



info@aslaNSW

Newsletter of the Australian School Library Association New South Wales

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From the Executive

Ken Brock

It's been a big year for the profession, with its focus on **ADVOCACY**. Across the nation as well as at our State Association level, most of the energy expended from your committee has gone towards establishing sound administration practices, working across ASLA State and Territory Associations on the Federal Inquiry into School Libraries, and the development of a different approach to the governance of ASLA National. As we move into the final weeks of 2010 and prepare for a re-invigorating 2011, spare a thought to the progress we have made as staunch supporters of school libraries. Remember the relentless work done by so many to change the stereotypical perception of school libraries and teacher librarians and the exciting year ahead as we prepare for our State Library Day.

I want to recommend some summer reading to you—a series of 5 books, published by ACER and produced by ALIA/ASLA. *Learning in a changing world* is a good *how* and *why* guide focussed on essential elements of our core areas of endeavour. All 5 are worthy of reading as we prepare for the next decade of this century and an even deeper level of engagement in digital environments.



Leading Perspective

Jann Carroll

Improving Literacy

It's almost Christmas, our summer holidays, our well-earned rest!

It's also a time to share a story about Nompomelelo. She wants to be a teacher when she grows up. She has the will, the intellect and the dream. She lives in a poor community where education is valued, but resources are scarce. Her mum knows that education is what will give Nompomelelo the opportunity she needs to break the cycle of poverty.

This is the familiar story in many, many poor communities across Africa. This is where we find the vast majority of children out of school and hope is dimming for the U.N's vision of universal education by 2015. Simple items such as the lack of books, stationery and school shoes prevent many children from attending and/or learning effectively at school. Some initiatives, such as abolishing school fees, have tried to make attendance fairer. However, cancelling school fees is no magic wand. The sheer numbers of enrolments severely challenges the entire education system, including infrastructure such as the physical buildings, class sizes, teacher availability and resources essential.

The United Nations is looking for partners with innovative ideas to assist them in achieving universal education. Global School Partners (GSP) is one such not-for-profit organisation that is motivated to address some of these needs. GSP facilitates partnerships between Australian/African schools, sharing resources and forming relationships between students and the teaching staff. Currently, there are 20 schools in Kenya waiting to partner with schools in Australia. Part of GSP's vision is to see organisations, such as schools, enabling groups of students, teachers and parents to visit their partner school to work on specific projects such as building, furnishing and stocking a library. The rewards for Australian students are enormous, and the mutual understanding of Australian/ African culture that develops—incomparable.

Interested in being part of GSP? Contact us via our website www.globalschoolpartners.com.au or email info@globalschoolpartners.com.au or call Simon, on 0407 104 159.

Note Both Simon and Jann, founders of GSP, were born and raised in Africa and are now living in Australia; Simon is a businessman and pharmacist and Jann, a lecturer at University of Canberra.

We thank the following contributors to this issue—

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Boys, blokes and books: A team approach to engaging boys in reading

Jann Carroll (jann.carroll@canberra.edu.au) is currently undertaking doctoral studies and teaching in the Education Faculty University of Canberra in the areas of literacy and technology.

This short extract, from a conference paper presented at the 2010 ALEA conference, explores the impact of a program titled *Boys, blokes and books* on 'blokes', in terms of their understandings of literacy, their relationships with their sons around reading and those strategies that were found to be effective.

Boys, blokes and books is a course offered by the National Capital Centre for Literacy Research (NCCLR) and takes place over 2 sessions of two to three hours each. The first session is run for the blokes only and the second, for the blokes and their boys.

The challenge was to acknowledge the unique approaches blokes bring to literacy learning and to find ways to allow blokes to feel more comfortable taking part in literacy activities at home to support their sons in reading.

Changing perceptions

Parental involvement usually conjures up a picture of a mother reading to her child. A study by Anderson, Strelasky and Anderson (2007) found that the image of a mother reading with her child dominated one hundred randomly selected family literacy websites. However, in recent years, with changes to the traditional family, there is evidence of greater involvement by fathers in their children's school and home lives.

Researchers have determined that:

- Children do better academically when fathers are involved in literacy-related activities. Nord, et al (1997) noted that children whose fathers participated in

their child's learning usually achieved higher marks, enjoyed school and never repeated a grade.

