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UNDERSTANDING THE SCHOOL  
MEDIA CENTRE

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FADEKEMI OMOBOLA OYEWUSI

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

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**Understanding the School Library  
Media Centre**

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**Fadekemi Omobola Oyewusi**

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

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## Dedication

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## Acknowledgements

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# Foreword

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# Preface

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# Contents

<b>Dedication</b>	v
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	vi
<b>Foreword</b>	vii
<b>Preface</b>	viii
<b>1. School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>1</b>
Philosophy of a School Library Media Centre	3
Mission of the School Library Media Centre	3
Effective School Library Media Centre	5
Importance of School Libraries	6
<b>2. Organisation of School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>11</b>
Circulation Policies	11
Tasks Performed at the Circulation Unit	13
Functions of the Acquisition Unit	14
Guidelines before Acquisitions of	
Children's Books	15
Inventory Procedures	17
Reference Service at the School Library	
Media Centre	17
Responsibility and Procedures for Selection of	
Reference Resources	23
Selection Criteria for Specific Reference Genres	24
Access and Management of Reference Resources	27
<b>3. Collection Development in a School Library</b>	
<b>Media Centre</b>	<b>29</b>
Collection Development Policy	29
The Need for Collection Development Policy	30
Selection Objectives	31
Criteria for Selection	31
General Selection Criteria for Learning Resources	35



<b>4. Cataloguing and Classification in School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>39</b>
The Catalogue	39
Rules Governing Catalogue Format	43
Classification of School Library Media	50
Number Building in Dewey	51
School Library Cataloguing and Classification Standard	52
Methods of Obtaining Standardised Cataloguing	53
<b>5. Best Practices in School Library Media Centres Operations</b>	<b>59</b>
Basic Things to Note when Setting a Standard for the School Library Media Centre	60
Indicator of Best Practices in School Library Media Centres	61
Evaluating the School Library Media Centre	70
<b>6. Automating a School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>73</b>
Library Cataloguing System	74
School Library System Configuration	80
Benefits of the School Library Media Centre Automation	83
Barriers to Library Automation	84
<b>7. The School Library Media Specialist</b>	<b>87</b>
Roles of the School Library Media Specialist	88
The Library Staff	92
The School Library Media Specialist's Job Description	97
<b>8. Importance of Multimedia in a School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>103</b>
What is Multimedia?	103
Types of Multimedia	105
Function of Multimedia Resources	106
The Role of ICT in the School Library	109
<b>9. ICT Application in the School Library Media Centre</b>	<b>113</b>
Challenges of Using the Internet by School Librarians	116
Use of the Internet by School Library Users	117

<b>10. Collaboration between the School Library</b>	
<b>Media Specialists and Special Educators</b>	<b>119</b>
What is Special Education?	119
What is a Disability?	120
Who are Special Education Personnel?	121
<b>11. Public Relations in School Library</b>	
<b>Media Centre</b>	<b>125</b>
What is Public Relations?	125
Strategies for Promotion of Library Activities	126
Readership and Promotion Techniques	128
Performance and Craft Activities	132
<b>12. Contributions of the School Library</b>	
<b>Media Centres to Reading Development</b>	<b>135</b>
How the SLMS can Assist in Reading	136
School Library Support	138
<b>13. Children's Literature</b>	<b>143</b>
Evaluation of Children's Literature	146
Children's Literature and Language Curriculum Implementation	147
<b>14. Funding and Budgeting for the School</b>	
<b>Library Media Centre</b>	<b>149</b>
General Guidelines as Regards to SMLC Budgeting	149
Responsibility for the School Library Media Centre Budget	150
The School library Budget Content	153
Budget Management and Review	154
<b>References</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Apendices</b>	

The school library now referred to as the School Library Media Centre (SLMC) is a major educational resource for the teachers and students. It is primarily a learning and information centre that includes print (books, magazines, journals, comics), non-print (projectors, slides, films, CD, DVD) and electronic (computers, Internet, televisions, radios) resources. The term “media” was attached to school libraries with the 1969 “Standards for School Media Programs” (Widzinski, 2001) and has since become synonymous with school librarianship. The inclusion of media materials in libraries began at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century with the development of academic slide libraries, motion picture and music libraries and record collections in public libraries. Through the 1960s and 1970s, traditional library services and media services continued to merge and develop into the “instructional resource centres,” “learning resource centres,” and “media centres”. Schools, especially in developed countries, had films, videos and sound recordings playing a central role in the teaching and learning processes and they also served as auto-tutorial materials. As a result of the introduction and utilisation of Information Communication Technology (ICT) into school libraries, school libraries are now called “learning resource centres” “school library media centres” and the school librarians assumed the name “learning resource centre managers”, “school library media specialists”. In this book, the school library media centre refers to the school library or children’s library while the school library media specialist refers to the school librarian, the teacher librarian or the librarian in charge of children’s library.

The school is a gateway to knowledge; it plays an important role in building up a love for reading and the school library media centre is integral to this educational process. Encouraged at the right age to use the school

library, children are sure to develop a love for books. According to IFLA/ UNESCO School Library Manifesto (2000), the school library media centre provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge-based society. The school library media centre equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination enabling them to live as responsible citizens. It plays this role by selecting, acquiring and providing access to appropriate sources of information. The School Library Media Centre (SLMC) offers books and other resources ranging from print to electronic media for the completion of various school projects and assignments, for acquisition of knowledge on a topic taught in class, for finding information about a hobby or current events and news, etc.

The School Library Media Specialist (SLMS) helps the students in finding the books/information on the topics of their interest. The SLMCs also act as laboratories for students and the school librarians should function as guides to help the students in learning and using the books for improvement of knowledge and scholarship. School library media centres provide services, personnel, materials, equipment and information system that helps in teaching and disseminating information to children and young adults. School library media centres vary greatly in size from the large, staffed complex with extensive resources to the special cupboard or corner in small schools.

Every school should have a school library media centre and students should be encouraged to visit the library regularly either through separate library period or as part of integrated lesson work. Infants and primary children should also be encouraged to borrow books for home use on a regular basis in order to inculcate this learning behaviour early.

### **Why Use the School Library Media Centre?**

School library media centres enhance teaching and students' learning by:

- cooperating with teachers in the planning, implementing and evaluation of learning programmes;
- providing opportunities for students to develop information skills and use them competently and confidently;
- extending and enlivening students' learning experiences and enriching their lives through the effective use of resources;

- providing experiences to stimulate reading and developing desire to read;
- promoting the social and recreational development of students;
- ensuring that resources in the library are consistent with government policies relating to equality of opportunity;
- involvement in the selection, acquisition and organisation of materials to support the school curriculum;
- extending the resources available to each school through cooperation with other school libraries and the community; and
- providing a variety of teaching/learning environments for classes, small groups or individuals.

### **Philosophy of a School Library Media Centre**

The primary objective of education is to learn how to identify, locate, organise and present needed information in a clear, concise and persuasive manner. The school library media centre programme, as an integral part of the total curriculum, is the vehicle that provides opportunities for students to achieve these skills and to foster a lifelong interest in both reading and knowledge. Each student, therefore, should have access to an effective, integrated school library programme that reflects the curriculum and the needs of the school community and the world in general.

### **Mission of the School Library Media Centre**

The mission of the School Library Media Centre is to ensure access to all available information so that members of the school community will become effective, independent and discriminate users of ideas and information. Based on the statement above, In a SLMC,

- students are the primary focus of the school library media programme;
- teachers and the media specialist working together form a vital link to the success of the school library media programme and the curriculum;
- access to information and ideas is indispensable to the development of human potential;

- all members of the school community should have access to information offered in a variety of formats that include ICT, print and non-print materials;
- a certified school library media specialist is essential to the instructional programme of every school; and
- the school library media centre is the hub for technology.

## Goals and Objectives of the School Library Media Centre

The following are some goals and objectives of a school library media centre:

- the school library media centre provides access to an organised collection of diverse learning resources that incorporates a variety of formats; these resources will encompass a variety of learning styles, cultures, points of view and interests of the school community;
- the school library media centre provides current information that is of extensive quality and sufficient quantity to meet the needs of the school community;
- the school library media programme will function as the technology and information centre of the school;
- to facilitate the right of every child to:
  - information;
  - functional, visual, digital and media literacy;
  - cultural development;
  - lifelong learning; and
  - creative programmes in leisure time.
- to provide children with open access to all resources and media;
- to provide various activities for children, parents and caregivers;
- to facilitate families' entry into the community;

- to empower children and to advocate their freedom and safety; and
- to encourage children to become confident and competent people.

### **Characteristics of a Quality School Library Media Centre**

School library media centres have important characteristics which include the following:

- the school library media centre atmosphere should stimulate interest and enthusiasm for learning through reading, listening and viewing;
- school library media centres should be attractive and welcoming to students, staff and parents/caregivers and be seen as a modern learning environment;
- the school library media centre should maintain its relevance to users by including and assimilating advances in technology;
- the media centre environment encourages the use of various media and motivates students to use the materials and services provided;
- the media centre is fully integrated into the educational programme;
- an open schedule is maintained;
- the personnel must include a well-educated professional staff and a strong technical and clerical staff; and
- provides materials and services to teachers in support of the curriculum and the state's standards.

### **Effective School Library Media Centre**

According to Frances and Webster (2002), an effective school library media centre:

- is accessible to the school community, on site or remotely;
- is cost effective because one book is used by many;

- provides flexible scheduling and timely access to the collection by all students;
- offers a broad range of materials which includes reference, fiction and non-fiction;
- addresses a broad range of reading levels;
- minimises loss through cost-effective tracking systems;
- supports learning to read and reading to learn with informational and imaginative text and literature;
- adds new resources throughout the school year to keep collections dynamic; and
- creates a sense of ownership that is shared by the entire school community.

## **Importance of School Libraries**

### ***School libraries are critical for students' achievement***

All over the world, research has shown that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, get better grades and score higher on standardised test scores than their peers in schools without libraries. Also, this is clear evidence that there is a connection between student achievement and the presence of school libraries with qualified school library media specialists.

### ***School libraries have an important role in teaching***

School library media specialists are important instructional partners or consultants in supporting and expanding the existing curriculum. These specialists work with teachers to change what is possible in the classroom and support exciting learning opportunities with books, computers and other resources.

### ***School libraries are leading the way for technology use in schools***

School libraries are no longer just for books, they have become "school library media centres" with computer resources that enable children to engage meaningfully with a wide variety of information. These centres with trained and qualified staff support the use of electronic information



resources not just in the centre but help to integrate these resources in classrooms and throughout the curriculum.

### ***School libraries inspire literacy***

When learners of all ages have the opportunity to read stories and explore information that matters to them, various forms of literacy and numeracy can emerge. Research has shown that school libraries have the tools to inspire literacy in learners of all ages.

### ***School library media centres matter with only highly qualified library media specialists***

Research has shown that school libraries staffed by qualified library media specialists are needed to have a positive impact on student academic achievement.

### ***School Library Media Centre Programmes Influence Learning Outcomes and Student Achievement When:***

- library media specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to teach and integrate literature and information skills into the curriculum;
- library media specialists partner with classroom teachers on projects that help students use a variety of resources, conduct research and present their findings; and
- library media specialists are supported fiscally and programmatically by the educational community to achieve the mission of the school.

### ***Library Media Specialists Enrich the Teaching and Learning Process When:***

- they teach skills and strategies that students need to learn;
- they are partners in educating students, developing curricula and integrating resources into teaching and learning;
- they teach the skills that students need to become effective users of ideas and information; and

- they seek, select, evaluate and utilise electronic resources and tools and instruct teachers and students in how to use them.

***School Library Media Centres are True Place of Opportunity When:***

- all students can strive for and achieve success;
- quality collections are provided, in print and online, they support the curriculum and address a variety of learning needs;
- students can develop a love of reading and literature;
- library media specialists help students explore the world around them through print and electronic media; and
- students can work individually or in small groups on research and collaborative projects.

**The positive impact of school library media centre programmes on student achievement includes the following:**

- a strong library programme that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the adults in the community;
- a strong computer network connecting the library's resources to the classroom and laboratories has an impact on student achievement;
- the quality of the collection has an impact on student learning;
- test/examination scores of the students are higher when there is higher usage of the school library;
- collaborative relationships between classroom teachers and school librarians have a significant impact on learning, particularly in relation to the planning of instructional units, resource collection development and the provision of professional development for teachers;
- a print-rich environment leads to more reading and free voluntary reading is the best predictor of comprehension,

vocabulary growth, spelling and grammatical ability and writing style;

- integrating information literacy into the curriculum can improve students' mastery of both content and information seeking skills; and
- libraries can make a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning.

## **Rules and Regulations in the School Library Media Centre**

School Library Media Centres must have guiding rules and regulations for their users. Every student/user must be made aware of the existing school library media centre rules and regulations. These rules could include some or all of the following:

- students must always bring with them the school or library I.D. in order to use the school library's resources and services;
- bags and stuffed toys cannot be taken inside the school library;
- Items like bags, binders, fillers and big envelopes brought inside should be subjected to inspection by the library staff before they are taken out. Books are inspected when leaving the premises of the school library;
- order is to be maintained by returning books borrowed from the library;
- smoking, eating, littering, playing and napping are prohibited in the library;
- silence must be properly observed;
- students who willfully mutilate or steal the school library's materials will be subjected to disciplinary action; and
- misbehaviour will cause the withdrawal or suspension of the school library media centre use.

## Organisation of School Library Media Centre

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Three major issues would be looked into while considering the organisation of a school media centre. These are the circulation policies, reference services and the acquisition procedure of a school media centre.

### Circulation Policies

School library media centre circulation or library lending comprises the activities around the lending of library books and other materials to the library users. The circulation department of a library is the area where patrons check out items, receive library cards and settle their account. The circulation section is one of the key departments of a library. The circulation desk or loans desk is the main public services point of the library, usually found near the main entrance of the library. It provides lending services and facilities for return of loaned items. Renewal of materials and payment of fines are also handled at the circulation desk. Circulation staff provides basic search and reference services to the children that visit the library. The circulation desk is, in most cases, staffed by library aides instead of professional librarians.

Most library materials circulate for a three-week loan period, although it varies from library to library. Three-week loans apply to all children's books, all audio cassettes and back issues of magazines, as well as most adult books. Materials can be renewed at the library for an additional three weeks if no other patron has reserved the item. There is a maximum of one renewal allowed for any item; however, renewing an overdue item does not erase any accrued fine. New books, because of their higher demand, may circulate for a one-week period or be placed on the reserved shelf. New books are clearly marked to help users return

materials on time. Video cassettes may also circulate for a three-day period with no renewals and no reserves. First-time borrowers may check out up to three items in most libraries. On subsequent visits, there is no limit on how many books and/or audio cassettes may be checked out but this may not apply to school library media centre with limited resources. However, the library may restrict the number of books to one subject depending on the library collection. Books and materials designated "Reference" and issues of periodicals do not circulate. It should be noted that loan periods vary by library, material type and user category. In other words, each individual library has its loan periods. Loan periods at all libraries are superseded by the expiry date of the library card, if that date precedes the due date of the loan period.

Circulation staff works under the direction of the library director or head of library, who oversees the work of support staff. The staff ensures that the children receive courteous and efficient service when visiting the circulation desk.

### **Functions of the circulation desk staff include:**

- lending materials to children;
- checking in materials returned;
- monitoring materials for damage and routing them to the appropriate staff for repair or replacement;
- troubleshooting circulation technology, i.e. library circulation software, scanners, printers, etc; and
- collecting statistics on library use, i.e. patron transactions, material checkouts, etc.

### **Job/Duties of circulation Head of Unit**

- The circulation manager or head of library hires the staff working at the circulation desk. The manager plans the training for circulation staff, schedules employees and performs employee appraisals.
- A circulation manager resolves issues with patrons such as fine collection and complaints. The manager works at the circulation desk checking materials in and out of the library.

- The circulation manager provides patrons with information regarding library policy. The manager plays a role in the planning and implementation of library policy. He works with the library director to evaluate current library policies and make changes when necessary.
- He also makes decisions on materials to purchase for the library and can make recommendations to patrons. He can assist patrons in finding materials in the library.
- Library circulation managers must have verbal and written communication skills to present information to library patrons. The manager must have basic computer skills and knowledge in using library software and databases. He/she should have knowledge of the library's policies and procedures.
- Managers must have strong leadership skills and the ability to direct the activities of library staff.

## **Tasks Performed at the Circulation Unit**

### *Overdue Notices*

Books are considered due by closing time of the library on the due date. All library materials may have a one-day grace period with no fines assessed after the due date. Fines will be assessed against the library user for any book not returned by the closing time on the day after the due date, no matter the reason for the non-return.

The library will send out reminder notices when books are overdue; however, prompt return is the responsibility of the borrower whether notices are received or not. Returning overdue books stops the daily increase in the fine, whether the patron pays the fine at that time or not.

### *Lost or Damaged Materials*

When library materials are lost or damaged beyond use, the patron checking out the materials will be charged for the value of the materials. Any item that is overdue for about six weeks is considered lost and must be paid for before borrowing privileges are restored. Parents are responsible for the loss or damage to materials checked out on their children's cards.

### *Audio-Visual Services*

The school library media centre has in its collection audio cassettes and video cassettes for both children and adults. Audio cassettes and video cassettes may circulate on the same terms as print materials or be placed on reserve.

### *Photocopying and Copyright*

Copiers should be made available at the school library for the convenience of patrons. Cost of copies and restrictions on use will be determined by the school library management and clearly posted at the copier centre or room. Compliance with copyright laws should be taken into consideration before making the copies.

### *Acquisitions Procedure in School Library Media Centre*

The school library media centre acquisitions unit is the department of a library responsible for the selection and purchase of materials or resources for the library. Acquisitions Unit of the SLMC may select vendors, negotiate consortium pricing, arrange for standing orders and/or select individual titles or resources (depending on the size of the library or system).

### **Functions of the Acquisition Unit**

- a. Ordering, claiming, receiving, preservation and payment of all library materials.
- b. Monitoring, coordinating, implementing and evaluating all collection-related activities.
- c. Check-in of children's materials, control, organisation and shelf preparation.
- d. Providing management and financial reports/statistics.
- e. Selecting and evaluating sources of supply.
- f. Organising gift and exchange activities with other libraries.
- g. Providing current awareness services.

All librarians responsible for selecting books for children would prefer to see books before ordering. However, those who live and work in small towns and locations have little access to many children's books and must depend upon reviews and selected lists. They see books only when they

go to cities with good book stores, when they attend professional meetings/conferences where book exhibits are held or when they visit Book Fairs, Book Week celebrations and other special exhibitions. School library media specialist should be allowed to visit such exhibitions. One of the challenges in the acquisition of books for children is the availability of books for examination before a decision to purchase them must be made.

Book selection and recommendation of books are done by all professionals in the school and children's librarians in a system. They are appointed to book reviewing committees for periods of time. All members of the staff have an opportunity, therefore, during a year to participate in this basic activity connected with book acquisition. Appointment may be to a general book reviewing committee or a subject committee, in either case, the librarian's interests and particular knowledge are used. Specialists in subject fields are often invited to review books and in the schools, teachers, elementary supervisors and often administrators are members of the review committees.

### **Guidelines before Acquisitions of Children's Books**

These steps below are a general guideline to be followed during acquisition of children's books:

#### **Weeding**

In order to have a relevant and appealing collection, the media specialist must select materials to correlate with the topics and standards being addressed by the classroom teachers and weed books that are beyond repair, soiled, in poor condition or do not meet the needs of the school. The copyright dates of books are to be considered when weeding the non-fiction books. Ideally, non-fiction books should not be more than five to ten years old. Library patrons should be excited about entering the school library media centre and weeding the collection regularly is paramount in having a relevant and desirable collection.

