

# SCAN

Curriculum Resources and Information Services

Vol 11 no 2 May 1992

- Curriculum change and implementation
- Caroline Macdonald
  - Applied studies
- Resource-based learning – assessment
- Networking CD-ROM



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It is pleasing to report that our subscriptions are, at last count, topping 1 500. This gives us a healthy basis on which to work for 1992, but we need to see the forms continuing to roll in. So please wave Scan around at school and cluster meetings and remind your colleagues to subscribe.

We also continue to welcome your contributions. You, the readers, are the people in the best position to know what the readers want. As well, in these times when teachers are documenting their achievements, a published article would be a worthy addition to your curriculum vitae. Write (Private Bag 3 Ryde 2112), fax (02 808 9413) or phone (808 9490) us with your ideas.

We hope that you will find plenty of good reading in this issue. Literature features strongly: interviews with the author, Margaret Barbalet and illustrator, Jane Tanner, of *The Wolf*, an interview with Caroline Macdonald and an article on the art of persuasion as it applies to children and 'good' literature. Children's literature will also be on the agenda in Scan 3 with reports on the Children's Book Council Conference and interviews with two of its visiting authors, Pat Hutchins and Robert Cormier.

Scan also offers challenges and assistance. The article by Ross Todd in Viewpoints is of major importance to all teachers who see the school library as an intrinsic part of the student learning program. It is a response to **Australia as an information society: the role of libraries/information networks**, the report of a House of Representatives Standing Committee chaired by Barry Jones.

John Gore's article, Curriculum: change and implementation, highlights the current stage of curriculum development and implementation in the Key Learning Areas K-12. It provides important information which will assist teachers and teacher-librarians in the planning for effective acquisition of resources to support curriculum.

Pam Wells' article describes an exciting and innovative learning program which enables students to gain practice at applying information skills. Pam, from North Coast Region, was sponsored by the Human Resource Development Directorate to attend a conference in the USA in February 1992 where this approach to learning was explored. ♦

## Scan Editorial Board

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Ms H. Vickers, SCIS Review Coordinator

### Editors

Jill Buckley and Fay Gardiner

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Dear Editor Scan,  
Congratulations on a super first issue of Scan. Our Science & technology committee found the resources section very helpful, while I particularly enjoyed the article by Marion Robertson. With the prospects of OASIS library arriving at our school in 1993, I read the OASIS Diary with mounting panic. I then resolved to practise laughing a lot during the Christmas holidays, and also to ensure that as many staff members as possible read OASIS Diary in every issue. I must photocopy it for executive members.

Thank goodness I had enough money left in the library budget to send off a subscription in December 1991!

Your faithfully,  
Leona Condon  
Parramatta West PS

Dear Scan,

No I have not sent in my subscription to Scan.

In the past we have received Scan, no charge. I have only used it 1-2 times a year although I did scan the Notes & miscellany section. As our support structure is crumbling away - no Library Consultant, no Film and Video Library, less OASIS staff assistance - we will have less time in which to utilise Scan.

Thus I am reluctant to part with \$25 or \$32 for a 'new' service, which I may not be able to use.

Yours faithfully,  
J. Mcintosh  
Teacher-librarian

**Beth McLaren:** Devolution has indeed meant a change in the way schools and school libraries are supported. Many services are now located closer to the school in Regions. Scan is intended to assist teacher-librarians respond to the new challenges in education and its format has changed over the years to allow this. Using the many reviews of relevant new learning materials is just one way that individual teacher-librarians are able to save time by using the information published in Scan. May we suggest that you borrow a recent copy of Scan and reconsider its value?

## ATTENTION TEACHER-LIBRARIANS

### School-based Support Courses for Teacher-librarians K-12 1992

Two courses will be conducted in 1992 for teachers from government schools who are working as teacher-librarians with minimal specialist qualifications.

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**Applications close on: 29th May, 1992**



Beth McLaren is Senior Curriculum Adviser - Library and Information Literacy

### Role

The role of the Senior Curriculum Adviser - Library and Information Literacy, includes the provision of advice to the Director-General on school libraries and information literacy programs, and the responsibility for planning program outcomes in relation to school libraries. It also includes

liaison with relevant organisations such as ACLIS (Australian Council of Library and Information Services), tertiary institutions providing information science courses, ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association), ASLA (Australian School Library Association) and the Curriculum Corporation, and the responsibility for the SCIS Catalogue and Review Team and Scan.

### Education 2000 and Priorities 1992

Schools have recently received a copy of two important Departmental planning documents **Education 2000** and **Priorities 1992**. A number of the objectives and outcomes included in **Education 2000** are of particular relevance to teacher-librarians. Specifically, Objective 1,

to develop in students the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in key learning areas, to enhance their quality of life and contribution to society

has, as an outcome, that

*students apply information skills, think critically to solve problems and support their conclusions with reasoned arguments.*

Schools considering how this outcome may be achieved may find the previously published **Information Skills in the School** will provide a number of strategies upon which to base their planning. Certainly the role of the teacher-librarian in the school should reflect the need to achieve this outcome.

The Board of Studies has published a number of documents which outline the educational outcomes in relation to specific syllabuses. Outcomes related to the development of information skills will be found in these documents and may well assist teacher-librarians and classroom teachers in the co-operative planning of programs in which student learning includes the development of such skills.

**Education 2000** is the basis for school and regional planning. The stated objectives, outcomes and

performance measures in such plans will be an important educational management tool in the future. It is vital that teacher-librarians participate fully in the process of planning, if their role in teaching information skills, and in delivering information services to students and teachers, is to remain central to the school's educational program.

### Hunter Region initiative

Hunter Region is supporting the teaching of information skills and the management of school library resources by developing a Regional Strategic Plan for School Libraries for the next five years. As the first step of this process a group of teacher-librarians, led by Alan Young, Cluster Director, considered where they would like Hunter Region's school library services to be in five years time and what strategies might be employed to ensure that this will be achieved. The proposed objectives, formulated at this first meeting, will be circulated to teacher-librarians in the region for consideration. The feedback received will be used in the next planning stage. This is a very exciting initiative and the region is supporting it with a one-off allocation of relief days. The plan, developed in 1992, will be implemented over the next five years. Other curriculum areas are being given similar support on a rotation basis.

### SCIS Team

Much progress has been achieved in the last few months. Anne Dowling has recently been appointed to the SCIS Cataloguing and Review team. Anne, who will be well known to many teacher-librarians, is taking charge of the cataloguing operation. Anne's experience as a SCIS cataloguer will allow the team to begin adding materials to the database immediately. Judy O'Connell and Terry Fahy are two other recently appointed members of the team, leaving only two positions still to be filled.

### Scan and Reviewing

Scan subscriptions continue to increase. This second issue for 1992 includes contributions on a number of topics which are of direct relevance to both teachers and teacher-librarians, reviews of learning resources to support the Applied Studies 11 - 12 syllabus, and reviews to assist the acquisition of new materials across the curriculum. Publishers have been generous in their continuing support of the Department's participation in SCIS and we anticipate that we will be able to continue to catalogue and review the most relevant new learning materials to support curriculum implementation in New South Wales schools. ♦

## ☆Curriculum: change and implementation

John Gore is the Manager of the Key Learning Areas Unit in Curriculum Directorate. John has an eighteen-year teaching background in secondary social sciences and was a secondary inspector before coming to Curriculum Directorate. The Key Learning Areas Unit consists of 10 officers who provide advice on all matters related to the key learning areas including matters before the Board of Studies. They coordinate system and external initiatives in curriculum support.

The development of syllabuses for primary and secondary schools in New South Wales is one of the responsibilities of the Board of Studies, a statutory authority responsible to parliament through the Minister for School Education and Youth Affairs. Many people assume that the Board and the Department of School Education are parts of the same organisation, but they are totally separate and distinct from one another. In fact, of the twenty three member Board, the Director-General is the only representative of government schools. Other Board members represent non-government schools, tertiary institutions, parents, principals, teachers and other interest groups.

During 1991 the Board continued work on the large development agenda set by *Excellence and Equity*. In accepting responsibility for the development of curriculum for K-12 it established Key Learning Area Coordinating Committees (KLACCs) in each Key Learning Area (KLA). The composition of KLACCs varies as members are selected on the basis of their expertise rather than on a more common representative model. These committees prepared framework statements for each KLA and considered the courses offered in each area.

### The Board and syllabus development

New syllabuses are developed according to a model which includes a writing brief, extensive consultation and amendment as part of the syllabus writing process. Common stages in syllabus development are:

#### Appointment of the syllabus committee

Syllabus committees vary in size but generally comprise at least fifteen members who are nominated by, and represent, various education groups including the Department of School Education, NSW Teachers Federation, tertiary institutions and a variety of non-government school organisations. A committee may also have some members appointed for their special expertise.

#### The writing brief

The first process in the development of a new syllabus is the preparation of the syllabus writing brief by either the syllabus committee, KLACC or a working group. The writing brief has a twofold purpose: it sets the boundaries for the work of the

syllabus committee and provides a framework for the new syllabus. Major issues and directions are usually determined at this stage and the brief must gain Board approval before proceeding further. Depending on the nature of the subject this brief may take a few weeks or a few months to develop.

#### Consultation

To be certain that the writing brief and hence the direction of the syllabus development is in line with the wishes of all interested parties the brief is sent to a wide consultative group who are given about a month to respond. This group includes teachers in all systems, tertiary educators, parent organisations and a range of educational and community groups who might have interest in the work of the syllabus committee. The syllabus committee usually determines the composition of the consultative group.

The comments of the consultative group often lead to modifications in the brief which are then reflected in the development of the syllabus document.

#### Writing of the syllabus

Following consultation and the incorporation of any changes into the writing brief, the syllabus committee writes the new syllabus which is then subject to further consultation and possible amendment. Draft copies of the syllabus are not usually distributed to all schools at this stage although in the case of primary syllabuses such a distribution may occur. This stage can take a few months, or in some cases, a few years.

#### Approval

When the syllabus committee believes that the syllabus is complete it is submitted to the Curriculum Committee of the Board. The Curriculum Committee's recommendations are sent on to the Board for approval. The Board indicates the date from which the new syllabus may be implemented. It is usually the commencement of a new school year.

Syllabus committees also work on the non-mandatory support documents to accompany syllabuses. Such documents have to be approved first by the Board's

Curriculum Committee and then the Board itself, but do not necessarily go through the same consultation processes for new syllabuses.

### Some current developments

During 1991 the finalisation of the *Curriculum Requirements for NSW Schools* and the development of syllabuses in the Key Learning Areas provided an enormous amount of work for the Board. This flowed on to the other bodies who work closely with the Board, such as the Department, and will continue to do so as the recommendations of *Excellence and Equity* are implemented. Outlined below are some of the things which are happening with regard to syllabus development in each of the KLAs for primary and secondary schools. These developments have implications for the Department's plans for curriculum implementation and support.

### Primary education

A Primary Curriculum Advisory Reference Panel was established by the Board to provide it with advice on matters related to primary curriculum issues. This group has representation from systems and people with expertise in the primary area. The Department has its own Primary Curriculum Advisory Committee which reports to the Director, Curriculum on all matters related to primary education. It is made up of primary principals, parents, cluster directors and teachers.

#### English K - 6

A new syllabus has been in the pipeline for some time and attempts have been made to produce a draft which will be acceptable to the various groups which have an interest in this KLA. A draft was presented to the March meeting of the Board and it is expected that it will be sent to a consultative network in April. Because of the importance of this syllabus all primary schools will receive a copy so that practising teachers will be able to 'trial' and program for it. After working with the syllabus, teachers will have the opportunity to send their comments to the Board.

#### Mathematics K - 6

This syllabus, which was well received, has been in schools since 1988. Teachers have been enthusiastic about its level of detail which provides comprehensive units of work at each stage for teachers to use in the classroom.

#### Science and technology K - 6

This syllabus, released in 1991, has also been favourably received by schools. It replaced the *Investigating science K-6 syllabus* which was introduced in 1981 by the Department. At the time of the introduction of *Investigating science* teachers in schools were given limited support for its implementation. An evaluation

undertaken in 1987 showed that primary science was not being well taught. The new PrimeSTEP Program, developed jointly by the University of Western Sydney (Nepean) and Metropolitan West Region on behalf of the system as a whole, will attempt to help overcome this problem. PrimeSTEP will provide training in science and technology education for a group of primary teachers who will then, in turn, train their colleagues in their schools, clusters and regions. Over time it is hoped that all primary teachers will benefit from the outcomes of this training program.

One of the ways in which the implementation of *Science and technology K-6* is being supported is through the publication of support documents. The Board of Studies has produced a number of teaching kits which are available for sale from the Board.

Early in term 2 all government schools will receive free the first of two volumes of units of work to support this syllabus. These units have been prepared by regions and coordinated into two volumes by Curriculum Directorate as an outcome of the deliberations of the K-6 Science and Technology Key Planning Group. This Group addressed the system-wide needs of teachers in respect to this syllabus. As well as this project PrimeSTEP was an outcome of this Key Planning Group.

#### Human society and its environment K - 6

The writing brief is at present being circulated for consultation. This consultation process will be followed by the writing of the syllabus, the final version being due for release in 1994.

It is proposed that the syllabus will have four interrelated content strands - Human Beings, Cultures, Environments and Societies.

Languages other than English (LOTE) will be included in this syllabus. A core element will include:

- knowledge and understanding about the role of languages in communicating with others and conveying cultural knowledge
- values and attitudes that promote intercultural understanding and the appreciation of cultural heritage.

The optional element of LOTE will include a generic framework which will assist schools to develop their own programs in a LOTE to meet the needs of the school and its community.

#### Creative and practical arts K - 6

The syllabus committee has met and is in the early stages of developing the syllabus brief.

#### Personal development, health and physical education K - 6

This syllabus utilises a model which integrates learning in the three areas of personal development, health and physical education. At the moment it is expected that the syllabus will be organised around three elements:

- content strands
- main ideas (related to each content strand)
- modules.

Eight strands are proposed. The modules may provide samples of teaching and learning activities for use in developing units of work.

### Secondary education

One of the major preoccupations of the Board has been the development of *Outcomes statements* for each of its secondary syllabuses. All syllabus committees have been involved in this process and the products of their work are now beginning to reach schools. These statements do not replace the existing syllabuses nor are they additional to it. The outcomes, as explained in the Board's *Curriculum outcomes* document, are primarily intended to be the "results of teaching and learning expressed as a set of broad, comprehensive, assessable and observable indicators or benchmarks of student achievement at each stage of a course." They give more detail than objectives but are not comprehensive of all outcomes from the teaching of a course. Further detail is provided in the Board's document and teachers should read it carefully.

The development of National Statements and Profiles for each learning area and the work of the Mayer Committee on employment related key competency areas may lead to an emphasis on assessment that will change the nature of current Board outcomes.

#### English

There have been few syllabus developments in this area to date. Much of the work of this committee has been taken up with the compilation and publication of recommended reading lists.

#### Mathematics

The publication of the *National statement in mathematics* will have an impact on syllabus developments in this area. Currently the Board is considering reviewing the Mathematics years 9 - 10 syllabus. If a revised years 9 - 10 syllabus adopts the principles of the years 7-8 syllabus and the directions of the National Statement there could be a greater continuity between years 7-8 and years 9-10 mathematics.

#### Science

Discussion about the future of secondary science syllabuses has resulted in a survey being sent to schools, tertiary institutions, professional teachers associations and other groups and individuals interested in science

education. Its purpose is to gauge their opinion of the current syllabuses and the areas in which change might be necessary. The results of this survey will provide important information for future science syllabus developments.

#### Human society and its environment

This Key Learning Area has generated a great deal of discussion. The KLACC made a number of recommendations to the Board about courses in this area. Their recommendations were not accepted and the Board decided to support only the mandatory provision of a minimum of 100 hours of both History and Geography in either Stage 4 (years 7-8) or Stage 5 (years 9-10). Both syllabus committees have found the development task difficult and it has taken some time for them to have drafts ready to be sent to consultative networks. Documents were sent out in February and the results of this consultation may further change the syllabuses in this area. The Department intends to collate the responses from its schools and present a consolidated response to the Board.

#### Languages other than English (LOTE)

Considerable syllabus development has occurred in this KLA through national cooperation as the Board has taken up the development of syllabuses in those languages which have been designated by the government as priority languages. Syllabuses for low incidence priority languages are now available. These syllabuses have been developed as part of a national project and are known as NAFLaSSL (National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level) syllabuses. They are the same for all the states.

The Department has also been active in developing a strategic plan for the implementation of LOTE provisions in both primary and secondary schools over the next ten years. The plan takes many new initiatives in this area and identifies their funding source. A strategic plan has been necessary because of the scale of change that is expected to occur over the next ten years as secondary schools implement first the 100-hour requirement, then another 100 hours before the year 2000, as signaled by the Government. In addition there are plans to extensively expand languages in primary schools through a variety of programs. This is one area that is likely to advance through the use of technology in education to deliver new programs.

There has been some debate in this KLA in regard to courses for native speakers of a language and courses for students for whom the language is a second one. The issue has not been completely resolved and is likely to be the subject of further discussions.

### Creative arts

This KLA was subject to one of the great debates of 1991. Strong opposition from some groups to the recommendation of *Excellence and Equity* for 100 hours of Visual arts and 100 hours of a performing art (music, dance, drama) saw the Board finally decide to maintain the old rule of 100 hours of both Visual arts and Music. This was not acceptable to drama and dance groups who continue to lobby for more flexibility in this KLA.

The decision to allow the mandatory requirements to be met in either Stage 4 or 5 is posing some problems for the syllabus committees in structuring a years 7-10 course.

### Technological and applied studies

This is the first year of optional implementation of the new Design and technology years 7-10 syllabus which requires each student to study 200 hours over years 7-10. The syllabus is a major development in this KLA. It requires a design approach and involves students in the use of a range of materials and technologies. This range will draw on materials, technologies and staff from across the school. One of its greatest challenges is for schools to create an organisation that allows the full range of resources and staff to be used in delivering the course. Industrial arts and Home economics teachers will find a natural place in this course but so will teachers in a range of other faculties all of whom have particular skills to contribute to the teaching of this course. It would appear that the breadth of this course is not understood in many schools.

Changes in this KLA have been significant for Home science teachers who feel particularly disadvantaged by the way many schools are implementing this syllabus, the deletion of traditional courses and the adoption of much of the material traditionally taught in Home science into the KLA of Personal development, health and physical education. There have been some moves in schools to collapse Home economics Head Teacher positions and to transfer Home economics teachers. This would appear to be a very short sighted policy by some schools. Not only have Home economics teachers an important role to play in the delivery of years 7-10 Design and technology syllabus but they also can have a major input to the years 7-10 Personal development, health and physical education syllabus, particularly if they have input into how these courses are organised and programmed at the school level.

In addition there are a number of new syllabuses being developed by the Board for both years 7-10 and 11-12, including Food technology that may be available as electives possibly from 1993. All these factors would indicate an increased demand for Home economics teachers in the medium term.

Other developments in this KLA include years 11-12 Design and technology and years 11-12 Industry studies. This latter course is of particular interest because it includes opportunities for industry experience and TAFE modules leading to further accreditation.

**Personal development, health and physical education**  
The years 7-10 Personal development, health and physical education syllabus is also in its first year of implementation. This integrated course has caused some concern. The former Director-General in his Memorandum to Secondary Principals 91/155 *Curriculum Requirements in Government Secondary Schools* acknowledged that schools should have an integrated program for Years 7-10 and that a variety of staff, including Home economics teachers, have an important contribution to make to this area. He also acknowledged that students in government schools could need more than the 300 hours over years 7-10 required by the Board because of the important contribution this KLA makes to the development of students.

Part of the Department's plans to assist the implementation of this syllabus will include a support document on the Department's policies in this area of the curriculum, and ways of dealing appropriately with the major areas of Careers, Drug education, HIV/AIDS education and Child protection. In addition the Human Resource Development Directorate will investigate developing a retraining course for teachers in this area who wish to broaden their skills to more closely fit the breadth of content and skills of this area. The course is planned to be 30 hours in length.

A 25-hour Personal development and health course for years 11 and 12 is required to be taught by all government secondary schools. Curriculum Directorate has prepared a course for optional use by schools and this should be available soon. This suggested course has four themes: Managing my life, Managing my relationships, Managing risk (HIV/AIDS) and Managing risk (Drugs). A list of suitable resources and suggestions for timetabling are included.

### Conclusion

Major curriculum change will continue in 1992 and beyond as schools implement a range of new syllabuses. The pace of curriculum change is not likely to diminish. Officers within Curriculum Directorate are very mindful of the pressures facing classroom teachers and will be constantly endeavouring to work in partnership with regions and schools to recommend appropriate curriculum implementation support for government schools. ♦

## ☆ Creating a special book

*The Wolf*, written by Margaret Barbalet and illustrated by Jane Tanner, is a powerful and involving new book. Jill Buckley recently spoke to Margaret Barbalet and Jane Tanner about their work.

### Margaret

'There were a couple of influences which affected the story. I have only recently remembered that I was upset by a really unpleasant, intrusive telephone call some time before I wrote *The Wolf*. I experienced that intrusion, that something unpleasant had intruded into the house. It was that feeling of a threat out there that intrudes right into the house which formed a core of the story. I had that sense that somehow the inside should be safe.

I wasn't really conscious of metaphor as I wrote.

I am slightly surprised by the therapeutic use some people have seen in the story... that it evokes responses at such levels... because I see it as a fable, a strange story. Others put different interpretations on it.

I wrote a draft over three months, on two different weekends with a gap between them, and showed it to my then 12 year old who said it was too long. I then shortened it, rewrote it and showed it to my twins, then aged 4, who liked it. The story was written fairly slowly for such a short piece. There were some very small changes once it was accepted by Penguin.

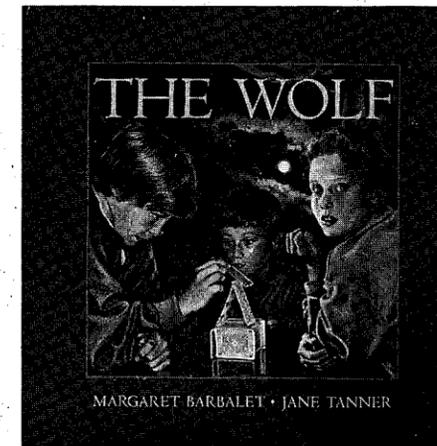
The words *Let it in, let it in* came into my head while I was driving. I remember that particular curve of the road, on the way to work, when I was thinking of the voices repeating this. I was thinking about the idea of change, that you go from fearing change to finding that you cope with it. If you think through an anxiety or a horror, asking yourself what is the worst thing which may happen, you are able to face things. *Let it in* is a key to the story.

Recently, since publication, I looked up the word wolf in dictionaries, and found there were lots of phrases about wolves. One French dictionary referred to dusk as 'the hour between the dog and the wolf', there is a musical reference to a 'wolf', which is a terrible discord, as well as such widely used phrases as 'to keep the wolf from the door'.

Wolves are what people for some generations have held at the edge of their imaginations, and heard at the

edge of the village. My children's paternal great grandfather was born in Minsk, and he talked of hearing wolves howling at night.

I pictured the story's setting as in a borderland, evoking something of the English and the Welsh border area. The children's names were meant to suggest strangeness, they are Welsh in one sense I suppose.



In my writing I have 'trouble with metaphors'. I love them, so I have to restrain myself in prose because I find them powerful. I just can't help myself.

Multi-layered books are at all levels. A favourite in my family is *Greetings from Sandy Beach*, which has a wonderful felicity about it, which is delicious and light hearted, but very thoughtful.

I didn't think of any endings other than the one used, the story was complete. I was brought up on the

Hans Anderson stories, and Ida Rentoul Outhwaite, much of which can be awfully bleak. Like Grimm, these are dark and powerful stories.

I feel that children respond to the book according to their age. A child who just picks it up, would probably need to be about 8 years and older. Younger readers may not understand the ending, how resolved it is. There is also quite a lot to read. I have had experience of children, my own among them, who are frightened, who were unable to watch a film, or frightened at night-time. I am aware of these difficulties. Children do get frightened.'

### Jane

'My first reaction to the text was that it was very difficult. Julie Watts from Penguin had brought it to the Children's Book Council Awards in Hobart, and she wanted me to illustrate it. The story gave me a strange shivery feeling, I was awake half the night after reading it. On the surface it is so simple, but the more you read, the more implications and suggestions it has. I have also learnt more through living with this work, considering how I approached it and the ideas it generates.

In doing the illustrations I had to rethink the story all the time in order to work with the metaphors of the text. For example, this passage:

*That night their mother went around the house bolting shut all the windows. Some of them had never been bolted before, and stuck. She had to force and wedge them shut. It took a long time and it was dark by the time she had finished.*

You could read the word 'mind' instead of 'window' in this passage. It is a powerful, abstract image. These windows had never been locked before, there is a physical darkness, a physical reality as well as a metaphorical level. Should I show the bolted doors and windows in the backgrounds of subsequent illustrations, or does that work against the metaphor? I used portraits without showing those barred windows, although the interior of the house is dark from then on.

I made the decisions about what to illustrate, how to construct the book around the story. Some images come easily as scenes which must be illustrated. Others are more difficult to find. It is useful to set up rhythms and repetition when illustrating a picture book, then ideas begin to flow.

The cream page colour also has the effect of emphasising the old world quality of the story. On this occasion Penguin have been most generous in the quality of the paper, and the expensive 5-colour process involved in printing on to that background.

This is a very honed text; Margaret has omitted everything superfluous. Everything has meaning, is part of the metaphor of the story. In a sense it is subliminal storytelling, for every gesture, the components of individual pictures, every phrase is purposeful. The illustrations are designed to integrate with the text, to reinforce it, adding another dimension.

I am aiming to get deeper into what is already there, to engage the viewer's emotions, to catch you, and get you further into the meaning. For example, I try to suggest the sense of grief within the family, that the mother too is vulnerable. In the illustration where she comforts Dai she is not clutching him, her hand gestures suggest something else.

There is an intimate, confiding voice about the text, it draws you in rather than addresses you. It is inward looking. I needed to be inward looking too, rather than draw from purely ideas and techniques. It is easy to be clever. With this book I had to strive for simplicity, although I did use exaggeration when necessary, particularly on the staircase, with a circular twisting fall reminiscent of Alice in Wonderland. The

illustrations emphasise the timeless, fairy story quality, but there are suggestions of a modern setting.

I tried to suggest that the reader may be an intruder, that you're viewing something private. This makes you feel a little uncomfortable, an outsider looking in. I use borders almost like window frames.

The house of cards on the cover is indicative of the careful balance inherent in the family situation. One child is tentatively balancing something, the youngest one is engaged in watching. The girl is caught for a moment, distracted. By what or whom? Is it you? The feeling is one of things being very finely balanced and volatile.

I did try to draw the wolf in early drafts, to suggest its presence - a shadow on the wall, clouds across the moon, to find ways to make the wolf physically more evident. As soon as you put a four-footed visual symbol into the illustrations the subtlety is lost. I need to create atmosphere, to imply rather than state.

## THE WOLF



Rejected cover draft

I have just read Bruno Bettelheim's *The uses of enchantment*, on fairy tales, on how we can make things too palatable, on the sinister quality of traditional stories which touch universal emotions. Their power is to touch real personal struggle, that these stories tap into darkness which is important to us. Margaret's story has this sort of power.

In *The wolf* there were three choices: to have the wolf devour them; for the wolf to be vanquished; or for them to embrace this thing. This last option is not a compromise, the metaphor of the story isn't defused by the ending. It is taking a contemporary solution which is uncomfortable and thoughtful. Decisions have to be made, responsibilities have to be faced. I feel that Margaret was most heroic in offering that choice. I have read recently that children like justice, while guilty adults prefer mercy.

The very openness of the ending makes this book clearly for those who don't need it all sewn up - who are old enough to make thoughtful decisions.

This isn't a book for very young children. Is it an illustrated text rather than a picture book? Like a picture book it is an integration of illustrations and text, but there is a large amount of text. I feel that the drawings are an essential element to understanding the story, so it is a picture book for older readers.