- When fathers are involved with their children's literacy education from a young age, their children demonstrate increased cognitive abilities, higher self esteem and greater social competence (Ortiz, 2000).
- Fathers reading habits influence children's reading habits, choices and interest (Gadsden, 2003). Modelling is one of the most powerful tools when encouraging boys to read.
- Shared literacy activities strengthen the father-child bond (Stile & Ortiz, 1999).
- Children who had parents participating in reading activities at home demonstrated improved motivation as a positive outcome stemming from the parents' belief that literacy education is important (Graves Smith, 2006).

Why a course for blokes?

A recent review by Lowe et al (2009) on family literacy programs identified a large gap in the research on the father's role in mentoring their children to achieve literacy, as well as the general involvement of fathers in literacy support programs, both in Australia and overseas. Gadsden (2003), amongst others, identifies father involvement as an increasingly critical area of research which will influence practice and policy in the area of family literacy, especially boys' literacy. Boys, in particular, make up the vast majority of the

learners in schools who struggle with literacy attainment. Zambo and Brozo (2009) reflect that, since the early 1930s, there has been increasing evidence of boys far outnumbering girls in remedial reading classes.

This translates into many adult males for whom literacy, including problem solving, is challenging and limits their own potential. Consequently, this has a trickledown effect on all family members, but particularly boys.

How did it work?

The NCCLR is based at the University of Canberra. We designed and ran a literacy program, based on research, called *Boys, blokes and books* with a group of blokes and their boys. The aim of the course was fourfold:

1. to provide blokes with ideas, knowledge and support about reading.
2. to demonstrate skills and strategies to support boys' literacy learning.
3. to share current international research in best practices in literacy learning.
4. to draw on and foster the unique relationship blokes have with their boys.

For this study, It was deemed appropriate to use the word *blokes* to define significant males which include biological fathers, grandfathers, uncles, male teachers, stepfathers, foster fathers, big brothers and other men who play a fathering role in the lives of young children.

(continued page 5)

Studysearch <http://www.studysearch.com.au>
Restricts its search returns to sound educational sites.

Bing <http://www.bing.com>
Gives previews of the pages, organizes sites on right hand side. Image feature allows searching of different sizes AND is reactive to mouse over: eg mouse over image title = source, resolution, file size, type.

Hakia <http://www.hakia.com>
Search returns in graphic format. Includes credentialed sites. Good Science search engine.

Struly <http://www.struly.com>
Gives more search engine tabs at top bar. Good for personal iGoogle page. Also has search option for videos, news, images and torrents.

Quintura <http://www.quintura.com>
Visual brings up sites on e side, word clouds on others; changes as word is selected, leads to more ideas.

Are you a Google only believer? Try these for a start!

(continued from page 4)

The blokes attended the first session on their own, where we covered the reading process, demonstrated reading strategies and discussed resources. The following week, the blokes attended with their boys and we engaged them in fast paced, fun reading and writing strategies and activities to build on the theory of the previous week. Each session ran for two to three hours.

Table 1 represents the comments from the follow up interviews that were conducted three weeks after the course.

Table 1 Responses from telephone survey

Category	Representative Quote
Most utilised strategies at home: NIM and Shared reading. 7 out of 8 blokes agreed.	"We use that reading strategy where I read and show direction and he reads behind me. I have seen a big improvement in his fluency and confidence" (Alex).
Writing strategies: Writing, sharing and listening. 6 out of 8 blokes agreed	"This was brilliant! We now each have a turn at breakfast to talk for one minute uninterrupted. We have seen an improvement in our son's speaking and listening skills" (Gary).
Best advice: Do not interrupt; allow the child to read for meaning and use the context of the story. All blokes agreed.	"I don't correct him and interrupt as long as he is getting the gist of the story. This has smoothed out our reading time and reduced the tension. Reading is more enjoyable for both of us" (Kurt).
Bedtime routine: Reading shoulder to shoulder works so well. All blokes agreed.	"We have set up a special reading place at home with comfy chairs next to each other and lots of books. We are reading more now and 10 minutes a day often turns into half an hour" (Hugh).
Relationships: Change in relationship with son around reading. 7 out of 8 blokes agreed	"I have more understanding and confidence now as a dad of the best way to go about reading with my son. My son loves cuddling up and reading with me because it is no longer a test" (Carl).
Course design: Effectiveness, content, structure, format. 7 out of 8 blokes agreed	"The course was brilliant! Probably the first session for the blokes could have been longer; the second session for the boys needed to finish at 8pm because 8.30pm was too late." I really enjoyed the theory and research and understanding my part as a dad in the reading process" (Ian).
Future recommendation: All of the blokes would recommend this course to others.	"This course was excellent. I am willing to be an advocate for you to promote it to other blokes and their boys through my children's school" (Kurt).