### **Guidelines on Weeding of School Library Collection**

#### ***Why Weed***

- to remove outdated, obsolete items and make room for newer more valuable items;



- to make the library more user-friendly;
- to strengthen the collection alignment with the classroom curriculum; and
- to remove the illusion of a well-rounded, well-stocked collection.

### *How to Weed*

- identify objective criteria;
- target circulation date (e.g., two years, five years); or target copyright date, either a general copyright date or dates specific to Dewey areas (e.g., Fiction, 20 years; 600s, 3 years). History books are always relevant. In case of any question or doubt, library staff should discuss.
- Pull materials for further evaluation based on subjective criteria (e.g., condition, format, content).
- Include lead teachers, school head and so forth, to evaluate the identified materials and assist in preliminary determination of items for possible discard.

### *Objective Criteria*

- Exceeds target copyright date
- Low circulation rate
- Subjective Criteria
- Physical Condition
  - Pages torn
  - Book covers torn—not repaired or not repaired appropriately
  - Ragged bindings, poorly repaired bindings

### *Content*

- Out-of-date
- Trivial subject matter or approach to subject matter

- Inaccurate information
- Newer editions available
- Not on a standards list
- Not circulated
- Not used for reference
- Unneeded duplicate
- Biased, depicts inappropriate stereotypes
- Interest or reading level inappropriate for the children

### **Inventory Procedures**

It is a normal procedure for each school library to conduct an inventory at some point during each school year, although this is not regularly done in developing countries due to several constraints like finance. In developed countries, this is done through the use of technology with a portable scanning unit. The school library media specialist can decide to do a complete inventory of all bar coded materials or may decide to exclude some material types. At the end of the inventory procedure, a report can be printed that will list the items that are lost. This information can also be quite useful in the selection of materials the following year.

### **Reference Services at the School Library Media Centre**

An information age school is distinctively different from the traditional school that most of us are used to. In an information age school (ALA Presidential Committee on Information Literacy, 1991), there will be more interactions as students pursue questions of personal interest and interact with other students and teachers. Both students and teachers will be familiar with the need to ask productive questions, gather data of all kinds and synthesise, analyse, interpret and evaluate information in all its forms. There will be more coaching than teaching as teachers recognise the importance to arouse curiosity, ask the right questions at the right time and stir up debate and serious discussion. With a vast array of information resources, learning will also be more self-initiated. This paradigm shift sees the teachers no longer as merely reservoirs of knowledge but also as guiding hands to information resources beyond the classrooms. However, the school library

maintains a core collection of reference materials for patrons' use; in addition, the library staff will gladly assist with the reference needs of the patrons. Assistance is not limited to designated reference materials but may involve any materials in the library. Information on an interlibrary loan request or referral to another library for assistance.

### **Procedures for Checkout to Elementary Students**

Students must have parents to sign permission slips in order for them to check books out of the school library media centre. Books are checked out from one week to three weeks depending on each library policy. Upon returning to the school library media centre, students place their books in a designated area. The library assistant checks the materials. When students come as a class, the students are informed if they have failed to return due library books. In addition to visiting the school library media centre as a class, the students also visit individually.

### **Procedures for Checkout to Secondary School Students**

Length of circulation period: one – three weeks depending on each library.

- Number of items: students may have a maximum of two books checked out at one time.
- Overdue fine rate (differs from library to library).
- Periodicals, reference, non-print materials are not taken out of the school library by the students but used inside the library.

Procedure for checkout:

- Student presents school or library I.D. badge when checking out material(s).
- Media centre staff member checks material(s) and performs checkout.
- Media centre staff member places Date Due Card in pocket of book.
- Upon returning item(s), student places item(s) in book return area.

- Media centre staff member checks item(s) in, removes Date Due Card from pocket and places in “To Be Shelved” area.
- Media centre staff member re-shelves material(s).

### **Payment for Fines and Lost/Damaged Books**

A student will be charged if a book is overdue for thirty days or more (depending on each library). If a book is lost or damaged, the cost of the book will be charged to the student. The money paid for a library book lost during the school year will be returned in full only when the book is returned during that school year.

### **Reference Services in the School Library Media Centre**

Reference services are the efforts made by a library and librarians to assist patrons to find the information they want or need. Reference service librarians assist, advise and instruct users in accessing all forms of recorded knowledge. This service includes both direct and indirect services to patrons. Library users can consult the staff at the reference desk for help in finding information. Using a structured reference interview, the school librarian works with the students to clarify their needs and determine what information sources will fill them. The help provided may consist of reading material in the form of a book or journal article, instruction in the use of specific searchable information resources such as the library’s online catalog or subscription bibliographic/full text databases or simply factual information drawn from the library’s print or online reference collection. Typically, a reference desk can be consulted either in person, by telephone, through email or online chat, although a library user may be asked to come to the library in person for help with more involved research questions. A staffed and knowledgeable reference desk is an essential part of a school library. The services that are provided at a reference desk may vary depending on the type of library, its purpose, its resources and its staff. Resources that are often kept at a school library reference desk may include:

- a small collection of reference books that are most often used, so that the librarians can reach them quickly, especially when they

are on the phone and so that the books will be returned in time for someone else to use later the same day. The library's full reference collection is usually nearby as well;

- newspaper clipping files and other rare or restricted items that must be returned to the reference desk;
- index cards with the answers to frequently asked questions and/or drawers with folders of pamphlets and photocopies of pages that, from previous experience, were difficult to find. These enable librarians to find such information quickly without leaving the desk—even faster than they could look it up in a reference book or using the Internet;
- books and other items that are being held for library users who asked the librarian by phone to set them aside for them to pick up later the same day or within the next few days;
- books from the circulating collection that have been set aside for students working on a special assignment and are temporarily designated to be used only within the library until the project is due; and
- printed lists of items in the library that are not in the catalogue, such as newspapers, school yearbooks, old telephone directories, college course catalogues and local history sources.

Services that are often available at a school library media centre reference desk include:

- a signup sheet for reserving computers with Internet access or word processing software;
- the ability to place the book 'on hold', which prevents the person who has borrowed it from renewing it. The person who placed the 'hold' is notified when the book has been returned. Some libraries provide this service at the circulation desk;
- the ability to request inter-library loan of books and other materials from other branch libraries in the same library system or from a cooperating library anywhere in the world. Some libraries provide this service at the circulation desk; and

- the opportunity to recommend that the library purchase something for its collection that it does not have, which may be needed or of interest to other library users.

The librarian in charge of the reference desk can usually do the following by virtue of their professional training and experience:

- the school library media specialist can look up a brief, factual answer to a specific question;
- the school library media specialist can use the catalogue to find out whether or not the library owns an item with a particular title or author or that contains a short story, chapter, song or poem with a particular title or to compile a list of books by a particular author or on a particular subject;
- the school library media specialist can briefly teach the user how to use the catalogue and its advanced features or recommend the proper subject words or terms that are used in the catalogue for the topic the user has in mind;
- the school library media specialist can often take the library user directly to the shelves with books on a certain topic without using the catalogue;
- the school library media specialist is familiar with the contents of hundreds of reference books and can recommend books that might contain the answer to a particular question;
- the school library media specialist can teach the library user to use online databases such as magazine and newspaper articles and recommend words and search strategies for the topic the user has in mind;
- the school library media specialist can recommend reliable web sites, give advice on searching the internet for information and evaluate the reliability of the information on web sites; and
- if the library does not have information on a given topic or if the library user wants more information, the librarian can refer the library user to another library or to an organisation that can be contacted by phone or mail.

## Competencies and Skills of the Reference Services Librarian

The reference services librarian should possess a number of competencies and skills. These competencies fall into five broad categories:

- **Access:** a librarian effectively designs and organises reference and user services to meet the needs of library patrons;
- **Knowledge Base:** a librarian effectively uses new knowledge to enhance reference and user services practices;
- **Marketing, Awareness and Informing:** a librarian conducts research to determine what types of reference services to provide and to what types of users these services will be provided;
- **Collaboration:** a librarian treats the user as a collaborator and partner in the information-seeking process; and
- **Evaluation and Assessment of Library Resources and Services:** a librarian assesses and evaluates resources in all formats in terms of objective standards and how well the resource meets the library user needs.

### Selection of Reference Resources

Selection of reference resources includes both print and online materials that support all areas of the curriculum and the recreational interests of staff and students in schools. It may include:

- access to online databases that provide quick, current information, e.g. weather;
- access to relevant websites;
- general encyclopedias – online / single volume / multi-volume;
- subject-specific encyclopaedias, e.g. Science, Music, History;
- language dictionaries – languages taught as part of the school curriculum and languages used by members of the school community;

- subject dictionaries for specific curriculum areas, e.g. Science, Arts;
- Thesauri;
- maps and atlases – contemporary and historical, local (e.g. country maps);
- local information – telephone directories, community directories;
- books of facts / records; and
- indexes, yearbooks, almanacs and directories as appropriate.

## **Responsibility and Procedures for Selection of Reference Resources**

Selection, development and maintenance of school library media centre's reference resources are the responsibilities of the library staff, with input from staff and students.

To select reference resources:

- identify present and future needs;
- identify the strengths and weaknesses of your school library media centre's current collection;
- research currently available resources – print and online – and identify which ones will support your school community's needs;
- prioritise needs and include in the library's buying plan and budget for the coming year;
- allocate the budget; and
- identify and select reference resources.



## General Criteria for Selection of Reference Resources

Reference resources must be:

- dependable, authoritative, up-to-date, concise and systematically arranged;
- user-friendly, relevant to the school curriculum; and
- able to cater for a range of reading/ability levels and learning styles.

When selecting print and electronic reference resources consider:

- whether the print or the electronic version is suitable for your users;
- how frequently and thoroughly both print and electronic versions are updated to ensure currency of information;
- overall quality of the resource
- subscription, networking and supplier's back-up support costs for electronic resources (if charges apply) versus purchase price for print copy;
- ease of access to the resources and how many users can access it simultaneously;
- ease of access to the information within the resource;
- the quality and speed of the library's ICT and the stability and reliability of your computer network (in a computerised school library); and
- with all print reference materials, consider durability of paper and binding; suitability of shape and size; and warranty details.

## Selection Criteria for Specific Reference Genres

### *Encyclopaedias*

- Appropriateness of scope, presentation and reading level of the users are important.

- Date of publication. After approximately five years, much of the content may be outdated in print versions.
- Assess the formats available (i.e. book and online) and decide which version is more appropriate for your students or whether you could use both.
- Comprehensiveness of indexing, cross-referencing and/or electronic links.

### *Dictionaries and Thesauri*

- Definitions are easily understood by the intended age group.
- Different meanings are numbered and easy to follow.
- Headwords in a thesaurus are words commonly used, with synonyms, alternative words, slangs and antonyms identified.
- Definitions given in a dictionary and synonyms in a thesaurus reflect current language styles. Idioms change and new words are coined so dictionaries may become dated after 8-10 years.
- Thesauri and dictionaries from North America will reflect North American spelling and usage while the British or Queens English spelling is used in Nigeria.
- Differences in spelling are indicated, e.g. disk/disc, program/programme; and that etymology and pronunciation are indicated, where applicable.

### *Atlases*

Publication date (atlases may become outdated after about five years), dates of sources given for any statistical information and names of cities and countries currently in the news should be put into consideration.

- Scope and proportion of space given, for example, to different geographical and political regions.
- Range of place-names suitable for intended users.
- Maps divided into continents giving a logical browsing approach;

overview of the world included which enables students to see countries in relation to each other.

- The grid system should be easy to follow.
- A good index in alphabetical sequence with references to exact page, map, latitude and longitude and grid information, font size and spacing to make index easy to read.
- Colour used for geological features, etc. has good contrast; symbols are easy to use; and the binding allows an atlas to be opened easily so that sections of the maps are not obscured.
- Labelling of maps for legibility – i.e. font, style, size, colour and contrast.
- In addition, make an electronic atlas with current functionality, e.g. Google Earth, available on library computers.

### *Yearbooks, Almanacs and Directories*

The general purpose of yearbooks, almanacs and directories is to update information by providing current data including statistics and current names and addresses. Before considering items for purchase, assess who is likely to use them (that is, the age range of the students) and evaluate whether or not costs are justified in each case.

- Increasingly current information of this type is located on the Internet but check how much of this information comes free of charge and how often it is updated.
- Secondary schools should consider purchasing the print version of these resources annually.

### *Supplementary Reference Material*

Some publishers produce single volume reference works on a variety of subjects which are ideal for school libraries. These include companions to music, literature and art; pocket books of statistics; handbooks on wildlife,

### *Loans Policy for Reference Resources*

Reference material is usually not available for loan outside the library, although exceptions may be allowed in special circumstances.

### *Processing Reference Resources*

- Classify, catalogue and process your reference resources in the same way as other library resources. You can include catalogue records for websites on your school library online catalogue.
- Identify print items as Reference on catalogue records and add an 'R' or 'REF' sticker to the spine above or below the Dewey classification number to aid shelving and retrieval.

### *Maintaining the Reference Collection*

- Monitor and evaluate your reference resources to ensure they are meeting student and staff needs.
- Identify the gaps and take these into account when you are reviewing your school library's budget.
- Include reference resources in the ongoing process of weeding outdated or inappropriate materials from the print collection and review your subscriptions to online reference sources, checking URLs for currency.

## Collection Development in a School Library Media Centre

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### Collection Development Policy

It is said that the library is a trinity of books, users and staff. Books are of various types and formats generally known as collection. Books are published in increasing number every year. Therefore, the School Library Media Specialist (SLMS) should be able to choose those relevant to his library, especially considering the curriculum and budget of the school. Advances in information communication technology (ICT) and the emergence of electronic resources have added a new dimension of digital books and other media to the increasing number of books worldwide. Librarians always like to acquire as many books as they can while the users would like to have all the books of their interest in the school library with which they are associated. Unfortunately, library budgets are not very much. At the same time, other needs such as open access computers, multimedia services have to be met. The best way of facing these problems is to have a well-written collection development policy.

The school library is judged according to the strength of her collection. Pupils (and teachers) who find what they want will return to use the library and will trust the library to meet their needs. The stock reflects a balance between supporting the curriculum and providing resources to meet individual needs and interests. As well as providing all users with resources that they know they want and need, the library can take them beyond the known into new worlds. Selection is not just responsive to need; its role is also to inspire and challenge. Where better can a child learn to discover new resources, new authors, genres and interests, than in the school library? Selecting and withdrawing resources need to be systematic to ensure currency and relevance.

## **What is Collection Development Policy?**

The American Library Association (2009) defines collection development policies (CDP) as documents which define the scope of a library's existing collections, plan for the continuing development of resources, identify collection strengths and outline the relationship between selection philosophy and the institution's goals, general selection criteria and intellectual freedom.

## **The Need for Collection Development Policy**

The primary purpose of a written collection development policy is to lay down guidelines for selecting materials for the collection of the library. It also describes steps on weeding (de-selection), retention, preservation and archiving. It helps in identifying gaps in collections and providing orientation to new staff. It can help the library users to know what to expect from the library and recommend what can be added to the collection. Collection development policy statement focuses on the communication function which is internally, with the users, staff and administrators and externally, with other libraries and institutions. Communication embraces a wide range of operations, including training, budgeting cooperative acquisitions, interaction with users and shared services. It is like a road map which outlines the steps to be taken to accomplish the goals of the business. Collection development policies act as a planning tool, guide to selectors, ensures consistency and defence for challenges.

## **How to Write a Collection Development Policy for a School Library Media Centre**

Collection development policy may be written either for the entire library or to a specific subject such as Chemistry, Economics, Biology, etc. The policy is usually drafted by a committee set up by the school administrator (Headmaster, Headmistress, Principal, Director or school Administrator). This Committee includes the school library media specialist and teachers.

## **Selection Objectives**

School library media centre's materials will be selected by the School Media Specialist with collaboration from subject teachers; this selection is done to support and enrich the educational program. Materials will serve both the curriculum and the needs and interests of the teachers and students.

## **Responsibility for Selection**

Responsibilities for actual selection of school library media centre materials shall rest with the certified school librarian and other professionally trained personnel, who shall discharge this obligation consistent with the adopted selection criteria and procedures. The librarian will work cooperatively with staff members to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections.

## **Criteria for Selection**

The school librarian/school library media specialists have overall responsibility for selection and acquisition of children's books. The range and balance of stock in the library should follow an agreed plan that is a part of the school's library policy.

## **Issues to Consider**

Do all staff have opportunities to recommend titles?

Are specialist curriculum and interest areas recognised?

Can parents, carers and other adults also recommend titles?

How can pupils contribute to the process?

Is the special expertise of both adults and pupils recognised?

Does the collection reflect the cultural diversity of the community?

## **Also Consider**

- the ratio of fiction to non-fiction;
- the proportion of curriculum resources to leisure reading;
- the proportion of stock for early years;

- the relationship of classroom collections and literacy resources to the central library; and
- equal opportunities, including multicultural provision and special needs provision.

CILIP (2002) also outlines some selection criteria for learning resources. These are classified into different categories which are as follows:

**CD-ROMS/Web Sites:** General selection criteria for CDROMs and

Websites must include content, coverage/currency and accuracy.

Other considerations include:

**Compatibility:** will it run on existing equipment?

### **Ease of Use**

- clarity of screen and instructions
- available search strategies, e.g. keyword, topic, illustration and/or [Boolean] searching
- help prompts
- time required to train staff and pupils

### **Functions and Facilities Available as a Part of the Software, e.g.**

- dictionary;
- print;
- download to disk;
- notepad;
- search record; and
- cross-references.

Networking capability includes use of medium, e.g. sound, music, video, photographs, etc.



## Non-Fiction

The following should be considered/asked when selecting non-fiction learning resources:

### Content

- Wide-ranging or specific?
- Stimulus material or full information for topic research?
- At an appropriate level for the intended audience?
- Introducing new concepts or assuming prior knowledge?

### Style and Language

- Clear and grammatically correct
- Convey an enthusiasm for the subject
- Matched to reading abilities and interests of the intended audience
- Are differentiated texts available?

### Information Accuracy

- Correct and current
- Avoids errors and bias
- Any instruction for activities or experiments should be workable and safe
- Author credentials.

### Illustrations

- should interact well with the text;
- should positively convey accurate information in an appropriate form, e.g. photographs, diagrams, maps, charts and drawings; and
- have appropriate captions which are written at the same level as the text.

## Format

- Suitable for the subject matter and intended users.

## Information-finding Aids

- Contents pages should use sensible terms and assist in using the resource.
- Indexes should contain relevant terms and useful references.
- Glossaries should explain difficult terms.

## Fiction and Picture Books

While quality is important, so too is balance of stock and having the right book for the right child. A rich reading experience includes access to 'fast food' reads as well as the more challenging like series, short stories and novelty books. The content should be appropriate to the maturity of the reader. In selecting fiction and picture books, the following selection criteria should be put into consideration:

### Plot

- Originality
- Creation of a sense of time and place
- Sensitive handling of controversial themes
- Imaginative handling of familiar themes
- Suited to the intended readers.

### Characterisation

- How do the characters interact with other characters in the story?
- How appropriate are they within the genre?

## Style and Language

- Stimulating use of language
- Language level for the intended readership
- Authentic dialogue, particularly the use of patois and dialect
- Avoid stereotyped language use. Use of slang should not be gratuitous but appropriate to the plot and readership.

## Illustrations

- Artistic merit
- Illustrations which complement the text
- Cover and pictures appeal to the intended readers.
- Illustrations reflect the nature of the story.

## Big Books

- Will it last? Look at paper quality and binding.
- Is the print size large enough to use with a whole class?