I think the book is appropriate for all sorts of levels. The older you are the more layers you will see. It needs to be handled carefully. It is scary, because it is about dealing with the unknown. It could be given to a child who is coming to independence, say middle primary and older, 8 or 9 upwards. It is a book which is relevant at times when things are a bit difficult.

I have seen the book used with a grade 6 class, and it was really a discussion opener, raising personal issues. It is not an easy book, and not meant to be used casually, as it could be upsetting.

I have used it with year 7, and it produced personal responses. One Chinese student commented that the book was about being different, two students said that it was about when your mother dies, echoing their own experience. In both these situations the book was approached in a careful, trusting way and the atmosphere and relationships in the class were such that personal responses could be shared. I think it is good to have a book like this for opening up discussion. It is challenging not entertaining, it is a beginning not an end.

### New projects

#### Margaret

'I am currently working on several new projects for children. I write sometimes at night, sometimes I note things down while I am at work. I also keep a notebook in the car to jot down ideas.

A new adult novel, *Lady baby gypsy queen*, will come out in June this year. I am also working on a couple of stories for children, but they are still in the early stages. I work full-time as a public servant and so I have very little time to write.'

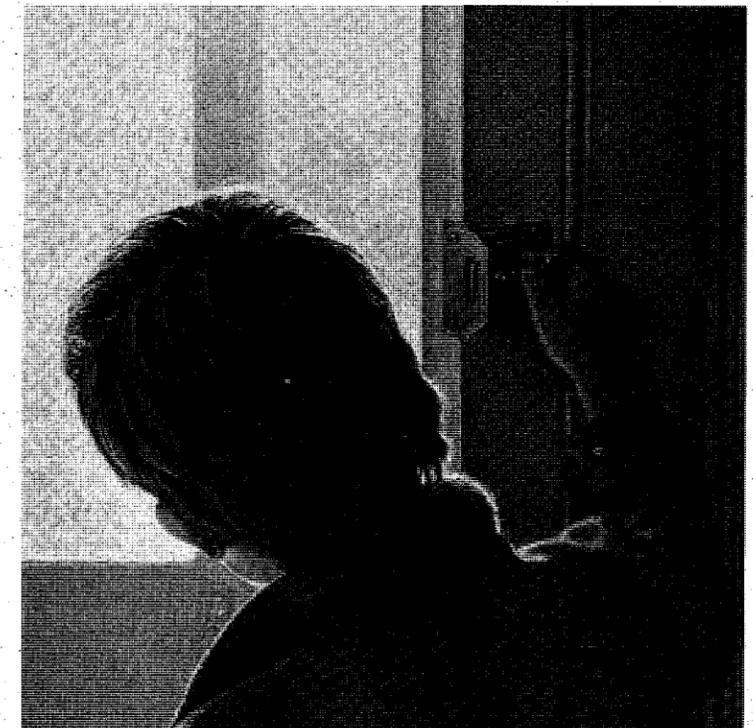
#### Jane

'I am now working on a Paul Jennings book with an underwater theme. It is about a sea creature which is the last of its species, and its baby. The fisherman has to decide whether or not to return the baby to its environment. I see it as being about mother child separation, so am currently depicting the creature as something precious and vulnerable. What I find exciting about illustrating picture books is that as I come to each project my points of view change, and I learn through renewed awareness of how much I do not know.' ♦



Instead of showing the boy opening the door and the inside of the house...

... Jane decided on a more subtle perspective



## ☆ May I introduce . . .

Every year those of us whose staple diet is children's literature await the announcement of the shortlist in March, and then the winners of the Children's Book Council Awards in July. Who are those power brokers who decide the shortlist and the awards? For a start they are people who can keep a secret: did you know that the winners are decided at the judging weekend and those in the know have to be absolutely tight-lipped for four months?

The judges are on the panel for two years but, like the senate, the panel is staggered so that, in previous years, it has been a change of either three or four judges each year. Last year South Australia did not have a judge; John Foster has stepped in for 1992 only, and since Northern Territory will participate for the first time next year, in 1993 there will be five new faces and three experienced.

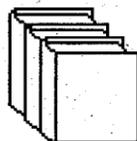
Here then is a brief profile of the 1992 judges.



### South Australia

John Foster has taught Children's Literature at the University of South Australia and its antecedents since 1975. Prior to this, he was a children's librarian in Toronto and a high school librarian in Adelaide. He is also Director of the Centre for Children's Literature which is based at the University of South Australia. His qualifications include Master of Library Science (University of Western Ontario), M. Ed and Ph.D (University of Adelaide). Much of the research for his higher degrees has been focused on aspects of children's literature, most notably on subliterate for children.

### Western Australia



Margaret Phillips has been a teacher-librarian in Western Australian government schools since 1969. Except for 1983 when she worked as a library services advisory teacher, she has been teacher-librarian-in-charge at Wanneroo Senior High School. Margaret completed her library studies at Curtin University in 1974 and it was a course **Resources for children** with Maxine Walker that stimulated her interest in children's literature and she hasn't stopped reading since. She completed her Master of Education in 1987 including a dissertation on teacher perceptions of teacher-librarians in government schools.

She has been active in both WASLA and the School Libraries Section (WA Group) of ALIA. She was President of the latter section for seven years and is still on the committee. The Section runs the West Australian Young Readers Book Award and Margaret has been involved in this for ten years. Among her publications are two articles in *Access*, a chapter in *Information Technology in Schools* (School Libraries Section (WA Group) ALIA) and reviews in *Access* and *Fiction Focus*.

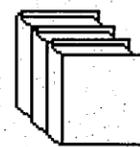
Margaret has three adult children and two grandchildren. Only her artist daughter still lives at home. When not reading books and attending meetings, she dabbles in sewing, gardening, bush walking, four-wheel driving, camping, rock-hunting, helping in flora surveys and greening Australia and bucket making with natural materials.

### Tasmania



Lyn Calitz was born 1947 in Johannesburg, South Africa where she took her BA Degree and Teachers' Diploma. She taught in Black schools for four years before she emigrated to Australia in 1974. A year as teacher-librarian in Adelaide was followed by study for her Diploma of Librarianship in Tasmania in 1977. Lyn spent 12 years as Children's Librarian at the State Library of Tasmania. At present she is teaching literacy/numeracy at SkillShare and is a part-time lecturer in Children's Literature at the University of Tasmania and Hobart Technical College. She is a long-standing member of CBC and an ex-vice-president.

Lyn is married with a 16-year-old son; and an 8-year-old daughter. She lives on five acres of beautiful Tasmanian bush and her hobbies are music, walking in the bush and along the beach, philosophy, self-sufficiency and reading.

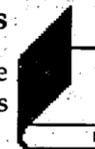


### Australian Capital Territory

Ann Armstrong has a BA from ANU and a Graduate Diploma in Librarianship from University of Canberra. She has been a member of the CBC in Canberra for seven years, serving as publicity officer, secretary and then President in 1989-90. She reviewed children's books on ABC Radio for two years and is on the National Word Festival Committee and the Lu Rees Archives Committee.

Ann has worked as a Children's Librarian and a Reference Librarian in public libraries, a teacher's resource centre, and a joint-use secondary college/public library. She is now Chief Librarian of Belconnen Town Centre Library, a main branch of the ACT Library Service, Canberra's public library system.

### New South Wales



Ever since studying Children's Literature as an undergraduate student at Macquarie University in the late 70s, Margaret Ramsden's commitment to children's literature has been fulfilled in many ways.

She has worked in a specialist Children's Bookshop, as a teacher-librarian in various primary schools, and for a children's publisher. She also spent many years on the committee of the NSW Branch of the Children's Book Council. She was one of the first students to complete a Graduate Diploma in Children's Literature from Macquarie University, where she now teaches Children's Literature part-time as well as working as a primary school teacher-librarian. She lives in Sydney and has three young children who also love books.



### Queensland

After working as a teacher and then as a bookkeeper in a family business, Mary Lydon Whipple became a teacher-librarian. She has worked in school libraries and in the central library services of the Queensland Department of Education, where she reviewed fiction and non-fiction and compiled bibliographies of resources to support the curriculum. She is now an itinerant teacher-librarian in the Sunshine Coast Region, assisting small schools with their resource centres and with resource-based teaching and learning.

### Victoria



Virginia Lowe is a Senior Tutor at the Rusden Campus of Deakin University, lecturing in English and Children's Literature. For the previous four years, she was employed as Head of Library Services at St Paul's School, Woodleigh, an innovative school at Baxter, outside Melbourne, and enjoyed the school experience immensely. She has also lectured at the Australian Catholic University.

She has published extensively, her most recent articles being *Stop! You didn't read who wrote it!*; *The concept of the author in Children's Literature in Education*, June 1991; *The Poetry Basket in The Literature Base*, October 1991; and *Snufkin, Sniff and Little My: The 'reality' of fictional characters for the young child* in *Papers*, August 1991. She also reviews for *Magpies*. She is working on a PhD thesis on the reality-status of stories and pictures for very young children, and their developing 'suspension of disbelief'. This is based on a journal of 6 000 pages kept on the reading responses of her own two children, Rebecca and Ralph, from birth to adolescence.

Virginia has been on the Victorian executive of the CBC for most of the past ten years. She has served as Honorary Secretary, and has twice edited the CBC News for periods of a year or more. ♦

## ☆... human beings have always needed stories ...



Caroline Macdonald recently spoke to Fay Gardiner by telephone from her home in Adelaide.

Caroline Macdonald's work flies in the faces of the critics who rage about awards being given to books that adults judge as good literature but which children find unattractive. Her novels are resoundingly successful with young readers and, although she has published only six novels, one collection of short stories and a picture book, she has won a multiplicity of awards. Caroline is not, however, unreservedly enamoured of awards:

*I think most of us have a kind of love-hate regard for the CBC shortlists. If your book appears on the list, then the judges are good and wise—if it doesn't then they're hopelessly biased!*

*Magazines that concentrate on children's literature can go a long way to redress the imbalance that can occur when there's a good book that doesn't make the shortlist. A journal like Scan can give it space and talk about it. Otherwise it might just be lost.*

There can be little doubt that the Children's Book Council is fundamental to the remarkable development of Australian children's literature. The work done by the council generally and the publicity generated by the awards themselves have given children's literature a high status and profile. But the awards can have a negative impact, even upon authors who are successful at making the shortlist...

*'Making the shortlist' is even more important to publishers, and this urgency can be infectious. To be writing a book with the spectre of the shortlist in the back of your mind would be one of the most counterproductive things that a writer can do.*

The blurb in the back of *The lake at the end of the world* tells us that Caroline 'has been engaged in research on where she is going to live, and her address changes frequently.' Whilst conceding that her nomadic behaviour may be related to her Kiwi heritage...

*There isn't any real plan for the shifting around, and it's not even a matter of real necessity for my writing. It's just that I feel like moving every year; maybe I'm looking for the ideal place. I'm very happy at the moment in Adelaide. I think I will stay here for quite a few years.*

In a recent interview published in *Magpies*, Caroline referred to the concept of the unreliable narrator, a literary device where the writer uses a narrator who, for one reason or another is not wholly au fait with the situation, thus leaving the reader to make his or her own conclusions. Caroline's novels also often have characters who are alienated from their surroundings. In both *The lake at the end of the world* and *The eye witness*, characters find themselves in scenarios that are unknown to them, where the other characters are dealing with ordinary, familiar objects and rituals which, because of a time slip in *The eye witness* or having lived in isolation in *The lake at the end of the world*, are bewildering to the character in question. Is there a link between the unreliable narrator and the alienated character?

*I don't use the term 'unreliable narrator' in that sense of alienation, except that when someone is describing a situation that is unusual for them. The reader has more information and can understand more than what is appearing on the page. If I set a novel in abnormal circumstances, for instance the future, there will be a lot of information about that world that I want to get across to the reader. A character coming from the outside can help with this conveyance of information through his or her comments and bewilderment or misunderstanding.*

*But what I really want to do when I'm writing is talk about how human relationships are the most important things in the world. You get a group of human beings in any situation and the network of alliances starts to become more and more tangled. I find that tangle really interesting to write about. A way to stir up this net of interrelationships is to bring in someone from the outside with a completely different viewpoint so the writer then can draw out more reactions from the central characters.*

*Writers for adults have used children as narrators in order to create this unreliable narrator idea so that the reader has this delicious feeling of actually knowing more about what is going on than the child is able to tell. What *Maisie knew* by Henry James is a good example of that.*

*Another thing I like to try to do when I'm writing a story is perhaps to play a game with the reader, not tell the reader absolutely everything, just hope that the reader can bring a little more knowledge to the text and get consequently more satisfaction from solving the puzzle.*

*A character like the girl in the short story, *Hostilities*, for example, is a very unreliable narrator. Everything in the story is filtered through Liz's consciousness, and concerns her misconceptions. The reader should gradually get to know that the boy against whom she is having this war is in fact not as bad as she thinks at all. He's simply a bit confused and worried about being pushed into the new family situation, and he only appears to be a pain; but she is blithely going straight ahead with her hostilities against him. All the time he's really trying to fit into this new family. And I hope that the reader would pick that up. If not, maybe I'm expecting too much of the young reader, but I would prefer to expect too much than not enough.*

*Hostilities* received a very positive review in *Scan* 10/4, but not all the reviews have been so positive:

*I'm really interested in the reviews that I've had for *Hostilities* because it's my first collection of short stories. There have been some quite wide ranging comments.*

*The first review I saw was critical because the reviewer, having assumed they were a collection of horror stories, said the collection had failed because the stories were not very frightening. That, I thought, was a very odd criticism because I didn't set out to write a collection of horror stories; frightening children was not my raison d'être for writing those stories. I wanted to move children emotionally, to give them stories which might have a frightening or puzzling element; there are a lot of hostile things in a child's environment whether they are imagined or real. I wanted to write about a variety of children or young people and how they responded to various hostile situations.*



*Authors seem to have many different approaches to writing; it is interesting that*

*some novels seem to spring almost fully formed into the author's mind whereas other authors begin with little idea of what will appear on the page. Caroline begins with a very definite map...*

*I'm certainly not the first person to do so, but I can use the analogy of a journey. For me, it's essential that I know where I'm setting off to; that I know the end point of the journey. I also have to know by what means I'm travelling, in other words the technical side of writing: tense, person, who's the narrator and so on. But the journey can have unplanned things happening along the way that have the effect of making it a more enriched and interesting journey.*

*A Caroline Macdonald novel, or short story, is always inventive and imaginative. Where do the ideas come from?*

*Lots of incidents I write about are things I've actually seen or noticed and they've stayed in my mind or on pieces of paper where I jot down ideas, sometimes for a very long time. Then in most unexpected ways they will become developed into a story or something that I later use.*

*The novels and ideas are not based on my own personal life, but on incidents that I have observed or lived through that have all affected the way I put the words down on the page, the way I want to affect the reader. I don't think this is different from what any writer would say. We can't write*

about anything except what is in our heads and memories. It's just the way you put these together that makes fiction.

Writers for children always seem to be, and have been as children, avid readers. Caroline is no exception.

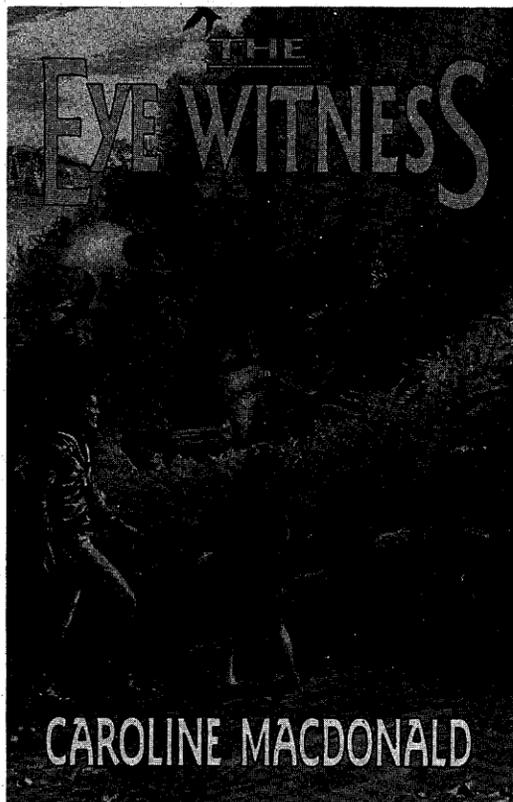
*I was a very undisciplined reader as a child. I read everything I could get hold of, not much non-fiction, mainly novels and stories. I read what was around at the time; I'm 43 now and when I was growing up in New Zealand, there were very few NZ authors, just the standard English stuff, Blyton, The lion, the witch and the wardrobe. I remember girls' boarding school stories. I've read a lot of other children's authors talking lovingly about many books they remember, but I just have impressions of atmosphere and the effects that writers could create that I really responded to emotionally or intellectually.*

*Now, of course, I'm very interested in reading books for young people. I've just read Jan Mark's *The Hillingdon fox* which I thought was wonderful. And I like Anne Fine's books because they are funny; she's so clever at humour. Penelope Lively is another writer who writes for adults and children. I always look forward to an Alan Baillie novel, and I like Gillian Rubinstein's books: she is writing in a way that I respond to emotionally. I would just love to have had her books to read when I was twelve.*

*I always look out for a new Ann Tyler or Muriel Spark. I do still read a lot of fiction.*

The craft of writing is a skill that needs to be developed and learnt by the writer rather than one that can be taught by someone else.

*I have mixed feelings about these things called creative writing workshops. There is no formula that you can tell a young person, there is no formula to create a story, and just as well there isn't or we'd all be bored with it immediately and stop writing. But I try to say to them that reading is a*



helpful preparation for becoming a good writer and I really do believe that.

*All the writers that I know and admire are great readers themselves. They can speak very articulately and enthusiastically about other writers' crafts. That is the way that I try to tell young people to study the craft of writing: look at what makes the story work for them, and work out what the writer is trying to do and try to re-create it. It's not a matter of copying the writer, it's a matter of learning the particular skills that are involved, the tricks, the ways of creating an effect.*

Australian children have access to an extraordinary range of literature, Australian and other. And thanks to the people who put them in touch with it, their parents, teachers and librarians, they do read it. They also watch a lot of television but Caroline does not see an immeasurable gulf between the two forms of entertainment.

*I don't think there's any kind of competitive situation here. For a start, a TV play or series or a novel or a picture book story all spring from the same source. Somebody first of all comes up with an idea, invents characters, thinks through a story line; in other words, goes through the processes that tap into the magic of fiction.*

*I believe human beings have always needed stories in their lives, and always will. We also have to recognise that there's a wide variety of tastes among any group of 12-year-olds, say, as among any group of 40-year-olds. I'm not going to fly into a panic and stop writing if a child would rather watch E Street than read a novel. Some will do both. ♦*

#### Novels:

*Elephant Rock* (Hodder & Stoughton)  
*Visitors* (Puffin)  
*The yellow boarding house* (OUP)  
*The lake at the end of the world* (Penguin)  
*Speaking to Miranda* (Viking)  
*The eye witness* (Hodder & Stoughton)

#### Short stories:

*Hostilities* (Omnibus)

#### Picture book:

*Joseph's boat* (Penguin)

## ☆What's new, what's hot: a bookseller's point of view

Kathy Belling is a Sydney bookseller.

'My daughter likes books, but I can't get her to read anything except *Babysitters Club* stories. Can you suggest anything else?'

'My son's bookshelves are about to collapse under the weight of *Fighting Fantasy* and *Choose Your Own Adventure* books. Now he's interested in Stephen King. Isn't there anything in between?'

As a children's bookseller, one hears these pleas from parents nearly every day and happily the answer can always be a resounding 'Yes!' Why are we so confident? Because time and again these parents return with tales of how much their children have enjoyed the alternative books suggested, often being encouraged to read them too.

### Best sellers

No one can deny the popularity of series such as *Sweet Valley High* (Bantam), *The Babysitters Club* (Ashton Scholastic), *Fighting Fantasy* (Puffin) and *Choose Your Own Adventure* (Bantam). In the United States a recently compiled list of bestselling children's books consisted almost entirely of *Babysitters Club* and *Ninja Turtle* stories – only a few classics such as *Charlotte's Web* and *Where the Wild Things Are* rubbed shoulders with these mass market titles. The resurgence of Enid Blyton's work, *Milly-Molly-Mandy* and *Anne of Green Gables* reminds us that children's series are not new, but the never ending numbers of the newer collections can make one feel overwhelmed.

Why then are they so popular? Children love to follow a series and seem to enjoy the predictability of plot, setting, narrative style and character found in these books. Does it make them feel safe? During the last decade, themes of family breakdown, drugs, environmental destruction and a host of other problems have been all too present in children's books. Television has repeated this process, often in graphic and frightening detail. One can hardly wonder then at the popularity of books which offer an escape into a highly predictable world – a world which primarily seeks to entertain. Parents will buy them for their children because 'at least they're reading', and this may indeed be particularly important for the more reluctant readers.

We tell ourselves that all of these factors are valid. Yet why does there remain a part of us that is appalled at such statistics as those of the 1991 children's bestseller list in the United States? Why are we afraid for Australian children who may be following the same path?

Perhaps Katherine Paterson has expressed the answer for us: '... don't we want far more for [our children] than the ability to decode? Don't we want for them the life and growth and refreshment that only the full richness of our language can give? ... we fail our children if all we give them are the platitudes, the clichés, the slogans of our society, which we throw out whole to keep them from having to think or feel deeply.'<sup>1</sup>

### Antidote for boredom and disenchantment

Of course we want our children to be entertained, but we crave other books for them as well: books that will leave them in some way changed, books with characters they will come to care deeply about and who will remain friends or foes for life, books which arouse empathy with others who may or may not be the same as themselves. Not because they 'ought to' or because 'it will be good for them,' for 'if we prescribe books as medicine, our children have a perfect right to refuse the nasty-tasting spoon.'<sup>2</sup> But because we want them to catch a 'sense of wonder so indestructible that it [will] last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantment of later years, the sterile occupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.'<sup>3</sup>

Fine, you say, I agree, but what are these 'other books' that the average reader can enjoy and how do you know they will like them? We have found, above all, that a book is popular for the above reasons if it has some combination of the following: a good plot, a style which involves the reader, strong characters, humour and honesty.

That great storyteller, Charles Dickens said of his readers, '... you must make them laugh, make them weep, but above all, make them wait.'<sup>4</sup> Children, like adults, love a book that constantly makes them wonder, 'But what will happen next?' *The Indian in the Cupboard* and its two sequels by Lynne Reid Banks (Lions) is such a story, with a boy's plastic indian coming alive as a tiny person after being placed in a cupboard overnight. It has been used with great success by teachers reading aloud to their primary classes. Cynthia Voigt's *The Vandemark Mummy* (Lions) and Simon French's mystery *Change the Locks* (Ashton Scholastic), are similarly ideal for older readers. The latter once again shows French's ability to portray sensitive boy characters and family relationships with an appealing honesty. For a wonderful fantasy set in Ireland in which two children are sent on a quest as part of a battle against evil, Pat O'Shea's *The Hounds of the Morrigan* (Puffin) is perfect. Brain Caswell's A

**Dream of Stars** (University of Queensland Press) is an interesting collection of short stories sure to appeal to teenage readers, as will Eleanor Nilsson's haunting mystery **The House Guest** (Viking) and David McRobbie's **Mandragora** (Mammoth). Younger primary readers have enjoyed the beautifully written and illustrated books, **The Moon's Revenge** by Joan Aiken and Alan Lee (Red Fox) and **The Mousehole Cat** by Nicola Bayley (Walker) which are wonderful for reading aloud.

These exciting stories are not 'told down' to readers, but in a style which involves them deeply. A good plot is essential to this, but the characters are also responsible for it. 'It may be possible in novel writing to present characters successfully without telling a story; but it is not possible to tell a story successfully without presenting characters.'<sup>5</sup>. Who will ever forget Winnie-the-Pooh, Toad from **Wind in the Willows** or Oliver from **Oliver Twist**? These are the characters that have made their stories popular over decades.

### Today's classics

Today's writers provide their own unforgettable characters. Michelle Magorian's story, **Goodnight Mister Tom** (Puffin), with its moving portrayal of an old man's care for a deprived boy during World War II, has deeply impressed many older readers. Katherine Paterson's newest novel, **Lyddie** (Gollancz), once again reflects her gift for bringing to life people we come to care passionately about. Lyddie is a young millworker in nineteenth century America and one does not forget her just because the book ends. Cynthia Voigt promises to remain highly popular with her final Tillerman story, **Seventeen Against the Dealer** (Lions) and her latest novel, **David and Jonathon** (Harper Collins), as does Tessa Duder for her stories about a champion girl swimmer. **Alex and Alex in Winter** hold similar appeal for primary readers. Books like these prove yet again that 'the fake characters we read about will evaporate like the morning dew, but the real ones, the true ones, will haunt us for the rest of our days.'<sup>6</sup>

### ... I like funny ones

Humour is a universal element in the popularity stakes. So many children, when asked, 'what sort of books do you like?' will answer, 'I like funny ones.' The success of Paul Jennings, Roald Dahl, Duncan Ball, Max Dann and Robin Klein reflects this.

Paul Jennings, for example, deliberately uses humour and good plots to entertain: 'Most importantly, I want [children] to come to like books, to think that books are

fun... Secondly, I want [them] to have a good time... it's my contribution to their happiness.'<sup>7</sup> His latest collection of short stories, **Unmentionable** (Puffin), continues this tradition. He, however, sees his books as a beginning rather than an end, 'so that [children] can move on to something else.'<sup>8</sup>



Duncan Ball's books, including his trilogy about Selby, the talking dog, (Angus and Robertson), remain very popular, especially as the latter can also be read as short stories. With **Stanley in Space** (Mammoth), Jeff Brown continues his funny series about Stanley, the boy who was squashed flat and carried around in an envelope by his parents. Morris Gleitzman's books, **Misery Guts** and its sequel **Worry Warts** (Piper Australia), are proving popular with older readers, helped by the fact that the stories are not too long and the print a good size.

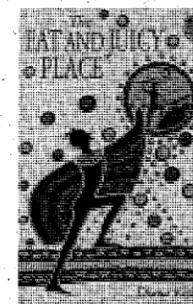
Amongst very young children, Martin Waddell's delightful and beautifully produced books combine soft humour with warmth and love. **Can't You Sleep Little Bear?**, **The Park in the Dark** and **Farmer Duck** (Walker Books) are just some examples of his work. Bob Graham's **Rose Meets Mr Wintergarden** (Viking) and Libby Gleeson's **Where's Mum?** (Ashton Scholastic) are sure to prove popular for the same reasons. Again, Feinberg and Gamble's **The Magnificent Nose and Other Marvels** (Little Ark Books) is a wonderful collection of five stories for younger readers, aptly illustrated and humorously told.



### Telling the truth

Finally, honesty seems to be another ingredient capable of making a book popular and memorable. According to Gillian Rubinstein, children want to be told the truth because this makes them feel strong.<sup>9</sup> Her books such as **Skymaze** (Omnibus), the sequel to **Space Demons**, are certainly widely read. A recent work popular with teenagers that reflects an admirable honesty is **Peter** (Omnibus) by Kate Walker, dealing with a boy's struggle to establish his sexual identity and involving the issue of homosexuality. For a tale of human frailty and tragedy within relationships, David Metzenthen's **Lee Spain** (Ashton Scholastic) is similarly frank and is sure to be of interest to older readers. A stunning picture book which deals with the confrontation of human fear is **The Wolf** (Viking). Margaret Babalet's text and Jane Tanner's illustrations are unforgettable in their portrayal of human terror. This book is well worth experiencing quietly on one's own before sharing with children.

It becomes clear that the range of children's books available is enormous and that the quality of many is outstanding. Parents will frequently comment that they themselves 'mostly read kids' books now' as they catch up on years of 'missing out'. They are often as excited as their own children at the discoveries they are making.



### Across curriculum

How then do we encourage children to read book such as these? Making them physically available in the classroom, library and home is an obvious place to start and one which requires financial commitment. Using such books across the curriculum also has very exciting potential. **Rainstones** by Jackie French (Angus and Robertson), for example, is an excellent collection of short stories for primary readers which evoke Australia's physical environment beautifully.