Conclusion

It was found that blokes responded positively to the demonstrations and practical application of strategies and ideas they could use at home. They preferred learning in a fast-paced, active and light hearted way. The very special bond between blokes and their sons was evidenced in the conversations they had around reading and writing and watching the positive interactions as they engaged in active literacy practices. Based on the positive outcomes and overwhelming encouragement of the blokes involved, the NCCLR will continue to offer *Boys, blokes and books* on a regular basis.

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iPads.... now there's an iDea

There are a couple of research studies on the move with a focus on iPads and learning.

Check out the action research study from the Crowther Centre in Melbourne at <http://www.crowther.org.au/pages/projects/ipads.aspx> and the questions under each of three strands: pedagogy, learning and useability.

The overarching question is:

Does the use of gesture-based mobile devices such as the iPad have the potential to change the way students will interact with, perceive and manipulate digital content and will the changes in learning style facilitate improved outcomes in literacy and numeracy?

3 Things

Sally Newton is the wife of a mate's brother. She is a teacher and a qualified librarian, but after working in a non-school library, she hasn't gone back. We got to talking about the benefits of having dual qualifications and the opportunities it afforded us in our profession, and then our chat swung 'round to why we were still working on the cusp of our sixtieth year. What was holding us in this profession beyond the time we could legitimately set sail toward the land of forever sun and chaise lounges? Her answer? Three things....

Firstly let me confess up front. I am not a teacher librarian. I am a teacher and a librarian. One came before the other.

In 1993, I was on leave when the school I had taught at for 16 years was closed. This prompted me to consider my future and I left teaching to train as a librarian.

I completed a Graduate Diploma in Information Services in 1995 and after two years working in short term, casual, part-time positions, I was appointed as the Collection Manager in the Law Library at the University of Melbourne. Sure I missed the kids but I didn't miss the marking and the meetings. Besides, the young law students were fresh out of high school and I got to teach legal research.

I worked in the Law Library for nine years before taking up a secondment position as Executive Officer to the Vice-Principal (Information) at the University of Melbourne. This role took me away from both teaching and library work; I became involved in the high-level management of the University Library and the IT division. I gained a much broader perspective on libraries and their relationships with clients, communities and business stakeholders.

As the end of this two-year secondment loomed, I joined a small team working on a six-month strategy development project. At the same time, I started to think about my career options. I had been working since I was fourteen, and in one profession or another

since I was twenty-two, with time off for long service leave and to have two children. I was approaching sixty, but I had only been a librarian for thirteen years and the broad field of information management still attracted me. With the mortgage paid and the children (nearly) independent, why was I working?

I needed a reason to keep getting up in the morning—one that would last longer than the six-month project.

A number of personal development activities I have undertaken, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, affirmed in me that **I love learning new things**. That became **reason number one**.

I am a baby boomer, so reason number two was not hard to find. **I want to make a difference**. That is what attracted me to teaching—that, and an allowance in return for promising to teach anywhere in the state of Western Australia for three years. (It wasn't the free, no-strings education younger baby boomers enjoyed in the 1970s).

The third reason to keep working was one I had always known was important to me but was reinforced during the six months I spent on the **Information Futures** project. That small project team worked very hard. We met tight deadlines and delivered a report we are proud of, and our recommendations are now being implemented.

And along the way **we had fun**.

Write Path International Connections

Encouraging links between students and school staff around the globe

Sally Newton continues...

These days I work in information management, helping to shape the long-term future for the University's Library.