## General Selection Criteria for Learning Resources

The following general selection criteria will apply to all materials, including electronic, print, and non-print resources that are useful for the use of school children:

- library materials should support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the nation, state and local governments and the aims and objectives of the individual schools and specific courses;
- library materials should meet high standards of quality in factual content, artistic and literary value and presentation;
- library materials should be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of students for whom materials are selected;

- library materials should meet the needs and interests of students and school;
- physical format and appearance of library materials should be suitable for their intended use;
- library materials should be current and up-to-date;
- library materials should be selected to help students gain an awareness of our diverse society;
- library materials should be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses; and
- the selection of library materials on controversial issues will be directed towards maintaining a diverse collection representing various views.

### **Criteria for Gifts and Unsolicited Children Materials**

Gifts and unsolicited materials must meet the following general selection criteria in order to be accepted and become a part of the school library collection:

- gifts and unsolicited materials must support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and local governments and the aims and objectives of the individual schools and specific courses;
- gifts and unsolicited materials must meet high standards of quality in factual content, artistic and literary value and presentation;
- gifts and unsolicited materials must be current and up-to-date;
- gifts and unsolicited materials must be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of students for whom materials are selected;
- physical format and appearance of gifts and unsolicited materials must be suitable for their intended use; and
- gifts and unsolicited materials must help students gain an awareness of our diverse society.

## Procedures

Materials for school library media centres will be selected by the professional library staff in collaboration with the faculty, parents and students. Professionally recognised reviewing periodicals, standard catalogues and other selection aids will be used by the librarian and faculty to guide them in their selection. To this end, the American Association of School Librarians (1995) asserts that the responsibility of the school library media centre is to provide:

- a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic written selection principles and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials;
- materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs and the varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds and maturity levels of the students served;
- materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literacy, cultural and aesthetic appreciation and ethical standards;
- a written statement, approved by the local Boards of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centres; and
- qualified professional personnel to serve teachers and students.

## Responsibility for Selection

Selection of materials involves many people: principals, teachers, librarians and department chairmen. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of instructional materials and making the recommendation for purchase rests with the professionally-trained school library-media personnel.

## Criteria for Selection

Needs of the individual school based on knowledge of the curriculum and of the existing collection are given first consideration. Materials for Purchase into the School Library Media Centre are Based on the Following:

- overall purpose;
- timeliness of permanence;
- importance of the subject matter;
- quality of the writing/production;
- readability and popular appeal;
- authoritativeness;
- reputation of the publisher/producer;
- reputation and significance of the author/artist/composer/producer, etc;
- format and price;
- requests from teachers and students; and
- procedures for selection.

In selecting materials for purchase, the school library media specialist evaluates the existing collection and consults reputable, unbiased and professionally-prepared selection aids as well as specialists from all departments and/or all grade levels. In specific areas, the school library media specialist follows these procedures:

- gift materials are judged by basic selection standards and are accepted or rejected by the standards highlighted above;
- multiple copies of items much in demand are purchased as needed;
- worn or missing standard items are replaced periodically;
- out-of-date materials or those no longer useful are withdrawn from the collection;
- sets of materials and materials acquired by subscription are examined carefully and are purchased only to fill a definite need; and
- salesmen must have permission from the administrative office before going into any of the schools.

## Cataloguing and Classification in School Library Media Centres

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### The Catalogue

Cataloguing is the way the library is organized; it acts as an index to the library collection, just like a book index. Instead of page number, it gives call number, location number and classification number. Catalogues are organised sets of bibliographic records that represent the holdings of a particular collection in the library. The library catalogue is primarily an index to a library's collection. It provides a complete list of all the materials the library contains. For proper use of the school library media centre, it cannot be ignored completely (Going straight to the shelves has its advantages; but then, the student will not get to know very well the library's resources by doing that alone. For one thing, books can be borrowed out, misplaced or they could be in the bindery, on reserve or in the work room, etc.). Apart from indicating where to find the books in the library, the catalogue is always there to show whether the library has a particular book or not and it also shows the strength of the library collections. Cataloguing and classification are used to develop an index of the library collection to enable users to determine the availability of resources. Also, to create a card or manual system with two different files that have a shelf list file for staff use and a dictionary catalogue for use by staff and students, most library catalogues are made of 3" x 5" card arranged in drawers but there are some in printed book forms.

Catalogue entries may also be available in forms as magnetic tapes and discs to be fed into computers. Therefore, cataloging is the process of preparing and maintaining such lists. It is restricted or limited to the stock of a library or in the case of a union catalogue to a group library. Effort has been made to have a universal bibliographic control that will describe

books in a standardised form universally. Many school libraries abroad are now computerising everything in the library, e.g. the use of internet to get access to school libraries in the U.S. School libraries have the important function of helping to prepare students for the future through access to high quality learning resources that complement curricular outcomes. The school librarian has the work of providing access to the school library through author, title or subject information. Simple and easy procedures are essential for the effective organisation and use of the school library. Books, and other resources, need to be organised in a logical sequence and labelled clearly.

### **Functions of the School Library Media Centre Catalogue**

- It enables the library user to find a book or other library materials of which the author, title and the subject is known.
- It shows what the library has by a given author, on a given subject and in a given type of literature.
- It assists in the choice of a book (books, journals, etc) as to its edition and/or to its character as regards to the topical.
- It helps to retrieve information efficiently.
- It assists in the selection, ordering and checking of resources efficiently.
- It helps to acquire and apply information retrieval skills that are transferable from one school library to other school, public, college, university and special libraries.

In a school library, the catalogue is a tool to:

- display the resources available in the school;
- describe these resources;
- direct users to similar materials;
- record purchasing and publishing history;
- indicate the location of the resources;
- provide users with connections to the curricula; and
- support student's inquiry.



## **Features of a School Library Media Centre Catalogue Include the Following:**

- the ability to organise, catalogue and classify information and resources for library, archives or other major collections;
- the catalogue shows subject relation to each other (broader, narrower, etc.) and specific place in the schedule;
- it serves as a key to the classification schedule; and
- the library professional who engages in the process of cataloguing and classifying library materials is called a cataloguer or catalogue librarian. The cataloguer examines a book and decides what kind of book it is, whether corporate or not (e.g. ministries). The work of the librarian is to make the work easily available.

## **General Rules for Cataloguing in a School Library**

Divide the library into fiction and non-fiction resources and label bays, shelves and sections clearly.

### **Arranging the Non-Fiction Books**

- Classify books according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System. Dewey organises knowledge into 10 numbered categories, e.g. 900: Geography and History.
- As well as the Dewey system, coloured labels can be used to indicate broad categories.
- Shelf non-fiction resources in a single sequence, from left to right within bays and in numerical order.
- Provide an alphabetical subject index in a range of formats, e.g. wall chart; computer search screen; booklet; drawer of cards.

### **Arranging Fiction Books**

Shelve alphabetically by author's last name, left to right, within bays.

## Arranging the Picture Books

- Generally these are shelved separately from the fiction books, or displayed in bright kinder boxes.

An issue system can be useful in order to:

- keep track of books as they are borrowed;
- record and assess children's reading habits;
- facilitate the issuing of bulk loans of reading materials to classroom book corners;
- encourage children to be responsible;
- familiarise children with library routines which will give them a generic understanding of all libraries, e.g. public libraries; and
- reduce stock loss.

CILIP (2002) recommends that a school library uses a computerised library management system which includes cataloguing and loan functions. If a computerised library management system is too expensive, other options for recording loans include:

- an exercise (or similar) book in which the pupils write the titles of the books they have borrowed. Most schools allocate a page of the book to each child and when books are returned, the child ticks off the record of the loan. Some schools like to note both the date of the loan and of the return; and
- a book-card for each child, which is used to record items borrowed. The cards are kept in book-pockets in the classroom, arranged by the children's names. The book title is written on the card, sometimes with the date; when books are returned, the child ticks off the record.

### Four Basic Steps to Creating a Manual Card Catalogue

Four basic steps are involved that are similar either to creating a manual card catalogue or to gathering information for an automated system. The steps are to:

- record the bibliographic information for the item;

- assign classification numbers;
- assign subject headings; and
- determine other indexing terms.

### What is Descriptive Cataloguing?

Descriptive cataloguing consists of two elements: describing the physical item and determining the main entry and added entries. Describing a book is recording the bibliographic information (author, title, publisher, date and number of pages) for each book on a 3 x 5 inch slip. This information is recorded exactly from the title page of each book. It is necessary to follow the punctuation style precisely as it is described in AACR2 and to write the information clearly to enable the data processor/typist to process it accurately.

The details in AACR2 specifications include:

- exact spacing and punctuation; and
- the elements of cataloguing and their spatial relationships.

<p>1st indention: 9 spaces from left margin  2nd indention: 13 spaces from left margin</p> <p>Added entry  (Do not leave a line space)</p> <p>Call Main Entry.</p> <p>No. Title proper [GMD] -- parallel title : other title information / first statement of responsibility. -- Edition statement / statement of responsibility relating to edition. -- Place of publication : publisher, date of publication.  Extent of item : other physical details : physical dimensions + accompanying material. -- (Series ; numbering).</p> <p>Notes  ISBN</p> <p>1. Subject headings. I. Added entries. II. Title. III. Series.</p>
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Fig 1: Catalogue card layout (Culled from Manitoba Education and Training, 1997)

## Rules Governing Catalogue Format

### Author Main Entry

The author's name appears on the top line of the card four lines from the top of the card and indented nine spaces from the left margin to

allow for the entry of long Dewey numbers. The surname is given first, followed by a comma and then the given names of the author in the usual order. Inclusion of birth and death dates is optional

### **Corporate Body Main Entry**

The school library may have materials that are the products of a corporate group such as associations, governments, business firms and conferences. AACR2 defines a corporate body as an organisation or a group that acts as an entity and is identified by a particular name. When a corporate body is responsible for the intellectual content of a work, the main entry is listed under the corporate body. It is rare that a school library finds itself in possession of large numbers of government documents or works emanating from corporate groups. If there is doubt on the part of the cataloguer, main entry is by title. Always enter governments and government departments and committees under the name of the country, province or local jurisdiction.

### **Personal Name Added Entry**

If there is more than one author or an illustrator listed on the title page, record only the first author as the main entry. An added entry is made for the second and third author or illustrator. If four or more authors appear on the title page, main entry is by title.

### **Main Entry by Title**

If no author is listed or three or more persons or corporate bodies are listed, the main entry is by title. Make an added entry only for the first author named. The remaining authors or corporate bodies are not recorded by name in the statement of responsibility but grouped under the heading [et al.]; neither are they traced.

Works entered under title are typed in a form called a hanging indentation. The main entry begins on the fourth line from the top of the card. The call number begins on the fourth line and is indented one space from the edge of the card. The title begins nine spaces from the left margin and continues at the second indentation.

### **Books with Editors or Compilers**

Books without a clearly identifiable author are treated as title main entries. In cases where an editor or compiler is named as responsible for the work, main entry is again by title. Note that the title of the item is recorded first in the statement of responsibility area and is followed by the editor. The editor is traced at the bottom of the card. The indentation pattern is different when the slip begins with the title. The second and succeeding lines are indented two spaces under the first line.

### **Books with Re-tellers or Adaptors**

In cases where there is an adaptor, this individual is given the main entry and an added entry is given to the original author (if there is one). Once the form of the main entry has been determined, add the title information to the slip.

#### **Title**

- a. The title is recorded on the next line and is indented two spaces under the author.
- b. The first letter of all proper names is capitalised, otherwise lower case letters are used except for the first letter of a title.
- c. Subtitles follow the main title and are preceded by a space-colon-space (:).
- d. The full title is the beginning of the "title paragraph."

#### **Statement of Responsibility**

A statement of responsibility is required for persons or bodies with major responsibility for the item (e.g., an author, corporate body, illustrator, editor or translator). If the person or body named in this first statement of responsibility is recognisably the same as that chosen for the main entry heading and the rest of the statement consists only of the word "by," omit the statement.

A first statement of responsibility follows the title and is preceded by a space-slash-space (/). Each additional statement of responsibility is preceded by a space-semi colon-space (;). A statement of responsibility

is required when there is an author(s), an illustrator or an editor being traced.

Any author, editor, illustrator or corporate author, who may be recorded in this area, should be traced at the bottom of the card, although this is at the discretion of the library. Added entry cards are produced for inclusion in the catalogue.

### **Edition**

- The edition statement, if necessary, is next.
- It is preceded by a period-space-dash-dash-space (. — ).
- The edition statement is included to indicate a revised edition or a numbered edition. Use abbreviations: Rev. ed., 3rd ed.

### **Place of Publication, Distribution Area**

Information regarding the place of publication, the name of publisher and date of publication is recorded collectively; this is known as the **imprint**. This information will generally be found on the title page. The area is preceded by a period space- dash-dash-space. (. — ).

The city of publication is noted first. Transcribe the first named place as the source of the publication. The rule holds even if two or more places are named. e.g., Lagos (Source of information reads: Lagos, Accra, Lome).

If the city of publication is uncertain, supply the probable place in the language of the chief source of information, followed by a question mark. The city is to be enclosed in square brackets when the cataloguer is uncertain, e.g., [Lagos?]

### **Name of Publisher, Distributor**

Record the name of the publisher or distributor next. It is preceded by a space, colon, space (:). Give the name of the publisher in the shortest form in which it may be understood, e.g. Ibadan : University of Ibadan Press. The publisher's name may be shortened to eliminate terms such as Ltd., Co., and Inc.

### **Date of Publication**

- The date follows the publisher and is preceded by a comma-space (,).

- If there is no date on the title page, select the most recent copyright date. These dates are most commonly found on the back (verso) of the title page. Do not use the printing date, unless there is absolutely nothing else.
- If no publication date is available, provide an approximate date of publication. These approximate dates are to be surrounded by square brackets. e.g., [1969?] probable date or [197-?] decade uncertain
- The date completes the title paragraph.

### Physical Description

- Begin a new paragraph for the physical description and indent it two spaces. The information for this area may be taken from any source.
- Record the last numbered page, leave a space and then record the abbreviation "p." i.e., 357 p.
- The last numbered page of a preface paginated with Roman numerals should be recorded, followed by a comma, then followed by the last numbered page with Arabic numerals, i.e., xiii, 357 p.
- Record the number of physical units, the components and the total playing time as appropriate, e.g., 1 jigsaw puzzle (30 pieces), 4 filmstrips
- In the case of multi-volume works, record the number of volumes e.g., 5 v.

### Illustrative Matter

- Record the abbreviation "ill." after the number of pages when the book is illustrated with pictures, diagrams, drawings, tables or maps. It should be preceded by a space-colon-space (:). i.e., xii, 120 p. : ill.

### Dimensions

- Measure and record the physical size of the text in centimetres. It should be preceded by a space semicolon- space. (;), i.e. xii, 120 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.

- Record items where the width is greater than the height as follows i.e., xii, 120 p. : ill. ; 16 x 24 cm.

Note: The height is listed before the width.

### Series Area

- The series, if any, is recorded next. It should be preceded by a period-space-dash-dash-space. (. —).
- Each series is enclosed in round brackets.
- An item which is a numbered part of a series should be recorded after the series title. Punctuation is space-semi-colon-space. ( ; ) i.e. (The ship ; v. 6)

### Note Area

- Leave two lines after the physical description before beginning note entries.
- Record here bibliographies or indexes, if present. Contents notes, summaries, multivolume works, in another language, audience level and local note are also entered in this area, i.e., include bibliographical references (p. 116) and index.

### Multiple Copies of the Same Book

If the library possesses two or more copies of an identical item, note it on the slip. Record "c.1" (for copy 1), "c.2", etc. (for as many copies as the library has) in the near left-hand edge of the card near the middle of the card. Subject headings consist of words, groups of words or acronyms that are used to describe the subject of a work. As access points in the catalogue, these headings are extremely important in communicating the holdings of a library.

Add subject headings to the slips to provide access to the intellectual content of the material. In selecting subject headings, the cataloguer decides what index terms appear in the dictionary catalogue for the book. The chosen headings are numbered with Arabic numerals and are recorded.

It is important to use consistently the same terminology to designate a particular subject. For this reason, libraries have developed standard lists of subject headings. The most commonly used list in school libraries are the Sears List of Subject Headings.



A supplemental choice would be the most recent edition of the Library of Congress Subject Headings. Note that subject headings are never assigned from the Dewey Decimal Classification.

Before assigning subject headings, the main subject or subjects of the book must be determined. This is done by examining the title, table of contents, description on the dust jacket, preface, text and illustrations. The next step is to write down the subject and check to see if that choice is permitted in the standardised list. If the subject selected is not in the list, the related subjects must be consulted. It is possible, although not advisable, to add a local subject heading. This should be done only when all other avenues have been exhausted. The standard subject lists represent a controlled vocabulary that has been carefully constructed over a number of years. Local subject creativity — if taken to excess — results in a garbled catalogue. If local headings are added to the catalogue, write them in your copy of Sears or LCSH for future reference.

Typically, two subject headings per item is sufficient for most school libraries, although there are occasions when three or more may be required to cover the scope of the item. Select as specific a heading as possible. A book about bears should be given the subject heading BEARS rather than the general heading ANIMALS. For a book about several different animals, the more inclusive heading ANIMALS should be used rather than separate headings for each animal mentioned in the text. Determining whether to use a specific or a general subject entry can pose difficulties. The introduction to Sears describes how to designate them correctly.

The subject heading is listed at the bottom of the slip preceded by an Arabic numeral. Such a notation is called a tracing and tells the cataloguer what other cards exist. School libraries often find it valuable to include subject headings for Fiction and Easy materials. This makes it easier to identify storybooks about a particular subject or theme. In general, add the word FICTION as a subdivision of other subjects to indicate that the item is a work of fiction.

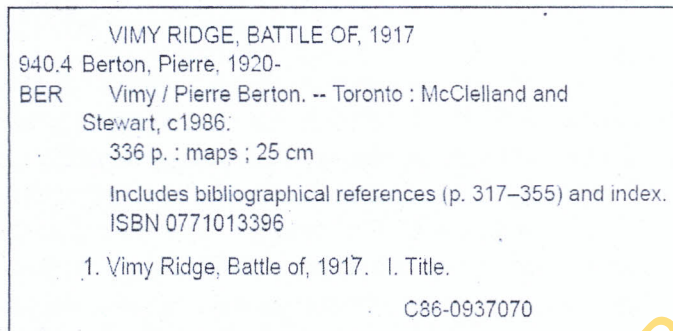


Fig 2: Example of a catalogue card (Manitoba Education and Training, 1997)

## Classification of School Library Materials

A classification number now should be added to the slip. It appears in the upper left-hand corner opposite the author. In classifying library collections, numbers or letters are assigned to the books to represent the subject of the book. These notations, which are called "call numbers," are also used to arrange the books on the shelves. Generally, library collections are separated into four major categories: easy, fiction, non-fiction and reference. Please note that "a", "an" and "the" are to be omitted when filing by title (e.g., for A Promise is a Promise, the book would be filed under the word "Promise").

School libraries primarily use the Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification scheme to organise their non-fiction materials. It is a hierarchical classification scheme which uses the decimal principal for subdivision. There are ten main classes into which all areas of knowledge are subdivided. Each main class is broken down into 10 subdivisions and each subsequent division is further broken down into 10 more subdivisions. Examples:

- 900 — History
- 970 — North American History
- 971 — Canadian History
- 971.2 — Canadian Prairie History
- 971.27 — Manitoba History

## Number Building in Dewey

As a general rule, the Dewey classification number should be kept as brief as possible. Assignment of class numbers begins with determining the general subject of the book and the treatment it requires. Clues may be gathered from the title, the table of contents, the description on the dust jacket, the preface and the text. Titles can be misleading and classification by title alone is not recommended. If a book has two or more subjects, try to determine which subject best describes the contents of the item. Then select the classification number accordingly.

The Dewey Decimal Classification scheme classifies materials primarily by a disciplinary approach to the subject. For example, the subject "corn" as a farm product goes under the number for farming. "Corn" as a grain may go in a number in the Pure Sciences, the 500s. "Corn" as a basis for designing decorative displays for fall goes in the 700s.