**Number the Stars** by Lois Lowry (Lions), **Let the Celebrations Begin** by Margaret Wild and Julie Vivas (Omnibus), **Park's Quest** by Katherine Paterson (Puffin), **My Hiroshima** by Junko Morimoto (Angus and Robertson), **Little Brother** by Allan Baillie (Mammoth), **So Far From the Bamboo Grove** by Y.K. Watkins (Puffin) and **The Little Riders** by Margaret Shemin (Walker) are just a few of the poignant accounts of war available in 'children's' literature.

Wonderful insights into social history can be found in Helen Forrester's books about her own life in Liverpool, England during the Depression and the following years. Similarly, Robin Klein's **All in the Blue Unclouded Weather** (Viking) brings to life a family of Australian girls growing up in the 1940s.

**The China Coin** by Allan Baillie (Viking) is highly effective in illuminating the events of Tianamen Square in China. Margaret Early's superb version of **William Tell** (Walter McVitty) recounts this tale in glowing colour.

Sally Morgan's books for children, based on her novel **My Place** (Freemantle Arts Centre Press) and Diana Kidd's **The Fat and Juicy Place** (Angus and Robertson) would be invaluable for Aboriginal Studies.

### Encouragement by example

The list goes on and the possibilities are endless. But there remains one way of encouraging children to read that is the most winning of all. And that is to read ourselves. For 'we cannot give them what we do not have. We cannot share what we do not care for deeply ourselves.'<sup>10</sup>. Rereading on our own, reading aloud with children of all ages, and talking or writing together about books is never wasted time. A book shared with enthusiasm is given twice the ability to please. The power of words increases when experienced together: comedy is funnier, sadness deeper, wonder and joy

more uplifting. A story has the ability to bind us together in a profound way. And if we are enjoying books like this, then we will truly be able to say, 'Read it because it's one of the best stories you'll ever read. Read it because it's one of the best stories I ever read...'<sup>11</sup>

Happy reading! ♦

1. Paterson Katherine **Gates of excellence**. Dutton, 1988, p 17
2. Paterson Katherine **Op cit**. p 17
3. Carson, Rachel **The sense of wonder**. Harper & Row, 1969 pp42-43
4. from Paterson, Katherine **Gates of excellence**. Dutton, 1988 p 51
5. Collins, Wilkie from **The booklover's birthday book**. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1984
6. Paterson Katherine **Op cit** p 59
7. Jennings, Paul **No kidding**. Pan Macmillan, 1991 p 121
8. Jennings, Paul **Op cit**. p 123
9. Rubinstein, Gillian in **No kidding**. (Op cit) p 237
10. Paterson, Katherine **Op cit** p 17
11. Paterson, Katherine **Op cit**. p 17

## Stop press: CIN and its subsets

SCIS users will by now have received a letter from the Curriculum Corporation informing them that the services associated with the Curriculum Information Network and its subsets will cease from 30th June 1992. The only subscriptions which this will directly affect in 1992 are ACIN and NSCEU both of which were to produce an update after June. The Corporation will negotiate appropriate action in relation to these. There will be no subscriptions to CIN subsets in 1993.

Schools will still have online access to the CIN subsets but State input agencies are unlikely to add any further data to the subsets so schools need to be aware that the information will become increasingly out of date.

New South Wales will continue to add review information to SCIS to support curriculum implementation. These reviews will all be available online and a number will be available through Scan.

New South Wales will also continue to add curriculum documents, with abstracts, to the database although these will no longer be in the NCIN subset. The SCIS Catalogue and Review Team is exploring with the Corporation the best way of making this information accessible to schools and SCIS users will be informed as soon as a decision has been made. ♦

## Archaeological dig: a cooperative approach to information skills

*Pam Wells is Human Resource Development Officer at the Clarence River Education Resource Centre, Grafton. In February she attended the annual conference on cooperative learning across the curriculum. This conference, held in San Francisco, was conducted by the Development Studies Centre and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. The Australian link came via the Australian Association for Cooperative Education.*

*Following is Pam's account of a workshop she attended: Archaeological dig.*



I chose the workshop from the conference prospectus because it seemed to promise an unusual approach to information skills: archaeology for primary students. My memory of the workshop after a month is one of delight – delight at how creative and yet simple ideas can span and connect theory and practice, teacher and students, library and classroom.

The focus for the presenters, Anita Bhat and Linda Oman, was co-operative learning in an integrated unit. They have never read Brian Cambourne or the NSW Information skills document. During the workshop, I became aware of the presence of the three areas: cooperation; conditions of learning; and information skills. The value of their synthesis became clear to me... I hope they will for you.

The notion of integrated units of work is still new in many areas of USA. Their attention is given to teaching strategies, rather than student-centred outcomes. Though I have adapted some of the features to suit our situations, what I want to share with Australian colleagues is the device designed to motivate students and give a high priority to information skills, ie. **Archaeology through the mail- a cooperative interschool exchange.**

Imagine the class receiving a box, origin unstated, wrapping intriguing. Layer by layer a gradual picture of an unknown place and culture begins to emerge. Clues allow the students to use research methods to define the area more clearly. Artifacts made by artisans in another place help the class to visualise a place far away. Finally the ideas, assumptions, inferences and facts are gathered together to enable an informed guess. Then the sealed envelopes are opened to reveal the exact location of the 'dig' and the nature of the inhabitants of the culture.

Imagine the class producing a box which was to be sent to another school. Think of the essential elements in a task such as this- the setting of priorities, the allocation of tasks, the reading, the writing, the visual arts, the conferencing, the modelling, the discussions.

Imaginative? Exciting? Motivating?  
Skills development? Social skills? Individual commitment to a task?

Yes.

### Goals

- How do my personal cultural patterns compare to those in other areas of the world?
- What are social, economic, political and environmental features of my community?
- What factors shape culture?

### Skills

- Higher level thinking skills
- Creative thinking
- Brainstorming
- Information processing  
gathering  
organising
- Expository writing
- Cooperative work in small and large groups

### Process

#### Part 1: What clues can we use to enable us to make decisions about a culture?

- The class is divided into small groups (two, three or four).
- The teacher hands out a set of photographs/pictures, giving an equal number to each group. Each item is identified by a number.
- On paper, the group records any comments they have about the places shown in each item.
- At the teacher's direction, the items are passed from group to group.
- Students then analyse their comments, trying to pinpoint the specifics within each photo which had been the indicators.
- As a whole class the students decide on the major aspects that contribute to the uniqueness of particular cultures.

#### Part 2: The students will begin with the individual, representing what makes them unique.

- The students make a mind map with their name in the middle. The teacher can use their own life or the life of a well-known identity to make a sample map on a chart.
- After completing the map, the students select six aspects of their personal culture and each makes a 'cultural pocket'. Each sheet placed in the pocket is illustrated in some form on the front and has a written piece on the reverse side.
- The pocket is created from materials that represent the essence of the student's world, eg. favourite things, family, quiet thoughts, sports/hobbies, goals/ambitions, school.
- An information sharing structure such as 'Think- Pair - Square', in which listening is the focus, is used to give students feedback.

#### Part 3: The students are introduced to a cultural systems model that will be used for a framework for the activities.

- Referring back to the initial photo lesson, and the personal aspects pockets, the class creates a mind map for 'culture'.
- In pairs the students work on a definition for culture.
- In groups of four, the students fit the information from the mind map, and the data bank from Part 1, into the four areas of the matrix.
- In a *Gallery Tour*, the class reads the resulting sheets (perhaps displayed on the wall).

The teacher models the creation of the artifacts, the clue cards and the sealed envelope.

### Think Pair Square or 1 - 2 - 4

Each student thinks about the task given by the teacher or class. Notes may be made to aid brainstorming.

In a pair, the students take it in turn to tell their ideas, uninterrupted.

When both have had a turn at speaking, they have a short time for clarification, making sure they have the essence of their partner's points.

In a square, or four, the student then shares the ideas of the partner to the small group, unaided by notes. Students are encouraged not to interrupt or ask questions, but to listen until all have had a turn. If the purpose of the exercise was the sharing of facts, then the group could collect and record all ideas.

### Artifacts

These are paper models made and decorated by the students. For instance if we were using the area around the North Coast town of Maclean, we may need sugar cane as an economic element. The students could find a picture of the exact structure of a cane stalk and reproduce it in light card, colouring it with textas.

### Clue card

The idea of this piece is to encourage the students to research until they find something about their area in this topic which is precise. Again using the Maclean example, the card could read: '95% of this product is produced in Queensland. The other 5% is produced in our region.'

### Sealed envelope

The students gather a pot-pourri of information and present it in a one page summary. They can include facts which they found interesting, or anecdotal information. This sheet should include a bibliography, so that the information gathered is proven to be 'true', and the receiving school can verify or extend their newly found knowledge.

### Part 4: The students create an exchange box, using the system's matrix.

- Use a *Round Robin* structure. Each group of four has four papers entitled **social, economic, political, environmental**. These are colour coded so that the four areas are henceforth recognised by their given colour- this is of importance when the pockets are made and need to be gathered together. Individual students are given two minutes on each page, to brainstorm using their own area. Each student takes the last page on which they were working to the class charts and records all ideas.
- With teacher discretion, the class can then narrow down the list (or expand it) so that each of the four areas has the number of items that corresponds to the number of groups in the class. (For a longer time frame, multiples of the number of groups would be acceptable.)
- The items are distributed randomly to the groups. New groups could be formed at this stage if the teacher so chooses.
- The task of each group is to create a clue pocket that illustrates the four items they have been assigned. They share ideas for clues on each.
- The task then becomes individual. Each student takes one of the four items for which they are responsible. The pocket should include two artifacts, one clue card and a sealed envelope which contains factual information.
- When individual clue packets are complete, they are brought back to the group for evaluation. Revisions are made if necessary.

### Part 5

- Each of the groups is asked to contribute one picture (magazine or photograph) that gives clues about the identity of their area. These should be fairly generic, containing features that might generate inferences without giving away the exact location.
- The box that will be sent to the receiving school will contain:
  - an inference picture from each group of four students
  - an individual culture pocket from each student
  - colour coded clue pockets for the area.

### Instructions for the receiving school

1. Teacher should open the box privately and remove the envelope marked 'Pictures for making inferences'. This should be used for the activity in lesson one.
2. Before handing out the clue pockets, the teacher should instruct the students NOT to open the sealed envelopes.
3. Teacher should distribute the **environmental** clue pockets. Each co-operative group should receive one clue pocket. Students will make observations based on the information contained in the pocket. The recorder in the group should list all the comments on a large piece of butcher paper.
4. The pattern should be repeated for each of the **economic, political and social** clue pockets. Time for library research will have to be allowed for.
5. Using all the inferences on their butcher's paper, the groups try to guess the state/region where the mystery box originated. Once all the groups have reached a consensus, the sealed envelopes can be opened and the information therein shared with the class, at the teacher's discretion.
6. Teacher should now hand out the **individual culture** pockets. Groups should discuss the similarity and differences in geography and lifestyle of the two places.

Follow-up activity could include pen-pal allocation and letter writing sessions.

### Links to Cambourne's conditions of learning

#### Immersion

The students have a complete focus for their period of study. The pictorial and factual materials with which they are working remain for ready reference. They will need to collect a variety of non-fiction (perhaps even fiction) resources: whatever they can use to give precise information on their clue cards and in the sealed envelopes.

#### Demonstration

Depending on the class's previous experience, this activity allows the teacher to demonstrate several skills. Teacher and students will work together through the personal mind maps, and the culture matrix.

#### Expectation

Because there is a specific audience in mind, the students become mindful of the quality of their production. They expect to find information which will be appropriate to the task. Teachers and teacher-librarians can assist by providing a generic bibliography and reading material at appropriate levels.

#### Responsibility

The individual, pair and small group work ensures that each student becomes an active learner. The individual accountability from assigned tasks is strengthened by the ownership the students feel: it is their ideas which are being developed.

#### Approximation

The non-verbal artifacts allow a broad range of expertise. The clue cards are designed so that the information is concise, but exact. The sealed envelopes allow the student to give the best information they can, in a form which represents an extension of their previous efforts.

### Gallery Tour

When a class recording is complete and the groups have all contributed, the gallery tour allows time for everyone to survey the results.

The good manners of an art gallery are observed: quiet inner voices; slow movement; and reflection time.

A whole class discussion can follow, or perhaps the small groups can re-form for comments to be shared.

**Round Robin**  
For this particular lesson, the four aspect titles are printed on the top of separate pages. Each member of the group begins with one page and for a few minutes, writes ideas/points/opinions. At the teacher's direction, the pages are rotated around the group, each member adding more from their own point of view. The group's page information is then recorded on a class chart. There are several variations of this structure, allowing for different techniques of gathering information, and for sharing of the information collected.

**Practice and engagement**

This project provides many opportunities for the reading and writing of non-fiction resources. The students will be working from the known to the unknown. In giving a focus and prestige to their own area, the students continually alternate between the real world and the texts.

**Response**

Feedback is given in a variety of forms. The pairs can share and check; the small groups evaluate the work and praise the effort; the teacher's involvement with the student-initiated efforts gives worth to their endeavours, in addition to supportive encouragement.

**Links to information skills****Identifying and locating information sources**

This unit presents a wide range of resources for the students' use. An agreed-upon basic bibliography could be extended by the use of travel brochures, government department publications, local historical society records and newspaper files.

**Acquiring information**

Notetaking will form an important part of the students' workload. From a range of information, they will need to keep a record of the precise facts, and where they were found for later reference, if those facts are finally chosen for inclusion in the pockets.

**Organising Information**

Working with the information, honing it to a one sentence clue, forces the student to analyse and prioritise. The decoration of the pockets allows the ideas to be synthesised.

**Communicating Information**

The underlying theme is archaeology – communicating ideas through space and time. The period spent on this project will entail several presentation sessions: written, spoken informally and formally.

**Editors note:**

Pam has generously agreed to be available for clarification of any sections of this article, and to be a 'meeting point' for teachers who want to arrange a school with which to 'have a dig'.

**Links to co-operative education strategies**

For me, the basic difference between group work and cooperative learning lies in the feedback to the teacher. That is, if a structure or strategy has worked for the group, then the teacher can be assured that each student in the group has participated in the various activities- skills development. For example, if a Think-Pair-Square has been completed, then the teacher knows that each child prepared a statement to share, spoke the ideas clearly, listened to the ideas of another, negotiated the main points with the partner, and then was able to report on that summary to another pair. Assessment is an inbuilt factor, as are the principles of individual accountability, positive interdependence and simultaneous interaction.

This is particularly evident in the use of structures for the Archaeological Dig.

The links between the practical activity and the three theory domains of conditions of learning, acquisition of information skills and cooperative learning are clear.

The advantages to the outcomes for students can be imagined. A teacher and teacher-librarian team working together could create a positive learning environment that would challenge and re-focus their ideas on integrated activities.

The idea came from the U.S.A; perhaps Australia can help to make it a global experience.❖

**⊙ Assessment of student achievement. It's a jigsaw puzzle!****Need to know**

Assessment is an important component in the education process. There are several purposes for assessing. A few are outlined here.

Teachers need to know what they should be teaching. Without assessment teachers would not be guided towards those areas in which students need to develop.

Teachers need to know whether they are doing a good job. Assessment of student achievement can be used by teachers to determine whether they have achieved what they set out to do. By reflecting on the results of students in a course of work, (without dismissing the result as an inherent quality of the student, beyond the control of the teacher) a teacher can decide to what extent the delivery and content of the program of work has met the needs of the students. Teachers may ask themselves, 'Were the goals too high for the students? Were the activities interesting enough for the students not to fall asleep? Did the program actively involve the students in learning?'

Parents are entitled to know how well their children are doing. Parents have a vested interest in their children, whether it is to see that their children are educated well enough to support them in later life or whether the child will be capable of leaving home and supporting him or herself without needing financial assistance. Whatever the reason, parents are interested in what their children are doing at school and how well they are doing it.

Students are entitled to know how others perceive them. As the recipients of education students need to be kept informed as to their progress and the directions or emphases which they should be putting on certain areas of the curriculum. Assessment informs study patterns. Just as a student should be informed of the program of work they are to undergo, and the outcomes they are expected to reach, they should be told of their assessments, not only after the course is finished but during the course. There could be considerable debate here that if a student is told they are doing very well in a particular course that they will not apply themselves as much for the duration of the course. It is the responsibility of the teacher to encourage student application but this is not necessarily achieved by withholding assessments or threatening students with failure simply to ensure that they will keep up the standards.

Society in general has a right to know what the future decision makers will be like. Student assessment, when aggregated to talk about entire cohorts, provides a picture of the capabilities of students in general. As with the individual teacher or school when the results of students are looked at, the community can make decisions about education on the basis of assessments made and reported on whole cohorts. Decisions may involve whether or not to support a government initiative to strengthen a particular part of the curriculum.

**More than opinion**

Assessment is a phenomenon which has been with the human race since it began and people continue to engage in assessments all the time. For example, here is a brief excerpt from a conversation outside a cinema.

'What did you think of the movie?'

'It was good.'

'I thought it was terrible.'

The two people involved in this conversation saw the same film and yet they came up with a different assessment of the film. They may not have had any formal training in film appreciation and for the purposes of their



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conversation they did not need any, yet they were able to make assessments.

The differences of opinion in the example above do not seem to be of great consequence. Each of the participants was entitled to an opinion and each opinion may be equally valid. However, what if the example had been situated outside a staffroom and between two teachers?

'What did you think of Alison's performance on the test?'

'It was good.'

'I thought it was terrible.'

Under these circumstances, alarm bells would be ringing. How can two teachers differ in opinion over a student's performance? Surely the performance can only lead to one interpretation.

### Ideal conditions

Education is often criticised for not being as professional in its ability to assess as, say, medicine or law. In medicine, a doctor's diagnosis and prognosis must be accurate. The patient's life is at risk if accuracy cannot be achieved.

In law, judgements are made by juries or judges and a person's future is dependent on those judgements. As a society we expect that the assessments of doctors and judges are accurate.

The thing that sets education apart from law and medicine is that in law and medicine the ideal conditions are known. The ideal condition of a human body is known and has been recorded in numerous texts. The heart rate should be this. Blood pressure should be this. Cholesterol levels and weight should be within these boundaries. Appropriate scales have been developed and are used by the profession.

In law, the ideal is also known. Legislation tells us what is correct and incorrect behaviour in our society. Stealing is an offence. Trespassing is an offence. The laws of our nation have been recorded and our lawkeepers refer to these parameters when assessing an individual's behaviour.

In education however, the ideal is not known. There are many theories which espouse what is believed to be the ideal but these are not consistent and they are not produced as a single record. Nor is the application of treatment as one could argue happens in the other two professions.

There is a belief in society that it is the responsibility of the teaching profession to be accurate and precise in what it says about student performance. If we consider the responsibilities of teachers to their students then the claim that a teacher must be an accurate assessor is well founded. Teachers are expected to assess student achievement with validity, reliability and accuracy. After all, much of a young person's future depends on how they are assessed in school. And yet, in general, teachers have had little formal training in the art of assessment. Little has been done to teach assessment to the teaching profession.

An argument could go that if people can assess in social situations then surely they can assess in an educational setting. There is a simple flaw in this argument. The assessments we use in our daily social lives are extremely subjective and within any group, assessments on the same topic will vary, (and will be expected to vary).

In education as elsewhere, assessment is both an act and a product. It involves collecting evidence, analysing that evidence and using the analysis to form an opinion.

The assessments a teacher makes are expected to be a true picture of a student's achievements. Given the complexity of the task, one could suggest as I am doing here, that the picture of student achievement which a teacher hopes to prepare is in fact a jigsaw puzzle.

How then should a teacher assess?

### Before, during and after

Assessment should be an ongoing process. For a long time assessment was considered as that thing teachers did at the end of a program of work to see whether their students had learnt what they should have and consequently to see how well the program of work had been taught.

It is recognised now that there is considerable benefit in assessing student achievement and performance before and during a program of work to determine the entry level of students and to determine any changes which might be necessary during the course of the program. Diagnostic assessment provides the teacher with the entry level of students. By knowing the end point in a course of study (which of course is determined through an assessment of what it is people should know) and knowing the entry point, teachers are able to develop appropriate programs of work, which will take into consideration not only the content, knowledge

**'Teachers are expected to assess student achievement with validity, reliability and accuracy. And yet, in general, teachers have had little formal training in the art of assessment.'**

**'Assessing through a single task or a battery of tasks at the end of a program of work is like trying to do a jigsaw puzzle in one go.'**

skills and understandings which are to be learnt but also the degree of understanding and skill which the student should be developing.

Formative assessment is carried out during the course of a program of work and helps the teacher plot the most appropriate course for the student to take. The course may go back to the beginning to start again or it may change tack to take into consideration those elements of the student which have emerged during the course of the program and which will help tell the teacher which way a particular student learns best.

Summative assessment at the end of a program of work will tell the teacher whether or not a student has achieved the goals which were set. Summative assessment can also act as a springboard to show the teacher where to take the student next.

Given that assessment is such an important issue it remains a puzzle as to why in syllabus documents and in teachers' programs, assessment is so often relegated to a page at the end of the document. As students ourselves, in post-graduate courses, one of the first things we look for in a course outline are the assessment tasks and how the course is going to be assessed. Perhaps the reason for its 'afterthought' status is that, even though it is a vital component in the education process, it is an area which causes more headaches and is the hardest of the processes in education to come to grips with.

### Seeing the whole picture

The notion of continuous assessment is not as daunting as it first appears. Teachers are assessing students every time they observe a particular behaviour or response from a student. These assessments are often stored in the teacher's mind. The real question is how often a teacher should formalise these assessments by recording them in some way. The answer is: as often as necessary to ensure that a full picture of a student's achievements is established.

Assessing through a single task or a battery of tasks at the end of a program of work is like trying to do a jigsaw puzzle in one go. It's best to do a bit at a time. Piece together the edges, then the sky then the rose bush or whatever before trying to put the whole picture together. If the puzzle is in a thousand pieces don't try to do it in single setting. Your judgement will become cloudy as the pieces start to look the same, just as report cards tend to do in that week before they are due.

Assessments should match the frame of reference around which the program of work has been designed. If a teacher has used one method of instruction during a course of work then the assessment tasks which are used to assess student achievement should reflect that method of instruction.

A teacher needs to be creative when deciding how to collect evidence about a student's performance. This is essential if teachers are to perform an honest, valid, accurate assessment. In being creative the teacher turns the assessment process into a problem solving task.

Being creative involves understanding what it is that is being taught in the program of work, the purpose of the program of work and the intended outcome of the program of work. The assessment task or tasks should reflect each element of the program of work from the frame of reference adopted in setting the program to the strategies adopted to teach the program of work.

For example, it would not be suitable to assess a student's attitudes to reading by counting the number of library books borrowed in a term. This does not tell you whether the books are being read, what sorts of books are being borrowed, whether the student is satisfied with what is being read and a host of other elements which go together to make up an attitude to reading.

Each assessment strategy employed is like a single piece of the jigsaw puzzle which, when put together, reveals the full picture.

### Appropriate strategies

Selecting appropriate assessment strategies does not mean picking one or two at random from the techniques listed in the final section of a syllabus document or a program.

The selection process involves:

- being aware of the context within which the assessment is to take place and being able to react to that context;
- being aware of the wide variety of evidence gathering and analytical processes which can be employed and being able to change those processes and methods as the need arises;
- being able to redesign assessment methodologies to fit in with the inherent qualities of those involved in the assessment process;
- being receptive to the issues involved in the assessment process as they are seen by the other participants.

In considering the most appropriate assessment strategies to match the course, the teacher is ensuring that each piece of the jigsaw puzzle interlocks without any of those annoying little gaps which tell you that you've got something wrong.

It is useful to employ a number of assessment strategies when looking at a single element of a student's achievements. The student who does not voice opinions in class may very well be able to write those opinions in an essay of extremely high quality. If you are assessing the knowledge of a student, do not

confuse the process of transmitting that knowledge with the knowledge itself. Let the student have the opportunity to express that knowledge in a variety of ways. The student who participates actively in groupwork may not be able to achieve results when working alone. If you are assessing the processes make sure that is what you are looking at by observing the process in a variety of contexts. Not just any blue piece of the jigsaw puzzle will go into the top left hand corner. It has to be the right blue piece, with the right shape the right way up and the right little wisp of cloud.

Both formal and informal assessments should be used to develop a full picture. It is dangerous to rely on one or the other of these types of assessments. Formal assessments by their nature occur less frequently and as such may not pick up on an achievement which occurred outside the time frame and the scope of the formal assessment. Informal assessments rely heavily on what a teacher observes. It is impossible to observe everything which is happening in an active classroom all the time. Some students demand more attention than others and so the teacher cannot guarantee that all achievements are being noticed. Formal assessments provide an opportunity for all students to be assessed on the same task under the same conditions. Informal assessments can be used to supplement formal assessments. In a jigsaw puzzle it is not wise to rely on systematically analysing and categorising each piece by its shape and the colours on the piece. Sometimes it is helpful to say, 'That looks like a piece of the rose bush,' and set it aside to confirm your intuition later.

### The audience

Assessment methods need to be appropriate to the needs of the audience for which they are being made. Earlier, I talked about the purposes of assessment and mentioned a number of audiences; teachers, students parents and the community. When preparing assessments the audience to whom the assessment is to be reported should be kept in mind. For students the feedback might be virtually immediate with verbal comments about the teacher's observations and the

possible directions in which the teacher thinks the student should be heading.

For parents the opportunities may not be as ample.

Quite often teachers mistake the lack of communication from parents and the lack of understanding about what is happening in the school as a lack of interest. Teachers need to be more effective in the area of communicating with parents. Parents do get confused by the jargon of teachers when talking about their children.

**'... the focus of school and parents should be made aware of this.'**

'Johnny has some trouble with his diphthongs but otherwise seems to be doing alright.'

'His dipwhatsies. Really! Should we see a doctor?'

Parents have not been involved with the education system in a lot of cases since their own days at school. They have memories of the sorts of reports they were sent home. Some may have memories of the tests that they did. Most will not be aware of the different types of assessment which may be employed in a school, or if they are aware find it far more comfortable to dismiss the techniques as 'new fangled ideas which may or may not work and why don't kids learn what we did anyhow?'

Teachers have the responsibility of explaining the assessment methods which they employ in the classroom and the reporting format which they will use. It is much easier to fall back on the grades which parents received when they were in school, but the focus of school has changed and parents should be made aware of this.

The issue of reporting assessments is a complex one and deserves to be addressed at another time. It is, however, important to remember that:

when the jigsaw puzzle is completed  
when the teacher has the full picture of a student's achievements,

you cannot take the picture and hang it on the wall.

The teacher cannot simply show that picture to others.

The puzzle will not stay there in one piece. It will fall apart.

The assessments will not hold together by themselves.

A backing sheet of contact or glue is necessary to hold all the pieces of the puzzle together so it can be put on display.

Strategies need to be developed to ensure that the teacher's assessments of a student are clearly communicated. ♦

## ⊗ A closer look at student work samples

Michele Bruniges is Australian Education Council National Mathematics Profiles Coordinator. The following article, which is the first in a series on resource-based learning, is a practical view of some aspects of assessment, and is thus closely linked with the preceding article.

The sound of the bell at the beginning of each school day acts as a catalyst, putting into action the thought and physical preparation agonised over during the nights of programming in the weeks before.

Mark the roll, collect the absentee notes, check the bookclub money and hand out the swimming school permission notes. All this constitutes the first hurdle of the day.