The list of **three criteria** has served me well. I am learning new things. Last year I enrolled in a Graduate Certificate in Arts. I have three hours of study leave per week during semesters to attend lectures and tutorials. I have completed Writing Journalism, Advanced Writing and Net Communications.

The last subject involved me setting up a blog about Information Management, a subject about which I am passionate, and embracing a number of Web 2.0 tools in my work. That's the fun factor.

Currently I am coordinating and developing a community of practice for Local Information Management Experts across the University Library. I am also the project manager for the Library's Intranet Renewal program. These activities are making a difference to the way Library staff create, share and manage information. In turn, these new skills will help my colleagues to do their jobs more easily and effectively.

So there you have it, the three reasons I go to work: **to learn, to make a difference and to have fun.**

It is a useful set of criteria to measure any job against. It puts me in charge. If any job fails to satisfy my three criteria, I know it's time to negotiate a change or to find something more rewarding to do.

When **Bev Humphrey**, a teacher librarian from England, organized a globally shared writing project for young people, she didn't think that it would be so successful as to be now into its third year... and it is growing.

It's called ***Write Path***.

It was to be a 24 hour writing marathon celebrating International Library Day. Bev asked a number of authors if they would write a first paragraph... the need to begin with a fantastic story starter was paramount to kick starting each story.

She began with 15 schools; each school working with 10 -12 students in the age range of 11-12. The students worked in pairs for one hour on one story and via email or SMS or Skype, forwarded their work to the next school [which could very easily be in another time zone]. On the *Write Path* website, a screen was set up to alert the student writers of where the stories were at any one time – stories were literally flying back and forth across the world. When a story was completed, it was returned to the host school, which voted on the best paragraph in the story.

Now Bev has set the whole project up using a Ning, which was just as well as the *Write Path* has moved from a solitary day to a full week.

Missed this year's writing marathon? Check out **www.writepath.ning.com** and begin now to organize the *Write Path* for International School Library Day 2011.

LGL

Kids' Lit Quiz -

The Sport of Reading



I have recently had the privilege of being part of a reading olympics –the *Kids' Lit Quiz*. To witness my students, aged between 11 and 13, in comfortable companionship with children from as far away as New Zealand and from every part of the United Kingdom, sitting on a double-decker bus enroute to a cruise on the Forth of Firth, with their noses so far buried in books that they were completely oblivious to a city they had never visited before, is a rare sight today. When they came up for air, it was only to swap recently purchased books, despite the obvious excitement growing around them in Edinburgh— Festival City.

Are they simply nerds with virtual centimetre thick glasses perched on their noses? Surely this was not 'normal'? No mobile phones were evident nor iPods and ear buds. Their thumbs were still, holding back pages of a book, whilst their ears were listening to the music of words on a page. These were real kids in real time who happen to love reading and whose enthusiasm for their *sport* was encouraged by dedicated librarians and teachers in their respective schools. These were kids about to defend their school's honour as they competed in the 2010 Finals of the *Kids' Lit Quiz* at the Stewart's Melville School, Edinburgh.

For six days our team lived, laughed, played, explored and competed. We were feted at a gala dinner. We met Alan Gibbons, who is leading a campaign to keep British public libraries open and better funded. We were entertained by the Lord Provost at a civic

Bev Schultz, *Media Librarian from the Ridge School, Johannesburg in South Africa, recently attended the finals of the international Kids' Lit Quiz in Edinburgh with her team of 1 girl and 4 boys. This is her impression of the event.*

How often are children awarded prizes or receive accolades at school prize givings for their reading prowess and enthusiasm?

Not often enough, as Wayne Mills, Senior Lecturer in Children's Literature, Faculty of Education, University of Auckland, decided back in 1991.

In pursuit of a solution, Mills set up the *Kids' Lit Quiz* [<http://www.kidslitquiz.com/>] to make reading for pleasure 'cool'. Nearly twenty years down the line, the Quiz is now international and growing. The **sport of reading** is a global reality!

reception, and attended presentations by various authors at the Edinburgh Book Fair, including Garth Nix and Gill Aburthnot. The Edinburgh Festival was in full swing – Andy Griffith's *Just MacBeth*, Michael Morpurgo's *Farm Boy* and a one hander of Orwell's *Animal Farm* were some of the presentations we were lucky to catch. We walked from one end of the city to the other, toured haunted vaults, and in a graveyard we were told spine tingling stories of Edinburgh's history.