Once the subject area of the book has been determined, a class number is assigned in the following manner. Use the current unabridged or abridged edition of Dewey to:

- turn to the outline of the ten main classes provided at the beginning of the classification scheme and determine in which main class the item belongs;
- turn to the outline of the 100 divisions of the 10 main classes, (also provided at the start of the classification scheme) and determine in which division of the main class the item belongs; and
- turn to the schedules (i.e., the detailed outline of the classification numbers) and select the most specific number for the item. For all but the very largest school collections, a maximum of three places beyond the decimal point, or the first logical break, should be sufficient.

## Reference

Most libraries will have a reference section for materials such as encyclopaedias, dictionaries, atlases and almanacs. These items are housed in a separate section for materials which normally do not circulate. To indicate an item as a reference book includes the notation "REF" with the call number.

## Oversized Materials

In many cases, libraries possess big books and oversized documents which do not fit comfortably on shelves. Frequently, these items are laid on their sides and gravity eventually pulls the text out of its binding. A common solution is to create an oversized section in the library to house such items. To alert users to where these items are located, it is necessary to add the prefix OS above the call number. The result is greater longevity for the books and a neater overall appearance. An oversized item may be any monograph over 30 cm high.

## School Library Cataloguing and Classification Standards

### Descriptive Cataloguing

- Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd Edition Revised (AACR2rev)

### Classification Schemes

- Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)
- Library of Congress Classification (LCC)

### Subject Heading Schemes

- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Sears List of Subject Headings

### Metadata Standards

- The MARC (MACHINE Readable Cataloging) specification for encoding bibliographic data is prevalent in developed libraries. Use of the MARC 21 standard is recommended also in school library systems. Other variations of MARC include MARC 21, UKMARC, AUSMARC, CN-MARC (for China Mainland), Chinese-MARC (for Taiwan), UNIMARC, etc.
- Dublin Core (15 elements for describing document-like objects). Related emerging standards: XML (for Data Markup), RDF (for Resource Description)

### Character Sets

- Big5, GB 2312-80, EACC, CCCII, Shift JIS
- Unicode  
UCS2, UTF-8, etc.

### Protocol for Information Retrieval

- Z39.50 Information Retrieval Protocol

### Methods of Obtaining Standardised Cataloguing

To obtain standards-based records, school libraries and school divisions have a number of options. They may:

#### a. Purchase commercially produced cataloguing

Wherever possible, high-quality cataloguing should be obtained through derived or commercial sources. No matter what options are used, consumers of cataloguing should be knowledgeable about accepted practices and standards. Original cataloguing can be very time-consuming and requires trained library technicians (officers) to ensure that it aligns with standards.

- Non-standards-based locally devised methods of library cataloguing are discouraged as users may require specific training for use of the collections and the knowledge would not be transferable to other libraries. Further, with changes in personnel, the data in these systems could become inconsistent, making it difficult and expensive to convert the data to a standard format.
- Training in cataloguing is essential to ensure the capabilities needed to handle bibliographic data in a MARC format and to understand relevant school division and school level policies.

#### b. Derived or Copy Cataloguing

Derived or copy cataloguing refers to the process of cataloguing items by using existing bibliographic records obtained from various

sources and altering those records to conform to local cataloguing standards. Cataloguing information may be found in:

- cataloguing-in-publication (CIP) data available within the book; and
- other library catalogues.

**Note:** Z39.50 searches can be imported directly into compatible catalogues. This applies to an Integrated Library System.

Derived or copy cataloguing does result in definite cataloguing savings, both in terms of cost and time. Cataloguing standards and formats, however, may vary somewhat from catalogue to catalogue. This variance will, of course, affect the amount of editing required to conform with locally established practices.

#### c. **Original Cataloguing**

It refers to cataloguing an item by examining certain parts of it to obtain information needed to describe it. Where derived cataloguing is not available, school libraries must provide original cataloguing. While original cataloguing allows for on-site, immediate cataloguing, some drawbacks are:

- it requires certified library officers or staff with specialised cataloguing training;
- it is time-consuming (often resulting in a backlog of uncatalogued resources); and
- it is difficult for inexperienced cataloguers (often resulting in errors and inconsistencies).

#### d. **Combination**

Most schools in developed countries opt for a combination of commercial and original cataloguing, purchasing commercial cataloguing whenever possible and doing original cataloguing for items in the collection for which commercial cataloguing is not available.

In organising the location of resources in the collection, the policy and guidelines at both the school division level and the school level need to be

considered. The filing of various types of media and their circulation is a local decision. Some school libraries may choose to interfile media types (e.g., DVDs and books). A few general guidelines should be followed.

- Arrange picture book resources in alphabetical order by author's surname on the shelves.
  - Arrange fiction resources in alphabetical order by author's surname on the shelves.
  - Divide the non-fiction resources into broad groups using the 10 main Dewey classes as a guide.
  - Separate any books that can be used as quick references (e.g., encyclopaedias, dictionaries, almanacs and atlases). These items will form the core of the library's reference collection.
  - Arrange serials alphabetically by title on the shelf.
  - Shelve multimedia resources separately if desired or interfile with print material in alphabetical order by the author's surname (fiction) or by the Dewey Decimal call number (non-fiction).
  - Shelve professional resources and other specialty collections separately in alphabetical order by the author's surname or by call number.

### **MARC Cataloguing for School Libraries**

A MARC or MACHine-Readable Cataloguing record has been encoded in a specific format. A formatted bibliographic record contains extensive information which typically includes:

- a description of the item;
- main entry and added entries;
- subject headings; and
- the classification and call number.

Local call numbers may appear in a variety of fields that are often determined by the software. The call numbers need to be applied consistently throughout the school division. All school library personnel need to be familiar with MARC records. The use of MARC 21 records allows for the electronic sharing of bibliographic records, thus facilitating resource sharing among school libraries, preventing duplication of work and enabling libraries to exchange cataloguing data that is predictable and reliable.

### **Why is MARC Necessary?**

Integrated Library Systems (ILSs) provide a means of building, managing and searching bibliographic databases that include each library resource in MARC format records. The MARC record contains machine-readable fields before each piece of bibliographic information to advise the cataloguer and the computer software what type of data is to be found in a specific field. Author, title and subject are examples of the various field types.

### **MARC Terms and Definitions**

To understand MARC records, there is a need to be acquainted with fields, tags, indicators, subfields, subfield codes, delimiters and punctuation.

#### **Fields**

Bibliographic records are divided logically into a number of fields to facilitate retrieval. Each field represents a different type of information (e.g., author, title, publisher).

#### **Tags**

A tag is a three-digit number that precedes each field in a MARC record. The tag identifies the field and the kind of data that follows to the computer software. There are many fields that may be used in a MARC record but only a fraction of the possible fields are ever used in a single record.

#### **Indicators**

Indicators act as signals to the ILS. They define how the software should treat the information within a specific field. Correct use of indicators is critical. Two spaces follow each tag. One or both or none of these spaces may be used for indicators. In some fields, only the second space is used. Sometimes, only the first is used; and sometimes, both are assigned. Current



MARC resources provide details. Each indicator will be blank or hold a number from 0 to 9. Each individual digit has a meaning. In the following example, the first three digits are the tag (245 being the title field tag) and the next two digits 1 and 4 are indicators. The 1 is the first indicator and the 4 is the second. For Example, 245 14 \$The man died /\$Wole Soyinka. The first indicator of 1 in the title field indicates that there should be a separate title entry in the catalogue. A 0 as a first indicator means that this is a main entry by title.

### **Subfields, Subfield Codes and Delimiters**

subfields are marked by punctuation, delimiters, and subfield codes. Most fields contain several related pieces of data. Each type of data within a field is entered into a subfield and each subfield is preceded by a subfield code. For example, the physical description field (300 tag) typically contains a subfield for the number of pages, one for physical details such as illustration and a further subfield for dimensions in centimetres. An example follows: 300 \_\_ \$a 234 p. :\$bill. ;\$c24 cm. Subfield codes are one lowercase letter preceded by a delimiter. The delimiter is a character such as a \$ which is inserted by the software program and indicates a new subfield. Each subfield indicates what type of data follows it. In the example above, the subfield codes are \$a for extent, :\$b for other physical details and ;\$c for dimensions.

### **Punctuation**

Spacing and punctuation are display constants of MARC coding that are readable by all MARC-compatible ILSs. They are either system- or operator-generated. These display constants are dictated by the International Standard for Bibliographic Description (ISBD). The spacing and punctuation (periods, slashes, colons, semi-colons, parentheses, square brackets, etc.) are unique to each tag and subfield. For example, the 100 and 245 fields end with a period.

### **Control Fields (00X)**

Control numbers and other kinds of coded data appear in the MARC Control Fields. Data in these fields allow the ILS to process bibliographic

The intention of the section is to inform readers what constitutes good practice in school library provision and to provide ideas that can be transposed to any school setting. The library is seen as a vibrant and central part of pupils' learning experiences and staff and pupils now have the opportunity to work in a stimulating learning environment. By providing a wide range of materials and activities, school library media centres provide an opportunity for children to experience the pleasure of reading and the excitement of discovering knowledge and works of the imagination. Children and their parents should be taught how to make the best use of a library and how to develop skills in the use of printed and electronic media. School libraries have a special responsibility to support the process of learning to read and to promote books and other media for children. The library must provide special events for children, such as storytelling and activities related to the library's services and resources. Children should be encouraged to use the library from an early age, as this will make them more likely to remain users in future years.

### Definition of Best Practices

A best practice is a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. A commitment to using the best practices in any field is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one's disposal to ensure success. Best practices mean the recognised methods of correctly running businesses or providing services (Collins English Dictionary, 2011). In other words, it refers to those practices that have produced outstanding results in another situation/ place and that could be adapted into your own situation.

## Basic Things to Note When Setting a Standard for the School Library Media Centre

- The school library media centres are essential for literacy, education and information provision as well as for economic, social and cultural development of a nation. Hence, the school library media centres must have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities.
- Library standards are used to measure and evaluate the condition of the libraries as well as the degree of their development.
- The standards, which are developed professionally, indicate a direction for the libraries as to what tasks and objectives it should strive for. They provide school management with information on the management of libraries.
- Standards can have an international, national and regional scope. Internationally, standards are not only developed by the library organisations, such as IASL (International Association of School Libraries) and IFLA but also by organisations like UNESCO.
- Effective library media programmes are creative, dynamic, enthusiastic and committed to the development of a community of learners that is centred on the student. Library media specialists connect students, teachers and others with the information resources they need. The effective library media specialist draws upon a vision for the student-centred library media programme that is based on three central ideas: collaboration, leadership and technology.

### Successful Library Media Centre Programmes Demonstrate that:

- the programme supports the mission, goals, objectives and continuous improvement of the school;
- the library media centre is staffed appropriately with at least one full-time certified media specialist who is supported by additional qualified staff;

- administrative support is ongoing;
- funding supports a large, diverse, in-depth, school-wide collection;
- state-of-the-art technology is integrated into the learning/teaching and information-seeking processes; and
- cooperation with other libraries is practised.

### **Indicator of Best Practices in School Library Media Centres**

Best practices must be maintained in the following areas in the SLMC:

#### **a. Library Location/Accommodation**

The strong educational role of the school library must be reflected in the facilities, furniture and equipment. It is of vital importance that the function and use of the school library media centre is incorporated when planning new school buildings and reorganising existing ones. There should be no one universal measurement for school library media centre facilities but it is useful and helpful to have some kind of formula on which to base planning estimates so that any new or newly designed library meets the needs of the school in the most effective way. According to CILIP (2002), the size of the school media centre accommodation is important. There are a number of factors to consider when calculating the ideal size of the library, for example, the number of shelves and wall/floor space required to house recommended number of books and accommodate study, group or class activities.

The library should be located centrally and accessible to all pupils and staff. There is adequate light, heat and ventilation and safe, suitable flooring. The library environment should also be very welcoming, friendly and eye-catching. The walls are brightly decorated and used to display pupils' work. The library can be used for a variety of activities and is conducive to learning and teaching. Access to resources is good and the layout of the library can be changed as necessary. The library should be large, with clearly defined areas for fiction, non-fiction and other library resources.

Pupils and staff should be proud of their library. Pupils should display a sense of responsibility when using library resources and a sense of ownership would be fostered by encouraging them to become involved in the day-to-day running of the library. This, in turn, would help create an atmosphere in which pupils work conscientiously and co-operatively with each other; and standards of behaviour and discipline would be high. The pupils may also design suspended banners (using colour crayons or water colours) in the ceiling to promote reading and general library use. This would give the children more ownership and pride in the utilisation of the library.

According to the IFLA /UNESCO school guidelines (2002), the following considerations need to be included in the planning process of a school library media centre:

- central location, on the ground floor if possible;
- accessibility and proximity that is close to all teaching areas;
- noise factors, with at least some parts of the library free from external noise;
- appropriate and sufficient light, both through windows and artificial light;
- appropriate room temperature (e.g. air-conditioning) to ensure good working conditions all year round as well as the preservation of the collections;
- appropriate design to meet the special needs of physically challenged library users;
- adequate size to give space for the collection of books, fiction, non-fiction, hardback and paperback, newspapers and magazines, non-print resources and storage, study spaces, reading areas, computer workstations, display areas, staff work areas and a library desk; and
- flexibility to allow multiplicity of activities and future changes in curriculum and technology.

The following list may also be considered when planning a new library:

- study and research area space for information desk,

catalogues, on-line stations, study and research tables, reference materials and basic collections;

- informal reading area space for books and periodicals that encourage literacy, lifelong learning and reading for pleasure;
- instructional area space with seats catering for small group, large groups and whole classroom formal instruction, 'teaching wall' with appropriate instructional technology and display space;
- production and group project area space for functional work and meetings of individuals, teams and classes, as well as facilities for media production; and
- administrative area space for circulation desk, office area, space for processing of library media materials, audio-visual equipment storage and storage space for supplies and materials.

#### b. **Library Environment**

The overall library environment should be well maintained and brightly decorated. There should be good quality furniture and plenty of shelves. Informal seats could be provided in the library to create an informal reading area.

Modern fixtures and fittings encourage formal and informal use by classes, small groups, schools and individuals. The library should be centrally located in a school or within a location easily accessed by schools. Attractive library shelving with clear shelf guiding provides accommodation for non-fiction resources and displays of new resources. Tables and chairs create a comfortable working environment; there should be sufficient space for children to move about the library. Pupils should have colourful 3D displays on space, weather and animals, etc, linked to environmental studies topics. Dewey classification numbers should also be suspended from the ceiling to remind pupils of the most commonly used topics and the relevant numbers. The lighting system of the school library should be taken into consideration. Wherever possible, make the most of natural light. Strip lighting may be used and placed appropriately for even distribution of light.

### c. Performance Indicators

Performance indicators were used to take a broad view of library performance across key areas and identify priorities for library development. A detailed development plan should be drawn up for the library and this outlines the following targets:

- criteria for success;
- implementation of strategies;
- staff responsibilities; and
- procedures for evaluation.

### Library Furniture

Quality library furniture like chairs, tables and shelves would bring big improvement in the school library services and help to create a more welcoming, pleasant and stimulating work environment, which would also encourage the reading culture of the children.

*The shelves should be low and be of average height to accommodate non-fiction books, picture books, etc. Shelving should be purchased from a specialist library supplier. According to CILIP (2002), shelving may be either wall mounted or freestanding. Ideally, shelving should be:*

- a maximum height of 1200mm (and never higher than 1500mm). This will provide three shelves per bay;
- 250mm deep;
- 900 - 1000mm in length with a minimum one front-facing display shelf per bay; and
- a minimum of 1000mm circulation space in front of and between shelving units. This is a Health and Safety requirement.

Shelving must provide:

- safe, back-edge book supports;
- shelf guiding;
- adjustable shelves; and
- options for face-on book display.

Other forms of shelving include:

- kinder boxes for picture books;
- big book storage; and
- paperback carousels.

The design of the school library plays a central role in how well the library serves the school. The aesthetic appearance contributes to the feeling of welcome as well as the desire for the school community to spend time in the library. An appropriately equipped school library should have the following characteristics (IFLA/UNESCO, 2002):

- safety resources;
- good lighting;
- designed to accommodate furniture that is sturdy, durable and functional as well as meeting the specific space, activity and user requirements of the library;
- designed to accommodate the special requirements of the school population in the least restrictive manner;
- designed to accommodate changes in library programmes, the school's instructional programme as well as emerging audio, video and data technology;
- designed to enable proper use, care and security of furnishings, equipment, supplies and materials;
- arranged and managed to provide equitable and timely access to an organised and diverse collection of resources; and
- arranged and managed so that it is aesthetically appealing to the user and conducive to leisure and learning, with clear attractive guiding and signposting.

CILIP (2002) also lists some features that furniture and equipment in school libraries should have; these include:

- tables and chairs of a size appropriate for most of the children;
- workstations for CD-ROM, Internet use, access to computerised library catalogue;
- sufficient power points and network connections for ICT desk and other audio-visual equipment;



- a table for issuing and return of books with room for a computer;
- easy chairs, bean bags or cushions for 'comfy reading';
- carpets, curtains and other soft furnishings – all create a welcoming and comfortable environment;
- listening stations with headphones;
- storage for audiovisual resources, other media formats, posters/charts; and
- display facilities.

#### d. Staffing

The school library personnel should be qualified educationally. The school should have committed and dedicated staff members that see the development of their library as a main priority. Strong leadership by the Head Teacher/Principal would mean that the development of the library would remain on course despite challenges. Teaching staff should be consulted at every stage in library development and all staff should work as a team to ensure that targets are met.

#### e. Student's Role

Research has shown that pupils enjoy using the library on a regular basis and are confident of their ability to find information and work independently on projects. The school library media centre is an effective resource centre that supports teaching and learning activities. Under the direction of their teachers, pupils could produce attractive displays for the library; this would make them to feel that they have a stake in the development and upkeep of the library.

#### f. Publicity/ Other Activities

The school and the school library media centre should organise activities that would promote the use of the library and encourage independent reading. Book fairs, author visits and other interesting programmes should also be organised by the school library. Schools should have information skills programme in place and classes should have library periods on their timetable.

### g. **Library Resources/ Materials**

A high standard of library accommodation and a wide range of high quality resources are essential. For this reason, a collection management policy is vital. This policy defines the purpose, scope and contents of the collection as well as access to external resources. Staff should also encourage students to use the library to pursue their extracurricular interests. All resources in the library should be clearly labelled and shelf guiding to allow pupils to independently retrieve resources.

### h. **Target Groups**

Different target groups are welcomed by the school library media centre, either individually or in groups. These target groups include:

- babies and toddlers;
- pre-school children;
- school children of up to 13 years old;
- special needs groups (young adults as the case may be);
- parents and other family members;
- caregivers; and
- other adults working with children, books and media.

### i. **Funding**

Children are a worthwhile “investment”; thus, school library media centres need a budget to maintain and improve the quality of materials and services offered to the public. Standard budgets can be supplemented with outside sources of funding, such as:

- government grants (for special programmes and new initiatives);
- cultural organisations (for music, dance, drama, arts, historical and ethnic presentations);
- publishers (for visits by authors or illustrators and for other give-aways);

- sponsorship (local businesses and volunteer organisations to support specific events);
- non-governmental agencies; and
- matching funds.

#### **j. Materials**

School library media centres should include a variety of developmentally appropriate materials in all formats, including printed materials (books, periodicals, comics, brochures), media (CDs, DVDs, cassettes), toys, learning games, computers, software and connectivity.

#### **k. Space**

Children of all ages should find the library an open, inviting, attractive, challenging and non-threatening place to visit. Ideally, schools need their own library area which must be easily recognisable (e.g. special furnishings, decorations and colours) and distinct from other parts of the library. Libraries offer a public space where children can meet one another or can meet others in cyber-space.