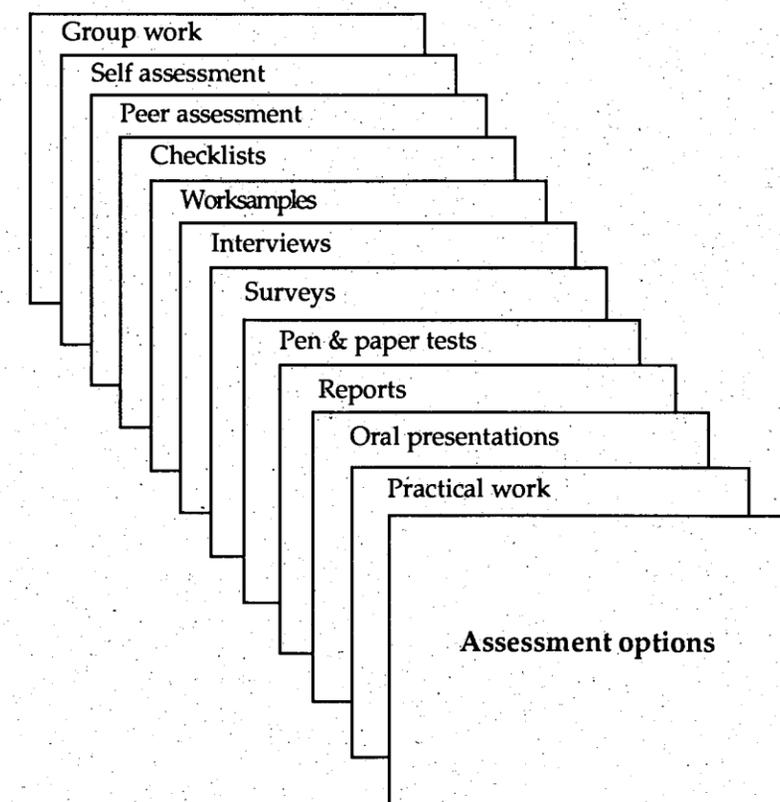
By recess, you have accumulated the handwriting of those students that you didn't check during the lesson and a basket full of all shaped and sized projects to assess.

These very projects, the ones that are awkward to carry to the car in one trip, are one form of student work products which provide a rich source of evidence regarding student achievement. The time taken in identifying the salient features in each project is well spent in constructing profiles of individual student progress and achievement. This same principle of identifying the salient features of student work products can be transferred into any key learning area, including Mathematics.

At the heart of the assessment process lies the accumulation of a range of evidence collected by the use of a variety of techniques over a period of time. This evidence enables the classroom practitioner to make decisions, some of which will include:

- identifying strengths and weaknesses in individual achievement
- providing the basis for future programming development.

Some of the assessment options available include;



I would like to take this opportunity to illuminate the assessment option of student work samples.

### Investigation

The students in this year 4/5 class were asked to investigate how many drops of water would fit on coins of various sizes. This particular class had prior experience in investigative activities.

*What I had to do*

*find out how many drops of water fit on a 1 and 2 cent piece*



Making predictions by using estimation

Organising & recording information in tables

	heads	
	est	res
2c	5	49
50c	20	61
1c	4	19

Collecting data in an attempt to validate predictions

	tails	
	est	res
1c	4	41
2c	6	52

Recording outcomes from simple experiments

Heads, 1 cent = 19  
Tails, 1 cent = 39 41  
Heads, 2 cent = 49  
Tails, 2 cent = 52  
Heads, 50 cent = 61

Rounding number to the nearest 10

*What happened*  
*I usually got from 30 to 40 drops on a 1 cent piece*

*What I found out*  
*My estimate (5) was miles away from the result.*

Commenting upon predictions in the light of results

Calling upon prior experience obtained from participating in investigations of this type, this student has been able to systematically carry out and record the findings of the investigation, without teacher assistance. At this stage of the investigation this work sample provides evidence related to the annotated features.

Once the students had recorded their independent findings, they participated in a small group discussion with peers and were required to generate a group report for presentation to the class.

Sometimes we unconsciously structure our activities in such a way that we do not give the chance for students to demonstrate what they are capable of doing. Time and care should be taken to ensure that a balance of structured and open-ended task experiences are provided and that we consider the most appropriate form of assessment for the task.

Being aware of alternative forms of assessment, we are better equipped to make informed decisions regarding the appropriate matching of what, why and how we are assessing. The use of a variety of assessment strategies ensures that our pool of evidence is not stagnating through the over use of one particular treatment. ♦

## ☉ Caring is central

*Sue Britton is teacher-librarian at Coolamon Central School.*

Ever heard of landing on your feet? Well that is what happened when I was appointed as teacher-librarian to Coolamon Central School.

Coolamon is a town of 1133 people in the wheat/sheep belt of NSW. Situated 45 kms northwest of Wagga, Coolamon benefits from the services of Wagga but maintains its small town features of civic pride, friendly people and community spirit.

Our school represents all these features and is, therefore, a great place to work. Being a central school, it was a K-10 school when I first became teacher-librarian, but over the past 2 years we have introduced years 11 and 12. In this time I have had the fun only a teacher-librarian would understand – ordering heaps of books for years 11 and 12 with an almost unlimited budget!!

Our students number 311 and we have 24 teachers on our staff. They vary in age and interests across a broad spectrum and make staff 'encounters' lively and interesting. The teacher-librarian job is full-time but, to make the timetable work with Whole School Staffing, I usually take on a few extra classes; this year it is General Studies, but in the past it has been PE!. I have wonderful clerical assistants who always pitch in when we have the inevitable 'Library Days', even down to being covered in pink fairy floss on 'International Pink Day'. This combination of an enthusiastic, caring staff combined with the freshness and zest for life of kinders through to the solid leadership provided by year 12 mean Coolamon Central School is unique - people always make the place.

Space-wise the library does not fare quite so well. But what teacher-librarian ever has enough room? The library was built in 1975 and is the size of one and a half classrooms. It has an office and reading room leading from it, and is next to the staffroom. The old workroom is the reference section year 12 study area. We are right next door to the staffroom and after working in this situation I feel teacher-librarians should insist that staffrooms adjoin libraries in all new building plans. It's noisier, but staff see the library and more importantly see the teacher-librarian as an everyday feature of their school.

We have a collection of about 10 000 items – sounds a lot but in a K-12 school it's not all that wonderful, but it is getting better!

Worrying about library collections was the last thing in my mind when I originally trained in the Social Sciences. I worked in the early 70s at Burwood Girls and Kingswood High. When my husband got a Principal's position at Caragabal (Western Region) I had to resign and become casual (RFF and Library).



*Library morning tea, each fortnight, is a very effective way of getting everyone into the library regularly, and people are more receptive to library information over a cup of tea than at a staff meeting. The Public Works builders join us and now use OASIS Enquiry.*

I went from year 12 Economics to kinder craft and Library! It was time for retraining!! I then completed a Graduate Diploma in School Librarianship at Charles Sturt University. I found the workload very high but I was learning so much that I couldn't give it up, though the thought frequently crossed my mind. During this time my two children, Ben and Emma were born. They are both avid readers and cost me a fortune for books. Neither like libraries where they have to return books!

We moved to Coolamon in 1987 where I was casual for 2 years and became teacher-librarian in 1989. I'm a member of RIVPAT (Riverina Professional Association of Teacher-Librarians) and really recommend joining a local group if you can. It is great to be able to talk to someone who empathises when I'm working on my own in schools. RIVPAT has meetings at cluster level but their main objective is to organise courses for local teacher-librarians. These have been not only a great help in terms of inservicing but are also a good socialising time. They also unify us – and there is strength in unity.

Professionally, a central school teacher-librarian has a real challenge. Kinder and year 1 come to library 4

times per week and we 'talk books' (fiction for kinder and non-fiction for year 1). This involves teaching library aims and objectives for kinder and year 1 on an immersion basis. All other primary classes come to library 1 or 2 times a week and we have CPPT running at all levels.

Some secondary staff have used the CPPT option and I've had the pleasure of working with all secondary grades at various times. Booking extra classes into the library can be a balancing act but there is always a way, though some are easier to find than others.

My biggest problem at a central school is also, I feel, the biggest advantage. How do you fit a kinder bookshare in with a year 9 to watch a video and six year 12 students on a study period? It gets full, frustrating and frantic but it's all worthwhile when a year 12 works SCIS for a new student in year 7 or finds a book on ants for a kinder student. I guess working in a central school library is similar to running a large family.

Still on the family theme, one of the really great things about central schools in general is Whole School Staffing. Under this system teachers with various expertise teach across the school and thus year 5 may have a semester of Home science or Industrial arts. Kinder looks forward to their weekly map visit from Mr Suidgeest - the Social science teacher - while secondary students really benefit from Music, Art and Sport expertise from the primary staff.

Whole School Staffing also makes for great 'days'. Here the whole school (K-12) celebrate certain events, for instance Environment Day, Jump Rope for Heart, Maths Day and an Art Fiesta. Again a family atmosphere pervades and I'm sure happy, secure environments make for great learning.

To help manage our resources our school became involved in OASIS Library. We have had OASIS for about 18 months and have been on circulation for 6. Our collection was entered relatively quickly because our staff all helped get SCIS and ISBN numbers for the free SCIS downloads. Most gave me about a week's

free time (RFF and free periods) and helped break the back of the work. My clerical aides have been superb and came in during holidays to help me, enabling us to get as far as we have.

Resources are always a concern in any library and being relatively isolated I find it hard to fill the many requests for items as well as I'd like. I certainly have found the Education Centre in Wagga particularly helpful, and the Riverina Community Library with its mobile service to Coolamon has proved invaluable.

Making things work is always my priority. Technology helps me to manage our resources, whilst the co-operation of the staff enables the library to be seen as a useful, interesting place. My job is very busy and requires constant change and challenge. Without a doubt it is the best job I have ever had. ♦



Kinder bookshare

Year 12 General studies

## VIEWPOINTS

### Awareness ... Reaction ... Response ... be in it!

Ross J Todd is Lecturer, Department of Information Studies University of Technology, Sydney.

**Australia as an information society: the role of libraries / information networks: Report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies**, tabled in the House of Representatives in September 1991, is a landmark report generally welcomed by the information sector. It affirms the reality of a society without historical precedent - an information society. It highlights the important development of information services as an integral part of the economy; it asserts the fundamental role of information in promoting quality of life; it recognises the key role of information networks in the equitable provision of access to information; and recommends the establishment of a national library and information policy.

The report makes a number of key recommendations:

- that a national library policy be developed and a detailed statement made to the Parliament about the adequacy of existing library and information networks in meeting Australia's information needs
- that funding for public libraries be reviewed, and that a funding program be adopted to overcome the unevenness in library networks and to facilitate development of new services and introduction of new technologies
- that funding be specifically targeted for libraries to provide information services to groups with special needs such as Aborigines and the disabled
- that State Governments be encouraged to examine the possibility of opening school libraries to the public and to liaise with public libraries to coordinate access to book materials, especially in remote areas
- that State Governments provide supplementary funding to public libraries to assist with the development of services provided for secondary students to compensate the public libraries for the cross subsidisation currently being provided to the education sector
- that the Department of Employment, Education and Training fund a research project into ways that information literacy can be integrated into curricula at all levels of education, including teacher education
- that the following principles be adopted:
  1. equality of service based on reasonable need
  2. library services provided free of charge
  3. cooperative efforts of all types of information agencies working towards a commonly accepted and planned system, and expanded and extended through this cooperation

School executives, teacher-librarians and classroom teachers are urged to study this document carefully and respond to it. From the perspective of the school library, and particularly in the context of the educative role of schooling, the report raises a number of concerns. At the outset, the title of the report is somewhat misleading.

The report's central focus appears to be public libraries, with other types of libraries and information agencies given only peripheral and superficial treatment. The report projects a perception that school libraries are almost a surrogate of public libraries or in the future will function that way. Further, it appears that the information network espoused in the report is in fact a public library network with other libraries subsumed under the umbrella of the public libraries.

In addition, the report fails to recognise or explore the implications of the key educative role of the school library – that of providing learning opportunities for students to develop information skills and use them confidently and competently throughout their lifetime in an information society. While the report identifies:

- the need for examining ways in which information literacy can be integrated with curriculum at all levels of education, including teacher education
- the necessity of enhancing the community's use of information
- the need for individuals to make sense of the information explosion that surrounds them, and to be able to access and use with confidence and competence a variety of information sources and the necessary technology and
- the need for information systems to impart information skills

it does not recognise or affirm the vital role of primary and secondary schools in meeting these needs through information skills programs. Nowhere in the document is it identified that schools, through school libraries, represent a significant potential for the delivery of quality information services across Australia, and that effective education in information skills in schools is key to bridging the gap between the information rich and the information poor, the basis of 'an informed citizenry'. (p. 20)

It is thus disturbing that the relationship between the school library and the public library in the report is projected somewhat as the school library being subsumed under the umbrella of a public library network, and not as one of partnership and equality. (After all, there are some 10,036 schools offering school library services to a captive audience of 3,031,387 students and 198,568 staff [1989 figures], as opposed to 500 public libraries on some 1,800 locations.) The recognition of an equal relationship will ensure that the development of a network of libraries and information agencies across Australia will not merely focus on the delivery of information products and services, but also give emphasis to meeting the information needs, including the vital educative process, of all Australians. The report, in this context, fails to recognize or respond to the real need of adequately funding school libraries so that they can effectively fulfil their educative role and so minimise the drain on public library resources. Rather, it side-steps the issue by recommending that supplementary funding be provided to public libraries to support their already overstretched services.

We need to be proactive in any discussion of funding for school libraries so that appropriate information services and further development of information skilling can occur. Such funding will ensure that schools are able to participate in resource sharing networks such as interlibrary loans, document delivery, selective dissemination of information services, national bibliographic networks and to develop a local resource sharing infrastructure. Such funding will also ensure that school libraries acquire appropriate information technology, have access to online databases and CD-ROM technologies. Such funding will facilitate the more effective targeting of educational needs of special groups within the school - such as students from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal students, distance education students, and those students with learning difficulties.

As teacher-librarians and educators, we need to be aware of and alert to events happening in the information arena of which we are a vital part. We need to react with initiative and insight, and to respond with a sense of urgency. And we need to reaffirm our commitment to the belief that 'the clever country' has its foundations in the process of school education, and that, without it, students will not achieve their full potential. ♦

#### Acknowledgements

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## MANAGEMENT

### CD-ROM update: networking

*Peter Day is teacher-librarian at Fairfield Heights Public School.*

CD-ROM stands for Compact Disk Read Only Memory. This technology allows significantly large amounts of information to be stored optically on compact disks and accessed through a CD-ROM player attached to a computer. More detailed information on CD-ROM may be found in Scan 9/6 and 10/1. This article, however, will discuss some new issues that concern the application of this technology in our schools.

The potential of CD-ROM technology in both primary and secondary school libraries is now becoming increasingly evident. The number of school libraries either setting up or planning to purchase a CD-ROM, along with the amount, range and quality of software, is increasing considerably. With the dramatic nature of change associated with modern technology, significant developments have occurred within the last year or so which may affect your purchasing decision.

Networking one or many CD-ROM players is now a workable option using MS-DOS computers, ie IBM compatible. Software has been developed where information stored on compact disk can be accessed by many users simultaneously (over 200) on a computer network. The CD-ROM network consists of a fileserver with appropriate networking software, a dedicated computer with the CD-ROM retrieval software on a hardrive, one or a tower of up to 21 CD-ROM players, and numerous workstations. The CD-ROM tower consists of a stack of individual players and is not to be confused with the juke-box style of player which stores a number of compact disks but can only access one at a time.

The great advantage of this system over previous attempts to network CD technology is that many users can access information from different compact disks at the same time as well as from the same disk. Furthermore, users can access the same information from the same disk simultaneously without waiting in line. It is also possible to gain remote access to the network by linking computers with modems through telephone lines.

The setting up of a network as mentioned above will provide a much more cost effective means of information retrieval than to buy a room full of computers with individual CD-ROM players. (NB Buyers will also need to take into account the licensing costs of using published software on a

network). However, where many schools will not be in a position to outlay money to set up a CD-ROM network, a great number of libraries are already developing OASIS Library networks. Therefore, much of the hardware necessary for a CD-ROM network may already exist in your library in the form of OASIS workstations.

Although, at present, OASIS does not allow other systems to operate on the network, certain workstations could be used both on a CD-ROM network and as OASIS workstations at different times, subject to demand.

For example, if you use a particular workstation for OASIS data entry for two days per week, it could be used as a CD-ROM workstation for the other three days. Therefore, a major implication for teacher-librarians who are purchasing hardware is to consider the flexibility, versatility and compatibility of technology being used in the library, that is, hardware should be suitable for both OASIS and CD-ROM applications.

If you are purchasing an OASIS workstation consider paying the extra to have a VGA colour monitor. It will not only enhance its performance as an OASIS unit but allow for future use with the colourful graphics associated with CD-ROM. Similarly, when buying a stand-alone computer with a CD-ROM player, have it fitted with a network card so that it may also be used as an OASIS workstation. (OASIS operates with DOS version 3.3)

The future of the direction and nature of technology may be unclear but its relationship with information and, therefore, libraries is most certain. The role of compact disk technology as a means of storing large quantities of information appears to be steadily growing. Soon, many of the hard-paper based resources that we use, from phone books to educational collections, may be commonly available in electronic form. As the costs of downloading information onto compact disk decrease and markets grow, schools and educational organisations may find this method a viable means of storing and circulating much of its information. Similarly, at some time in the future, when a user sits at a computer he or she may be able to choose between OASIS, any number of CD-ROM based programs or a remote database using telecommunications all on the one workstation. ♦

## △Of sleep-overs and such: life in a new school library

*Niki Kallenberger is teacher-librarian at Cherrybrook Technology High School. The first of her articles on the establishment of library and information services in this new school appeared in Scan vol 11 no 1 March 1992.*

'60... 72... 80... 85 — How many year 7 students can sleep in the library? Yes of course you can sleep under the table — tonight anything goes!'



'Do we have anything on rhinoceroses? Well, stand here and you'll be able to see our whole non-fiction collection in a glance! And yes, I think there might just be something on rhinos in this book.'

'Your year 8 history class is working on the Middle Ages? We'd love to have you come to the library, but I'm not sure there would be much point. We only have one book on the Middle Ages.'

'Marina, you want a novel about World War II and the Jewish refugees? I think we might just have something. Let's have a look on the computer and see.' [A list of ten items pleases one student while this teacher-librarian jumps with joy at actually having used OASIS Library Enquiry for an information retrieval task — and at having the sought after items on hand to retrieve!]

'We've put the video in; we've checked the connections at our end — you've checked the settings on the monitor and the plug at yours, and we've tested the batteries in the remote control. I'm sorry, Mr Evans, but all I can suggest is that it looks like the wiring to your lab is faulty. The technician is coming next week and we'll add your room to the list. Now, would you like to bring your class over to the AV workroom to see the video?'

'School captain selection? Of course you can use the library. We'd be thrilled.'

'You have some old books you'd like to donate? How old did you say they are?'

'You've run out of contact? These textbooks just keep

arriving, don't they? It certainly is terrific that so many of you parents are able to come and spend some time at the school covering them. We've ordered more contact but it won't be here till next Wednesday — would you like to stamp some library books or learn how to use the SCIS microfiche instead? But first, how about a cup of coffee?'

'We can use the network, can we? Great, I'll start plugging in straight away.' [Three periods are spent testing outlets.] 'Well, the outlets with green stickers work, and the ones with purple stickers don't — when can the electricians return?'

### It's been a busy term, but we've done a lot

It is now Week 8, Term 1 and Cherrybrook Technology High School is well and truly open. The quotes above may just give you a taste of the joys and frustrations encountered in the library's first term of operation.

Sitting down to write this second article for Scan is a useful exercise for me, for I'll have to stop, think, assess, re-assess and ponder what we have and have not done. Time for reflection has been a precious commodity this term. On the whole though, I have to say I'm delighted in our progress in the library and I think this sentiment is shared by all in the school. Let me summarise our major accomplishments:

#### Accomplishment 1:

The library is beginning to look like a library. Empty shelves are filling (we will have processed approximately 2000 items by the end of term); plants, posters, magazines and the clutter of everyday school life are giving at least half of our large space a 'lived-in' feel. The human dimension is there, too — I have counted 80 or so students during several lunchtimes. The regular early starters await my arrival each morning. Year 11 students come regularly to the library during their study periods (and some of them even study). Staff members come frequently to book videos, borrow equipment (the library is home to our fleet of luggable computers, so we're very popular) and talk about programs and projects. While class visits aren't yet happening in the way you'd expect them in a secondary school, we have had a couple of classes in to work on specific, carefully planned tasks.

We have a good fiction collection, thanks to donations acquired on Open Days last year, the judicious assistance of Robin Morrow from the Children's Bookshop and the overwhelmingly generous donation of a significant and lovingly gathered collection of

adolescent fiction by Pat Morgan, Director, Woollahra Cluster, who is well-known to many Scan readers. Our non-fiction collection is small and patchy, but improving daily. A basic reference collection, a 'starter' collection of periodicals and a growing video collection round off our resources. There are the seeds of a teacher reference collection on top of my filing cabinet, but it and the establishment of other resources, such as a vertical file, online information services and CD-ROM, are a little further down the track.

#### Accomplishment 2:

We're becoming increasingly confident with unfamiliar hardware and software. OASIS Library regularly sends us into shouts of delight as we understand it better and experience the benefits of its power (it occasionally produces another kind of shout, too, but such exclamations are not frequent). Our first SCIS download has given us not only a catalogue, but additional confidence in our own abilities to manage an automated information retrieval system. (And bless you, Curriculum Corporation! Where would we be without SCIS?) Borrowing cards were produced today; by this time next week, our temporary circulation system of notepad and pen should be a thing of the past. Our Video



Command system nearly always does the right thing now — we're learning, and some technical glitches have been repaired.

#### Accomplishment 3:

We have been blessed with assistance of all sorts, and we are making the most of it. Systems and procedures are still rough around the edges, but refinements occur daily. The school executive has recognised that the library needs a lot of support in these early days, and the benefits of nearly 11 school assistant days each week are tremendous. Four school assistants work in the library over each two-week period, and the diversity of skills and experience this brings the library is marvellous. Students are keen and eager, too, and their help with everything from getting rid of rubbish to entering items onto OASIS and from moving furniture

to choosing books is invaluable. Parents and community members are a boon also, and have generously donated hours and hours of their time to help cover textbooks and library resources as well as performing all kinds of other tasks.

### But it hasn't all been smooth sailing

Frustrations? There have been plenty! Everyone who works in or uses the library could probably make a list, but these are my own biggest frustrations:

#### Frustration 1:

Cherrybrook THS has a remarkable staff: enthusiastic, creative and actively seeking new ideas. I feel a constant frustration, wanting to teach alongside and with them,



but acknowledge that collection building has to be a priority for me at this time. We need resources of all kinds to maximise the learning experiences we offer our students and a vital part of my job is to ensure they are carefully chosen and organised. However opportunities such as EAR (enrichment, acceleration and remediation) and Design and technology (DAT) are too exciting to resist.

Cherrybrook THS offers EAR to year 7 (four 40 minute periods a week) and to year 8 (two periods). Staffed by specialists from all key learning areas, EAR affords students the opportunity to embark on learning activities in areas where they have special talents, interests or needs. For a teacher-librarian, EAR offers a marvellous opportunity to become involved in learning activities across the whole curriculum. We are still in the early days of developing EAR policies and programs, but I believe it will have a pronounced student-centred, resource-based flavour, with big implications for school library and information services and for the role of the teacher-librarian. I have to be involved!

Design and technology (DAT) in years 7 and 8 is being programmed in such a way that information skills are

woven into learning activities in a strongly structured way. I am currently working with one DAT teacher to explore the potential of IBM's Linkway as a vehicle to develop student information skills. One of the outcomes of this exploration we hope will be student designed and produced Linkway guides to understanding and using various information resources in the school.

With many more exciting opportunities like the two mentioned above and the infectious enthusiasm of my classroom-based colleagues, you can perhaps understand my frustration at not teaching as much as I'd like.

#### Frustration 2:

The first draft of this paragraph started this way: 'Our local area network (LAN) is not yet working and we are restricted to the number of OASIS workstations we can place a cable's length (just over a metre) from the file server. We can fit three into this space, but it's congested and not very functional. This may sound luxurious to some of you, but remember we don't have any manual systems to fall back on. Our computers are vital to the efficient functioning of all our library systems; we need appropriately located enquiry and circulation workstations. Work on the network is progressing, however, and this frustration may soon be a thing of the past.'

Four days later, things have changed dramatically! The LAN is functioning beautifully (we say with fingers crossed and breath held) and enquiry and circulation terminals can be located where they are needed. OASIS enquiry is theoretically accessible from any workstation on the LAN (which at this point includes the staffroom and two computer rooms), but we haven't tested this yet. Please don't assume I had the expertise to make this happen. Without the technical know-how and time contributed by Mark Watson, Head teacher technology and information, Glenn Dudley, Head teacher maths, and Alan Corven from IBM, we'd be back where we started.

The excitement of this major accomplishment has, however, brought yet another frustration to the surface: computer equipment, ergonomic concerns and standard school library furniture are simply not compatible, as many Scan readers will be all too aware. I'll keep you posted on the resolution (or otherwise) of this frustration.

In a similar vein, the library security system still isn't fully installed. Although decisions have been made about what has to be done, the work has yet to be started. One result is that we aren't yet using all the library entrances as we would like to.

#### Frustration 3:

Time, or perhaps more accurately, a lack of time is my third major frustration. A school day is only 6.5 hours

long (although 8 or 9 is more like it) and a week only 5 days long. I'm exhausted at the end of each, but still want more hours and days! There's so much to do and so much motivation to do more. Rome, I constantly remind myself, wasn't built in a day, and a school library is an equally complicated undertaking. The trouble is, the more we do, the more we want to do!

A negotiated closure of all library services and facilities for three days in the second last week of term will give us time to catch up on some policy and procedures work as well as shift furniture, reorganise shelving, put up more posters, signs, etc. We haven't been closed at all, apart from a day or two in the first week of term and for the occasional lunchtime when I have a meeting to attend.

With the prospect of 6 weeks holiday ahead of me at the end of last year, I blithely volunteered for the Year 8 Adviser's job. Reality has shown it to be a difficult juggling act, but I wouldn't give up the contact this role gives me with students for quids (well, maybe . . .). Each day, and each week are full to overflowing, but the compensations are many. The Year Adviser's job has planted one of my feet firmly in student welfare circles and reminded me yet again how intertwined welfare and curriculum issues are. If teacher-librarians have a serious commitment to maximising learning for all students, we can't ignore welfare issues.

#### Looking ahead

I've heard it said that teachers never work harder than in the first two years of a new school, and experience is proving this to be true! If by this point in our first term the staff, both teaching and ancillary, at Cherrybrook THS are feeling exhausted, it is with good reason. But there is, I sense, an equivalent feeling of satisfaction about what we've achieved in so many areas right across the school. There is, of course, much more to do — though this could undoubtedly be said of any school, regardless of its age. With Cherrybrook THS's official opening scheduled for mid-May, there is increasing impetus to get things done sooner rather than later.

Over a quick cup of coffee in the library workroom someone occasionally says, 'Won't it be great when life here settles into routine?' Somehow I think that time is still a long way off, but I also have to say that I'm not sure it is what we really want. Should a school library effectively playing a vital role in a developing, dynamic school ever settle into routine?

Of one thing, however, I am confident: this year's orientation sleep-over at school for year 7 was a great success. Very early one morning in 1993 I'm sure we'll see many more snoring bodies sprawled throughout the library. It adds a whole new dimension to the purposes of a school library, doesn't it? ♦

## Δ OASIS Diary

Sharon Wilkes is teacher-librarian at Wentworth Falls. The first 'entry' in this diary of OASIS implementation appeared in Scan Vol 11 No 1 March 1992.

### Term 1, 1992

#### Weeks 2 & 3

Record Trial Ordering disks arrive at school. I carefully read accompanying information:

- Step 1: do a rebuild
  - Step 2: full data backup
- There were no problems except that I rebuilt *school* data instead of *library* data.
- Step 3: check system parameters

The computer will not allow access into the library management menu. A print message appears on the screen indicating that files cannot be found. Gail Henley at OASIS Support is unable to solve the problem via the phone and she refers it to Paul Drayton at Parramatta.

The hard disk is believed to be corrupt so the fileserver is packed up and returned to Parramatta where the hard disk is replaced.

This OASIS-less time gives me some breathing space to consider my priorities and make decisions about borrowing procedures and other OASIS-related management decisions.

Our first local OASIS Support Group meets during week 2. Over coffee we share our thoughts and set dates for meetings for the rest of the year.

#### Week 4

The fileserver is returned. All the information I had entered is still there — a sigh of relief! Now it is time to attempt the download.

And so I:

- do a rebuild
- do full data backup
- check system parameter

... everything OK ...