The day of the *Kid's Lit Quiz* was a grand affair, complete with a Piper escorting the teams in. Mills, in his Quiz Master's black outfit and top hat, opened proceedings. The competition comprised of ten categories with seven questions in each. And this is where the extensive reading knowledge of these



children became apparent as questions were wide ranging and came from a variety of areas including reference books, poets, nursery rhymes, authors, Steampunk, music, opening lines, fabled places, titles, picture books.

All teams start with ten points. An incorrect answer results in minus one, with two points gained for the right answer.

The City of London School for Girls took out the honours, However, at the end of the day, the placings fade into insignificance. The experience of knowledge shared, friendships forged, new cultural exposure, and the opportunity to excel and be acknowledged in the *sport*

of reading is powerful reward for these reading kids.

The interest generated in our school is heartwarming. Library usage and reading for pleasure has risen exponentially in recent months; an interest in a country and people and history very different to our own has been piqued, and we are reading the novels of some of the Scottish authors we met.

It doesn't end there. There is the continuous affirmation that those of us who chose teacher librarianship as a profession still have a role to play in encouraging reading for the sheer pleasure it brings.

“ These were real kids
in real time
who happen to
love reading.”

*Founder Kids' Lit Quiz
Senior Lecturer, Wayne Mills,
with Ridge School Team from
Johannesburg.*



*Bev Schultz with
Ridge School Team
in Edinburgh.*



Interested in being the
Australian National
Coordinator
Kids' Lit Quiz?

Contact
Wayne Mills
penway@ihug.co.nz

Interactive Whiteboards Research at CSU

CSU lecturer Arthur Winzenried, School of Information Studies, teamed up with Barney Dalgarno, School of Education and Jacquie Tinkler, Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education to explore if in fact using IWBs had lead to a pedagogical change in teaching.



One key finding from their case studies of six teachers in both primary and secondary schools was that the technology itself could yet become the catalyst for a major perspective shift in Australian education:

...all teachers were enthusiastic, had seen improvements in student engagement, and were able to develop and evolve their IWB teaching strategies through explicit reflection. However, there was considerable diversity both in the ways in which the IWB was used and in the *degree to which teachers changed their classroom teaching practices*. Whereas some (Glover & Miller, 2001; Kennewell, 2006) have been critical of IWB adoption without clear pedagogical transformation or without utilisation of all IWB features, we argue that one of the IWB's key benefits is that it *can be used initially without requiring a big shift in pedagogy but that it may gradually afford more major pedagogical changes* over a longer period of time (Winzenried et al, online).

IWBs are more or less ubiquitous in schools in NSW. They are now *not new*. The literature, itself, is replete with ways in which IWBs have been /are being used, whole conferences are dedicated to IWBs and discussions abound focussed on 'increases in student engagement, more effective visual representation, and learning through greater classroom interactivity' (ibid, online).

Yup! There is certainly no dearth of information on this learning technology. However, the researchers were after clarity on one question, which was centred on the IWBs and change in teaching practice. They felt that it was still unclear if using IWBs would see an evolutionary pedagogical shift over time, and if the strategic use of IWBs was indeed predictable or specific to the individual. They noted that:

The exploration of these questions about the ways in which IWBs impact on teaching practice are important to policy makers in planning for support and training for teachers as part of wider IWB implementation strategies (op cit, online).

If you go back a few decades, similar concerns were raised regarding the integration of videos into learning and teaching and maybe even further back to overhead projectors—maybe!

Did any of these learning technologies change teachers' pedagogy? I like to think so.

In time, though.

It took time to change our pedagogical shift in using videos beyond an information dump where students, all too often, passively watched a documentary for a class period.

How we have moved on!