#### **l. Services**

Children's services should be taken as important and treated equally with those for adults. School library media centres should meet the information, cultural and entertainment needs of the community's children by:

- lending a variety of materials;
- offering information and reference services;
- helping children select materials;
- offering training in library skills and information literacy;
- doing motivating activities (e.g. reading promotion);
- offering creative programming and storytelling;
- educating parents and caregivers;
- providing reference and training for caregivers, pre-school teachers, school teachers and librarians;
- co-operating with and supporting community organisations and institutions;

### m. **Networking**

The school library media centre should form a network with other organisations and institutions in the local community. This is done in the following ways:

- investigating the information and cultural needs of the community and trying to match those needs with library resources ensures that local institutions do not compete but co-operate to the benefit of children;
- schools are important partners. The school library media centre provides support for the educational process and the children's library deals with self-education and leisure reading; and
- healthcare centres, day-care centres, kindergartens and other care giving places are institutions which are necessary and welcome partners, especially in reading promotion activities for children, parents and professionals.

### n. **Publicity**

A positive, public profile for children's libraries is most important as competition for a child's time and attention grows. Reading and literacy are necessary skills in order to communicate and their value must be constantly reinforced.

### o. **Human Resources**

Effective and professionally run children's libraries require trained and committed children's librarians. Desired skills include:

- enthusiasm;
- strong communication, interpersonal, team working and problem-solving skills;
- the ability to network and co-operate;
- the ability to initiate, be flexible and be open to change;
- the ability to analyse user needs, plan, manage and evaluate services and programmes; and
- an eagerness to learn new skills and develop professionally.

### p. Management and Evaluation

It is important that those who manage children's services participate in the planning process for the library as a whole, to ensure an awareness and support for children's services in the overall goals and long-term plans of the library. Reliable performance information is a necessary tool for evaluation and improvement in that it:

- collects statistics related to resources, staff, services, circulation, activities, etc., to provide data for planning, showing accountability and making informed management decisions; and
- measures staff performance based on standardised competencies.

### Evaluating the School Library Media Centre

The best way to find out is to pay a visit and ask the following questions suggested by the American Association of School Librarians (1995).

- Is there a state-certified full-time school library media specialist?
- Does your child have access to the school library anytime during the day that he/she needs to use its resources?
- Does the library offer remote access from home via computer?
- Does your child visit the school library media centre frequently with his/her class? Individually or in small groups?
- Does the school library media centre have a wide range of resources in a variety of formats (that is books, computers, audio and videotapes) that appeal to different learning styles?
- Are the resource materials in the school library current?
- Are children encouraged to read, view and listen both for understanding and enjoyment?
- Are school administrators knowledgeable and supportive of the school library?

- Does the school provide ongoing training to support teachers and staff in learning about new technologies?
- Are teachers encouraged to work with the school library media specialist to extend learning opportunities beyond the textbook and classroom?

Earlier standards for libraries relied heavily upon resource and programme “inputs” such as financial support, space, materials and staff activities. New standards continue to consider “inputs” but they also take into consideration “outputs” and “outcomes”. In order to create uniformity, the definitions as described in the ACRL Task Force on Academic Library Outcomes Assessment Report could be used. These include:

- inputs are generally regarded as the raw materials of a library programme – the money, space, collection, equipment and staff, out of which a programme can arise;
- outputs serve to quantify the work done, i.e., number of books circulated, number of reference questions answered; and
- outcomes are the ways in which library users are changed as a result of their contact with the library’s resources and programmes.

These standards provide both quantitative and qualitative approaches to assessing the effectiveness of a library and its librarians; and they should be used when evaluating the school library media centre.

[Check standards in the computer and internet for references]

## Automating a School Library Media Centre

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### Automating a School Library Media Centre

There is a need for school library media centres to automate their library functions. The benefits of an automated school library include improved circulation of resources, extensive reporting facilities, efficient book hire system and increased access to the resource collection. Educational benefits derived from the automation of library functions include opportunities for students to develop information skills, achieve greater success in locating resources and become independent and lifelong learner. School library media centre's management has to take note of the fast generating information and its growth rate and the importance of having the information resources properly bibliographical controlled and disseminated to users. In order to contribute towards the objectives of building an information rich society among students in both primary and secondary schools, it is suggested that there is a need for schools to be involved in Information Technology (IT) education strategies which would embody a long-term plan to automate the school libraries.

### What is Library Management System (Library Automation)?

Library automation can be defined simply as the use of computer and networking technologies in the library. An efficient computerised library management system will enhance the effectiveness of the library. The system makes the recording of loans simple and provides useful information about library use. Keywords make finding information easy. When assessing different systems cost, installation, operation and maintenance all need to be considered, e.g. printing subject specific lists and producing statistics.

Areas of Library Automation include:

- automation of library functions (e.g. circulate, serials, cataloguing and classification);
- use of electronic resources within the library (e.g. CD-ROMs);
- accessing remote electronic resources (e.g. the Internet);
- office automation (e.g. word-processing, spreadsheets, databases, etc.); and
- patron services (e.g. computer laboratory, multimedia centre).

### **Objectives of Library Automation**

- To improve the level of service and quality of output; and
- To fulfill needs that cannot be achieved by manual system:
- sharing of resources; and
- information that appears only in electronic format (e.g. CD-ROM, Internet resources, databases, etc).

Automation can be visualised at four levels:

- library cataloguing system;
- housekeeping operations and networking;
- development of CD-ROM library/products; and
- e-mail system and internet.

### **Library Cataloguing System**

The library catalogue or index to the collection forms the base for most of the library activities such as acquisition, reference, bibliographic service, inter-library loan, etc. The users of library card catalogue will appreciate how fast the retrieval, search and printing in automated environment are. If the same system is available in network environment, users can have simultaneous access to the same database. From the library staff point of view, the cumbersome job of printing the cards and their subsequent filing gets eliminated; it also conserves space and saves stationary.



## **Housekeeping Operation and Networking**

The second level of automation will be to use software which can handle the entire housekeeping operations of the library such as acquisition, circulation and serial control, thus creating a network within the library or becoming part of the existing network of the institution. Networking of computers within an organisation helps the users to browse the cataloguing system from any of the workstation/terminal.

## **The Development of CD-ROM Library/Products**

The development of CD-ROM collection not only conserves space but also provides multi-user access in network environment. There are many self-tutorial CD-ROMS available with multi-media effect. Libraries facing high incidence of mutilation of materials will benefit from such electronic products. Also, people doing empirical research can download data and directly take it to other software platform for analysis and making graphical presentation.

## **Email and Internet**

Other technology which libraries can make use of is the e-mail system. This not only reduces the recurring expenditure but it is also effective and fast. Sending reminders for non-receipt of journals by e-mail has proved to be very cost-effective and sharing of resources among libraries becomes easy. Few public domain e-mail software (e.g. Gmail, yahoo, etc.) are available and there will be no additional expenditure incurred. Another technology which has revolutionised the information world is the development of the internet. Subscribers of the internet, in addition to getting access to various public domain databases and services, will also get free e-mail and fax facility. Some publishers have started giving content pages of journals; and libraries having subscription to such journals can also have full text of the articles. Many academic and research institutes have given free access to their working papers.

## **Steps to Take during Library Automation**

Planning for school library automation is time-consuming but it is usually cost-effective because time spent planning reduces the amount of time required for system implementation. Cohn, Kelsey and Fiels (1997) list

the following steps to be taken during automation:

Step 1: Understanding Existing Library Services and Technology

- Identifying existing services and functions provided by the library
- Identifying existing technology being used in the library
- Collecting and organising basic statistical data

Step 2: Assessing Needs and Setting Priorities

- Who should be involved in planning?
- Needs assessment
- Identifying approaches to satisfy the needs
- Setting priorities
- Developing a preliminary budget

Step 3: Translating Needs and Priorities into Specifications

- Designing specifications
- Preparing and distributing the Request for Proposal (RFP)

Step 4: Evaluating Proposals and Selecting a System

- Making the first cut
- Seeing system demonstrations
- Analysing vendor responses
- Costs
- Obtaining responses from vendor's clients
- Making the final cut

Step 5: Putting your System into Place

- Contract negotiations
- Hardware and software installation
- Training

Step 6: Retrospective Conversion and Bar Coding

The following procedure would also assist the school library during automation:

**a. Decide which functions to automate.**

Automation isn't "all or none". Choose whether to automate:

- administration;
- inventory;
- circulation;
- self-service circulation;
- patron catalogue/OPAC; and
- web-accessible patron catalogue.

**b. Research and select automation software**

Make a plan to organise your research and choose programs to evaluate. Note that some automation software is most suitable to large public libraries, college libraries or school; other programs may cost less and be a better fit for your school. You should also try the programs and talk to references. Finally, understand price structure as well as one-time and annual costs.

**c. Furnish work area**

Install electrical outlets. Obtain Internet/Intranet access as needed. Arrange furniture for both work area and patron catalogue search station. Purchase administrative computer, laser printer and scanner.

**d. Install automation software and hardware**

If you want assistance and do not have a technician on staff, the library could use parents, youth corps members or Industrial Training students professional expertise at a lesser cost to the school. Read through documentation, usually found on the software company's Web site. Install automation software at circulation desk. Connect scanner and printer at circulation desk. Install software at catalogue search station. Test all software and hardware. Determine how you will back-up data; create a system and stick to it.

**e. Weed the collection**

Weeding makes space for valuable items to create an appealing, relevant and up-to-date collection. Evaluate the collection. Maintain a list for new materials as you weed. Remove materials that are no longer needed. Replace lost and worn out materials. Repair damaged but usable materials.

**f. Enter materials**

Each item on the library collection needs a “record” in the software. There are several methods to use. Cataloguing is a process in which you hand enter/type bibliographic information printed in the material. Copy cataloguing is a method in which you find records from libraries accessible via the Internet. Copy cataloging software/features make this process more efficient than original cataloguing. Recon (retrospective conversion) is a method in which you send a shelf list and catalogue cards to a vendor for processing for a per-item fee.

**g. Process materials**

Add card and pocket (if needed). Label spine. Apply barcodes and protectors.

**h. Create circulation procedures**

First, determine the type of patron (adult, primary, secondary, etc.). Then make circulation rules for each of the patron and type of library material (book, CD, etc). Choose a circulation method: unautomated, fully automated or a hybrid. With a hybrid, patrons sign and leave cards. Later, the library staff or volunteers use the cards by entering the borrower’s name and then scanning the card’s barcode. This is a good option for school library media centres without a full-time librarian.

Set up a self-service station (with drop-box for signed pocket cards if needed). Some software programs offer a special interface just for patrons to check out materials; however, access to sensitive administrative functions may be blocked.

**i. Enter patron information**

Decide how to enter patron information. A class list at the beginning of the year or importing information from school administration software (where it is available). Print library cards if desired.

### j. **Promote the new improved school library**

Publicize the school library media centre. Automation can help you increase interest in the use of your library resources. Hold an open house for both the school staff and parents.

### **Cost of LMS**

Cost of Library Management System should be assessed by considering the following:

#### **Hardware**

- Number of computers – at least one dedicated computer is needed.
- Networking costs, if more than one computer
- Printer
- Barcode reader.

#### **Software**

Assess the software packages on offer and decide which modules are needed.

#### **Other Costs**

- Barcodes
- Initial input of records: many systems allow data to be imported requiring only the addition of a class number, e.g. catalogue records – this saves time and money
- Ongoing maintenance and upgrades
- Helpline/support
- Staff training
- Staff time.

## School Library System Configuration

The following questions must be answered during system consideration:

- Is the screen layout clear and user-friendly?
- Does the catalogue offer all the fields you need – author, title, Dewey classification number, edition, publisher, publication date, price, resource type, keywords, and notes?
- Is searching by keyword simple?
- Is there a limit to the number of keywords which can be applied to a resource?
- Can lists be printed?
- What reports and statistical information can be produced, e.g. top 10 use, books borrowed by boys?
- Are issuing and returning straightforward?
- Can the system be networked across the whole school?
- Is the system easy to manage?
- Does it offer an interactive element, e.g. pupils adding their own reviews?
- Is the system easy to backup?
- What systems are other local schools using?
- Would you visit another school to see the system in use?

## Company Information

- Does the company have a good reputation?
- Does the company employ librarians who will understand the needs of a school library?
- Is there a user group?
- Can demonstrations be organised?
- Is the manual easy to use and comprehensive?
- What technical support is offered?

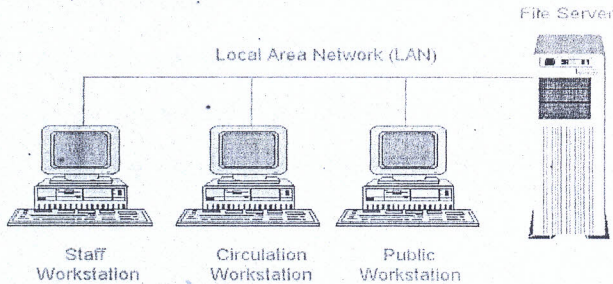


Fig 3: Example of a typical school library configuration

#### One File Server

- To hold the library system and database.
- For access by workstations via the Intranet or the Internet.

#### One to Two Public Workstations

- For students/teachers to access the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), CD-ROM network and/or the Internet.

#### One Circulation Workstation

- For library staff to check-in and check-out items, etc.

#### One Staff Workstation

- for cataloguing, acquisitions, reporting, etc.

### Typical Configuration

The configuration below is another example and it is advised that the school media specialist should consult with specialists in IT.

#### Server

- Pentium PC (e.g. Pentium III 500MHz)
- Sufficient RAM for serving the network (e.g. 512MB)

- Large and fast hard disk (e.g. 20GB or above)
- Network card
- Operating system: Windows 2000 Server/Window XP
- Backup Device (e.g. DAT tape drive)
- Optional: networked CD-ROM drives

### **Workstation**

- Pentium PC
- 256 MB RAM
- 9 GB hard disk
- Network card
- Operating system: Windows 98/ Windows 2000 Professional /Window XP or the latest technology as at the time of installation
- Optional: CD-ROM drive and sound card

### **Selection of Library Software**

The following criteria would help School Library Media Specialists to select the right software for the school library media centre:

- Who are the developers, whether an institution or reputed company or few individuals? The preference is for institution and second preference is for the reputed company. One has to be sceptical about the software developed by individuals as there will be no continuity.
- How many times the software has been revised since the time of its first launch.
- How many parameters are available for each module? The more parameters, the better the flexibility.
- Whether the software has facility to import bibliographic data available in ISO2709 format and similarly export of data in this format.



- Training and guidance before and after installation.
- Whether available on major operating systems.
- Whether it is web interfaceable.
- Whether it can be interfaced with the e-mail system.
- How many installations it has got in the country, since when and who are the major clients who had used the same software?
- Can it offer OPAC and different log in?
- What are the benefits of library automation?

### **Benefits of the School Library Media Centre Automation.**

There are many benefits to automating the information available in school libraries, these are as follows:

#### **Improved Customer Service**

Automation of the school library media centres helps take some of the workload off of librarians and other staff members in the areas of acquisitions, cataloging and circulation, which in turn allows them to better serve their patrons. This extra time can lead to more programs being facilitated in the library and make library staff available to answer reference questions and help students who having trouble researching or finding the right information.

#### **Cataloguing Improvements**

Automated cataloguing standards, such as MARC (Machine Readable Cataloguing), allow for quicker cataloguing of library items. Not only does this allow the librarian more time to dedicate to improving customer service but it also makes the sharing of materials from location to location much easier and much more affordable.

#### **Easier Access**

Not only does automation of school library materials make it easier to find books but it also makes it easier to access journals and books online from

a home computer or elsewhere. The automation of library collections also allows the library to be more flexible when there is increase in demand.

### **Collections**

Automation of the school library allows for an improvement in the variety, amount and quality of materials that are available in the library's collection. It can also help make weeding out old, outdated and irrelevant books and materials from the collection, which helps keep the library's collection more streamlined and easier to find the right item.

### **Lasting Effects**

Automation is also a way of preparing the collection to become sustainable with the ever-increasing shift to a technology-based society in terms of information dissemination, paired with the ever-decreasing amount of funding for libraries. Switching to an automated system allows libraries to add on features when they become available in the future, instead of having to do a complete overhaul of their collections and cataloguing methods.

### **Barriers to Library Automation**

The following could be the few possible barriers of library automation:

- fear of adverse impact on employment;
- funding: most school libraries are not adequately funded in terms of collection. When a library does not have adequate collection due to fund, it would not think of automation;
- the technology could be too expensive for schools to procure: both hardware and software would be expensive and unaffordable. The cost of hardware and software depends on the level of automation;
- the library staff members have to undergo extensive training;
- lack of support from the management due to budget constraints;
- retrospective conversion of data could be expensive;
- lack of electricity and fund to maintain a generator: this is mostly applicable in developing nations like Nigeria;
- some libraries lack qualified librarians to handle IT;

- the IT officers may not understand that library automation requires special skills.
- difficulties in purchasing library materials, e.g. cataloguing materials, labelling tapes, etc which are not produced locally in Nigeria;
- shortage of manpower;
- occasional system failure: the system occasionally breaks down and would be out of use for few days before the consultants come to rectify the faults;
- staff attitude towards automation: many staff members shy away from electronic systems with the fear of damaging or deleting important information while keying-in; this slows down the automation processing; and
- space for automation equipment: most school libraries do not have enough space for their users. In other words, there would be no space to keep the equipment like computers and peripherals.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## The School Library Media Specialist

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### Who is a School Library Media Specialist?

The school library media specialist (SLMS), school librarian or teacher-librarian refers to the same person, who must be an effective educator and curricular leader. The school library media specialist must possess up-to-date knowledge and skills on a wide range of educational topics including teaching, learning and information literacy. For many children, the school library media specialist is their first experience with a librarian. These information professionals play a critical role, teaching students how to select, use and understand information in all formats. The school library media specialists are teachers in the first instance. In order to be an effective teacher, the school library media specialist must consider the needs of learners and what makes students feel in charge of their learning. For example, the school library media specialist or teacher librarian must be prepared to teach and collaborate on all aspects of information inquiry across disciplines and grade levels. A school library media specialist may be guiding a class through the evaluation of websites for a science project, while later in the school day, he/she may be teaching a small group to use the video camera for recording oral histories of the Kanuri people. The school library media specialist must embrace the concepts of co-teaching, *integration* and cooperation. The role of a school librarian, operating in a modern multi-media library resource centre and equipped with the technical and professional skills acquired in an accredited librarianship education programme, is absolutely crucial to the economic and social progress of every country. There is need for a library, staffed by a full-time, professionally trained, information specialist (librarian), in every primary and secondary school, especially in Africa if the countries within her are to survive, prosper and compete successfully in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The concept of the school library media centre and the function of school library media specialists must be seen in the light of current curricula and school development with an emphasis on learning and knowledge. The school library is the key for children to learn in an information-rich technological environment. Librarians play a vital role in restructuring schools for the information age and preparing students for lifelong learning. According to Canadian School Library Association (CASL, 2007) a school library media specialist is a professional teacher with a minimum of two years of successful classroom experience and additional qualifications in the selection, management and utilisation of learning resources, who manages the school library media centre and works with other teachers to design and implement resource-based instructional programmes. The school library media specialist is the professionally qualified staff member responsible for planning and managing the school library media centre, supported by staffing who is as adequate as possible, working together with all members of the school community and liaising with the public library and others (IFLA/UNESCO, 2002).

Professional Competencies of the SLMS relate to the knowledge and skill in the areas of collaboration and leadership, curriculum and instruction, cooperative programme planning and teaching, information resources, information access, technology, management and research and the ability to apply these abilities as a basis for providing library and information services (Lamb & Johnson, 2009).