- put in the first of 5 disks to download

... downloaded without a problem then ...

... the school has a blackout — no storms, no hint of electrical problems — and the problems start again. I try to backup all the data from the second disk but both menu screens are scrambled: crotchets, quavers and hearts where there used to be information that related to the library.

#### Week 5

More calls to John Dwyer and Gail Henley, who are always encouraging and positive even when you feel a complete fool. Gail comes to my school armed with detailed instructions about fixing the problem. (As I still have no phone in the library trying to fix things over the phone was impossible.)

Gail also has problems and is unable to complete the instructions because the scrambled menu will not allow her access to what she needs.

With one fileserver in tow Gail returns to Parramatta where the computer is again fixed again — a corrupt soft menu D-file is the problem.

Our second OASIS Support Group meeting is held at Winmalee High. Lots of issues are aired, problems are discussed and Gail Henley proves (again!) to be a wealth of support and information.

### Week 6

Before the power has the chance to wreak further havoc, we buy a power surge protector from Hypec. We figure the \$300 is money well spent!

At the same time we buy a circulation workstation with back-up terminal and a hard disk drive so that at a later stage I will be able to use RECON. We also order a diskless workstation (so no one will be tempted to play on it with floppy disks) plus a portable barcoder reader.

### Week 7

Before I can download I need to recover all the titles previously entered; John Dwyer talks me through the process and it proves to be easily done.

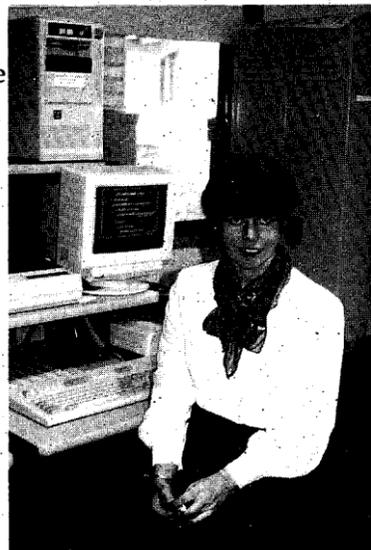
All ready to attempt the download for the third time! (I have retained a sense of humour, though it wavers when I have to run back and forth to the office phone - I've been promised a connection in the library in June.)

Starting the download early in the day proves to be a wise move: it takes 4 hours (I'm still using floppy disks . . . but not for much longer). I cannot believe that I have no problems and immediately print a data validation to double check that the titles are really there. I am thrilled to find that in a day we have gone from 330 titles to over 3 000 titles. Wow!

During these 7 weeks Maureen, my clerical assistant, has been systematically taking from the non-fiction shelves the books on the download, checking for cover damage, correct spine labels (we are making them 100% SCIS accurate) and putting them onto trolleys in correct order.

Now begins the task of adding (K)opies information and barcoding the books. I also need to check the authority files carefully for publisher, subjects and series added as I suspect there may be some global changes to be done.

I feel like we're on our way. ❖



## △ SCIS records

*Beth McLaren is Senior Curriculum Adviser - Library and Information Literacy*

A number of teacher-librarians have been concerned by the note included with their SCIS microfiche subscription in relation to copy cataloguing. At a recent meeting with Warren Brewer, Manager, Curriculum Information Services, Curriculum Corporation, this matter was raised. If the Corporation is to continue to remain viable it must obviously earn a return on its products and services, of which the provision of bibliographic records to schools is one of its most important. Schools choose to copy catalogue materials from the fiche both for financial and management reasons. In order that teacher librarians may retain this flexibility, without depriving the Corporation of income which is rightfully theirs, it has been proposed that in 1993 subscribers to the microfiche service which provides the full bibliographic record will pay a more realistic price for their subscription. With this higher subscription they will be given the legal right to copy records. Schools intending to order their records from SCIS will be able to continue to subscribe to the microfiche service which includes brief records. ❖

## △ Music on tap

*Anya Smeaton is music officer at the Department of School Education Library.*

Do you want a jazz recording? Or a ballet suite? Maybe you require some primary music kits, such as *Upbeat*. These resources, and many more, can be obtained from the Department of School Education Library.

Music resources in the library include

- books on music
- printed music
  - scores and parts, miniature scores, vocal scores
- recorded music
  - cassettes, LPs and CDs.

All of these items are available for loan to N.S.W school teachers. Requests can be made in person, by telephone, by mail, by fax or through Keylink. The library can be contacted at this address:

Department of School Education Library  
 Department of School Education Building  
 Ground Floor  
 2-10 Wentworth St  
 Parramatta 2150

PO Box 6000  
 Parramatta 2124

Telephone: (02) 561 1306  
 Fax: (02) 635 4581  
 Keylink: INSERVE.LIB

### How to locate resources within the library:

We have several catalogues and lists to assist you in locating music resources held by us. These include printed catalogues of scores (available to all teachers) and recordings (available on loan only). If you require copies of these please contact the Library.

Lists of all new music material are produced every few months, and the latest one should be in your school now. A copy of this list is sent to each government secondary school, addressed to the Principal, and marked for the attention of the Music Department. Music accessions lists are available to other schools on request.

Several specialised bibliographies are also available from the library. These include scores and parts for concert band and orchestra, resources in the areas of jazz and Australian composers, and a list of post-1965 music.

If we can't help you, another source of music resources is the ABC Library, which lends miniature scores and sets of scores and parts. You will need to contact this Library directly, as they will not lend to us on your behalf. The ABC Library imposes the following charges for the hiring of scores:

Scores:	\$12.00 deposit	Scores and parts:	\$28.00 deposit
	\$12.00 handling charge		\$28.00 handling charge

Deposits are refunded when items are returned undamaged to the ABC Library.

The ABC Library can be contacted at:

ABC Ultimo Centre  
 700 Harris Street  
 ULTIMO 2007  
 Telephone: (02) 394 1686

Please do not hesitate to contact the Department of School Education Library for your music resource needs. ❖

## △ Reading professionally

Fay Gardiner recently spent several hours at the Department of School Education Library in Parramatta.

Did you know that you have access to hundreds of journals via your Department of School Education Library?

Following is the yield of an afternoon's browsing. A brief annotation, usually lifted straight from the contents page descriptor, will help to let you know whether the article is one that you'd also like to read. Following is a photocopy request form to be completed if you wish to obtain copies of articles.

• **Accountability:** assessing comprehension during literature discussion. **The Reading Teacher.** Vol 45 No 1 Sept 91 pp 8-17 Edward E Paradis and 4 other teacher-researchers document ways of assessing students who are learning to read in literature-based classrooms.

• **The metamorphosis. Gifted Child Today.** Vol 14 No 6 Issue 77 Nov/Dec 91 pp 38-39 Jane L Newman recalls the events that changed David from a student without a flicker of motivation to an enthusiastic, involved learner.

• **Silver science. The Science Teacher.** Vol 58 No 9 Dec 91 pp 36-39 William J Sumrall uses metal prices to create stoichiometric problems.

• **Learning in virtual worlds. Australian Educational Computing.** Vol 6 No 2 Sept 91 pp 13-15 Alistair Inglis looks at the traditions that have developed in computer-based learning and notes a new tradition.

• **Tomorrow's media centre: a look into the future.**

• **Media & Methods.** Vol 28 No 2 Nov/Dec 1991 pp 10-13, 77 Gary Marchionini examines some of the changes that have already begun in libraries, including networking, multi-media and making administration more efficient.

• **Fullerenes Scientific American.** Vol 265 No 4 Oct 1991 pp 32-41 Robert F Curl and Richard E Smalley elaborate on the elusive and useful bucky ball.

• **Special Olympics: opportunities to learn: Teaching Exceptional Children.** Vol 24 No 1 Fall 91 pp 20-23 Janet K Ballard and Mary Lynne Calhoun outline a program which capitalises on disabled students' interest in the olympics to accelerate progress in academic work and independent living as well as sports and physical fitness.

• **Some surprising findings on how teachers learn to teach. Educational Leadership.** Vol 49 No 3 Nov 91 pp 14-17 The TELT (Teacher education and learning to teach) study, carried out in the US, looks at what students learn

about teaching strategies from different kinds of teacher education strategies.

• **Tracking student progress. Thrust for Educational Leadership.** Vol 21 No 2 Oct 91 pp 45-48 Diane Guay points out the many benefits of the use of portfolios in assessment.

• **The escape from teaching. Education Monitor.** Vol 2 No 4 Spring 91 pp 19-20 Patrick Morgan examines the swapping of the teacher role for the bureaucratic paperwork role.

• **The role of the school in the national campaign against drug abuse. Drug Education Journal of Australia.** Vol 5 No 3 1991 pp 187-198 Ray James and Susan Carruthers review formally documented evaluations of school-based drug education in Australia 1978-1990. Their conclusions and recommendations appear in this article.

• **Multiplication facts: memorisation made easy. Intervention.** Vol 27 No 3 Jan 92 pp 150-154 Gary Greene explains memory training techniques for teaching multiplication facts.

• **Cooperative problem solving in mathematics: beginning the process. The Clearing House.** Vol 65 No 1 Sept/Oct 91 pp 14-17 James E McGlinn believes that cooperative problem solving should be taught. In this article he explains how.

• **Fostering full access to literacy by including information books. Language Arts.** Vol 68 No 6 Oct 91 pp 449-462 Christine C Pappas shows that young children can process factual texts very well if they're given the chance.

• **Multiculturalism and school libraries in Australia. Australian Library Review.** Vol 8 No 1 Feb 92 pp 16-21 HM Yee discusses the education policy for a multicultural Australia and its implications for the provision of school library services and the training of teacher-librarians.

• **Fine tune your sense of colour. Science & Children.** Vol 29 No 3 Nov/Dec 91 pp 24-26 David K Dalby explains how to teach children about the composition of light, using only projector, a prism and screens. ❖

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We haven't received any items for Forum; does that mean that your problems are insoluble, or is it that there isn't time to record and fax them to us?

In lieu of reader input, we are including a short item from the School-based support course for teacher-librarians which we hope is useful.

## Setting objectives and managing time: the practical side

**Have your job description handy. It's your overview or framework to the job you're doing.**

**Write goals down and get them out of your head.**

**Keep a diary and use it as a system, eg**

- daily or weekly objectives
- daily schedule of meeting or key events
- phone calls, appointments, reminders
- identify routines, patterns, record of work
- contacts - addresses and phone lists

**Discuss and confirm objectives with supervisor or colleagues**

- check for confirmation (don't be a Lone Ranger)
- request advice (actively build a cooperative spirit)
- inform others of targets (so others can cooperate)
- allocate tasks (so cooperation will achieve the objective)

**Set time aside to plan and review**

- have a planning or review session everyday
- have a planning or review session every week
- be willing to just sit and think
- use logical and creative approaches to planning
- throw out stuff that isn't relevant (don't hoard)

**When the job gets 'overwhelming'**

- do a time log and find out where your time is going
- re-check priorities and only do what is important
- check for time wasting procedures and correct
- sit back and think or reflect on your situation
- get advice from a trusted, effective colleague
- have a swim or massage or walk or meditate
- examine your diary to establish what has been happening
- analyse your rest days or week's schedule
- review your situation with your supervisor
- tidy up your desk and work area
- complete and update your in and out trays. ♦

And don't forget to fax your questions to us at

02 808 9413

or write to

The Editors  
Scan  
Private Bag 3  
Ryde 2112.

## ■ Applied studies Years 11 - 12

### Introduction to the syllabus

This 1- unit course of study was approved by the Board of Studies in 1991 for implementation in year 11 in 1992. Initial examination of Applied studies at the Higher School Certificate will take place in 1993.

Applied studies aims

*to develop in students a variety of mathematical, scientific and technological skills in an applied setting.*

Applied studies syllabus, Board of Studies, 1991: 3

The course is particularly suited to students who have specialised in the humanities and require unit(s) in the Technological and applied studies area.

A minimum of three modules must be selected for study from ten specified in the syllabus. The ten modules are:

1. Application of computer controlled systems
2. Applied mathematical studies
3. Mathematical ideas
4. Science and medicine
5. Scientific research
6. Significant technological achievements
7. Statistical methods
8. Technology and the consumer
9. Technology of communication systems
10. The environment.

Three of the modules, Scientific research, Significant technological achievements and Technology and the consumer, have a choice of prescribed topics. These are set out in *Memorandum No BOS 188/1991* issued January, 1992.

According to the syllabus, *after studying a module, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the underlying scientific principles, to apply the skills and techniques as specified, and to appreciate the contribution of those skills and techniques to society.*

Applied studies syllabus, Board of Studies, 1991: 7

Applied studies is a very broad course which has the potential to utilise a wide range of learning resources. Because of its recency, publishers have yet to see its market potential and specifically tailor materials for the course. However there are resources available which would support the implementation of this course providing due consideration is given to their level of readability. A lot are difficult to read and students may need assistance in interpreting the information they provide.

Others do not pose this problem. In particular some of the learning materials which have been produced for other courses, such as senior science courses and the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) courses in information technology, have sections which are readable and are very relevant to Applied studies. The Wiley Science Editions Series reviewed for this bibliography are highly readable and engaging.

Some titles reviewed which originate from the USA have relevance for Applied studies, but often the American content, vocabulary and examples given will pose problems for what is a syllabus with a strongly Australian content. Again this underlines the need for more Australian material to be published in this area.

Some of the Applied studies modules will require students to locate and use current information published in newspapers, magazines and periodicals. Indexes, such as *Guidelines* and *APAIS*, will be invaluable aids in locating up to date scientific and technological information.

## Resources

The reviews which follow have been written by Lois Caw, Diana Collins and Neryle Sheldon with assistance from the following Board of Studies Officers: Jenny Allum, Gina Grant, Anne Hastings and Rod Leverment. Reviews are arranged alphabetically by the title.

**Australia, working it out! core material for Australian studies.** Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1990. ISBN 064215757X [319.4]

Developed in consultation with teachers and curriculum advisers of the Victorian Certificate of Education as a resource for students of year 11 Australian studies, this is also a most apposite text for Statistical methods and Technology and the consumer modules of the NSW Applied studies syllabus. It is clearly set out and logically developed and gives a thorough examination of the uses (and misuses) of demographic information. The sections on graphs and questionnaires are particularly enlightening. A most useful resource.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.50 SCIS 667796

**VERMA, Surendra The Australian dictionary of science, technology and the environment.** Nelson, 1991 ISBN 0170079163 [503]

Containing over 4000 entries, this dictionary has been compiled to meet the needs of Australian secondary science students. It includes terms unique to Australian science and those widely used in the Australian media, which perhaps accounts for the definition of yellowcake as *colloquial*; the Macquarie Dictionary is more specific. The language used in this book is simple and clear, definitions are given an Australian context and there is brief biographical information on eminent Australian scientists past and present. Useful tables are included in the appendices and pertinent diagrams throughout.

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 706863

**The Australian Medical Association guide to medicines & drugs.** Reader's Digest, 1990 ISBN 0864381565 [615]

This book provides advice and information on drugs and medicines which can be readily understood by a non-medical reader. An excellent reference, it contains material relevant to the module, Science and medicine, by presenting a useful introduction to the pharmaceuticals used to treat illnesses specified in the case study. A general section on drugs is followed by profiles of 205 drugs, vitamins, minerals and drugs of abuse using a standard format for descriptions. Cross

references are easy to follow and the book has a good glossary and index.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$47.00 SCIS 671911

**BARDEN, Robert Communication technology.** Delmar, 1990 ISBN 0827332254 [621.382]

The nature of communication, technical and computer aided drawing, graphic reproduction, photographs and motion pictures, electronic communication and the future of integrated systems are the subjects of this work. Colour photographs and diagrams abound in a text which uses clear language, defines essential terms and uses a limited amount of jargon. It is applicable to the modules, Applications of computer controlled systems and Technology of communication systems.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$46.95 SCIS 711035

**McCUEN, Gary Ending war against the earth.** Gary E. McCuen Hudson, 1991 (Ideas in conflict series) ISBN 086596081X [333.7]

A useful stimulus to thinking on environmental issues, such as population, greenhouse effect and ozone depletion, is provided in this series. A number of differing viewpoints are given from a wide variety of sources (mostly USA), with discussion guidance offered at the end of each of the themes. Both the purpose of the viewpoint expressed, and the means of expression are addressed. Excerpts are short, clearly and succinctly argued in a conversational style but some difficulties may arise from words like 'infrastructure' used in different contexts. There is no index but a bibliography is provided.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$21.95 SCIS 669146

**LAILLER, Greg Environmental chemistry.** Longman Cheshire, 1991 ISBN 058287114X [574.5]

This book provides an Australian perspective on study of the environment, concentrating on the chemical processes at work. It gives a useful background to scientific concepts basic to several modules, including Scientific research, Science and medicine and The Environment. Topics covered include air and water

pollutants, pesticides, nuclear industry, radiation, waste disposal and recycling chemistry. A comprehensive index and glossary are included, as well as boxed information for further research. A number of experiments are linked to issues raised.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$21.99 SCIS 698153

**MYERS, Norman The Gaia atlas of future worlds.** Penguin, 1991 ISBN 0140130527 [306]

This book discusses in a clear and readable way, the Gaian concept that the earth is more like an ecosystem than an organism. It outlines the human environmental crisis the earth faces, and ways to make a better world in the future. Arranged in 3 sections which cover: pressures on the planet; impacts and outcomes at global, regional and personal level; and future options. Well illustrated, thought provoking material, dealing with a separate issue on each facing 2 pages. Especially useful for modules, The environment and Technology and the consumer.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$25.00 SCIS 669574

**Genetic engineering education kit.** CSIRO, 1992 ISBN 0643052976 [575.1]

A variety of resources and information of relevance to the module, Scientific research, is contained in this kit. Two lively videos explain the basis of recombinant DNA technology, depict current applications and raise social and ethical issues. Notable Australians offer differing viewpoints on genetic engineering in the second video. A collection of articles from the CSIRO magazine Rural research, while relevant, will need heavy teacher interpretation of language and presentation of information. Over 30 student activities provide a starting point or a framework for student research. Cloth and paper DNA models are useful inclusions.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$125.00 SCIS 711116

**BLASHFIELD, Jean Global warming.** Childrens Press, 1991 ISBN 0516055011 [363.73]

A projection of conditions of life in North America following global warming introduces and sets the tone of this book. The composition, function and processes of the greenhouse effect and ozone gas are explained, and the consequences of excesses and depletion are examined. Possible solutions are discussed, and immediate personal action by individuals

recommended. This is a readable book, written in a narrative style in large clear print, with many, mostly colour photographs, some simple graphs and maps. Includes a glossary and index.

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$31.95 SCIS 692077

**LEVER, Ruth A guide to common illnesses.** Penguin, 1990 ISBN 0140113339 [616]

This book provides useful information on 2 of the diseases, asthma and diabetes, which may be studied in the module, Science and medicine. A guide to common illnesses, each section contains a definition and explanation of symptoms and diagnostic techniques. Both orthodox and complementary or 'alternate' treatments are described. Self-help suggestions are given where relevant. A glossary, index of complementary remedies and detailed general index enhance the clear language and simple presentation of this useful reference.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$17.99 SCIS 667245

**High tech, high cost? technology, society and the environment.** Pan Australia, 1991 ISBN 0330272527 [363.70994]

These fourteen essays provide a well-balanced assessment of biological and other environmental and economic problems, both present and future. The various authors are all specialists, and the level of language makes the book suitable either as background reading for teachers or for outstanding students. There is a good index, useful glossary, bibliography and suggested further reading. One or two essential diagrams are included but no pictures. The book has relevance for aspects of the Applied studies syllabus with its coverage of population, environment, genetic engineering, computers, ocean and air pollution and energy.

AUD: Professional  
AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 SCIS 677622

**How is it done? Reader's Digest, 1990** ISBN 027642008X [500]

Explanations of a wide variety of common (and some not so common) questions, mostly technological, mostly current, some for fun, are arranged here in 12 themes. Themes include wonders of the medical world, marvels of science and how does it work? The illustrations, mostly in colour, are apt; diagrams and maps are provided when appropriate. The index is

comprehensive and explanations are clear and to the point. The print is regrettably small, but the book is a wonderful browse for anyone and is relevant to several modules of the Applied studies syllabus.

LEV: Lower secondary  
Middle secondary  
Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$47.00  
SCIS 681717



BELL, Wendy **Information technology and you: an introduction.** Arnold, 1990  
ISBN 0713183586 [303.4]

This volume examines the 3 components of information technology: information, computer technology and communications networks. It is very clearly written, with many relevant examples and illustrations. Arranged by chapters using an 'areas of study' approach, each chapter contains a broad discussion as well as 'frames' which expand on ideas in the main text and provide further activities. Very relevant to the modules Applications of computer controlled systems and Technology of communication systems.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 SCIS 661549

BELL, Wendy **Information technology and you: people, processes and systems.** Arnold, 1990  
ISBN 0713183837 [303.48]

More difficult than the introductory text by the same authors, this is nevertheless an excellent resource for teachers and those students interested in computing or information systems. It deals with their use and effect in daily life at home and work, and society as a whole. Many suggestions are provided for teachers in an interesting and informative text. It has the especial merits of clarity of language and Australian provenance.

AUD: Professional  
LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 692145

CUSUMANO, Alan **Information technology in business: people, systems, procedures.** VCTA, 1991  
ISBN 0868594296 [658]

This book is a useful resource for the module, Applications of computer controlled systems. An

extended case study of a small Australian business forms the core of the book, so that issues, problems and concepts in the use of computer systems relate to this practical situation. The book's focus includes: nature of information technology, components of computer systems and the impact of information technology on individuals, organisations and society. Well written with many illustrations and diagrams, it includes an index and detailed glossary. Although intended as a text to support a Victorian course in information technology, content and approach is very relevant to Applied studies.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$25.00 SCIS 703388

WOODHOUSE, David **Information technology: theory, applications and impact.** Dellasta, 1991  
ISBN 0947138897 [303.48]

Initial impression is rather offputting, being one of solidity and earnestness, but closer examination reveals a clear exposition in jargon-free conversational language which is not merely readable but has a touch of humour and arouses sustainable interest in the role, effect and control of information technology. Not for beginners, this book is best suited for teachers and able students as a source of ideas and fascinating information which is applicable to two modules, Applications of computer controlled systems and Significant technological achievements. Includes an extensive bibliography, a very useful list of abbreviations and index.

AUD: Professional  
LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$34.95 SCIS 689678

DE FIGUEIREDO, John **Introducing information technology.** Jacaranda, 1991  
ISBN 0701627271 [303.4]

Although written as a textbook for a recently introduced course in information technology in Victoria, this book contains useful material for the module, Applications of computer controlled systems. It provides a broad introduction to types of information, components of computer systems and ways computers are used to solve problems. Two detailed case studies look at computer systems in a public library and a fast food restaurant. A large part of the book discusses the impact of information technology on the individual and society. Clear black and white photographs, some diagrams and an index support the text. Each chapter has summary questions and exercises.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 680719

PETOCZ, Peter **Introductory statistics.** Nelson, 1990  
ISBN 0170078795 [519.5]

An excellent textbook with a good introductory history to both statistics and probability theory. There are well chosen examples, plenty of exercises and questions, and lots of relevant applications. Applicable to the Statistical methods and Mathematical ideas modules, it is very readable, and information is clearly expressed. A good general text for statistics.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$32.95 SCIS 652453

DUNHAM, William **Journey through genius: the great theorems of mathematics.** Wiley, 1990  
ISBN 0471500305 [510.9]

Hippocrates, Archimedes, Euclid, Newton and Bernoulli are among the great mathematicians whose lives and theorems are investigated in this highly readable book. Each chapter provides a brief human, social and historical background to a mathematical idea, then presents the theorem and its proof. Each step of the proof is explained clearly in a way that does not require a high level of mathematical understanding. Although there are no illustrations and diagrams are few but relevant, an index and list of further reading is included. This is a very useful teacher reference for the module, Mathematical ideas.

AUD: Professional  
AVAIL: \$39.90 SCIS 659893



BRENNAN, Richard **Levitating trains and kamikaze genes: technological literacy for the 1990s.** Wiley, 1990  
ISBN 0471622958 [600]

With its conversational style, this book guides the reader into an understanding of technological developments and basic scientific principles behind much of the course. It begins with a 50 question quiz covering: space, biotechnology, computer technology, environmental issues, energy, superconductivity, medicine, transportation and weapons and arms control. Each chapter contains an explanation of key terms. Diagrams and tables are clear and simple, although there are no pictures. With its content and approach this book is an excellent readable resource for students and teachers.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$37.90  
EVAL: Highly recommended SCIS 686088

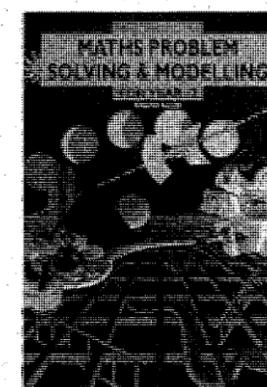
HACKER, Michael **Living with technology.** Delmar, 1988  
ISBN 0827332483 [600]

There are aspects of dated content in this book which reflect its 1988 publication date. However, what it does do quite well is emphasise the history of technology from ancient times to the modern. This perspective of technological development over time is applied to communication, building, manufacturing, transportation and medicine. The main text is supported well by colour illustrations and supplementary boxed information but American examples and language are at times distracting. An index and glossary are included.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$46.95 SCIS 480097

LOVITT, Charles **Maths problem solving & modelling for year 11.** Nelson, 1991  
ISBN 0170086895 [510.76]  
SCIS 703100

LOVITT, Charles **Maths problem solving & modelling for year 12.** Nelson, 1991  
ISBN 0170086909 [510.76]



These two excellent books were written to support the VCE mathematics syllabus but are applicable to school programs in NSW. Not specifically applicable to a particular module of the Applied studies syllabus and not intended as sources of information, they do provide a wide variety of stimulus material for problem solving in some areas of some modules such

as Technology and the consumer and Applied mathematical skills. Very readable, with fascinating project ideas based on real life problems.

LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$17.95 SCIS 703100

AASENG, Nathan **Over-population crisis or challenge?** Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0531110060 [363.9]

In simple language and good sized print this is a well put together and wide-ranging investigation of the economic, political and moral aspects of overpopulation both historically and today. The pressures placed on the world's natural resources in spite or because of advances in technology, weigh heavily in the ecological

balance. There are succinct accounts of the practices and problems of birth control for a variety of countries, cultures and religions. Relevant, in particular to the Environment module of the Applied studies syllabus, it provides source notes, an extensive bibliography, and an index.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$19.95 SCIS 675598

GUNTON, Tony *The Penguin dictionary of information technology and computer science.* Penguin, 1992  
ISBN 0140512403 [004.03]

This dictionary focuses on the vocabulary and jargon of new information technologies; operation of the information technology business; applications of computers; personal computers and office automation; and key programming terms. The author attempts to keep pace with the rapid rate of change in this area by expanding on emerging technologies, such as hypertext and optical disks, which he considers will increase in importance. This is a valuable reference book but the level of language makes it more useful for teachers and the more able senior secondary students.

AUD: Professional  
LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 SCIS 480097

HEYCOX, Kay *A question of survival.* ABC Enterprises, 1991  
ISBN 0733300111 [304.2]

Based on the 1990 ABC TV series of the same name, this book is a lively set of essays on important world issues of this decade and beyond such as pollution (air, water), conservation (soil, flora, fauna), global warming, climate change and population pressures. Comments from well-known Australian and international environmentalists are interspersed throughout the essays. Although it is easy to read there is no index and no illustrations. Relevant to almost every module of the Applied studies syllabus. A short list of possible further reading is given.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 SCIS 672228

DALTON, Les *Radiation exposures.* Scribe Newham, 1991  
ISBN 0908011199 [362.1]

This book presents a strongly argued case for the reassessment and improved safety monitoring of the use of radiation emitting equipment and materials. A number of public health issues are examined, in particular toxic effects of radiation such as X-rays,

microwaves and nuclear energy. Scientific research findings are outlined in a very readable way, and numerous examples presented to support arguments. An extensive bibliography and chapter notes provide avenues for further research.