Videos in learning and teaching have changed the way we teach, from integrating a few minutes of a You Tube clip into an English lesson to emphasize a literary element, to preparing activities and assessments that demand students use a range of media skills through to using services like *Clickview* where students can follow a line of inquiry and find research support in the form of film *chapters* which they can pack into their digital *schoolbags*, take home, mash them up and re-present their perspective on their inquiry—pedagogical shift to student-driven use of videos. And we as teachers are now comfortable with this constructivist approach.

Read the study if you need evidence in planning policy for IWB integration. It also has an important reference to where IWBs are best located if the school is planning on installing only a few.

LGL

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Brainstorming Tip

The American comedian Michael Jastroch is pretty serious about avoiding the pitfalls of blocking and other barriers when people are engaged in brainstorming. Being an *improv* trainer as well, he notices how people get stuck or even defensive when engaged in a brainstorming session. You know the type... 'Yes, the idea was tried once and it didn't work!'

In order to move forward into a cycle of creation, agreement and collaborative endeavour, and to avoid stomping on other's ideas, we must learn to contribute, listen and support each other. So, he suggests, make those creative sessions into a game.

By pairing people off, he gets them to use a structure called "Yes, and..." . No matter what each person says, the other has to reply by saying, "Yes, and..." . The norm seems to be "Yes, but..." which has an immediate psychological effect of squashing someone's contribution, and quite possibly changing the direction of the creative flow.

"Yes, and..." lets the idea grow, lets it be refined and in doing so, each member of the pair can readily track his/her contribution and feel they have contributed to a co-creation of knowledge.

Why foster reading? Krashen on Dementia

Reading as a potent means by which to reduce and perhaps prevent the mental effects of aging is a thesis Stephen Krashen is passionate about. Krashen was invited speaker at *Your School Library 3*, an online conference held toward the end of last year. Amongst other things he discussed was the research currently available into the benefits of reading in preventing or limiting the effects of dementia. A strong supporter of the role of teacher librarians in the literacy development of young people, he quickly seized the opportunities presented in the findings, from a series of studies over the past three years, to support the need to continue to fund school libraries.

Krashen believes teacher librarians need to understand the important contribution they will make by never giving up the battle to light their students' fire to read. He affirms that when we enthrall our students to read, we are not only helping them to increase their knowledge and social understanding, but we are investing in their future mental health.

Studies demonstrated some irrefutable evidence that older people who read frequently do much better on tests of mental ability. For example, people over 84 who read novels and non-fiction were well within the normal healthy range for tests such as arithmetic, memory and spatial relations while those who only read newspapers were below the norm and those who did no reading were well-below the norm (Galluccia et. al., 2009). An interesting study by Verghese et. al. (2003) also pointed to the very real benefits of reading frequently and across formats.

Krashen, Professor Emeritus Rossier School of Education's Language and Learning Department, U of Southern California, also notes that keeping your brain young can be helped by lifelong bilingualism (Bialystok, Craik, and Freedman 2007). We might also remember that coffee has been reported in the media as being connected to slowing down the dementia process.

And so the image is obvious... relax with a good book by Jean Paul Sartre (or better yet, try *Tin Tin* in French) and a Brazilian dark coffee and don't feel guilty—you are preventing the onslaught of dementia and reducing the health care cost for Australia.

Enjoy your summer vacation.

LGL

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A TL In NY

Amy Foster is a NYS Certified Library Media Specialist at Trinity-Pawling School, a private all boys school in upstate New York. Amy returned to school for her MLS 20 years after she received her Bachelor's Degree, and very much enjoys working with many of the things she loves: books, technology, and most of all, the kids! This article was entirely researched, written, edited and uploaded on her iPad!



Like everyone else who did not have their head under a rock this past year, I heard a great deal of hype about the springtime release of Apple's iPad. Another gadget, I thought, that would put billions into Apple's coffers, and simply add another laptop choice to a crowded market. As the reviews came in, however, it was clear that this was going to be different... very different. The long lines of people waiting to purchase them on their release date did not disappear—in fact, in early June the giant flagship Apple store in NYC had a two-week waiting period to just make an *appointment* to buy them!

As any self-respecting cybrarian of the 21st century would do, I put my order in online and waited patiently for my life to change with its delivery a few short weeks later. Our summer break is a long one, virtually three months, and I found myself spending considerable time getting to know what has affectionately been called my *iCrack Addiction*. It certainly is, as Wang, a Stanford University Assistant Professor who develops music applications for the iPhone notes, "This will enable people to do things they didn't know they wanted to do."