Personal Competencies of the SLMS represent a set of skills, attitudes and values that enable school library media specialist to work efficiently and effectively, be good communicators, focus on continuing learning throughout their careers, demonstrate the value-added nature of their contributions and thrive in the new world of education (Lamb & Johnson, 2009).

### **Roles of the School Library Media Specialist**

The School library media specialist or school librarian has many roles and responsibilities which include being a teacher, an instructional partner, information specialist and a programme administrator (Fig 3).

**As Teacher:** the library media specialist collaborates with students and other members of the learning community to analyse learning and information

needs, to locate and use resources that will meet those needs and to understand and communicate the information the resources provide.

**Instructional Partner:** the school library media specialist must build collaborative partnerships throughout the learning community. The media specialists must be a leader in the development of policies and practices that support information literacy as well as learning across the curriculum. As instructional partner, the library media specialist joins hands with teachers and others to identify links across student information needs, curricular content, learning outcomes and a wide variety of print, non-print and electronic information resources. This involves working closely with committees and individual teachers to develop effective learning environments for students. For example, the school library media specialist might bring together teachers from various disciplines to plan strategies that reduce plagiarism in the school.

**Information Specialist:** the school librarian must be an expert in locating, evaluating and synthesising information. As information specialist, the library media specialist provides leadership and expertise in acquiring and evaluating information resources in all formats; in bringing an awareness of information issues into collaborative relationships with teachers, administrators, students and others; and in modelling for students and others strategies for locating, accessing and evaluating information within and beyond the library media centre. Whether collaborating with the principal on a budget issue or teaching fifth graders to use electronic databases, the media specialist must model strategies for using a spectrum of traditional and new information tools and resources. For example, the teacher librarian might work with a group of teachers on writing a grant proposal for funding an environmental education programme. Assistance in locating background information, research for the literature review and budget information would be a valuable contribution to this partnership.

**Programme Administrator:** the school library media specialist must manage all activities associated with the school library media centre including budgeting, staffing, collection development, promotion, instructional and facilities. As programme administrator, the library media specialist works collaboratively with members of the learning community to define the policies of the library media programme and to guide and

- direct all activities related to it. For example, the SLMS may initiate a programme to help youth learn about the profession but also assist in basic tasks such as collection circulation, shelving and technical support.

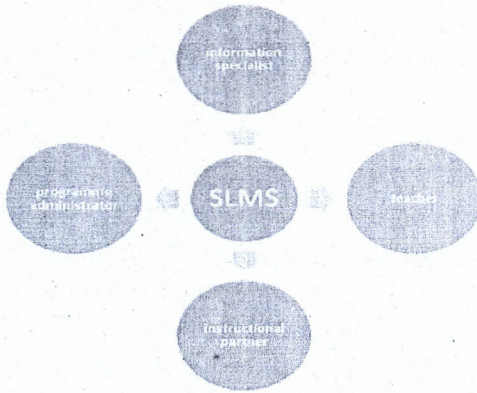


Fig 4: Traditional roles of a School Library Media Specialist

The school librarian of this age and future is one who needs to be comfortable wearing a number of hats. As shown in Fig. 4, the librarian of the twenty first century must be a researcher, counsellor, planner, manager, assessor, team member, problem solver and computer-printer repair person (Saw & Todd, 2007). His/her most important characteristics are very good interpersonal and communication skills, language proficiency, team working skills, user- friendliness and customer orientation.

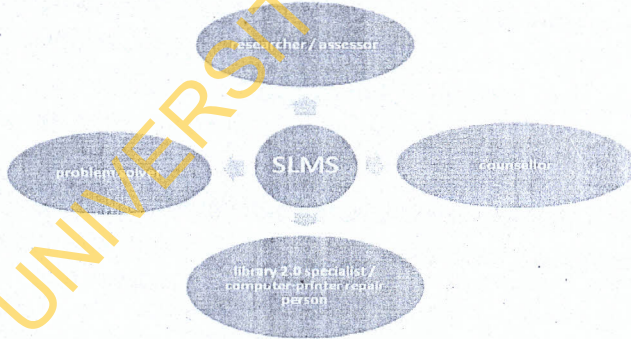


Fig 5: Additional roles of a SLMS in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

## Aims of the School Library Media Specialist

### The School Library Media Specialist:

- participates effectively in school programmes as he/she strives to meet the needs of pupils, teachers, parents and other community members;
- provides boys and girls with the library materials and services most appropriate and most meaningful in their growth and development as individuals;
- stimulates and guides pupils in all phases of their reading so that they may find increasing enjoyment and satisfaction and may grow in critical judgment and appreciation;
- provides an opportunity through library experience for boys and girls to develop helpful interests, to make satisfactory personal adjustments and to acquire desirable social attitudes;
- helps children and young people to become skilful and discriminating users of libraries and of printed and audio-visual materials;
- introduces people to the school library as early as possible and cooperates with those libraries in their effort to encourage continuing education and cultural growth;
- works with teachers in the selection and use of all types of library materials which will contribute to the teaching programme;
- participates with teachers and administrators in programmes for continuing professional and cultural growth of the school staff; and
- cooperates with other libraries and community leaders in planning and developing an overall library programme for the community.



## The Library Staff

The richness and quality of the library provision depend upon staffing resources available within and beyond the school library. For this reason, it is of paramount importance to have a well-trained and highly motivated staff, made up of a sufficient number of members according to the size of the school and its needs for library services. The term 'staff' means, in this context, qualified librarians and library assistants. In addition, there may be supporting staff, such as teachers, technicians, parents and other kinds of volunteers. School library media specialists should be professionally trained and qualified, with additional training in educational theory and learning methodology. One of the main objectives for staff management in school libraries should be that all staff members have a clear understanding of library service policy, well defined duties and responsibilities and properly regulated conditions of employment and competitive salaries which reflect the professionalism of the job.

➤ However, volunteers should not work as substitutes for paid staff but may work as support based upon a contract that gives a formal framework for their involvement in the school library activities. Consultants at local or national level can be used as external advisers in matters concerning the development of the school library service. The school library media specialist's main role is to contribute to the mission and goals of the school including the evaluation procedures and to develop and implement those of the school library. In cooperation with the school management, administrators and teachers, the school library media specialist is involved in the development of plans and the implementation of the curriculum. The school library media specialist has the knowledge and skills regarding the provision of information and solution of information problems as well as the expertise in the use of all sources, both printed and electronic. Their knowledge, skills and expertise meet the demands of a specific school society. In addition, the librarian should lead reading campaigns and the promotion of child literature, media and culture.

The support of the school management is essential if the library is to carry out interdisciplinary activities. The SLMS must report directly to the head teacher or deputy head. It is extremely important for the SLMS to be accepted as an equal member of the professional staff and be entitled to participate in the teamwork and all meetings as the head of the library

department. The librarian should create an environment for leisure and learning which is attractive, welcoming and accessible for everyone without fear or prejudice. Everyone who works in the school library media centres should have a good rapport with children, young people and adults.

According to the IFLA/UNESCO school library guideline (2002), the SLMS is expected to do the following:

- analyse the resource and information needs of the school community;
- formulate and implement policies for service development;
- develop acquisition policies and systems for library resources;
- catalogue and classify library materials;
- instruct in library use;
- instruct in information knowledge and information skills;
- assist students and teachers in the use of library resources and information technology;
- answer reference and information enquiries using appropriate materials;
- promote reading programmes and cultural events;
- anticipate planning activities connected to the implementation of the curriculum;
- participate in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of learning activities;
- promote the evaluation of library services as an ordinary part of the general school evaluation system;
- build partnership with external organisations;
- prepare and implement budgets;
- design strategic planning; and
- manage and train library staff.

### **The Role of the Library Assistant**

The library assistant reports to the librarian and supports them in their functions. This position requires clerical and technological knowledge and

- the ability to communicate positively and open-mindedly with children and adults;
- the ability to understand the needs of users;
- the ability to cooperate with individuals and groups inside and outside the school community;
- knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity;
- knowledge of learning methodologies and educational theories;
- knowledge of information skills and of how to use information;
- knowledge of the materials which compose the library collection and how to access it;
- knowledge of child literature, media and culture;
- knowledge and skills in the fields of management and marketing; and
- knowledge and skills in the field of information technology.

### **How do School Library Media Specialists Use Technology?**

The SLMS uses technology for information, instruction, administration, collaboration and communication. The SLMS should serve a key role in the selection of, the instruction about and utilisation of electronic resources and technology tools such as online databases, Internet resources and video programs, including all equipment and technologies used in the school, classroom, and learning community. SLMSs should model the effective application of instructional software and technology tools in their planning documents, presentations and lessons and professional communications. They can develop and distribute high quality, professional documents that convey evidence-based support for their ideas and programmes. These communications often incorporate data from a library automation system combined with digital imaging and computer-generated graphic elements. Accomplished school library media specialists are also teachers who:

- understand students and their diverse social, emotional and intellectual needs;

- support the learning of all students in the school community;
- encourage and engage students in reading, viewing and listening for understanding and enjoyment;
- create an environment of mutual respect and trust;
- use their expert knowledge in acquiring and evaluating, developing and promoting the effective use of learning resources in different formats and media, both on-site and remote, to support the instructional programme;
- integrate information literacy standards for student learning into the content and objectives of the school's curriculum;
- integrate technology for learning and teaching;
- plan instructional units collaboratively with classroom teachers;
- provide leadership in collaborative programme planning and teaching to ensure both physical and intellectual access to information;
- know curriculum programmes mandated by the state, district and school ;
- model strategies for locating, accessing and evaluating information within and beyond the library media centre;
- provide appropriate information, resources or instruction to satisfy the needs of individuals and groups and foster individual and collaborative inquiry;
- use appropriate information technology to acquire, organise and disseminate information;
- manage library programmes, services and staff to support the stated educational goals of the school and district;
- work collaboratively to define policies of the library media programme;
- evaluate the library media programme and services;
- are committed to programme excellence and remain flexible and positive in a time of continuous change;

- have effective communications skills and work well with others in a team;
- are committed to lifelong learning; and
- serve as instructional partner, information specialist and programme administrator

The library staff members support the use of books and other information sources, ranging from the fictional to the documentary, from print to electronic. The materials complement and enrich textbooks, teaching materials and methodologies. It has been demonstrated that, when librarians and teachers work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem-solving and information and communication technology skills.

### **The School Library Media Specialist's Job Description**

School library media specialists help children to use technology and find information for their school work or personal projects. Librarians are classified based on the type of library where they work such as a public library, university library, elementary or secondary school library / media centre. However, most librarians spend their time focusing on technical services, user services or administrative services.

- **Technical service:** librarians who work in technical services obtain, prepare and catalogue materials so that they can be found easily. They may write summaries and abstracts.
- **User services:** working directly with patrons of all ages, librarians working in user services are most commonly reference librarians or children's librarians. They help patrons use reference tools and technology to find the information they seek.
- **Administrative services:** librarians who handle administrative services manage and plan libraries. They are responsible for negotiating contracts for equipment, materials and services. They supervise employees, prepare budgets and direct projects. They may also perform fund-raising and public relations functions.

In larger libraries, the roles of librarians may be broken down even more, with each member of a team specialising in an area such as acquisitions, reference or special collections. In school libraries/media centres, media specialists assist teachers in developing curricula and acquiring materials for class. They also teach students on how to use library resources. Librarians in any role within a library are typically expected to:

- be familiar with many kinds of academic, government and other information sources;
- keep up with trends in library science;
- read book reviews, catalogues and publisher's announcements;
- shop for and purchase materials from distributors, publishers and wholesalers;
- compile lists of recommended materials;
- expand and maintain collections of materials related to a specific topic or field;
- coordinate programmes such literacy skills, speakers and storytelling for children; and
- maintain computerised databases and search databases of other libraries.

### **Degrees and Training Programmes for the School Library Media Specialist**

There are bachelor's degree programmes offered in Librarianship at many Nigerian and African Universities. Masters and PhD programmes in Library Science are also available in many universities and colleges in Nigeria and abroad. Students may do their research at postgraduate level in specialised areas like school libraries, school media, ICT in school media or reading. However, School Media Programmes at postgraduate level is offered in Nigeria at Abadina Media Resource Centre (Centre for School Media Centre), University of Ibadan.

School media programme is an interdisciplinary degree programme which combines traditional training in Library Science with technical courses

such as Information Science, Educational Technology and Reading. Major course studies at library schools include:

- Foundations of Library and Information Science;
- The Role of Information and Libraries in Society;
- History of Books and Printing;
- Censorship and Intellectual Freedom;
- Selection and Processing of Library Materials;
- Organising and Classifying Information;
- Research Methods and Strategies;
- User Services Skills;
- *Using Internet search methods, automated circulation systems and online reference systems;*
- Resources for Children or Young Adults;
- Classification, Cataloguing, Indexing and Abstracting; and
- Library Administration.

Major courses for school media programmes include:

- Audio-Visual Resources;
- Psychology of Learning;
- References Sources and Services in Media Resource Centre;
- Curriculum Resources and Services in the School Library Media Centres;
- Classification, Cataloguing, Indexing and Abstracting;
- Educational Media Psychology and Learning;
- Reading Theory & Application;
- Multi-media Services for People with Special Needs;

- Learning System Design;
- Media and Children's Literature;
- Organisation and Management of School Library Media Centres;
- Marketing Strategies for Media and Information Centres;
- Automation in Libraries, Archives and Information Centres;
- Reading Strategies for the Content Fields;
- Community Information Services;
- Educational Assessment and Testing; and
- Users Services in Media Houses and Educational Resource Centres.

### **Online Classes and Programmes in Librarianship**

Online master's degree programmes in Library Science are readily available as Web-based or as part of an on-campus programme. These programmes are found on the internet and are offered by schools that are campus-based and more likely to provide practical experience opportunities and job placement assistance.

### **Employment Requirements for School Library Media Specialist**

Most SLMS are expected to have a bachelor's degree in Library Science or any area of education with a master's degree in Library Science; masters in Information Science, masters in School Media or a combination of the two depending on their area of interest or specialty. A bachelor's degree is required for admission into a Library Science graduate programme/school media programme. In some countries like America, teacher certification for librarians working in school libraries is often a requirement as well.

A doctoral degree in Library and Information Science or school media can provide career advantage for librarians seeking college/university teaching positions or top administrative jobs in a school library, university or college library.



## Evaluating Library Science Schools

The following questions can be helpful to consider when evaluating master's degree programmes in Library Science and School Media:

- **Accreditation and Location:** is the school accredited? Is it located in a community with many different kinds of libraries?
- **Classes and Focus:** does the curriculum emphasise a particular area of library work, such as reference, school library or user services? Does it provide sufficient support for specialisation in areas of interest?
- **Applied Experience:** what internship opportunities are provided? Are computer labs equipped with the kinds of computing systems and information technologies that are of interest to potential employers?
- **Financial Aid and Expenses:** are resources for students who wish to take advantage of student loan, grant, scholarship and other financial aid opportunities well organised and thorough?
- **Graduate success:** what job placement assistance is offered? Over the past several years, how many graduates were successfully placed? What are they doing now?

## Importance of Multimedia in a School Library Media Centre

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Multimedia is a computer-based technology that integrates text, graphics, animation, audio and video. It is an important instructional medium in the education sector. Multimedia combine's five basic types of media into the learning environment: text, video, sound, graphics and animation, thus providing a powerful new tool for education. Multimedia refers to materials available in both CD-ROM and on the Internet. The term is also applied to multiple media such as a series of books and audio cassettes tied to a television or video programme. It has a supportive role in the classroom and can be seen as complementing and enhancing education.

### What is Multimedia?

Multimedia is a combination of text, audio, video, graphics and animation.

**Text:** out of all of the elements, text has the most impact on the quality of the multimedia interaction. Generally, text provides the important information. Text acts as the keystone tying all of the other media elements together. When it is well-written, text makes multimedia communication a wonderful channel of disseminating information in the SLMC.

**Audio:** this includes speech, music and other types of sound. Sound is used to provide emphasis or highlight a transition from one page to another. Sound synchronised to screen display enables teachers to present lots of information at once. This approach is used in a variety of ways, all based on visual display of a complex image paired with a spoken explanation (for example, in art, pictures are 'glossed' by the voiceover; or in math -- a proof fills the screen while the spoken explanation plays in the background). Sound used creatively becomes a stimulus to the imagination

but when it is used inappropriately, it becomes a hindrance or annoying. For instance, in an English Language/Language Arts class, still images and a sound track allow students to utilise their own power of imagination without being biased and influenced by the inappropriate use of video footage. A great advantage is that the sound file can be stopped and started very easily.

**Video:** this is a collection of images. The representation of information by using the visualisation capabilities of video can be immediate and powerful. It is the ability to choose how we view and interact with the content of digital video that provides new and exciting possibilities for the use of digital video in education. There are many instances where students, studying particular processes, may find themselves faced with a scenario that seems highly complex when conveyed in purely text form or by the use of diagrams and images. In this situation, the representational quality of the video helps in placing a theoretical concept into context.

Video can stimulate interest if it is relevant to the rest of the information on the page. Video can be used to give examples of phenomena or issues referred to in the text. For example, while students are reading notes about a particular issue, a video showing a short clip of the author/teacher emphasising the key points can be inserted at a key moment; alternatively, the video clips can be used to tell readers what to do next. On the other hand, it is unlikely that video can completely replace the face-to-face lecture; rather, video needs to be used to supplement textual information. One of the most compelling justifications for video may be its dramatic ability to elicit an emotional response from an individual. Such a reaction can provide a strong motivational incentive to choose and persist in a task. The use of video is appropriate to convey information about environments that can be either dangerous or too costly to consider or recreate in real life, for example, video images used to demonstrate particular chemical reactions without exposing students to highly volatile chemicals or medical education, where real-life situations can be better understood via video.

**Graphics:** these are of image as well as video. Animation is used to show changes in state over time or to present information slowly to students so they have time to assimilate it in smaller chunks. Animations, when combined with user input, enable students to view different versions of

change over time depending on different variables. Animations are primarily used to demonstrate an idea or illustrate a concept. Video is usually taken from life, whereas animations are based on drawings. There are two types of animation: cel-based and object-based. Cel-based animation consists of multiple drawings, each one a little different from the others. When shown in rapid sequence, for example, the operation of an engine's crankshaft, the drawings appear to move. Object-based animation (also called slide or path animation) simply moves an object across a screen. The object itself does not change. Students can use object animation to illustrate a point – during a history class, imagine the Biafra army movement is represented by sliding arrows.

**Animation:** – This is artificial movement of text or object. Graphics provide the most creative possibilities for a learning session. They can be photographs, drawings, graphs from a spreadsheet, pictures from CD-ROM or something pulled from the Internet. With a scanner, hand-drawn work can be included. Images make use of a massive range of cortical skills: colour, form, line, dimension, texture, visual rhythm and especially imagination.

### **Types of Multimedia**

- Interactive and non-interactive multimedia
- Entertainment and edutainment multimedia
- Other multimedia

### **Interactive and Non-interactive**

The interactive multimedia is that in which the user can participate in every stage of process (for example, games ware, CD ROM title, etc). The non-interactive multimedia includes those in which the user cannot participate; this just shows the process from the beginning to the end in a sequential manner (for example, corporate presentation, multimedia projects).

## Entertainment and Edutainment

All games, novels and movie multimedia are entertainment multimedia. These multimedia try to educate the user in specific curriculum; they are also known as edutainment multimedia.

## Other Multimedia

These include internet multimedia, broadcast multimedia.

## Application of Multimedia (where to use multimedia)

- Multimedia in business: business application for multimedia includes presentation, training, marketing, advertising, product demo and network communication.
- Multimedia in school: an interesting use of multimedia in school involves the students themselves. They can put together magazines and newsletters.

They can also design and run web websites.