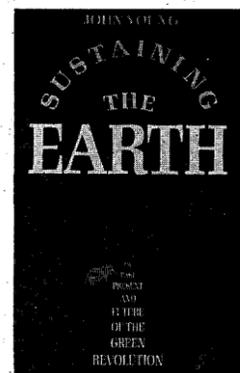
LEV: Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 678414

NIELSEN, Ann *Science and life: work, leisure, technology and the environment.* Oxford UP, 1991  
ISBN 0195532244 [600]

Initially devised as a text for the course Science for life, this book has some sections of relevance to Applied studies. These are, in particular, consumer science, biotechnology, communications and the science of toys, although general concepts are clearly explained. Topics in the book are thematically arranged, but activities may be adapted or used as a starting point for discussion or further research. Suitable for mixed ability groups, the language is straightforward, with ample illustrations and diagrams and a comprehensive glossary.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$29.95 SCIS 686726

YOUNG, John *Sustaining the earth: the past, present & future of the green revolution.* NSW University Press, 1991  
ISBN 0868402605 [363.7]



An historical approach to the green revolution which is traced to its origins centuries (or millenia) ago, this book gives a good evaluation of the current position of controversial matters and a reasonable estimate of possible futures, some distinctly unpleasant. It has a sound index, large and detailed bibliography and suggestions

for further reading. There are no illustrations. This is a valuable guide into the large, confused and controversial issue of the environment but is best suited for teachers and some students with a particular interest in this topic.

AUD: Professional  
AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 677768

GOETSCH, David *Technology and you.* Delmar, 1987  
ISBN 0827326629 [600]

Although published in 1987, and heavily American in style and content, this book contains much useful

information for the module, Significant technological achievements. Chapters cover the technology of manufacturing, transport, engineering, electronics and agriculture. A chapter which discusses health care and medical technology has relevance to the Science and medicine module. The style is not overly technical, with many everyday examples presented. Very well illustrated with glossary, index and extensive use of circular diagrams for explanation of concepts.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$44.95 SCIS 403845

WILLIAMS, Charles F. *Technology at work.* South-Western, 1987  
ISBN 0538163003 [306]

Recently available rather than recently published, this book provides a simple explanation and introduction to many of the concepts and ideas in Applied studies, in particular the module, Significant technological achievements. Developments in technology are related to working environments and career prospects. While the career aspect is both American and somewhat outdated, the presentation of technological change in, for example, mechanisation in agriculture and the assembly line in manufacturing, provides a good starting point for less able students. The text is simple, with good use made of colour photographs and diagrams, boxed information and a glossary.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$33.95 SCIS 607330

WILLIAMS, Charles F. *Technology for tomorrow.* South-Western, 1985  
ISBN 0538162503 [600]

Although not recently published, this book provides, particularly for less able students, a general introduction to what technologies are and how they combine to serve people. The book's 3 main areas of physical technology, biotechnology and information technology, explain and illustrate underlying concepts in several modules, including Science and medicine,

Significant technological achievements and Applications of computer controlled systems. A companion volume to *Technology at work*, this book is broader in scope and less vocationally oriented. It has a similar colourful well-organised layout and simple style; its American orientation is less of a problem.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$33.95 SCIS 711235

HACKER, Michael Robert *Technology in your world.* Delmar, 1992  
ISBN 0827344252 [600]

Designed for USA school technology education programs, this publication has relevance to the 3 technology modules of the Applied studies syllabus. The language is straightforward (once technological terms are grasped) and headings and subheadings keep information in easily digestible chunks. Problem solving is a central theme, with suggested activities detailed. Key terms are given with each chapter and there is a glossary and index. A good reference tool, well supplied with colour illustrations to illustrate concepts.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: \$46.95 SCIS 711270

SMALLWOOD, Mary *Understanding diabetes.* Houghton Mifflin, 1990  
ISBN 0867701161 [616.4]

Diabetes, a condition affecting 3% of the population, is discussed in a clear, accessible way, with apt use of tables, figures and black and white illustrations. Although quite detailed, the information is well organised, with both a brief and more lengthy chapter summary presented at the beginning of the book. Chapter 2 provides relevant information on the development and use of pharmaceuticals in the treatment of diabetes. A glossary and index aids research. Useful for the module, Science and medicine.

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary  
AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 SCIS 655101 ♦

ATTENTION TEACHERS OF HUMAN SOCIETY AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

JUST RELEASED: AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL INDICATORS FILE VOLUME 1

The *Social Indicators Files* are a series of two volumes concerned with statistical trends in the following areas:

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Each volume contains statistical material, related press clippings with student questions and activities.

## ■ Business studies textbooks : do they make the grade?

Bill Hutcheson teaches Business studies at Sydney Boys High School and has a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Commerce. In the following review article he critically examines some of the textbooks widely used by schools teaching Business Studies to students in years 11 and 12. The books have been arranged alphabetically by the author's surname.

The relatively new 2 unit Business studies syllabus was examined at the Higher School Certificate for the first time in 1991. Since its approval as a course of study for years 11 and 12 publishers have responded by promoting a number of textbooks aimed at this market. What follows is an assessment of a number of textbooks currently being used in the teaching of Business Studies.

COOMBES, Robert and others **Business studies: book 1.** Social Science Press, 1990 ISBN 0949218669 [650]

This is not an easy text although the layout would lead you to believe otherwise. Many concepts are implicit and require pointing out to the students who easily miss the point. Activities are at the end of each chapter and not interspersed. While its coverage of the accounting function component, cash flow and management accounting is excellent, there are some aspects, like critical path analysis, which may challenge some students but may not be relevant to the syllabus. For this text to be effective a lot of preparation is required by the teacher since a workbook is really needed to supplement the text. There is an interesting chapter on the year 12 core topic The dynamic nature of business which weighs heavily on marketing, some of which is also useful for the year 12 option, *Marketing*. However other aspects to do with *The dynamic nature of business* are lacking or covered in insufficient depth. These include profitability in relation to forward planning, profitability as a function of accounting and financial management, and the changing technological, competitive and economic environment.  
AVAIL: Paper \$24.95 SCIS 710846

COOMBES, Robert **Business studies: book 2.** Social Science Press, 1991 ISBN 0949218987 [650]

This book covers the year 12 options and is a good starting point. However, it does not cover the options in sufficient depth and needs to be supplemented by other resources.  
AVAIL: Paper \$26.95 SCIS 677445

DUNN, Colin **Business Basics.** CCH, 1991 ISBN 186264270 [650.0994]

This book is well produced with distinctive print, eye-catching layout and photographs dispersed through the text. The language is straightforward and simple giving this text particular applicability to less capable students. The text is interspersed with boxed activities, somewhat repetitive in design, but which either involve stimulus material within the text or individual research drawing on the student's own experience or environment. However student centred activities such as multiple choice, cloze, matching exercises and other types of learning strategies are lacking. In some areas the content is somewhat shallow. Further supplementation would be required for business organisation, the life cycle of the firm, cash flow, and the support services of accounting and marketing.  
AVAIL: \$28.00 SCIS 683087

HARPER, Graham **Introducing business studies: book 1.** Heinemann Educational Australia, 1991 ISBN 085859577X

The syllabus is reasonably well covered by this text although the layout is fairly repetitive. Each chapter is interspersed with short review comprehension questions on each sub-topic together with pertinent case studies. At the end of each chapter are research activities for students and practice in multiple choice questions. The text would need to be supplemented by more student centred activities and exercises employing a wider scope of teaching strategies or methods.  
AVAIL: \$24.95

HAYWARD, Harold **Business in Australia: book 1.** Oxford University Press, 1991 ISBN 0195532260 [658]

This is a most comprehensive text with a degree of difficulty suitable for more able students. It is interspersed with student review questions, including multiple choice, and an elaborate array of consolidation and research activities at the end of each chapter. Case studies and press media stimuli are short and appropriate. The sections on accounting and financial management are academically rigorous, explicit and interesting. The text employs an analytical approach familiar to economics students and there is an excellent chapter on how the economic environment affects business. However some parts of the book are overly arduous while other areas would require further amplification. There is too much detail on the history of business in Australia while additional information is required on management accounting (especially breakeven analysis), cash flow projections and equity financing (for example types of shares in a public company).  
AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 692356

SYKES, Don **Business studies: an introduction.** Longman Cheshire, 1992 ISBN 0582875668 [650]

An interesting and varied layout, with much stimulus material including graphs and statistics and concepts in diagrammatical format make this an excellent text for student centred learning. There are plenty of student activities involving either the stimulus material within the text and/or additional research by students. Each section of a chapter has comprehension questions and at the end of each chapter are interesting consolidation and review activities which include cloze exercises, matching true/false responses, multiple choice, interpretation of statistics or graphs, ideas for the business assignment and more. If used as a text some topics would require extension. These include the economic environment (CPI and other economic indicators), financial accounting and consumer protection legislation. There are a few pages on the Pacific Rim countries in relation to technology and foreign trade which could be useful in introducing the 3 unit option *International Business*. In addition the text has a valuable simulation exercise for breakeven analysis using Microsoft Excel. Overall this is an excellent text for most students with plenty of variable exercises and activities.  
AVAIL: Paper \$21.99 SCIS 710543

### Beyond the Textbook

While the use of a core textbook with students has its merits no one book would be sufficient to cover the entire course. It is essential to make use of a variety of learning resources including video and/or television, newspapers, business magazines, the Business Links Program and visiting speakers from the school community.

Teachers catering for the needs of gifted and talented students may wish to consider extracting information from university texts, from legal documents such as statutes or use computerised information systems including business management assimilation games, spreadsheets or word processing packages. Such activities keep the interest level high.

An invaluable resource is the Small Business Office of the NSW Government (Tel: (02) 895 0555 or outside the Sydney Metro Area 008 451 151). The office produces a range of information in formats such as posters, pamphlets and videos. It also has lesson plans on topics such as what makes a business winner, getting finance and calculating cash flow. Its services are particularly helpful when assisting students plan their business assignment. The *business assignment* usually involves students setting up or/and researching a business and many experience some difficulty in going about this task. When programming teachers should consider including lessons in business planning which go beyond what is offered by the textbooks. ♦

Do you have expertise to share? If you would like to evaluate curriculum materials in a syllabus area please contact Hazel Vickers, SCIS Review Coordinator or the editors on:

Phone: (02) 808 9490  
Fax: (02) 808 9413.

## Picture books

The following fiction bibliographies, arranged alphabetically by title, have recently been reviewed by the SCAN team.

STONE, Kazuko G. **Aligay saves the stars.** Scholastic, 1992  
ISBN 0590443828

Aligay's characters, exhibiting principled behaviour with realistic lapses, and an entertaining storyline combine in this appealing picture book. Aligay's interstellar adventure is beautifully depicted in Stone's rich, exuberant, illustrative style. Highlights include the shimmering image of Stardust Beach edging the Milky Way and Aligay's means of returning to Earth. The events, foibles, problems and their solutions, all gloriously illustrated, speak to the child within every reader, regardless of age. B. Mitchell  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$ 15.95 SCIS 704842

GAY, Michel and PONTY, Monique **All alone.** Oxford UP, 1991  
ISBN 0192799061

Two soft toys feeling lonely and unwanted by Christmas shoppers escape the store window to seek something better outside. The world outside is cold, huge and frightening, and soon the tiny kitten and the bear want to return to the store but are lost and frozen. A small child finds them and takes them to his home. Whilst the story seems predictable the tension and atmosphere created by the simple text, with its clever use of dialogue and the water colour illustrations, invite the reader to empathise with the plight of the toys. M. Ellis  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$16.95 SCIS 707454

THIELE, Colin **The Australian ABC.** Weldon Kids, 1992  
ISBN 1863021825

A rhyming couplet introduces one Australian plant and animal on each page of this alphabet book. Magpie sings in the mulga tree, echidna probes the eucalyptus for ants, wombat finds waratahs and so on. The story culminates in all the animals arriving for a conference. Attractive colour illustrations by Wendy De Paauw add life to the text.



Decorative borders surround the lively depictions of the anthromorphised animals J. Buckley  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 SCIS 706076

THOMSON, Pat **Beware of the aunts!** Macmillan, 1991  
ISBN 0333525248

There are too many aunts in this family, each of them excessively endowed with one unusual or embarrassing characteristic. Aunt Anne kisses too much, Aunt Jean is too fussy about housekeeping, Aunt Susan is forgetful, and the other aunts are also to be avoided. In describing each aunt there is much wry humour both in the sparse text and softly coloured illustrations by Emma Chichester Clarke. These eccentric aunts prove to have advantages at the conclusion of this amusing picture book, which will promote discussion about family life. J. Buckley  
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
AVAIL: \$16.95 SCIS 703302

DAY, David **The big lie.** Picadilly Press 1991  
ISBN 1853401102

Tall tales by the river, as told by the town's 2 gangs, the River Rats and the Road Dogs. A nostalgic view of childhood 50 years ago in a rural American community, this story involves a giant catfish, a mischievous prank and a tale told often enough to become a legend. Evoking the mood of Huckleberry Finn, this atmospheric and imaginative picture book is greatly enriched by Mark Entwistle's glorious watercolours, which combine soft glowing colour with varied perspectives. J. Buckley  
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 701956

LENNIE, David **Car-rumba.** Angus & Robertson, 1992  
ISBN 0207167249

Reminiscent of Peter Carey's *The tax inspector*, this picture book centres on a used car salesman and his odd family. Since this one is for a considerably younger age group, Lennie's family exhibits rather less antisocial behaviour than Carey's, but the prose which (horrors!) isn't prose but contrived rhyming verse of the worst sort, isn't quite up to Carey's. The illustrations by Peter Kendall have an appropriately airbrushed appearance and complement the rhyming verse admirably. But, while I think the book overall is rather dreadful, I

suspect that this is one which won't languish on the shelf; I'd be surprised if its target audience didn't love it. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 706397

GRAHAM, Amanda **Cinderella/Alex and the glass slipper.** Keystone, 1991  
ISBN 0947212981

Cinderella is retold by Amanda Graham adequately. But turn the book over, start at the 'back' and you have a delightful new fairy tale in which Alex takes on the traditional female downtrodden role. Aided and abetted by his feisty lady, Polly, he eventually shows more than a little gumption, and a healthy disregard for the offer of marriage to the princess. Brightly coloured, wacky illustrations complement the text. This will be fun to read aloud and would also provide a good basis for oral and written language work. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$6.95 SCIS 694696

LUNN, Helen **Digger's mate.** Aird Books, 1991  
ISBN 094721416X

If for nothing else, this book would be of interest as Clifton Pugh's last book. There is much else, however. His evocative pen and watercolour drawings support quite a long text which is unremarkable except for its unassuming, appealing simplicity and realism. Digger has his wet doggy nose put right out of joint when Joyce performs a wildlife rescue upon a baby wombat. The environmental message is put strongly but not aggressively as we see Joyce replace the mother wombat's pouch with an old jumper and Digger learn the lesson that wild animals cannot be owned. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 SCIS 692294

**Dragon poems.** Oxford University Press, 1991  
ISBN 0192760963

Fire-breathing monsters hold some mysterious but undeniable appeal for children and almost constitute their own genre in children's literature, so the success of this work is almost assured. Dragons of all sorts feature in this collection of 23 poems: fiery, friendly, baby, pathetic, tame, dying, lonely - and even Polar dragons who breathe frost instead of fire. There is also a variety of settings, styles and forms. The general standard is high; poets include Jack Prelutsky, Tony Bradman and Max Fatchen. Korky Paul's colourful, zany illustrations embellish the poems very effectively. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 695901

SIS, Peter **Follow the dream.** Julia MacRae, 1991  
ISBN 1856810232

In this, the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's voyage to the 'new world', it is inevitable that there will be a plethora of commemorative works in various media. If they are all as restrainedly stunning as this one, his voyage will have been almost worthwhile. Information is provided in beautifully integrated text which is minimal and direct, and illustration which is exquisite and evocative of the era which spawned men who were willing to 'follow a dream', even unto the nightmarish edges of the world, and at least one woman who was inspired enough to provide the means to allow Columbus to realise that dream. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
AVAIL: \$19.95 SCIS 712442

VON HERTZEN, Catarina **Four-eyed monster.** Lothian, 1991  
ISBN 0850914515

New glasses are the problem, and Alex takes refuge in the school library. His 3 friends find him, recount 3 stories about children who really are different, and Alex manages to accept the new glasses. This is a simply structured story which tackles a situation and imaginatively explores a solution. Vibrantly coloured illustrations contribute much to the success of this cohesive picture book, which uses fantasy effectively and is not heavy handed. J. Buckley  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 698381

JUNGMAN, Ann **Honest Mum I've looked everywhere.** Angus & Robertson, 1992  
ISBN 0207174741

Lizzie couldn't find her new, green pencil case. She looked in all of the places her mother suggested and found any number of objects, appropriate and inappropriate but there was no sign of her pencil case until the end. A series of circular cut-outs give the reader a clue; this device would provide a good focal point when reading aloud. The text is sufficiently repetitive to provide some predictability and superb, detailed illustrations by Carol Jones accompany the text exactly so that they too could be used as an adjunct in deciphering the text, as well as providing starting points for language. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 706331

BRUMPTON, Keith *Ig and Tig's trip to earth*. Orchard, 1991  
ISBN 1852132930

A holiday notebook is presented in this picture book, the observations of Ig and Tig, 2 aliens who decide to visit planet earth. They encounter various quaint habits of earthlings, which are recorded in brief bemused notes, lists and captioned colour illustrations. With whimsical humour and bright well designed illustrations this is an entertaining picture book which is accessible to a wide readership because of the high interest level of the story and its short text. J. Buckley.  
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
AVAIL: \$19.95 SCIS 704898

LESTER, Alison *Isabella's bed*. Oxford, 1991  
ISBN 0195532147

Luis and Anna always sleep in Isabella's bed when visiting their grandmother. There is a mystery surrounding the bed and their grandmother's memories which is unravelled in this emotional picture book as the children journey to South America on the bed and discover their grandmother's secret. The innocent adventure of the children is countered by the wistful recall of past romance as love, loneliness, and the relationship between young and old are explored. Well designed pages feature Lester's characteristically styled charming colour illustrations. This is a poignant and intriguing romance. J. Buckley  
LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 699465

SLATER, Teddy *Listening with Zachary*. Macmillan, 1991  
ISBN 0732912164

As well as being a perfectly acceptable picture book, this also aims to develop the ear of the young child for rhyme. The general text rhymes but in addition on every fourth page the child is asked to nominate which of the preceding lines rhymes with a particular word. The correct line is featured at the beginning of the next page. Excellent for reading aloud, this would be a welcome addition to the list of books for the about-to-begin reader. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: Paper SCIS 696132

DE PAOLA, Tomie *Little Grunt and the big egg*. Ashton Scholastic, 1991  
ISBN 0868967963

The enduring theme of desire for a pet is here set in prehistoric times, when Little Grunt's big egg becomes

a large dinosaur. Family pressure wins out, and Little Grunt is forced to part from his pet until the dinosaur proves his loyalty to the family and a compromise is found. Tomie de Paola's illustrations employ his usual strong design and careful use of colour. This is a pleasant picture book which uses a high interest topic to make its point about the value of pets. J. Buckley  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$16.95 SCIS 704185

PIZER, Abigail *Loppylugs*. Macmillan, 1991  
ISBN 0333541650

Loppylugs is a caged rabbit, used to the comfort and love provided by Rosie, but longing for the freedom of the rabbits he sees in the wild. He spends a night outside his cage when Rosie accidentally leaves the door open, but finds the hazards of life at large exceed its advantages. Well composed, softly coloured illustrations enhance the story, capturing the evening mood of this straightforward tale which is simply and satisfyingly told. J. Buckley  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 SCIS 703505

VAUGHAN, Marcia Milly *Fitzwilly's mousecatcher*. Periscope Press, 1992  
ISBN 0949714119.

Milly Fitzwilly has an old house which is overrun by mice. She comes up with a number of imaginative schemes for decreasing her mouse population, with her final invention, a carnival fun fair, being most successful. Mice are an ideal subject for the detailed, humorous illustrations of Roland Harvey, which increase the fun of this light hearted picture book. J. Buckley  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 SCIS 708440

LINTON, Kate *Miranda*. Oxford, 1991  
ISBN 0195533054

Miranda decides to rescue her toys, left outside in a storm. Her task is undertaken at 2 levels - the actual and the imagined. She imagines herself as a lighthouse keeper, rowing out on a hazardous mission while collecting the toys from the garden. Illustrations on facing pages tell each story, while the text recounts her imaginary journey. Employing a rich palette of blues and greens enlivened with yellow, the illustrations are a strong feature of this picture book, which allows young readers to experience 2 different strands of a story. J. Buckley  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 696270

TREZISE, Percy *Mungoon-gali the giant goanna*. Angus & Robertson, 1991  
ISBN 0207172005

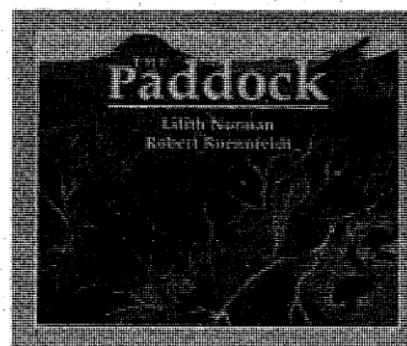
Mungoon-gali is one of the Kadimakara, the giant animals which lived in Australia 20,000 years ago. This picture book introduces these animals, and the warnings used by Aboriginal people to protect their children from attack. The bulk of the story concerns the adventures of 4 children who set off alone, are faced by Mungoon-gali, shelter in a cave and cause a fire which drives the giant reptile away. It is a straightforward story with plenty of action, but more of an adventure with child protagonists and a giant, dinosaur-like reptile than a work deeply linked to Aboriginal lore. Trezise's distinctive colour paintings enrich the text. J. Buckley  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 693160

TREZISE, Percy *Nungadin and Willijen*. Angus & Robertson, 1992  
ISBN 0207172145

Percy Trezise, in collaboration this time with Mary Haginikitas, gives us another Aboriginal Dreamtime story, acknowledging in the foreword that the real storytellers are Joogumu of the Gugu-Yalanji and Toomacalin of the Olcula people. The poignant story, which has a very important message for the carers of young children, is told in a conversational style echoing the traditional verbal transmission of Dreamtime stories. Uncluttered, full colour illustrations extend the text and evoke the landscape. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 706841

NORMAN, Lilith *The paddock*. Random House, 1992  
ISBN 0091826519

In the tradition of *My place and Window*, this book, in a far less complex way, traces the changes undergone by one patch of land. And it is the patch of land that is timeless: human footsteps may appear upon it, not always particularly lightly trod but transitory nonetheless. Teachers across many years will find



plenty of material for discussion in this very attractive work. The language, though within reach of young children, is rich in description and expression of feeling; the text is very well supported by Robert Roennfeldt's very fine, colour illustrations. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary  
AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 710389

FOREMAN, Michael *Panda and the bushfire*. Penguin, 1992  
ISBN 0140541152

An informal preamble tells us that Panda and his friend lion, whilst in Australia during a world trip, are caught up in a bushfire. It is appropriate that we are told that the story takes place in Australia because the illustrations, beautiful though they may be, certainly bear no resemblance to the Australian bush or a bushfire. Nor are koalas, referred to almost throughout the book as furry bundles, terribly recognisable, their size being on a par with the panda. The story is banal and the text undistinguished. This one is definitely not worthy of Michael Foreman. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$7.99 SCIS 704840

BRADFORD, Clare Phillip and *Jack the monster*. Angus & Robertson, 1992  
ISBN 0207167893

Phillip, as is the wont of preschoolers, tends towards behaviour which is naughty but irresistible; partial escape is achieved by blaming his imaginary friend Jack the Monster. The theme has a familiarity but perhaps this is forgivable because of its extension into showing this as a phase from which Phillip learns and emerges as just that much more grown up. The colour illustrations by Ulrike Kundra are bright and earthily appealing and a worthy adjunct to an unpretentious text to which young children will relate. F. Gardiner  
LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 705938

IKEDA, Daisaku *The princess and the moon*. Oxford, 1991  
ISBN 0192716808

If you are looking for a spectacularly beautiful picture book, this combination of an appealing, polished story and the luminous artwork of Brian Wildsmith should be ideal. It is a fairy tale about the Shinnings of children on earth, moon beings who are able to lower the defenses of personality and attitude to allow the children's essential goodness to shine through. Sophie visits the moon to see her Shining and to glimpse the

true nature of some of her friends. The moon's magical realm is given glorious expression in the illustrations, which demonstrate Wildsmith's vibrant use of colour, striking design and power of interpretation of the elegantly written text. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 694817

Graham Bob Rose meets Mr Wintergarten. Viking, 1992  
 ISBN 0670843733

The Summers family (Mum, Dad and the 3 kids) move into their new house and immediately achieve a homey look, indoors and out. Nextdoor, however, is anything but homey and the neighbourhood children tell gruesome stories of the occupant, Mr Wintergarten. Rose Summers is not to be intimidated, well, not too intimidated, and she eventually meets the dreaded old man, who of course turns out to be not fearsome at all. Bob Graham's illustrations are delightful, although overall this book lacks the originality and the subtle irony and humour of its predecessors. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Lower primary  
 AVAIL: \$16.95 SCIS 707781

Rub-a-dub-dub Blackie, 1991  
 ISBN 021693091X

It seems almost obligatory for illustrators to publish a collection of nursery rhymes; this is Val Biro's contribution to the genre. All the old favourites are there and at the end there is a short selection of riddles and tongue twisters. The contents, which serves as index, are listed alphabetically by first line. Val Biro's illustrations are splendid of course and if you are in the market for a new Mother Goose, this is a perfectly acceptable choice. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Preschool Lower primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$14.95 SCIS 700519

WILD, Margaret The slumber party Omnibus, 1992  
 ISBN 1862911177

Margaret Wild may one day be held responsible for any upsurge in the popularity of slumber parties after this picture book is enjoyed. She explores all the likely experiences of a slumber party with great style and perception. Seven friends are invited to the party. We witness their preparations, presented in a style similar to that used in Clive eats alligators. The stories expand and weave together as the varying emotional states, and the fun and mayhem which ensue are captured in finely honed text. Perfectly matched by David Cox's lively, informal colour illustrations, this is a wonderfully

exuberant work which will inspire young readers and bring rueful smiles to the faces of their parents. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 704457

WHATLEY, Bruce The ugliest dog in the world. Angus & Robertson, 1992  
 ISBN 020717413X

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as demonstrated by the boxer in this picture book. We are offered many viewpoints on the dog's looks, both from the playful text and the large cheerful illustrations. We see the ugly dog as criminal, monster, Groucho Marx, bull, clown and others, as perceived by everyone she meets. Large, softly coloured pencil illustrations flow over the uncluttered pages of this picture book. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 706899

CIVARDI, Anne The wacky book of witches. Kingfisher, 1991  
 ISBN 0862726786

If witches are what you want, here they are! In large format, abounding in colour and gruesome detail, the illustrations in this picture book are designed to be pored over and enjoyed. They dominate the rhyming text, which details the activities of Warty, as she prepares a Halloween feast for all the witches of Cackle Town. Many visual puns about all things witchy require some previous understanding of the cliches surrounding this topic. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 699570 ♦

### Budget tip

The following prices, prepared by Curriculum Materials Information Services in Western Australia, may help in the development of budgets and submissions.