Over the summer, NY State's Association for Computers & Technologies in Education (NYSCATE) was busy scheduling two hands-on iPad workshops for Administrators, where attendees would take home a 16 GB/3G model at the end of the day!

Loaded with previews to just a few of the

thousands of educational apps out there, (the number of apps has increased already to over 250,000 with 6 billion downloads reported as of September 1), the iPads, and the hands-on delivery method, led by Apple Certified Trainers, were an instant hit. Demand has necessitated their scheduling **19 more conferences** (with an additional 7 added as this article was being written!) with 40-50 educators in attendance at each.

Apple CEO Steve Jobs considers the iPad a game changer. Cloud computing, the very heart of Web 2.0, is implicit in the iPad's design. The elimination of the necessity to purchase and upload large files of software, for example, and to have to maintain them with tedious upgrades, is a huge advantage. Instead, when the iPad user signs in and an update is available for an app, a red 'flag' appears and the user can go straight to iTunes and download. Are the days of server ownership and maintenance gone? Will the iPad become the student's *server* for all textbooks? Alas, the fluid nature of information updates on the web is no match for most traditional textbooks.

The iPad's power to change the rules of the technology game, and have a substantial impact on education delivery was immediately evident to a normally skeptical group—NYC administrators, who are still recovering from a recession. In fact, one commented that if he really could better control technology costs, perhaps he could afford to replace a teacher or two he had to lay off recently, a true win-win for the students!



RSS with Di Laycock

...snippets designed to entertain, inform and inspire.

RSSinfo@aslaNSW

Anything is possible...

Last week, for the first time, I decided to catch the bus to uni. So what makes that newsworthy? Well, first the bus pulled up next to a church noticeboard that posed the question: *Have you any idea where you're going?*

It was certainly something to ponder as I made my way into the city. However, I couldn't help but become a little concerned as the next bus I caught stopped beside a scrolling billboard that asked: *Where are you heading?*

Now I was worried! Should I quit while I was ahead? But then just up the road, as we slowed down near my stop, was yet another message: *Anything is possible!*

Bizarre, yes? The last message, a mantra by which my mother raised me, was a timely reminder to end my self-doubt and just 'get on with it'. And, at a time in the school year when we're all starting to run on the smell of an oily rag, it's probably a good reminder for us all to keep, as our PM would say, 'moving forward'. So here are a few ideas to get you started.

1. Moving forward with Appreciative Inquiry

In a library environment where 'change' is currently the word on everyone's lips, many of us are probably looking for some guidance. Rather than consider 'what's wrong with what we've got and how do we fix it', why not take the lead from the business model of *Appreciative Inquiry* developed by David Cooperrider and colleagues?

According to the Australian Appreciative

Inquiry website '*the approach is consciously a positive search for what is working well, the successes and high points of experience and service together with an analysis of or understanding of the "root causes of success". Literally, it is asking questions about what we value or appreciate in order to "improve" and to build on what we have discovered*' (<www.appreciativeinquiry.net.au>).

Anything that celebrates what we do well and uses that as the basis for change sounds good to me! Check the website for some very comprehensive information on this approach.

2. Moving forward with your PLN

Why not take some time over the Christmas holidays to get your Personal Learning Network into shape? For an interesting analysis of the stages of PLN adoption, have a look at Jeff Utecht's post to *The Thinking Stick* www.thethinkingstick.com/stages-of-pln-adoption, and for some *must-haves* in your PLN, check Eric Sheninger's 'PLN Quick Start Guide' on his blog, *The Principal's Reflection*. (<http://esheninger.blogspot.com/2010/08/pln-quick-start-guide.html>). Also check out Chris Smith's (aka shamblesguru on twitter) PLN page <www.shambles.net/pages/learning/infolit/pln/>.

3. Moving forward with Twitter

Try a Twitter search for the following hash tags to keep up to speed in TL Land— #tlchat; #austli; #slav; #brightideas; #NSWDET; #mlearning; #edchat; #online learning; #slaqiasl2010.

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