- Multimedia at home
- Multimedia in public place

## Functions of Multimedia Resources

### *Easing Access before Reading*

As a presentation system, multimedia can provide a tool for easing entry to a literary work. This can be accomplished when software provides access to supporting visual/aural information, thought-provoking images and key information. The teacher alone or with the help of her students can tailor and utilise such materials.

### *Creating the Literary Experience*

Multimedia can serve to shape the social context in which library materials can be explored and experienced. Students and their teachers would have a central source of images, sounds and text that can stimulate and facilitate the sharing of responses. The technology can be used as a springboard

and around which roles and discourse can be shaped. In other words, multimedia can play the role of catalyst, thereby stimulating interaction and an ambiance conducive to collaboration and sharing experiences.

### ***Inviting Understandings/Developing Interpretations***

Through multimedia, students can be encouraged to build meaning and develop understandings. Given aural and visual tools with which to explore, expand, clarify and modify their understandings, the technology can be cast in the role of support system for students as they develop and share their interpretations.

Multimedia can also potentially assist students in considering multiple perspectives; that is, students can see and experience the responses of others to the same text. Varying interpretations can be accessed via video, audio, graphics and text.

### ***Make Connections (Personal, Literary and Cultural)***

Students can be permitted and encouraged to connect what they read and discuss with their own experiences. They can use multimedia tools to construct as many linkages as they can support and defend.

### ***Taking a Critical Stance***

Multimedia technology can serve response-based practices as a vehicle that facilitates and makes more powerful the sharing of experiences and understandings gained through them. The medium can, for example, supply tools and large stores of information that can be used when students cooperatively construct meanings around the texts they are reading.

### ***Exploring the Author's Craft***

Multimedia can supply students with a magnifying glass (among other tools) with which to examine subjects or topics with the aid of multiple forms of on-line assistance. This can help students make sense out of an author's work via access to a wealth of available commentary.

### ***Stocktaking***

Multimedia can serve as a place to return to in order to continue to probe and make sense of an author's work. As such, it can provide the kind of

independent re-examination that promotes independent as well as socially constructed envisionment building.

### *Evaluation of Instructional Materials*

Instructional materials prepared in any medium consist of three (3) discrete elements: content, organisation and interface. These elements define the essential characteristics of the package when they are combined to create the instructional sequence. The different media in which instructional materials can be developed all have unique and distinct attributes. Through these attributes, the content, organisation and interface can all be varied to provide the unique forms which we see in instructional packages across the different media forms.

**Content:** this attribute describes the information that is contained within the product. Books and paper-based materials are limited in the content that they can carry. Typically, this includes such elements as text, diagrams, graphics and photographs. Video materials are able to support temporal media forms such as sounds, animations and moving images as well as static graphics. Multimedia materials support many different media forms combined in instructional settings.

**Organisation:** the content within learning materials is delivered according to the manner in which it has been stored and represented. With books and paper-based materials, organisation tends to be sequential where one chapter leads to the next. Video materials also embrace sequential organisation and most materials designed with this medium are designed to flow from one point to the next in the order in which they appear on a tape. Multimedia materials can support multiple organisational modes that extend beyond the sequential modes that constrain conventional forms.

**Interface:** the interface of learning materials describes the environment in which the information is presented. The computer interface describes the image that is displayed and the elements that form the operations of the display. Books, for example, can use a variety of interfaces, ranging from standard black and white pages as were the norm in the past, to colourful pages comprised of well designed text and imagery as we often see today. Video materials tend to be limited in the interface design, the medium requiring quite standard approaches. As with the previous attributes,

multimedia materials support a range of interface designs and approaches.

While each of these elements can be considered as discrete and separate items in the design and development of multimedia materials, the design process often causes the distinctions to become blurred. Designers often blend and combine the elements in innovative ways to create and enhance learning opportunities. The attribute of educational multimedia that facilitates the linking of the content, organisation and interface elements is the interactivity which the product provides.

School library professionals in the developed countries are now engaged in some exciting activities so as to remain effective in the midst of fast-moving technological changes. They are striving to provide smart researching methodologies and information literacy skill sets to students. They are using web 2.0 technologies including blogs to give updates on resources as well as to interact with users and host collaborative discussion. They are also connecting their readers by creating pages on social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook and offering RSS tools that allow users to subscribe to get new information as it goes online. They use wikis to get staff and students involved in creating online library-related resources and are using Podcasts and video casts for the audio tours of the library.

## **The Role of ICT in the School Library**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) includes the Internet; CD-ROM; video; computer packages such as word processors; and television. ICT provision in the school library should be part of a coherent and consistent whole-school policy. ICT provision through the library benefits the school in several ways.

### **Access to Information**

- ICT widens the range of materials available in the school library and makes access to it much easier.
- The library is able to offer access to ICT resources before and after school hours including holiday periods.
- If the school library catalogue (OPAC) can be accessed via



the Internet or school's intranet, information is available at the point of need,

- The library should provide a range of ICT information sources including CD ROM, the Internet and high quality licensed databases offering up-to-date, authoritative information,

### **Support for the Development of Research Skills**

- The library's involvement in research skills training using ICT should be part of a whole-school programme and fully integrated into the curriculum.
- Many of the research skills developed by students for use with print-based texts apply to electronic sources.
- Students who struggle to interact with traditional text-based materials sometimes find it easier to access and use ICT sources.

### **Support for Literacy**

The school library will use ICT to enhance its support for literacy and the promotion of reading for pleasure.

- The library can offer online access to relevant websites devoted to reading, authors or books.
- The school librarian can co-ordinate students' materials for inclusion on the school's intranet or the school's web pages.
- Reports from the automated library management system can offer useful insights into students' reading habits.

### **Support for the Preparation and Presentation of Work**

- Access in the school library to basic computing applications such as word processing, data handling, spreadsheets, multimedia presentation and authoring tools offers new scope for staff and pupils to prepare and present information.
- E-mail enables students to communicate and exchange ideas.

## **The Role of the School Librarian in the Use of ICT**

To ensure consistent practice throughout the school, the librarian should be aware of how ICT is used to support all areas of the curriculum. He or she should also work closely with teaching staff and other educators to identify learning needs. School librarians are information specialists and should be, at the very least, competent users of ICT. Many are, in fact, proficient users of ICT and offer teachers and students support in a number of ways. The school librarian supports teachers and students in several ways:

### ***Evaluating the Quality and Suitability of Sources***

The enormous quantity of information available can make identifying relevant material a daunting and potentially time-wasting task. The school librarian applies traditional evaluation criteria extended to cover new aspects of electronic resources when assessing sources to ensure that they meet the curriculum needs of teachers and students. Because of the ephemeral nature of some of these materials, the SLMC will constantly be reviewing and updating its ICT resources.

### ***Disseminating information on useful resources***

To ensure that the school community is aware of the full range of potentially useful sources the school librarian will:

- add Internet sites to Bookmarks or Favourites. These may be included on the automated library management system for view through OPAC;
- provide annotations on websites/software; and
- provide reliable guides to relevant material.

### ***Providing Guidance and Support with Research Skills***

The school librarian will provide advice and guidance on all aspects of research skills. The use of ICT in the research process places an additional emphasis on the skills required for planning, searching and evaluating information. Planning a research task is even more important when using online information than it is when working with traditional sources. The provision of an Internet planning form can help students in planning and

## ICT Application in the School Library Media Centre

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formulating queries. It is helpful to know which search engines are best for a research task. The school librarian will have a good knowledge of the range of search facilities available together with their strengths and weaknesses and may provide guides to appropriate search engines. The school librarian will also offer guidance on effective search strategies. The school librarian will bookmark sites or links to sites via the automated library management system. Evaluation of sources to assess relevance and the selection and rejection of information are also critical. The provision of guidance on how to evaluate a website can provide students with a set of useful criteria to apply.

### *Advising on Copyright Issues*

The school library helps to advise both students and teachers on copyright issues, for example, the SLMC can advise on how to obtain permission when downloading materials from the internet. The school librarian can also provide guide on how materials could be cited using different referencing style.

### *Offering Support for Reading*

The school librarian may co-ordinate the production of students' reviews on the school's intranet. The school librarian may provide opportunities for:

- contacting authors through their own or publishers' websites;
- joining an internet activity related to books and reading, e.g. book raps, review sites, e-mail and video conferencing; and

- the computerised library management system can provide reports for teaching staff on profiles of students' reading and lists of the most popular books.

### ***Producing High Quality Presentations and Publications***

Presentation software enables the school librarian to produce high quality, interactive presentations to the school community. The use of ICT tools enables the school librarian to produce high quality promotional materials for staff, students, parents, etc. The quality of shelf guiding, posters, booklists, guides, etc. can be improved by the use of word processing.

### ***Producing Web Pages***

The library could form a significant part of the whole school website. By placing the school library catalogue on the website, access to information is extended beyond the physical confines of the library.

### ***Effective Library Management***

- The use of an automated library management system not only saves time on routine operational tasks but can also produce library usage statistics to support strategic planning.

### ***The Internet***

The Internet is a computer network made up of thousands of networks worldwide. The Internet is composed of many interconnected computer networks. Each network may link tens, hundreds or even thousands of computers, enabling them to share information and processing power. The Internet has made it possible for people all over the world to communicate with one another effectively and inexpensively. The Internet has an enormous impact on libraries. Librarians use the Internet and its multimedia component, the World Wide Web, to answer reference questions and to provide access to materials not previously available to their patrons. The speed and availability of computer networks and data communications lines have increased tremendously; and greater number of people have also gained access to the Internet. Patrons of school library media centres can access new sources of information via the Internet.

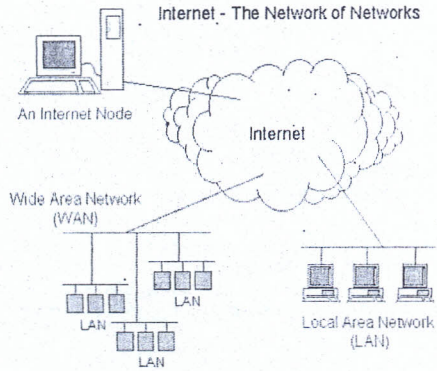


Fig 6: The Internet (Culled from Lam, K. T. 2001 School Library Automation)

The Internet spreads across the globe into over 200 countries and territories. All computers on the Internet communicate with one another using the Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol suite, abbreviated to TCP/IP. Computers on the Internet use a client/server architecture. This means that the remote server machine provides files and services to the user's local client machine.

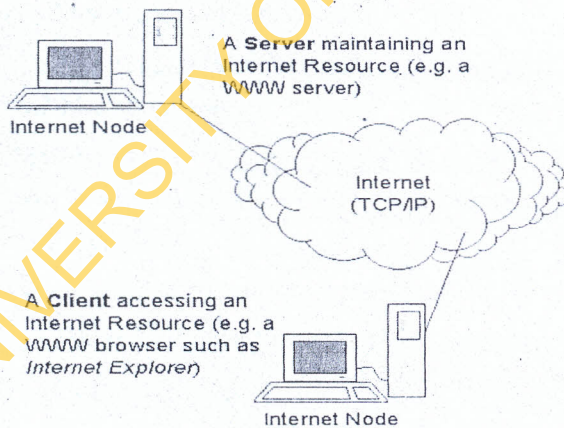


Fig 7

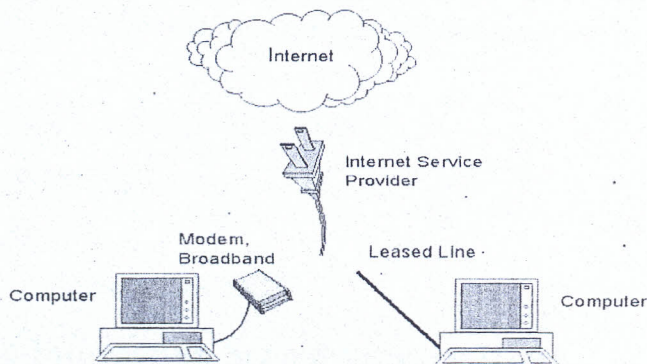


Fig 7 & 8: Connecting to the Internet (Culled from Lam K. T. 2001 School Library Automation)

### Challenges of Using the Internet by School Librarians

- a. Acquiring the skills on using the Internet.
- b. Participating in various teacher-librarians related news groups and email lists to:
  - share experiences on various topics relevant to the management of school library, and
  - participate in discussion of mutually interested issues on Librarianship.
- c. Maintaining WWW pages that link to useful Internet resources relevant to school libraries for easy access by teachers, students, parents and librarians.
- d. Producing local school library resources
  - Lesson plans for library skill, library activities/projects, etc.
  - Cataloguing records
  - Education resources, e.g. materials on curriculum, class notes, answers/solutions, examination papers, etc.

- e. Training other teachers and students to use the Internet.
- f. Assisting the school administration to formulate Internet use policies on:
  - intellectual property rights;
  - censorship;
  - security;
  - computer ethics, etc.

### **Use of the Internet by School Library Users**

One of the library's goals is to provide students with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet in ways appropriate to their education and information needs. Library staff should guide and supervise students in the appropriate selection and use of electronic resources. Making the Internet available to students carries with it the potential that some students may find information that they or others may identify as being controversial, inappropriate or potentially harmful. Therefore, a clear set of guidelines for acceptable use must be displayed prominently. The teacher-librarian should make sure she or he is involved in the development and/or articulation of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) within her/his school. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to learning objectives. Most importantly, librarians and classroom teachers shall instruct students in the skills they need to enable them to find, evaluate and use information from the Internet wisely and safely.

Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of the Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio and movies. Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy could result in a student's loss of access to network and the Internet privileges or other disciplinary action to be determined at the building or classroom level, consistent with the student Discipline Code. Where there is an allegation of criminal behaviour, law enforcement organisations will be involved.

## Collaboration between the School Library Media Specialists and Special Educators

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Collaboration is a central value in school librarianship. Numerous studies have addressed collaboration between school library media specialists and classroom teachers as well as between school library media specialists and administrators. School library media specialist collaboration with special education personnel has received less attention, although these staff members can contribute significantly to student success, particularly as students with disabilities are mainstreamed into the typical classroom.

The unique qualities of special educators make them valuable partners for school library media specialists. The impact of these partnerships is best measured based on the evidence of the results of those collaborative efforts to impact student learning.

### What is Special Education?

Special Education is defined as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Special education is in place to provide additional services, support, programmes, specialised placements or environments to ensure that these categories of students' educational needs are provided for. Special education is also the education of students with special needs in a way that addresses the students' individual differences and needs. This process involves individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, accessible settings and other interventions designed to help learners with special needs achieve a higher level of personal self-sufficiency and success in school and community. Common special needs include challenges with learning, communication challenges,



emotional and behavioural disorders, physical disabilities and developmental disorders. Students with these kinds of special needs are likely to benefit from additional educational services such as different approaches to teaching, use of technology, a specifically adapted teaching area or resource room.

## What is a Disability?

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) defines a child with a disability as one:

- with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as 'emotional disturbance'), orthopaedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and
- who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

However, the child's disability must adversely affect his or her educational performance. While a student with a temporary disability, such as a broken leg, might require short-term accommodations while the bone is healing, the intent of special education is to help individuals with chronic or acute disabilities participate and perform to the fullest reasonable extent in academic settings.

School library programmes provide resources and services for all students, which includes students with special needs. Not only is this philosophy socially responsible but it is also a legal necessity. Several federal laws in the United States impact school library programmes for students with special needs:

Gibson ( ) identified four categories of school library services that need to be addressed when supporting academic achievement of students with disabilities:

- 1) **Policies and procedures.** School library policies must comply with government laws and regulations, such as those mentioned above.

School library media specialists also need to make sure that the entire school community, particularly families with affected students, know how the library implements those policies through appropriate accommodations. Sample policies include selection policies that address needs of students with special needs, differentiated circulation periods, differentiated class management procedures and Web page development.

- 2) **Access to facilities and equipment.** Shelving heights, aisle widths, traffic flow, signage, furniture and lighting all need to accommodate students with physical challenges. Adaptive technologies need to be available so that all students can have physical access to information, e.g., larger monitors for computers, keyboards with track balls, optical scanners and reading software.
- 3) **Specific services.** Information needs to be available in a variety of formats, such as Braille, audio, captioned videos and electronic files. Student-specific services may also be called for, such as extended lending periods, delivery of materials to students' homes, customised picture books (e.g., texturised), customised teaching aids (e.g., task cards) and individual instruction.
- 4) **Staff development.** Library staff members need training to enable them interact successfully with students with special needs. Some training can be general (such as universal design), disability-specific (e.g., autism or vision impairment) or student-specific (based on each student's individual education plan).

### Who Are Special Education Personnel?

Special education personnel address the academic needs of students with mild to severe disabilities which may be sensory, mobile, developmental or cognitive. Personnel work with students in self-contained and mainstreamed classrooms and they collaborate with other specialists as well as classroom teachers and community agencies.

The educational preparation of special education personnel varies from a high school diploma to advanced degrees. Special education professionals (typically called special educators, special education

instructors or education specialists) may have a basic teaching credential and an added credential for teaching special education or they may have a credential that enables them to teach only in special education areas.

- Special educators know the relevant laws and can help school library media specialists comply with those laws (e.g. Web page accessibility).
- Special educators can help school library media specialists select and arrange furniture and equipment to facilitate physical access for all students.
- Special educators can also recommend appropriate resources – books, electronic resources and adaptive technology – to match the needs of individual students.
- Special educators can provide formal training to school library media specialist.

### **Similarities between the School Library Programmes and Education for Exceptional Children**

Several characteristics of special educators resemble those of school library media specialists. These include:

- specialised knowledge and preparations; often, they are the sole site experts in a given facility that focus on resources and services;
- formal and informal instructional roles; and their role as student support professionals; and
- other similarities between special educators and school librarians include having no standard curriculum; often relying on information or skills; scheduling and planning time constraints; and the potential to work with all students and other school personnel.

## **What do School Library Media Specialists Contribute to Education for Exceptional Children?**

To collaborate effectively requires that both parties contribute to the effort at seeing the disabled child having equal opportunities to learning. School library media specialists have a broad and deep knowledge about resources across the curriculum and in different formats, which can help special educators match materials with individual students. While special educators might know more about adaptive technologies, school library media specialists are likely to know the Internet and other online resources that could be useful for students with special needs. The two specialists can share knowledge and contribute to educating the disabled child. Furthermore, school libraries are likely to have more current technology than special education rooms, especially in developed countries. Since library use support, the curriculum, school library media specialists can link learning activities with special educators' strategies. Even more than special educators, school library media specialists work with the entire school community and can introduce special educators to teachers who might not otherwise come into contact with them.

With their knowledge, school library media specialists and special educators can offer significant support to students with special needs as well as their classroom teachers. By documenting their strategies and student learning assessments, school library media specialists could build a persuasive case that they impact classroom instruction. More generally, school library media specialists and special education personnel have much expertise to share with each other and with others in the school community. Increased research and documentation of those efforts can strengthen their collaboration and contribute significantly to student achievement.

The relationship of the school library media centre with its patrons and the community is of utmost importance. The school library media centre needs the community behind its programme. Volunteers are used at schools in order to enhance the school library media centre programme and to allow them to view the programme. Marketing and advocating school libraries are crucial tasks: a strategic and effective advocacy helps in building a deeper understanding along with a better perception of the educational role and the value of the school library throughout the school and the local community. Library associations also play a relevant role besides promoting professional development, because they can set up initiatives, meetings, events and provide school librarians with advocacy kits, best practices list, opportunities to meet and share experience. International yearly celebrations such as the International School Library Day in October or the UNESCO World Book Day in April are good occasions for advocating and promoting the school library services within the school and the local community. Contacts are also made with the parents and community through a variety of ways: school newspapers, local newspapers, morning shows, bulletin boards, intercom systems, radio and local television bulletin boards/ adverts.