Average cost of resources in 1991:

Primary non-fiction	\$23.71
Primary fiction	\$14.99
Lower secondary non-fiction	\$25.28
Upper secondary non-fiction	\$36.89
Secondary fiction	\$12.61
Software K-12	\$107.40

## Fiction for younger readers

FINE, Anne Anneli the art hater. Mammoth, Reprinted 1991  
 ISBN 0749705973

Not only is Anneli's curiosity satisfied, but she strikes up a happy new relationship with her elderly next door neighbour when she explores a hidden upstairs door. The revelations of this neighbour also convince Anneli that paintings can sometimes be interesting. Whilst there is nothing distinguished about the plot, characterisation or style, this simple, straightforward story is perfectly acceptable and will appeal to young readers. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.50 SCIS 685719

HUNT, Julie The Answerman. Hyland House, 1991  
 ISBN 0947062793

Who is Wimmer J? This name on the letterbox fascinates the child narrator of this intriguing story, who imagines him to be the Answerman, someone who can answer some of life's questions for her. Wimmer J does not have the answers. He too is battling, with loneliness and alcoholism, but is prompted to articulate some of his own questions. This deceptively simple story addresses complex issues. Angular, poignant illustrations by Maya place the characters within an urban setting rarely reflected in writing for young readers. They mirror the emotion generated by this story, which in style and size is suited to newly independent readers, demanding of them thought and emotion. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Upper primary  
 AVAIL: \$14.95 SCIS 697667

HALL, Penny Better for everyone. Omnibus, 1992  
 ISBN 1862911096

Perhaps this novel will mollify some of those critics of the plethora of 'problem' books for young readers. Oh there are problems—divorced parents, remarried father, step siblings, financial difficulties—but the characters have been so well pre-soaked, washed on the heavy duty cycle, and doused so liberally with softener that they are whiter-than-white, cleaner-than-clean, sanitised, and so bland and boring. Children from real life disrupted families, or even those from intact families, who read this book are likely to wonder about their own families in which people actually live, shout, solve problems only with great difficulty, rather than exist on some sweet plane where everyone smiles vacuously, notices little and cares less. Jane Tanner's cover illustration is outstanding. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$8.95

SCIS 704520

Can I keep him? Oxford, 1991  
 ISBN 0195533062

Here are stories about pets: all deftly written and illustrated with great verve and charm by Betina Ogden. They are entirely appropriate for their intended audience, well set out with large clear type and would be excellent to read aloud. The authors (including Colin Thiele, Libby Hathorn, Nan Hunt and Julia McClelland) convey the highs and lows of pet ownership, the pleasures as well as the practicalities. The high standard of design and illustration contribute much to the appeal of this anthology. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95 SCIS 6976

VAN LEEUWEN, Jean Dear Mum you're ruining my life. Pan Macmillan, 1991  
 ISBN 0330319868

Sam (antha) is a worrier; whether it's concern about her appearance, friendships, the pain of having her loose tooth given the final yank, or how to behave as a first-time babysitter, Sam is nervous. She is also facing the transition from child to adult, more than a little unwillingly. Although the setting is very clearly the US, Sam's doubts and fears are equally common in Australia, and will strike a chord with many young girls on the brink of adulthood. Van Leeuwen's accessible and appealing style make this a worthwhile addition to the collection. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 SCIS 704483

KIDD, Diana The fat and juicy place. Collins, 1991  
 ISBN 0207167869

Using his own style and idiom, Jack, a young Aboriginal child, tells us his story. Essentially it is a tragedy but Jack's exuberance imbues the story with the earthy joy and insight that has enabled his people to survive not only the past 200 years, but the preceding tens of thousands on this harsh motherland. As she has shown us before, Diana Kidd has a special talent for creating character: Jack bursts into reality via his narrative, introducing us along the way to his family and community. There are no descriptive passages and yet each character is a vividly drawn as a Van Gogh sunflower. Bronwyn Bancroft's profuse black and white illustrations complement and break up the text making this a perfect book for the very newly independent

reader; its layered humour and drama will, however, ensure its appeal for more mature readers. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95

SCIS 700521

Please note that almost all items reviewed are recommended. The only exceptions are those which have an EVAL statement 'Consider before buying' or 'Not recommended'. Exceptionally fine items are given a 'Highly recommended' EVAL statement.

KINGSLAND, Robin *Hook, line and stinker*. Pan, 1991  
 ISBN 0330319930

The fishy inhabitants of the river have it all over the anglers in the fishing competition, despite the devious tricks employed by some competitors. The cheat appears to prosper, until the fish intervene to cause havoc. Readers can turn the book over to enjoy an accompanying story, *A fishy tale*, which explores the relationship between the local fish and Carlos, a dashing piranha who arrives on holiday. Two perspectives on the same events are provided, adding interest to these short stories for newly independent readers. Cartoon style line drawings accompany each sentence, and fun abounds. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.95

SCIS 703546

MATTINGLEY, Christobel *Lizard log*. Hodder and Stoughton, 1992  
 ISBN 0340412984

This is a new edition of a story written in 1975, but its themes of love of animals and care for their maltreatment remain fresh. Tony observes and feeds blue tongues, jacky lizards, skinks and a goanna while on a camping trip, eventually saving them from poachers. Information is provided about the habits and appearance of the lizards, making the instructional intent of the story obvious at times, but interest is maintained. Colour illustrations by Walter Stackpool are detailed, accurate and appealing. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$8.95

SCIS 704687

ANDERSON, Scouler *The magic boomerang*. Pan, 1991  
 ISBN 0330319809

A boomerang with magic powers is the final result of Max's meddling with a book of magic spells. Max is the frustrated apprentice of the wizard Bungli, who prefers watching television to wizardry. This quirky story has an Australian setting, with cartoon style illustrations which match the short, funny text. One of the Flippers series of books for newly independent readers, it contains a companion story, *The magic present*, within the same volume. This explains how the boomerang becomes a present from an aunt in Australia, with many comic results. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.95

SCIS 703534

WESLEY, Mary *Magic landscapes: an omnibus*. JM Dent, 1991  
 ISBN 0460880950

This corpulent tome (470 pages) promises a feast for the bookworm. Alas the 3 courses prove to be nouvelle cuisine at its most sparing – and not that nouvelle either. The 3 novels comprising this omnibus were written some time ago *Haphazard house* in 1983, *Speaking terms* and *The sixth seal* in 1969. All 3 have the common thread of fantasy, but although they have a touch of whimsy, essentially they are silly and unappealing. Persuading students to take any hardcoverd book off the shelf is not always easy; the lack of reward for hefting this one homeward will make it very shelfbound. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$35.00

SCIS 701964

BLACKER, Terence *Ms Wiz banned*. Pan Macmillan, 1990  
 ISBN 0330319973

Ms Wiz has created chaos before at St Barnabus School, but, when most of the teachers become ill, the School Inspector is forced to ask Ms Wiz to head the school and to find two other teachers. His only request is that she does not employ magic. Ms Wiz manages to control herself, but her two colleagues cannot resist using magic to enliven their lessons. Disaster looms until Ms Wiz with the help of magic and one of the students manages to return everything to normal. The large text, and occasional black and white illustrations combine with the humour to create an appealing story for newly independent readers. M. Ellis  
 LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.95

SCIS 704480

JENNINGS, Paul *The naked ghost, Burp! and blue jam*. Longman Cheshire, 1991  
 ISBN 0582875609

Three short stories are compiled in this volume. The author's deft touch in combining surreal fantasy, humour and acute observation of human nature produce 3 funny and intriguing stories. A good introduction to the work of Paul Jennings, this is a small novel which will encourage newly independent and older reluctant readers. J. Buckley  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$6.50

SCIS 706314

WAGNER, Jenny *Return of the nimbin*. Penguin, 1992  
 ISBN 0140348549

'The corridor downstairs had an old fashioned smell about it'. Just as Jenny Wagner describes a corridor where Greg and Philippa go to seek help in their search for the lost nimbin, so could one describe her novel, metaphorically of course. Its 'old fashionedness' emanates from its straightforward plot, simplicity of style, good humour, and characters who are unburdened by psychological or emotional problems. (This is not to suggest that there is no place for novels which delve into darker themes.) The legion of fans of *The nimbin*, published so long ago, will probably have moved onto more sophisticated offerings, but there's a new generation, so maybe you'll need a new copy of the original novel as well. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95

SCIS 704380

O'CONNOR, Pamela *Tessa's promise*. Millenium, 1991  
 ISBN 085574894X

Tessa is the only member of her family to survive the ravages of the Irish potato famine. In a workhouse in Dublin she befriends orphans Liam and Thomas, promising one day she'll take them to Australia for a better life with her uncle Timothy on his farm at Parramatta. A long sea voyage, shipwreck and close encounters with snakes and bushrangers intervene, but Tessa inevitably keeps her promise. Short chapters, an eventful storyline and unambiguous characters make this a successful novel for newly independent readers. M. Lobban  
 LEV: Middle primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95

SCIS 684624



ODGERS, Sally *Three loony months*. Angus & Robertson, 1992  
 ISBN 020716780X

The problem is basically a fiscal one: 11 people living in one house use more electricity and food than one wage earner can comfortably provide for. Justin's collaboration with his father (or vice versa) in schemes to save money manages to alienate most of the other cold, hungry inhabitants. Narrated almost entirely by Justin, with asides from his father, this aptly titled novel is indeed loony almost to the point of tedium, but young readers will be forgiving and enjoy the anarchic humour, the accessible format and off-beat characters. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$8.95

SCIS 699315

ESCOTT, John *Truth game*. Blackie, 1991  
 ISBN 021693124X

The arrival of the famous TV star Sonny Ryman and his family in the tiny town of Molestock triggers a series of events and intrigues that finds school newspaper reporters Ros, Kenny and Jamie pitted against the sensation-seeking and scurrilous adult reporter Unity McPhee. Who will solve the mystery that surrounds Sonny and reveal his past? Although written very much to a formula, and betraying its English origins the story manages to have enough twists and turns to maintain a reader's interest. M. Ellis  
 LEV: Middle primary Upper primary  
 AVAIL: \$24.95

SCIS 701459

BARBALET, Margaret *The wolf*. Viking, 1991  
 ISBN 0670836141

There are 300 page novels, employing all manner of sophisticated devices or grizzly details that fail to evoke the terror of this amazing picture book. Margaret Barbalet has tapped into and blended two of our primal fears: wolves and the unknown. The result is both a realistic treatise on the fear generated by an apparently fierce, wild creature and an allegory for the dangers to our psychological, and ultimately physical, health when we are unable or unwilling to confront our fears. This is a uniquely magnificent book: the eloquent text is enriched to perfection by Jane Tanner's masterly illustrations. But such is its power that wisdom and discrimination must be employed in its use with young children for whom it is definitely not appropriate for class use. For older students, however it would provide a perfect springboard for discussion. Shortlisted 1992 CBC Awards. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$17.95  
 EVAL: Highly recommended

SCIS 699315

## ■ Fiction for older readers

ODGERS, Sally *All the sea between*. Longman Cheshire, 1991  
ISBN 0582875374

A sequel to *Another good friend*, this takes the play written by four students through its production to triumphant performance. The story is told from the perspective of Helen, the quiet musician of the group, who is bitterly disappointed when she does not win the leading role and will not sing the songs she has composed. Again it is relationships, both within and beyond the group, which are the strength of the novel. There is also an interesting attempt to consider adolescent romance from a male point of view.

M. Lobban

LEV: Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.99

SCIS 706548

ODGERS, Sally *Another good friend*. Longman Cheshire, 1991  
ISBN 0582874920

Four very different year 9 students become involved in writing an historical musical to be performed to celebrate the sesquicentenary of their small Tasmanian town. The play absorbs them totally, and although romance blossoms between two of the group, it is not the focus of the novel. The novel's success lies rather in the realistic portrayal of the four characters and the dynamics of their working relationship. This is a pleasant book which avoids the oversimplification of the romance genre, whilst still appealing to its readers.

M. Lobban

LEV: Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.99

SCIS 706549

*The Blue Dress*. Mammoth, 1991  
ISBN 1963301305

Sixteen Australian writers have contributed stories to this collection. The writers were invited to respond to Brian Dunlop's painting of a young girl wearing a blue dress and walking pensively along the seashore. The results are what one might expect from a 'creative' writing assignment: 16 stories with a rather tedious sameness. Even the genres are not well represented; romance, (mostly not of the flowers and chocolates variety) fantasy, and the supernatural predominate. The high standard of the writing serves only to make this reader wish for a more diverse selection. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$9.95

SCIS 689022

Pilkington, Doris *Caprice-a stockman's daughter* University of Queensland Press, 1991  
ISBN 0702224006

With simplicity and emotion, Doris Pilkington, Nugi Garimara, writes a fictionalised account of her life, and those of her mother and grandparents. The 3 generations experience all aspects of interaction between black and white communities, including the fulfilling marriage of her Irish immigrant grandfather and full blood grandmother, her mother's tragically ending love, and life in pastoral stations, institutional care and missions. The dignity of the author shines through this readable and involving work. It opens a door on the riches of this woman's progress in life, finding fulfillment both in white society and in embracing her heritage. J. Buckley

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$12.95

SCIS 684612

TOLBERT, Steve *Channeary*. Longman Cheshire, 1991  
ISBN 0582875536

The horror and tragedy of the war in Cambodia is told through the eyes of Channeary, a young girl fleeing the massacre of most of her family by the Khmer Rouge. Her journey takes her on a terrifying and tragic trip to the overcrowded refugee camps in Thailand and finally on to life in Tasmania with an Australian nurse who has befriended her. Here the strangeness of her new country and the bigotry of some fellow students reawaken terrifying images of her previous life. Whilst the 9 year time span does not allow a deep exploration of her experiences it is nonetheless a sensitive and thought provoking novel. M. Ellis

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.99

SCIS 694698

OTTLEY, Ian *The Creeklanders* University of Queensland Press, 1991  
ISBN 0702223921

The creek is home to many animals whose peaceful life is disturbed by the arrival of white settlers. They introduce many fearsome creatures - dogs, rabbits and cane toads, and begin the process of changing the landscape for agriculture. The animals, particularly the feisty platypus and Clarrie the carpet snake, need to find ways to cope with the change, which ultimately destroys the harmony of the environment. Reminiscent of Graham's *Wind in the Willows*, this is a gentle, symbolic story which strongly emphasises the worth of the natural environment. Line drawings by the

author contribute to the innocent atmosphere of this fable. J. Buckley  
LEV: Upper primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$9.95

SCIS 693295

MOLONEY, James *Crossfire*. University of Queensland Press, 1992  
ISBN 0702223840

The author's stated aim of focussing on gun ownership and usage in Australia rather obviously drives the plot of this novel. Fourteen-year-old Luke lives with his austere, embittered mother and his interest in guns stems mainly from his desire to share an interest with his father, Wayne. Luke is continually being caught in the emotional crossfire between his divorced parents, but at the end of the story he literally places himself between his mother and his angry, drunk father who is wielding a lever action Winchester rifle. But Luke, Wayne and Alison are never stereotypes, and Luke's struggle to be his own person is a realistic and touching one. M. Lobban

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$10.95

SCIS 707106

KELLEHER, Victor *Del-Del*. Random House, 1991.  
ISBN 0091826063

After a brief introduction, more of a foreword really, by the narrator, Beth, the story proper begins with a family visit to grave of Laura, the middle child, who died exactly a year earlier. Sam, the 7-year-old youngest child, begins to act very strangely on this day; his behaviour gradually worsens and he endures the most terrifying and tormented psychological suffering throughout the novel. There are two false denouements before the real solution is found. It is a testimony to the skill with which this novel is written that the concentration of the reader is not diverted in any way by the effective division of the novel into 3 sections. And whilst a 7-year-old hero would usually be the kiss of death to a novel for older readers, this one will not suffer at all. Shortlisted 1992 CBC Awards. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

SCIS 693406

WILSON, Jacqueline *The dream palace*. OUP, 1991  
ISBN 0192716778

Lolly and her best friend Lynn have just left school. Lolly is an unhappy girl, feeling she is always in the shadow of the glamorous Lynn, hating her amiable, fat stepfather and arguing endlessly with her mother. During her first grown-up summer Lolly works in a nursing home, falls agonisingly in love with a wildly unsuitable young man, and changes forever the balance

of her relationship with Lynn. This is not a gentle novel - Lolly's arguments with her mother are sharp and spiteful, Greg is a drug dealer who suspects he may be HIV positive and life in the nursing home is described in grim detail. Despite all this, Lolly's journey to independence and self-knowledge is credible and engaging. M. Lobban

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

SCIS 707563

MACDONALD, Caroline *The eye witness*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1991  
ISBN 034054953X

His mother's unexpected remarriage takes Leo from familiar Melbourne to Tasmania where his new family and surroundings are not only unfamiliar but often hostile. The year is 2046 and Leo is 15. His encounter with 11-year-old Jack who claims to belong to the year 1995, leads to a succession of dangerous and perplexing situations. The basic plot and ideas are interesting, but too many strands proliferate and the seesawing between Jack and Leo as the principle character dilutes the book's power. Sufficient tension remains to engage and hold the reader, however, and this futuristic novel will be well received by its intended audience. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$17.95

SCIS 696383

McVEITY, Jen *The fifty dollar fall*. Longman Cheshire, 1991  
ISBN 058287517X

Simon wages \$50 with Jarrod, the school bully. Why? He doesn't know, and is in a state of numbed desperation. The challenge is interrupted by a teacher just before his success. Simon spends the weekend frantically trying to raise the money because of his fear of Jarrod. He, however, has to apologise and spends the weekend trying to find a way of doing so without losing face. The strengths of the novel are its accurate understanding of friendship and power relationships, and its unflagging humour. The ambiguity of the situation, as the bully is maintained in his role by the expectations of others, helps make this a successful, thought provoking work. J. Buckley

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$7.99

SCIS 706476

McCAUGHREAN, Geraldine *Fires astonishment*. Minerva, 1990  
ISBN 0749391200

Very slow to begin, this hefty novel develops into a work of art that is worthy of the author of *A pack of*

lies. Totally different from the latter work, this one is a mythical work which explores human passions, strengths and flaws. The audience? The prose is difficult and has a strong archaic redolence; some of the subject matter is for mature readers; the plot is obscure, especially in the beginning. So it is certainly not for McCaughrean's regular audience. But older and adult readers who enjoy a novel which requires intellectual input from the reader and who appreciate rich layers of myth in a mediaeval setting will be rewarded by this difficult read. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$12.95

SCIS 696712

McROBBIE, David *The fourth caution* Longman Cheshire, 1991

ISBN 0582875366

Danny is a cuckoo. He is a time traveller, one of 4 babies to be nurtured then return to their own society at adolescence. He is forced to make sense of his new powers of perception and communication, while understanding his relationship to the other time travellers and preparing to leave his family. This is an engaging and fast paced adventure, which links the experiences of adolescence into a science fiction story.

J. Buckley

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.99

SCIS 706470

NILSSON, Eleanor *The house guest*. Viking, 1991

ISBN 0670831242

Gunno's involvement with a gang of pubescent burglars brings him to an old house which draws him back so forcefully that it and its inhabitants, particularly an absent one, eventually assume the utmost importance in his life and lead him to a surreal, disturbing but satisfying experience. To say that Eleanor Nilsson doesn't totally fulfil all of the requirements of the difficult time-slip novel is not to be destructively critical because this is an excellent novel and one which children will love. The characters are refreshingly and disarmingly real, ie humanly imperfect; the prose pulsates with mystery, begging to be read but never sacrificing superior prose for accessibility. A worthy winner of the Adelaide Festival Children's Book Award; shortlisted 1992 CBC Awards. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$14.95

SCIS 693353

KEANEY, Brian *If this is the real world* Oxford University Press, 1991

ISBN 019271661

Danny's real world revolves around coping with his first year of secondary school, life with his mum, and a preoccupation with his long missing father. A chance encounter in a supermarket leads him to suspect that he has found his father. New friendships help him to establish himself at school, and as he attempts to discover the facts of the past and reconcile them with his current situation. Raising complex questions with a light touch, this tightly written novel realistically conveys the emotional states of early adolescence.

J. Buckley

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$19.95

SCIS 708239

POHL, Peter *Johnny my friend*. Turton & Chambers, 1991

ISBN 1872148700

Johnny appears out of nowhere to become a part-time member of the gang - part-time because his presence is ephemeral. Chris, the narrator, develops a close friendship with Johnny and finds it difficult to cope with Johnny's repeated and unexplained absences, and the mystery which surrounds his whole being. This is a most absorbing but disturbing book. The underlying theme is child abuse, which may explain its obscurity - a young person's book which spells it all out plainly would obviously be unacceptable. But the reader needs to feel satisfied at the end that she has found all the bits of the puzzle and put them in the right places, not an easy task with this novel which has won awards in its native Sweden and in Germany. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$19.95

SCIS 693743

MAHON, Kate *Just one tear*. Angus & Robertson, 1992

ISBN 0207174547

A diary from 2 March to 2 May traces the reactions of a boy who sees his father die, not instantly, from a shot fired under unexplained circumstances by a man who is found not guilty at trial, also covered during this 2-month period. It is a story of self-searching, coming to terms with his own and his mother's grief, told in a very sparse, staccato style. This is an outstanding novella for any reader, the ingenuous but effective language makes this however an exceptional book for older reluctant readers. The author is a 14-year-old NSW schoolgirl. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$8.95

SCIS 693743

*Landmarks*. Edited by Nadia Wheatley. Turton & Chambers, 1991

ISBN 1872148654

In the landscape of our lives there are landmarks:

revelations, events and realisations which stand out and change that landscape forever. In the nine short stories in this fine collection a variety of adolescents come to know and understand themselves and their lives a little more clearly. The events and experiences they undergo range from the exquisite embarrassment of imagined social ineptness to acknowledging and accepting one's sexuality. The authors are all well-known Australian writers, and the distinctive voice of each can be heard clearly in these original stories.

M. Lobban

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$14.95

SCIS 693745

McROBBIE, David *Mandragora*. Mammoth, 1991

ISBN 1863301011

A collection of tiny dolls, unearthed under inauspicious circumstances, brings untold misery to the finders. Although the predominant theme of the book is one of possession by evil powers, its real strength is in the realistic portrayal of the relationship between the main character, Adam, and a slightly less major character, Catriona. McRobbie displays not the slightest hint of cliché as the burgeoning relationship ebbs and flows, with each of the protagonists learning about themselves during its course. The plot is less successful, though by no means unsuccessful; there is some obscurity, which does not have the feel of being intentional, and which left this reader flicking back trying to work out references. But that diminished the riveted enjoyment only marginally. Shortlisted 1992 CBC Awards.

F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$9.95

SCIS 687387

CURTIS, Philip *Mr Browser meets the Mind Shrinkers*.

Penguin, 1991

ISBN 0140345566

Mind Beggars, Lip Smackers, Taste Bud Ticklers and Telly Mates - these are the delicious sweets provided by Mr Smith, replacement teacher for Mr Browser's class. The chilling Mr Smith is, however, a Mind Shrinker using the class as an experiment in a plan to control the people of earth. Only Spiky, returning to school after a long holiday, suspects that something strange is going on. Lots of fun and adventure ensue, as the alien is foiled and Mr Browser returned to his class. Illustrations by Tony Ross contribute to the zany fun of this winning combination of science fiction and school adventure. J. Buckley

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$7.95

SCIS 682899

*On the edge*. Macmillan, 1991

ISBN 0330319833

The authors represented in this collection of what could probably best be described as thrillers, are Patricia Windsor, Robert Westall, Jan Mark, Margaret Mahy, Rex Harley, Vivian Alcock, John Gordon and Brian Morse. So the expectations are high and the reality is not disappointing. Every tale is gripping, the writing is uniformly excellent, and the young readers who take this one off the shelf may well be inspired to try the numerous superb novels by this collection of writers.

F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$7.95

SCIS 704482

*Perhaps you should talk to someone*. Edited by Julia Eccleshare. Penguin, 1991

ISBN: 0140328963

With contributors like Beryl Bainbridge, Nadine Gordimer, Graham Greene, Salman Rushdie and Virginia Woolf this volume of short stories was bound to be interesting. These stories are very short - generally less than 10 pages - precise and detailed, and appeal directly to mature adolescent readers. They deal seriously and whimsically with life, examination pressure, relationships and sex: William Boyd's Eric loses his virginity to a French prostitute; Penelope Lively's Trevor becomes a naked fountain statue. The writers are British, South African and American. There are no Australians. The print is small. A. Barber

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$8.95

SCIS 688534

McCANN, Daryl *Street of dreams*. Mammoth, 1992

ISBN 1863301186

Nick's ordinary old Glenelg street takes on a new lustre when he discovers a hitherto unknown part-time resident, Angela. His relationship with Angela is the centrepiece of this novel and the catalyst for the changes that he makes in his life as he approaches his final school exams. This is McCann's first novel and to say that it shows is not to condemn it unmercifully. Its theme is a bit hazy; it could have been tightened by omitting some extraneous incidents and conversation which does not advance plot or character development or anything else; and the reader needs to be accorded more trust to work things out for herself. But the characters are credible and likeable; the idea of the vulnerable 17-year-old boy is one to be fostered. And the opening chapter is splendid; this reviewer awaits with great anticipation the second novel which may well live up to the promise of this one. F. Gardiner

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$9.95

SCIS 704923♦

## Information

Following is a selection of resources which have recently been reviewed. They are listed in order by Dewey number.

