, slipping from one empty mansion to another in the British and French concessions. Later he learnt the habits and small economies of life under internment, and the Japanese soldiers became almost his only security. The approaching end of the war brought even greater danger. Torture-crazed Europeans killed at random, Nationalist soldiers attacked foreigners, and the Japanese empire collapsed. Incredibly, Jim found his parents again, but for him war's ending was more incomprehensible than all the privations of the actual conflict. T. Hobbs.
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $4.95   ASCIS 235056

KOHNER, Hanna **Hanna and Walter : a love story.** Penguin, 1986
ISBN 0-14-007672-7   [940.53]

It is the 1930s in Czechoslovakia, Hanna and Walter meet and fall in love. The outbreak of war interferes with their plans, Walter escapes to the United States but Hanna and her family are forced to stay in Europe under German occupation. Hanna later meets Carl, falls in love and marries. Hanna and Carl are sent to a series of concentration camps, including Auschwitz where Carl and most of Hanna's family perish. Hanna somehow survives to be later reunited with Walter in

a war-devastated Europe. This moving story, told alternatively by Walter and Hanna, vividly describes the suffering and the determination to survive of these Jewish people. A. Gill
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 242936

HERSEY, John **Hiroshima.** Penguin, 1975
ISBN 0-14-000603-6   [940.54]

In this edition of his original unforgettable account about 6 survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb, the author has added a new chapter *The Aftermath*. This addition describes his return to the scene 40 years later, to discover how the same 6 people had coped with the catastrophe. The horrific implications are even more dreadful considering the proliferation of nuclear weaponry. P. Ward
LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $11.95   ASCIS 52481

LOWENSTEIN, Wendy **The immigrants.** Penguin, 1978 (Pelican books)
ISBN 0-14-022188-3   [305.80994]

Seventeen immigrants to Australia from 1890 to 1970 describe the dreams which they carried with them to their new home. The reality which they experienced reveals so much about Australian society. J. Cobb
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $6.95   ASCIS 78860

CHARLWOOD, Don **No moon tonight.** Penguin, 1987
ISBN 0-14-009630-2   [940.54]

This is a welcome reprint of an Australian World War II classic, in which the author, an RAAF navigator, tells the moving story of a bomber crew during the 1942-3 offensive against Germany. P. Ward
LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $7.95   ASCIS 378085

DAVIS, Jack **No sugar.** Currency Press, 1986
ISBN 0-86819-146-9   [A822]

This play is set in south-west Western Australia and deals with one Aboriginal family's experiences during the 1930s. The Aboriginal language used is Nyoongah. The issues dealt with lend themselves to discussion and workshop treatment. D. Griffiths
LEV: Upper secondary
AVAIL: Paper $8.95   ASCIS 375650

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Self-adhesive labels

Keith Jarvis, teacher-librarian at Orara High School, has written regarding the self-adhesive labels purchased through Northern Districts Education Centre. The school has been using these labels with The Librarian's Apprentice since 1985. In his letter Keith indicates that after 18 months to 3 years the adhesive on the labels dries out and they fall off. The problem may be due to a bad batch of labels. The main concern was the absence of a label on the book cards as resources couldn't be linked to borrowers. Keith now writes the accession number on the book card so it can be identified with or without its label.

Textbook allowance

Increased textbook allowances for secondary students have been announced. The new allowances are: $16.30 per student in Years 7-10, and $40.20 per student in Years 11-12.

Freedom of information

The NSW Freedom of information (FOI) legislation will be implemented on 1 July 1989. This legislation gives people access to documents held by state ministers, government agencies and other public bodies and they may correct incorrect or incomplete records about themselves. A network of FOI Liason Officers will be established in regions to advise on FOI matters. In the interim, enquiries about FOI implementation may be directed to the FOI Project Coordinator on (02) 240 8685

Sportsafe resource

The NSW Department of Education has, in a joint venture, produced an educational package Prevention and treatment of soft tissue injuries. The resource contains a series of brochures and a video which adresses:
* general safety hints for sport
* overuse injuries
* asseesment and treatment of sporting injuries
* rehabilitation of sporting injuries.
This is part of a statewide program to develop an awareness of the potential hazards, suitable measures for reducing risk and a knowledge of appropriate action in the event of injury.

Staff at Library Services

Maggie Roche, working at Library Services as a deployed teacher-librarian, has accepted an appointment as Education Officer at the resource centre of the Multicultural Education Centre. Fay Gardiner, teacher-librarian at Wentworth Falls Public School, is now working as the deployed teacher-librarian at Library Services. Fay is working with the Library Policy Implementation taskforce.

Report on the course for untrained teacher-librarians

In the Easter holidays a 2 day course for untrained teacher-librarians was held at Library Services. Thirty teacher-librarians attended, some having travelled from country regions to attend. The course aimed to give a brief overview of the role of the teacher-librarian and provide some survival skills. Topics covered included Library Policy, selection, acquisition, circulation, cataloguing, ASCIS, resource-based learning and information skills. The evaluations indicated that all participants found the 2 days extremely beneficial.

Carol-Ann Haycock at Library Services

Carol-Ann Haycock, a leading consultant in school libraries and lecturer from Vancouver, is well known for her workshops on cooperative program planning and teaching (CPPT) for teachers and teacher-librarians and for her work with the journal Emergency librarian. On 29 and 30 April she conducted a 2 day workshop on CPPT at Library Services. The course was organised by the School Libraries Section (NSW group) of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Her work in Sydney was part of a larger tour which took in all mainland states and New Zealand.

Approximately 200 attended an evening lecture given by Carol-Ann on Monday, 1 May at Services Directorate, Ryde when she spoke about teacher-librarianship in Canada and internationally.

Handbook for School Libraries

The revised section 1 of Handbook for school libraries has been approved and printed. A copy of section 1, with a copy of the Libraries in New South Wales government schools: policy statement 1987 will be arriving in each state school soon to replace the current section 1 of the handbook.

Thanks to the Library Policy Curriculum Implementation Coordinating Group (CICG), additional copies of the Library Policy have been printed. Each state school will receive extra copies of the policy with the new section 1 material.

Further handbook revisions are under way. Arrangements will be made to make the revised sections available to non-state schools and other organisations.

The views expressed by contributors to this issue of scan are not necessarily those of the Editors or the NSW Department of Education.