### K-6

PALMER, Joy **Rainforests**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0749605715 [333.75]

The characteristics of the rainforest habitat are outlined in this book which features plenty of colour illustrations supplemented by a simple, brief text. Some of the plants, animals, birds and people living in tropical rainforests are described. Key terms associated with this habitat are used throughout the text and defined in a glossary. An underlying message about the importance of conservation is presented but may well be too subtle for many younger readers. A basic index is included. H. Vickers

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary

AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 704926

#### In the same series:

PALMER, Joy **Deserts**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0749605731 [574.5]  
SCIS 704925

PALMER, Joy **Polar Lands**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN 074960574X [919.8]  
SCIS 704924

PALMER, Joy **Oceans**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0749605723 [551.46]  
SCIS 704927

BAILEY, Donna **Recycling rubbish**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN: 0749604077 [363.72]

After setting out the basic problem clearly and succinctly, the author takes the reader through possible solutions to the mountains of garbage now produced. Recycling is one method, but it is not the only suggestion: reducing rubbish by selecting better-packaged products, reuse and avoiding disposable products are suggested. Good illustrations, simple text and careful presentation on each double page give maximum impact. There is a global perspective, but words like 'dustcarts', 'ponds' and 'streams' betray the origins. There is an index, glossary and suggested activities. A. Barber

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 695784

MACKNESS, Brian **Practical science 1 teacher's book**. Dellasta, 1992  
ISBN 094713896X [507]

Organised around 4 themes life, energy, matter and

space/time this resource provides simple, but interesting, investigations to explore scientific concepts. Each investigation, such as 'Air exits', outlines the science concept and skills involved, the objectives, the procedure, and an evaluation which can be employed. Materials used are readily obtainable and inexpensive making this a useful resource for the Science and Technology syllabus. To increase the teacher's knowledge and confidence, additional background information including a scientist's profile is provided. Students can complete activities on each investigation in the separate student log book. M. Ellis

AUD: Professional

AVAIL: Paper \$29.95 SCIS 710306

MACKNESS, **Practical science student's science log**. Dellasta, 1992

ISBN 1875627030 [507.6]

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary

AVAIL: Paper \$3.95 SCIS 710307

ARDLEY, Neil **Sound**. Little Ark Books, Allen & Unwin, 1991

ISBN 163730672 [534.078]

This is one of eight in a series aimed at the primary school market. Large, clear print, colourful photographic illustrations, simple, fun experiments with step-by-step instructions and 'fascinating facts' inserts will be attractive to young scientists. The experimental, hands-on approach fits in well with the Science and Technology K-6 syllabus providing teachers with a useful resource to support practical classroom activities. Unfortunately there is no list of contents or index to assist in locating information within the book. The organisation of information on the page is cluttered at times and some students may have difficulty in following the flow of instructions for experiments. F. Moloney

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary Upper

primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$12.95 SCIS 692469

#### In the same series:

ARDLEY, Neil **Light**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 0044423144 (Reviewed SCAN 10/3) [535]  
SCIS 667398

ARDLEY, Neil **Water**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 0044423152 (Reviewed SCAN 10/3) [532]  
SCIS 667393

ARDLEY, Neil **Air**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 0044423128 (Reviewed SCAN 10/3) [533]  
SCIS 669604

ARDLEY, Neil **Growth**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 1863730680 [574.3]  
SCIS 692461

ARDLEY, Neil **Magnets**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 1863730656 [538]  
SCIS 692463

ARDLEY, Neil **Electricity**. Allen & Unwin, 1991  
ISBN 1863730664 [537.078]  
SCIS 692468

POWELL, Jillian **Swimmers**. Firefly, 1991  
ISBN 1854851004 [591.1]

The 'notes for adults' in the back of this book claim that it 'teaches children all about the huge variety of animals that can swim'. It doesn't. The book is a series of beautiful photographs of swimming creatures (including humans) with a small amount of information about each one. The discussion points at the back could be useful in the home, pre-school or K-2 classroom context. There is no list of contents or index to assist in locating information within the text. Mainly for general interest use or as support material for study of movement at junior primary levels. F. Moloney

LEV: Lower primary

AVAIL: \$16.95 SCIS 701745

#### In the same series:

POWELL, Jillian **Jumpers**. Firefly, 1991  
ISBN 1854851020 [591.1]  
SCIS 701747

POWELL, Jillian **Climbers**. Firefly, 1991  
ISBN 1854851012 [591.1]  
SCIS 701749

POWELL, Jillian **Flyers**. Firefly, 1991  
ISBN 1854850997 [629.132]  
SCIS 701742

JENNINGS, Terry **Territories**. Aladdin Books, 1991  
ISBN 0749606940 [591.51]

This book explores why some animals occupy and protect a specific patch of ground. The author has considered its usefulness at a number of different levels. Each short chapter has a large heading followed by a brief informative statement in bold type. This information may be sufficient for the research needs of some users. More detailed information about animal territorial behaviour follows with specific examples given. The well-labelled illustrations are a combination of line drawings, diagrams and photographs. Unfortunately, the *Spot it yourself* section loses its impact due to a concentration on northern hemisphere animals. Nevertheless, the list of contents, a comprehensive index and a simple glossary make this a very accessible resource. F. Moloney

LEV: Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
AVAIL: \$21.95 SCIS 704886

#### In the same series:

BURNIE, David **Communication**. Aladdin Books, 1991  
ISBN 0749606894 [591.59]  
SCIS 704889

WATTS, Barbara **Stick insects**. Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0749606045 [595.7]

Beginning with a general introduction this resource quickly moves to a more detailed description of some of the different types of stick insects and their favoured habitats. This provides the basis for information on the care, feeding, reproduction and life cycle of these insects. The information provided by the large print text is reinforced by superb colour photographs. An interesting fact file, index and contents pages are included to assist the reader. M. Ellis

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: \$18.95 SCIS 704940

MORRIS, Jill **Dido has diabetes**. Great Glider Productions, 1992  
ISBN 0947304053

Dido is a diprotodon who excels at sport, is the delight of Mrs Dennaro's class and who is helpful at home. She also exhibits some odd symptoms which lead to a diagnosis of diabetes, and consequently a drastic, but not by any means unmanageable, change in lifestyle. Illustrations and diagrams by Margie Chellew elaborate on the main formal text, and a glossary (un-named) provides some useful information. The view is simplistic: children who suffer from such illnesses often have much more complex reactions than does Dido—perhaps the use of a child as the central character would have made the work more effective. But it is important that such conditions as diabetes are dealt with in the classroom and this book must be seen as a starting point. F. Gardiner

LEV: Lower primary Middle primary  
AVAIL: Paper \$12.00 SCIS 707258

PARKER, Steve **Catching a cold (How you fall ill, suffer and recover)**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
ISBN 0749604964 [616.2]

This book deals with the general concept of becoming ill, being ill and recovering by charting the progress of a child getting, and recovering from, a cold. Using a combination of clearly labelled photographs and drawings and easy-to-read text, it examines concepts such as immunity, temperature, antibodies, immunization and staying healthy. There are also some child-centred activities and experiments. It could be useful with older children as a discussion starter on broader, community health issues. There is a list of

contents and a detailed index as well as a glossary of medical terms. F. Moloney  
**LEV:** Middle primary Upper primary  
**AVAIL:** \$23.95 SCIS 704816

**In the same series:**

PARKER, Steve **Singing a song (How you sing, speak and make sounds)**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749606207 [612.7]  
 SCIS 704931

BARRETT, Norman **Flying machines**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749607270 [629.13]

This interesting book will certainly fuel the passionate interest some students have for aeroplanes. The historical development of machines that fly is interwoven with current information about passenger aircraft, fascinating flying facts and clearly-labelled illustrations. The list of contents is well organised and the index quite comprehensive. **Flying machines** would be a useful resource for general interest or, in the company of the others in this series, for a study of machines. F. Moloney  
**LEV:** Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
**AVAIL:** \$21.95 SCIS 704639

**In the same series:**

BARRETT, Norman **Space machines**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749607262 [629.4]  
 SCIS 704635

LOBSTEIN, Tim **At the take-away**. Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750202297 [641.1]

This book encourages students to assess the impact of the fast food industry on their health and the environment. The production of take-away food such as hamburgers, fried fish and chips is linked to the impact on land use, depletion of fish stocks and the use of packaging and non-renewable energy. Eating less fat and less processed food is suggested as one way of conserving the environment and being a healthier individual. Includes lots of activities for students to investigate the issues it raises. H. Vickers.  
**LEV:** Upper primary  
**AVAIL:** \$24.95 SCIS 700849

**In the same series:**

JAMES, Barbara **Down the drains**. Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201940 [363.72]  
 SCIS 700851

LANCASTER, John **Paper crafts**. Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749604859 [745.54]

Between the materials and equipment required which are listed at the beginning, and the index at the end, are the comprehensive directions for a variety of craft activities using paper: pricking; tearing; crumpling; collage; making paper; indenting; papier maché. Written directions are supported by excellent, full colour photographs to illustrate each step. The book is also very aesthetically pleasing. The only section that is not of particular use to Australian students is 'further information' which lists British suppliers but the overall excellence of the work otherwise makes this almost a carping comment. F. Gardiner  
**LEV:** Lower primary Middle primary Upper primary  
**AVAIL:** Paper \$12.95 SCIS 692352

**In the same series:**

DEVONSHIRE Hilary **Printing**. Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0740604832 [760.28]  
 SCIS 692350

DEVONSHIRE Hilary **Drawing**. Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749607009 [741.2]  
 SCIS 692351

HILL, Susan **Really rapt**. Keystone, 1991  
 ISBN 1863740015 [782.9]

Ideas for speaking and accompanying old and new rhymes, chants, raps and clapping games appear in the pages of this slender volume. Children will appreciate the nonsense and inventiveness of the rhymes; even Little Miss Muffet has acquired an extra verse. The large print would enable a group of children to follow the text; for the whole class the pages could easily be made into overheads. Simple, amusing line drawings are scattered throughout. F. Gardiner  
**LEV:** Lower primary Middle primary  
**AVAIL:** Paper \$6.95 SCIS 694805

BROWN, Elizabeth **The kids' first book of magical activities**. Egan Publishing, 1990  
 ISBN 0947272488 [793.8]

Illusion, sleight of hand and good preparation will enable children to perform the 23 simple magical tricks that are to be found in this small volume. Tricks include invisible writing, making objects vanish and reappear, mind reading, and X ray eyes. All tricks use readily available and inexpensive materials and are accompanied by simple step by step instructions reinforced by colourful illustrations making this an appealing recreational resource. M. Ellis  
**LEV:** Middle primary Upper primary  
**AVAIL:** Paper \$6.95 SCIS 664568

DEUTCH, Richard **Your book of magic secrets**. Hodder & Stoughton, 1991  
 ISBN 0340535768 [793.8]

The techniques behind a plethora of magic tricks are revealed for budding magicians. Each trick is explained in simple terms using headings such as: you will need; what the audience sees; to make the trick; to perform; the secret. A number of tricks also have a cautionary 'magical footnote'. The final chapter provides general performance guidelines and suggestions for the most appropriate places (close-up, living room, stage) for success with each of the tricks. Some of the line illustrations are simply for decoration; others provide diagrammatic assistance. The only problem with this book will be safeguarding it from over-enthusiastic, light-fingered sleight-of-handers. F. Gardiner  
**LEV:** Upper primary Lower secondary  
**AVAIL:** Paper \$12.95 SCIS 696447

ROBSON, Denny **Kites and flying objects**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749606142 [796.1]

Children are always interested in making things although not necessarily just on rainy days. This book gives clear instructions on the construction of a range of flying objects from the simple to those requiring a reasonable amount of skill and some assistance. The layout is attractive, one colourful project to a double-page spread, and the list of contents as well as an index make the ideas easily accessible. It would be a useful library reference or craft resource. F. Moloney  
**LEV:** Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
**AVAIL:** \$17.95 SCIS 704884

**In the same series:**

ROBSON, Denny **Masks and funny faces**. Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749606150 [745.59]  
 SCIS 704884

**In the same series but in paper (\$9.95)**

ROBSON, Denny **Puppets**. Franklin Watts, 1990  
 ISBN 0749606681 [745.592]  
 SCIS 704880

ROBSON, Denny **Shadow theatre**. Franklin Watts, 1990  
 ISBN 0749606673 [745.592]  
 SCIS 704958

BAILEY, Vanessa **Card tricks**. Franklin Watts, 1990  
 ISBN 0749606665 [795.4]  
 SCIS 704879

BAILEY, Vanessa **Magic tricks**. Franklin Watts, 1990  
 ISBN 0749606657 [793.8]  
 SCIS 704878

The four above have a list of contents but no index. **Card tricks** and **Magic tricks** have glossaries.

SMITH, Mike **Kids' guide to fishing**. Five Mile Press, 1991  
 ISBN 0867883634 [799.1]

This well organised and well illustrated book describes the necessities of basic fishing. Essential homemade equipment is shown with clear instructions for its manufacture. Licences, safety with hooks and sun protection are mentioned. A respect for living things is strong: there are tips for keeping creatures alive for observation before releasing them. Both saltwater and freshwater fishing are dealt with. There is no index but a detailed contents page is very useful. A. Barber  
**LEV:** Middle primary Upper primary Lower secondary  
**AVAIL:** Paper \$7.95 SCIS 708411

TAMES, Richard **Journey through Japan**. Eagle, 1991  
 ISBN 1855110113 [952.04]

Each section of this clearly written book focuses on a different geographical area of Japan. The section on Tokyo relates its importance, how it appears today and its history. A river bus cruise is described. A capsule hotel, the Imperial Palace, a kabuki play, sumo wrestling and sushi are pictured. A similar approach is taken throughout. There is a good balance between text and illustrations, although more subheadings and a more detailed map would help. A selection of key facts, and a time line assist understanding. There is a good index. A. Barber  
**LEV:** Middle primary  
**AVAIL:** \$19.95 SCIS 673717 ♦

**7-12**

BRADLEY, John **Human rights**. Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0749605995 [323]

To provide a global perspective on the current state of human rights in an easy-to-understand format for younger readers is the goal of this well-presented book. Unfortunately human rights is a topic which cannot be successfully dealt with simply. While some of the information is sound, many statements are overly brief, the simplification employing stereotypes and open to misinterpretation. Examples have purposefully been selected to be as current as possible; however some have already been superceded. The assistance of a teacher is recommended when using this resource. L. Bowring  
**LEV:** Upper primary Lower secondary  
**AVAIL:** \$21.95 SCIS 694733

DAVIS, Carole **Earth alert**. Hodder & Stoughton, 1991  
 ISBN 0340539682 [363.7]

Busy, comic-format pages are not always particularly

appealing; this book is an exception. Each page deals in a very even-handed way with one aspect of environmental degradation: a central section of text detailing the problems formally, is surrounded with ballooned comments issuing from characters, human and non. 'Footers' offer statistical snippets. Throughout the book, we are also given advice as to what we can do to avoid further damage or help repair the planet. The glossary and index are brief but useful and a list of interest groups (Australian) and books to read finish off this excellent, inviting and accessible work to perfection. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 SCIS 696350



HARRIS, Colin **Waste management.** Franklin Watts, 1991  
 ISBN: 0749605022 [363.72]

The large format and delightfully cluttered layout make this book's treatment of a complex issue appropriate. The section on recycling does not necessarily see it as a simple solution. Different approaches to the issue are taken, and several case studies used. Lots of illustrations, diagrams, cartoons, subheadings and activities combined with good organisation enables logical presentation. Treatment is generally balanced. However, the obviously British examples, language, illustrations and humour will decrease the relevance in Australia. A. Barber  
 LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary  
 AVAIL: \$19.95 SCIS 680724

PEAD, David **Crime and punishment.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201517 [364]

Each thematic chapter of this balanced book takes a similar approach. Statements, quotations from acknowledged sources, illustrations with appropriate captions and boxed questions reinforce the different opinions. There is not a confusion of detail but a clear presentation of a range of possible opinions. The chapter on prisons discusses the history of modern gaols, the overcrowding problems caused by recent attempts to control crime through imprisonment, looks at different forms of prisons, and asks the reader perceptive questions. Victims' rights, political crime and youth crime are dealt with. There is an index, glossary and suggested further reading. A. Barber

LEV: Lower secondary Middle secondary Upper secondary  
 AVAIL: \$26.95 SCIS 693518

McTAVISH, Douglas **Galileo.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201630 [520.92]

Highlights of Galileo's life and work are presented in straightforward chronology. Most, but not all, of the illustrations are useful and appropriate. One shows planets in the wrong positions; this is acknowledged, but not the inappropriate scale. The text could be simpler and have subheadings. Additional background information is provided in occasional boxes and more use could have been made of this. There is an index, a glossary, a time line and a list of further books to read. A. Barber  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 696615

LAFFERTY, Peter Albert **Einstein.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201657 [530.092]

This readable account of Einstein's life and work goes some way towards making his ideas about relativity, speed, gravity, light and energy accessible to the younger reader. The language is uncomplicated, essential scientific terms are defined in a glossary and the chapters are broken up by monochrome and colour photographs and diagrams illustrating difficult concepts. Einstein's work is discussed in the political and social context of his time with emphasis given to his stand on anti-Semitism and pacifism. One in a series on the pioneers of science. H. Vickers  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 700892

In the same series:  
 MORGAN, Nina Louis **Pasteur.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201665 [614.4092]  
 SCIS 700860

WARD, Brian **Human Body.** Kingfisher Books, 1991  
 ISBN 0862728207 [612]

Each double page in this book focuses on a different aspect of the human body and how it works from basic cell structure, muscles, the skeleton, through to the senses, and the chemicals or hormones which control many of our body functions. Information is organised under headings, with colourful, clear, well labelled diagrams and fact boxes providing supporting information. Contents, glossary, and index pages further assist the reader. M. Ellis

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$8.95 SCIS 705406

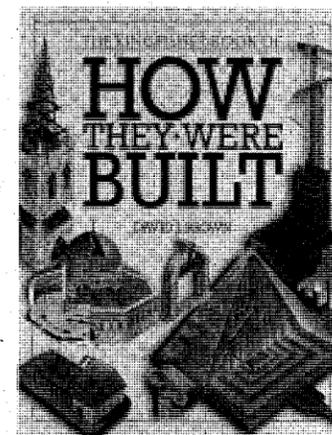
NEWSON, Lesley **Feeling awful.** Macmillan, 1991  
 ISBN 0330319892 [616]

Just about all the illnesses and diseases likely to be encountered by healthy youngsters are dealt with in this very useful little booklet. And not only are they dealt with, the explanations are couched in language that older children will easily understand. This is therefore a very important work, helping not only to give children some control over their own health but by understanding how their bodies function, dysfunction and recover. Christopher Masters' illustrations are informative and amusing. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 SCIS 693343

In the same series:  
 NEWSON, Lesley **Burgers and bugs: the science behind food.** Macmillan, 1991  
 ISBN 0330319906 [641.3]  
 SCIS 693341

BROWN, David J **The Kingfisher book of how they were built.** Kingfisher, 1991  
 ISBN 086272760X [624.09]

Individual technological changes which have allowed the construction of significant buildings and monuments of the past are identified and explained simply in this attractively presented book. Beginning before the time of the pharaohs, examples of new building techniques from many civilisations are illustrated in a double page spread. The work is arranged in chronological order and has a glossary and index. It would be a useful reference for Design and technology, Science and technology as well as for history and architecture. L. Bowring  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary  
 AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 704798



ANDREWS, Jeni **Fun with fashion.** Ashton Scholastic, 1991  
 ISBN 868967890 [646]

Young girls whose involvement with the world of fashion is beginning to assume great importance will appreciate this catalogue of suggestions and ideas. The book's best feature is that instead of horribly kitsch results, which are too often the hallmark of such tomes, the contents are generally quite stylish and, at least from an oldie's vantage point, very becoming. The book's design is very attractive, instructions are clear, and colour illustrations are profuse and sometimes support the text in providing instruction. Adornments of all sorts are covered: clothes; jewellery; hair care; make up. Ideas for recycling clothes are also included. F. Gardiner  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary Middle secondary  
 AVAIL: Paper \$7.95 SCIS 693459

ALLEN, Bob **Mountain biking.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750201827 [796.6]

Mountain bikes are the latest off-road vehicles. Developed in the USA for downhill racing their popularity has spread world-wide. This book employs a chatty style to introduce aspects of mountain biking. The origins are explained and the champions given advice on aspects of competitive racing. There is plenty of advice regarding bicycle selection, maintenance and safety. The perspective is British but the advice is sound and can be applied to the Australian situation. Many colour photographs support the text. L. Bowring  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$26.95 SCIS 697614

ALLEN, Bob **Wind and surf.** Wayland, 1991  
 ISBN 0750204680

Surfing on boards and windsurfers is popular all over the world. This enthusiastic introduction to the world of surfing provides a brief history to the sport, an explanation of the equipment needed, basic instructions on how to surf safely and suggestions for maintaining fitness for sport. A chapter is devoted to world champions. The format is attractive with lots of colour photographs and information boxes. That this is a British publication may account for a reference to Margaret River being in NSW not WA and the serious omission of sunscreen use under the section on safety. L. Bowring  
 LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary  
 AVAIL: \$26.95

TAMES, Richard **1900-1919.** Watts, 1991  
 ISBN 0740602619 [909.82]

Students will be attracted by the format and the generous use of contemporary photographs in this

historical overview of two decades. Primary emphasis is on the social history of the time and only a few significant political events are described. Essentially British in perspective, there are some global references but very few Australian events. The short passages of text are deceptive in that they employ sophisticated language and do not explain the concepts used. This factor restricts the effective use of the resource for the older, more capable students. L. Bowring

LEV: Middle secondary

AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 690418

In the same series:

TAMES, Richard *The 1920s*. Watts, 1991

ISBN 0749605251

[909.82]

SCIS 689368

CHRISP, Peter *The Roman Empire*. Wayland, 1991

ISBN 0750201991

[937]

Ancient Rome from the republic to the end of the empire is surveyed in this simple, easy to read history. Because several centuries are covered, significant events and institutions are mentioned but not discussed in any detail. Social and religious aspects are included but the book largely focuses on a chronological account of political events. The text is interspersed with extracts from ancient sources thereby providing some idea of how sources are used to reconstruct what happened in the past. Attractive illustrations similarly complement the text and enhance its visual appeal. Includes an index. H. Vickers

LEV: Upper primary Lower secondary

AVAIL: \$29.95 SCIS 700896

In the same series:

SMITH, Nigel *The American frontier*. Wayland, 1991

ISBN 0750202351

[937]

SCIS 700917

## ■ Professional reading/Teachers resources

The following resources are arranged alphabetically by title.

**Kids and the law: a guide for parents, youth workers and teachers.** Edited by Lynne Spender. Redfern Legal Centre, 1991

ISBN 0947205160

[344.94]

Many parents, teachers and youth workers need to be aware of their legal rights and responsibilities, and the rights of the children in their care. Case studies and information primarily about NSW laws are provided in 6 broad categories in this easy-to-read guide. The

ROGASKY, Barbara *Smoke and ashes*. Oxford, 1991

ISBN 0192722425

[940.53]

Martin Gilbert's *The Holocaust* is probably the definitive work on the horror and inhumanity of the Nazi "Final Solution". However, its size and scope make it difficult for most school-aged readers. Rogasky covers much the same ground but her accessible language, clear organisation, strong focus and appropriate illustrations make this one suitable for most secondary students. There is a good background to Jewish life in Europe before the rise of anti-Semitism, and Hitler's rise to power is discussed. The extent of the Holocaust is told powerfully, dramatically and unequivocally. A. Barber

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$15.95 SCIS 697765

EVAL: Highly recommended

FITZGERALD, Shirley *Millers Point*. Hale & Iremonger, 1991

ISBN 0868064432

[994.4]

To commemorate the 1992 anniversary of the Council of the City of Sydney several local history studies were commissioned. This is one of a series that includes *Surry Hills*, *Chippendale* and *Pymont/Ultimo*. A study of Sydney itself is due in 1992. *Millers Point* tells the history of this harbourside and dockside area cut off from neighbouring *The Rocks* by geography and Harbour Bridge approaches. The language is detailed but unexciting. Appropriate illustrations, including maps, and boxed primary sources are very useful. The index is good. A. Barber

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: \$24.95 SCIS 711147

categories include laws affecting children in general, as well as laws affecting children in the home, at school or colleges, when leaving home and during employment. The final section deals with children and crime. Two supplements briefly describe and list NSW government and interstate welfare services. Useful as a teacher's reference and for 2 unit Legal studies. D. Collins

AUD: Professional

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$17.95 SCIS 690639

**The law handbook: the easy to use practical guide.** 4th edition. Edited by Lynne Spender. Redfern Legal Centre, 1991

ISBN 0947205284

[349.944]

Highly recommended as a general legal resource this handbook has particular relevance for the 2 unit Legal studies course. The 30 chapters include basic legal information on a wide variety of topics, including new sections on guardianship and alternative dispute resolution. The value of this handbook is enhanced by a plain English text, margin notes, a comprehensive index, a glossary of terms and a bibliography. This fourth edition includes a free updating supplement to be produced in 1993. D. Collins

AUD: Professional

LEV: Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$49.95 SCIS 710850

BRINCKERHOFF, Richard F. *One minute readings*.

Addison-Wesley, 1992

ISBN 0201231573

[361.1]

As we move into an era of far-reaching scientific and social change, and as at least part of the world moves sufficiently far up Maslow's hierarchy of needs to be able to devote time and energy to the consideration of ethics, this latter must begin to assume an importance in the array of school subjects. This interesting book presents some 80 issues, social and ethical, and across the broad spectrum of the sciences, for reflection. It comes with a brief teachers manual. My only reservation is the subtle bias in the phrasing of some of the issues; but alert teachers will incorporate this as part of the discussion. F. Gardiner

LEV: Middle secondary Upper secondary

AVAIL: Paper \$16.95 + \$7.95 for teachers manual

SCIS 702287

STRONGIN, Herb *Science on a shoestring*. 2nd ed

Addison-Wesley, 1991

ISBN 0201257602

[507]

This well designed resource for teachers wishing to give their students hands-on experience in science and technology, using inexpensive, readily available materials, is organised around the 3 themes matter, change and energy. Some 62 activities are accompanied by step by step instructions, including a script for the teacher. Suggested grade levels, time needed to complete the activities, materials, the concepts covered, vocabulary, further activities and evaluation are also included. Where necessary diagrams, worksheets or safety guidelines, such as the use of goggles, accompany the investigations. M. Ellis

AUD: Professional

AVAIL: Paper \$26.95 SCIS 704604

WALSH, Maureen *Story magic reading with real books*. Oxford UP, 1991

ISBN 0195533208

[428.4]

Part 1 of this resource consists of a model which can be applied to picture books by teachers in order to teach beginning readers. It includes an outline of the importance of context, content, concepts, story structure, vocabulary knowledge and word recognition. Part 2 shows the way in which the principles outlined can be applied to 10 popular picture books including *The very hungry caterpillar*. Different strategies such as sequencing, prediction, cloze activities are included. Suggestions for other titles, and an assessment table are provided at the end of each unit. M. Ellis

AUD: Professional

AVAIL: Paper \$19.95 SCIS 704847

WALKER, Kate *Story writing the low stress way*. Kate Walker Ink, 1992

The craft of writing is not one that can be taught. But many techniques can be learnt and Kate Walker has produced (ie written, typed and published) a manual which will assist teachers who have rejected the red pens and former teaching strategies (write about what you did on your holiday!) but who recognise the need for some structure in the process of creative writing development. Kate's struggles and facility with the pen are both in evidence in this handy booklet which details a wide variety of activities to encourage students to explore their own capabilities. And most valuable of all, it provides structures without ever transferring ownership of the work from the writer - Kate, as well as being a successful author, has conducted many creative writing classes. F. Gardiner

AUD: Professional

AVAIL: Paper \$12 from Kate Walker 14 Dent St Islington 2296

### Congratulations

to Catherine Brown  
currently teacher-librarian at Bourke High School  
who recently received a  
Director-General's Award  
for Excellent Service to Public Schools  
and  
to Ruth Buchanan  
teacher-librarian at Jamison High School  
who has been awarded a Thomas T. Roberts  
Education Fellowship for 1992 which will fund a  
journey to North America to investigate future  
directions for school libraries  
and teacher-librarians.

## ALIA

Seminar at Cherrybrook Technology HS - Planning & monitoring a school library program: August 15. Contact Niki Kallenberger 02 484 2144

Seminar at Monte Sant' Angelo College - Raising the profile of the school library: October 31. Contact Di Simpson 02 922 2547

The 1992 ALIA Conference 'The heart of the matter' will be held in Albury-Wodonga from September 27-October 2. A discount is offered for early registration at this conference which will address issues both across the information profession and for school librarianship. Contact ALIA on 068 020071

## ALIA NSW School Libraries Section 1992 Committee

President: Niki Kallenberger, Cherrybrook Technology High

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Past President: Ian Balcombe, DSP Met East

## Children's Book Council South-West sub-branch

Pat Hutchins: 7.30 pm May 19 at Moorebank Community Centre

Children's literary luncheon: 12 noon 27 June Campbelltown TAFE School of Catering

Adults' literary games & quiz night: 7.30 pm at Moorebank Community Centre

Tricia Oktober & Rodney McRae: 7.30 pm 16 September at Moorebank Community Centre  
For further information phone Di Bates 606 0985

## School Library Association of NSW 1992 committee

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ASLA Council: June Wall, Peg Craddock, James Henri, John Lee

Publications Officer: Diana Herbert

## SLANSW professional development -

Information skills; Performance indicators: 29 August. Contact PO Box 187 Rozelle 2039

## The Children's Book Council Book of the Year Awards: 1992 shortlist

### Children's book of the year: older readers

French, Simon *Change the locks* (Ashton Scholastic)  
Kelleher, Victor *Del-Del* (Random House Australia)  
McRobbie, David *Mandragon* (Mammoth Australia)  
Marsden, John *The letters from the inside* (Macmillan)  
Nilsson, Eleanor *The house guest* (Omnibus Books)  
Walker, Kate *Peter* (Omnibus)

### Children's book of the year: younger readers

Barbalet, M and Tanner, J *The wolf* (Viking)  
Fienberg, A and Gamble, K *The magnificent nose and other marvels* (Allen & Unwin)  
French, Jackie *Rain stones* (Angus & Robertson)  
Gleitzman, Morris *Misery Guts* (Pan)  
Utemorra, D and Torres, P *Do not go around the edges* (Magabala)  
Wrightson, P & Cox, D *The sugar-plum tree* (Viking)

### Picture book of the year

Baker, Jeannie *Window* (Julia MacRae)  
Early, Margaret *William Tell* (Walter McVitty)  
Gouldthorpe, PJ & Dennis, CJ *Hist!* (Walter McVitty)  
James, A & Rubenstein G *Dog in, cat out* (Omnibus)  
Meeks, Arone Raymond *Enora and the black crane* (Ashton Scholastic)  
Vivas, J & Wild, M *Let the celebrations begin* (Omnibus Books)

### CBC Notable Books

In an attempt to broaden the public's awareness of books, the CBC publishes a list of books which missed out on nomination for the shortlist but which are nonetheless worthwhile. Notable books is available from the CBC for \$5.

### IBBY Diplomas

1992 Diplomas to Australians have been awarded to Dodger by Libby Gleeson (Turton & Chambers) for writing and *Aesop's Fables* by Rodney McRae (Margaret Hamilton) for illustration.

**Landcare action resources guide for environmental education**, a publication sponsored by the National Soil Conservation Program, has been distributed to schools in the south east of NSW. Have you seen a copy? The person to contact is Keryn Kefous Landcare Education Consultant PO Box 1038 Tuggeranong ACT 2601

### Dates for your diary

Australian Library Week: 2-9 October

Children's Book Week: 25 - 31 July.  
Theme: Windows into worlds

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