### **What is Public Relations?**

Public Relations (PR) is concerned with maintaining a public image for businesses, non-profit organisations or high-profile people. Public relations provide a service for the SLMC by helping to give the public a better understanding of how the company works. PR also helps companies to achieve their full potential; they provide feedback to the company from

the public. This usually takes the form of research regarding what areas the public is most happy and unhappy with. Public relations within libraries are used to build rapport with employees, library users, donors and the general public.

### **Strategies for Promotion of Library Activities**

The following are the strategies that a school library media centre could engage in to promote their activities:

- the SLMC staff should smile a lot and remind library assistants to look happy;
- staff should look well groomed and professional;
- sponsor a club, organisation or group and the SLMS could attend after school activities;
- a visitor to the Centre could be asked to give an honest appraisal of the "first impression" of the library media centre;
- display signage that is professional, consistent and easy to read;
- create an entrance that is inviting, uncluttered and well lit;
- insure the floor plan and traffic flow are logical and easy to follow;
- provide student assistants with badges;
- use a common logo on the same colour paper for all library media centre memorandums and publications;
- advertise services outside the library media centre in unexpected places: by the drinking fountain, in the cafeteria, in the main office, on the public address or closed circuit television system, in the teacher's lounge;
- spend a certain amount of time visiting students and staff;

- produce a regular newsletter for staff and students (include humour and lots of graphics); ?? prepare a brief monthly report for administrators;
- write and publish short handouts for students to keep or take home: lists for vacation reading, research hints and bookmarks; and
- gather an advisory committee of staff and students to give you feedback, support and suggestions from time to time.

### **Promotion Strategies for Elementary School Media Centres**

On the elementary level, there should be frequent school-wide efforts to promote reading and the love of books. Involvement of the total instructional and administrative staff is crucial for reading promotional activities to be successful. The following are some successful strategies especially at the elementary level:

- story reading field trips to libraries and museums;
- book talks/reviews book discussions;
- book character parades book games/puzzles;
- book/reading contests with theme-related book lists;
- puppetry flannel board stories;
- chalk talks/dramatisations reading awards;
- reading clubs new book announcements/exhibits;
- book fairs visits from local authors/storytellers;
- story telling activities; and
- sustained silent reading read-ins.

## Readership and Promotion Techniques

The school library media centre in each school should conduct a variety of special programmes and events during the school year to promote library use and reading. Some of the events that could be celebrated include book fairs, Children's Book Week, School Library Media Month, National Library Week, etc. For example, Reading Counts is a computerised reading programme that has been implemented at every school in the United States of America. In this programme, students would earn points constantly and receive prizes in the school library media centre. At the end of each mid-nine weeks, the top five (5) students at each school with the highest points will receive a prize and will have their picture placed in the newspaper. At the end of another nine weeks, the top two (2) students at each school in a District with the highest points will receive a prize and will have their picture placed in Newspaper. Also, at the end of the school year, the top two (2) students with the highest points at each school will receive an overall prize with his picture in newspaper. The events and special programmes are publicised on bulletin boards within the schools while newsletters and newspaper articles are given to parents.

Children of all ages and abilities, including reluctant and less able readers, need a variety of reading choices to feed their moods and interests (CILIP, 2002). For example:

### *The Youngest Readers*

Even before children start school, they can visit the school library as part of their introduction to the school day. Picture books, novelty books, board books and nursery rhymes should be part of the core stock to encourage children and parents to read together.

### *Developing Readers*

There are many attractive first reading series which offer both familiarity and challenges but which are not devised as reading schemes. Pupils should feel they are reading 'real books'. Poetry, short stories, non-fiction, picture books for older readers and story-tapes also appeal to new readers. Some of these children will still enjoy the younger picture books. The short paragraphs of text in non-fiction books can also be interesting for new readers.



### *Reluctant Readers*

Make sure that there is plenty books to interest reluctant readers, e.g. picture books for older readers, suitable graphic novel, etc.

### *Confident Readers*

Confident readers still need support. The main fiction sequence should include quick reads as well as more in-depth stories. Extending pupils' reading experiences includes becoming familiar with genres, a wide range of authors, series and different publishers. Pupils relish the freedom to dabble, explore, read up and down, take risks, make choices and read for escapism.

## **The School Library should Encourage Reading Exploration**

Some reader development activities include:

- story times for children of all ages;
- private reading time;
- author/illustrator visits;
- book weeks;
- shadowing national book awards;
- celebrating national reading initiatives, e.g. Poetry Day; World Book Day, etc;
- promoting public library activities, e.g. the Summer Reading Challenge;
- family literacy; and
- linking with whole school events, e.g. celebration of key festivals and events.

## Readership and Promotional Techniques

Outside the requirements of the curriculum there are many enjoyable ways to involve pupils creatively in the reading process. Pupils of all abilities need to be reassured that their reading experiences are valid, and to have opportunities and activities to measure and test validity (CILIP, 2002). Additional reader development activities include:

### *Reading Camps*

The programme is aimed at exposing the students to various skills, viz, speed reading, information handling skill, etc. Various activities with local authors, film show and slides show can be carried out at the camp.

### *Reading Groups*

A Reading Group starts with the interests of the pupils and allows them to develop the identity of the group and the nature of the reading activities, which can include:

- exploring book-related Web sites;
- producing book reviews and recommendations for the whole school;
- involving pupils in book selection for the library;
- taking part in the planning of book weeks; and
- helping with story sacks.

### *Story Sacks*

According to CILIP (2002), story sacks combine a book (fiction or non-fiction) with activities and a collection of objects and package them in a decorated fabric sack. The sacks can be put together by parents and other volunteers and loaned for use at home as well as in the classroom. Story sacks work well with pupils of all ages including children with special needs. They involve parents in supporting their children's literacy and stimulate book sharing in families.

### *Reading Contest*

It is aimed at accelerating reading habit among the younger generation. This is done through the use of libraries, which is considered important in

nation building. The contest material is a number of books on literature (prose and poetry), selected by a Committee.

### ***Book Talk***

This is a cost-effective strategy with ability to reach a wider audience through book talk. The school holds book talk and book reporting sessions through the help and assistance of the librarian. The talk could be done through talk-cum-slide by librarians for new coming books or during orientation in the library.

### ***Read Aloud to Children***

If the child is too old to talk to, s/he is not too old to read too. Most critical task during these early stages is learning how to calm the child and put them under control. By age 5, a child would have been taught to read. Fairy tales offer an excellent opportunity to introduce the child or class to comparative literature by reading to them.

### ***Creative Poetry***

The area of poetry could be explored in promoting reading and library use. Poetry sets an excellent medium for training children in listening and reading. These are also integral parts of reading aloud programme. Poetry must be read word for word because it is bound by meter and rhythm where every word and every syllable counts. This strategy would also stimulate the love for reading among children.

### ***Picture Book***

Start with picture books and build up to storybooks and novels. Picture books can be read easily to children in spite of their age. If there are more than 2 years between the children, each child would benefit greatly if they are read to individually. Make sure each child can see the picture easily; especially children in the back row should see the picture above the heads of the others.

### ***Story Hours***

Story-telling is one of the easiest activities for the school library to organise. Traditional tales or short stories of the same type and picture book are the easiest to use. Apart from myths, legends, fairy tales, stories about animals,

things which appeal to the sense of wonder and the sense of humour of the children could be used during story hours.

## **Performance and Craft Activities**

Performance and craft activities used to promote reading and school library use include the following:

### ***Dramatic Activities***

The approach is to outline a theme, based on a story or part of a book, which can then, by the cooperation of the children and the librarian, be demonstrated in a dramatic form with each child undertaking a role.

### ***Puppets***

Dramatic activity and craftwork can be combined in the making of puppets by the children and their presentation of a performance based on a story or episode from a book. For both the puppeteers and audience of other children, it will extend the awareness of the story and the book on which the play is being based. This would encourage other children to read from the book where the puppet play is based.

### ***Craft Activities***

Craft activities can use both local traditional skill and a wide range of materials, many of which can be improvised from waste materials such as newspapers, disused packaging cardboards and so on. The requirements are space and surfaces on which to work and also a good collection of materials. The link with books can be twofold: the choice of themes from books, such as giants, prehistoric animals or other features and the use of *books for instruction in methods and techniques*.

### ***Competition/Quiz***

The quiz is aimed at encouraging students to read beyond their textbooks in school, promoting books as a source of information. Therefore, it is necessary to decide precisely the purpose of the quiz in each competition. Book quiz can be done just for fun. They may be set at various levels for different age grades.

## Significance of Reading in a Developing Society

- Reading is important for the acquisition of new ideas and sharpening of the reading skills by children.
- Reading is important for exploration which would help to proffer solutions to problems that affect life either directly or indirectly.
- Reading nourishes the mind with knowledge and fresh information. This makes responsible and informed citizens in the society and the global community.
- Reading enables the reader to establish a healthy relationship between the reader and books and enhances development.
- Reading strengthens the economy and increases individual and collective productivity of a nation.
- University lecturers, college tutors and secondary school teachers will be encouraged to write more if their publications are widely read and well sold. This will enable them sustain their personal economies.
- It is important to note that reading helps in the preparation for national examinations.
- Reading is also a means for entertainment and enjoyment.
- Finally, it is important to note that a nation, whose population reads, grows in all directions, that is, socially, economically, academically and politically.

## Contributions of the School Library Media Centres to Reading Development

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The importance of school library media centre in the attainment of quality education cannot be overemphasised. The process of developing a reading culture should start at an early stage of childhood and nurtured into adulthood. SLMS are central to the development of reading habits, hence the need for libraries to organise seminars as their contribution to developing and inculcating reading among secondary school students in Nigeria. School library media centres should promote 'reading for leisure' activities which include reading anything from comic books through newspapers to the latest bestseller. By promoting reading in this way, school library media centres would encourage reluctant readers and then, over time, introduce them to new material.

The following are essential to the development of literacy and are also core school library services:

- supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school's curriculum;
- developing and sustaining in children the habit and enjoyment of reading and learning, and the use of libraries throughout their lifetime;
- offering opportunities for experiences in creating and using information for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment;
- supporting all students in learning and practising skills for evaluating and using information, regardless of form, format or medium, including sensitivity to the modes of communication within the community;

- providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions;
- organising activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity;
- working with students, teachers; administrators and parents to achieve the mission of the school;
- proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy; and
- promoting reading and the resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.

Different studies have confirmed that the school library media centre is related to reading in the following ways:

- better school libraries result in more reading;
- the more hours a library is open, the more reading done by students;
- more planned trips to the library with teacher and class results in more reading;
- physical environment of library contributes to how much reading is done;
- size of school library is an accurate predictor of reading test scores;
- the more money invested in school library, the higher the scores of the students;
- the higher the quality of the library staff, the better the achievement of students; and
- unlimited check-outs and book displays result in more reading.

### **How the SLMS can Assist in Reading**

- Increase library hours before and after school.
- Increase high interest level of students in using the library by encouraging them to utilise the library resources.

- Encourage collaboration with librarians and teachers.
- Increase collection to approach a least 8 books per student [even though 18 books is the international minimum number].
- Find additional sources of funding for the school library, such as civic groups, grants, PTA and the students themselves.

### Importance of Reading

Reyhene (1998) observes that when children read for pleasure, they involuntarily and unconsciously improve their language skills. Bignold (2003) indicates that the habit of reading improves children's reading skills. Hence, the issue of reading whether it is for learning or leisure is important since it helps broaden young people's experiences and knowledge.

- Reading helps to develop thinking skills, enrich knowledge, enhance language proficiency and broaden life experience.
- Emphasis has to be placed on motivating learners and providing them with proper guidance and opportunity to enhance their learning capacity through reading.
- Extensive reading is an important source of ideas and language for carrying out tasks in the English language curriculum.
- Reading helps to revisits vocabulary and structures in different books and contexts.
- Reading reinforces understanding of story structure, i.e. introduction, setting (place and time), characters, plot (problem or goal), episodes, events or resolution.

In reading, children are enabled to:

- listen, enjoy and respond to stories, nursery rhymes, poems and songs;
- become familiar with a wide range of environmental print;
- learn to recognise and name the letters of the alphabet;
- develop awareness of letter sound relationships and to fuse the sounds of letters into words;
- sing and say the alphabet, pointing to each letter. The SLMS could allow children to handle magnetic letters, soft letters, etc;



- love books and create an interest in reading as a result of story time;
- pay attention to the mechanics of reading, i.e. holding a book, turning the page, letting their fingers go under the words as they read from left to right;
- repeat what happened in the story; this will help build their vocabulary;
- recognise similar, written and individual sounds and rhymes; the more highly developed children's ears are, the better, e.g. matching games like 'wall' and 'fall' in rhyme; and
- be provided with an opportunity to handle books.

### **School Libraries Support the Reading Programme**

A school library and a classroom collection of reading materials both support the school reading programme. One cannot substitute for the other. The school library is a collection of resources that are organised according to a standard system with materials catalogued and classified for accessibility, while the classroom collection of reading materials is organised and levelled to service the individual classroom.

Classroom teachers and reading teachers need a selection of materials to teach students how to read. Research shows that classroom collections are most effective when augmented by rotating collections and individual student selections suggested by the school library media specialist. By providing proactive support for in-class reading instruction, school library media specialists demonstrate their commitment to helping schools meet reading goals. For teachers, they provide catalogued sets of materials in searchable formats and data on material use. For students, they provide collections for research, skill building and pleasure that support reading motivation.

School libraries could initiate, coordinate and stimulate the reading culture by following the steps bellow:

#### **a. Development of New Strategies**

The importance of motivation cannot be overstressed because people most, especially the youths do things better when they are interested in

what they are doing. In other words, reading encourages students to conceptualise, implement and monitor.

#### **b. Improving the Reading Environment**

Most school libraries are in a poor state due to lack of funds, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. The empty library shelves or outdated books on the shelves say it all; moreover, the library buildings are dilapidated and these conditions are not inviting enough to stimulate reading. The physical environment of the library should be rejuvenated in order to have a serene environment. The improvement of libraries is considered essential; government at all levels, individuals, publishers, booksellers and organisations should adopt and refurbish libraries in the localities.

#### **c. Improving the Image of Reading**

This is image building or public relations for pleasure reading. The younger generation is very individualistic and mobile. To many of them, reading may seem dull, that is, it is seen as an activity not to engage in, because it takes time and concentration. Africans, especially Nigerians youths, need to be shown that reading cannot only be fun but that it is also a great way to spend their leisure time. In other words, reading is valuable and rewarding. Reading campaigns should be organised with features such as inviting popular musicians and well-known TV presenters so that such programmes would be interesting and encouraging. Examples could be taken from the interesting programmes organised for AIDS and HIV campaigns.

#### **d. Thinking Skills**

The library plays a valuable role in helping to develop thinking skills among readers because of the variety of materials and viewpoints offered through different materials for reading activities.

#### **e. Literacy Skills**

The ability to read is a crucial skill for information retrieval, without literacy, people are severely limited in the information they can access (Dike, 2006). According to her, it has been demonstrated by research that children learn to read by reading! It is not through drill and practices but by free voluntary reading. And for this reason, readers need access to plenty of pleasurable

books that are of interest to them and school libraries must support literacy by providing pleasurable books.

### **School Library Media Specialists Help Schools Meet Reading and Learning Goals When they:**

- provide collaborative programmes for reading instruction;
- select resources to meet the learning needs of all students;
- assure that technology, teaching and learning are integrated seamlessly;
- select resources that support national/state learning standards;
- select resources that enhance levelled classroom collections;
- provide imaginative materials that promote reading motivation;
- encourage students to seek, access and use information independently; and
- provide for free voluntary reading, individual reading selection and reading guidance.

### **Students can Become Lifelong Readers When they Have:**

- access to current, quality, high-interest and extensive collections of books and other print materials in their school libraries, classrooms and public libraries;
- contact with adults who read regularly and widely and who serve as positive reading role models;
- certified library media specialists and classroom teachers who demonstrate their enthusiasm for reading by reading aloud and booktalking; and
- time during the school day dedicated to reading for pleasure, information and exploration. . .”

### **The School Library as a Dynamic Agent of Learning**

This model posits that as a dynamic agent of learning, a school library media centre's intellectual and physical infrastructure centres on three essential interactive and iterative components:

1. **Informational:** the information resource and information technology infrastructure which are:
  - current, multi-perspective, multi-format resources with readability levels aligned with the school curriculum;
  - state-of-the art technology to acquire, organise, create and disseminate information and function as a gateway to information; and
  - reading resources for curriculum and personal pursuits.
2. **Transformational:** these are instructional interventions which include:
  - development of information access and knowledge-building competencies
  - development of media and technological skills for information access and knowledge creation; and
  - development of approaches to promote and encourage reading for academic achievement and lifelong learning.
3. **Formational:** student outcomes
  - Students create new knowledge through effective information seeking and use competencies.
  - Students develop transferable skills for sustaining knowledge beyond the classroom.
  - Students can use technology and information tools to produce new knowledge and demonstrate achievement.

Ross, Kuhlthau and OELMA (2004) give a report of the Ohio Research Study on school library use as follows:

- all school library programs provide instructional intervention, through a credentialed library media specialist, which centres on the development of information literacy skills for inquiry learning;
- all school libraries, including elementary schools, should be staffed with credentialed library media specialists who have educational certification and who engage in collaborative

instructional initiatives to help students learn and achieve;

- all library media specialists have a clearly defined role as information learning specialists;
- all school libraries provide a learning-centred space supported by a strong technology infrastructure; and
- all stakeholders engage in action-oriented discussions to maximise learning opportunities through school libraries.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

Children's literature is the material created for and widely read, viewed and heard by children, that has an imaginative element. Children's literature is for children; it may be it read, viewed or heard. However, these stories are written by adults. Children want to derive fun from reading a book while adults view the functionality of books as one where there is a need for children's books to teach good moral values. Children are regular users of literature. They will unquestioningly embrace story characters and events by becoming drawn into their real and imaginary worlds and view the world through the eyes of their favourite heroes. The moment a story has the child's attention, they become invaluable in imparting attitudes and ideas that form an integral part of their evolving understanding of the world. Children become aware of differences within their own world and may, in the process, develop tolerance, understanding and insight into the unfamiliar culture. This kind of literature may also serve to highlight similarities of people from different cultures. In this way, children who belong to the minority groups feel represented and can identify with story characters and begin to be fulfilled by the activity of reading, while enjoying the emotional and academic benefits. Children's books are multifunctional in that they help children to expand their imagination and to acquire literacy. Children's literature helps children to cope with problems that are social, cultural or racial and problems that crop up in dealing with life in the real world. It also helps to inculcate in children specific social attitudes that are deemed to be acceptable in their community. It is important to acquire books on specific topics into the children's library but it is even more important that these books should be developmentally appropriate, well-written and appealing to the students.

## **African Literature**

African children's literature is literature written for African children by African authors either in the vernacular or in a foreign language. African literature are identified according to the period when they are published.

### **Pre-colonial Literature**

Pre-colonial literature was basically oral. It was valued as one of the major means by which societies educated, instructed and socialised their younger members. With the introduction of formal education, most of that which previously would have been considered oral literature, that is, proverbs, riddles, tales, taboos and legends, are now available in print. Despite this, oral literature is not a thing of the past. In many African societies, it is still alive and active. Much of it is still created daily; it is constantly being adjusted to new developments and continues to take on new dimensions.

### **Colonial Period**

During the colonial period, African children in government and missionary schools were introduced to children's literature that was alien to their experience. These books have a Western background and are based on Western values. While some of them present moral teachings, African children would have benefited more if they had read these books alongside books that had an African background with African cultural values. Those who regard oral and written literature as having equal values might argue that this was achieved because the African child, despite being introduced to Western literature, was at the same time still listening to stories and proverbs at home. This was not the case. The introduction of formal education emphasised written literature as mature, civilised and conscious of its art and considered oral literature as primitive and lacking in technique.

### **Post-colonial Literature**

Despite having an African background, these books can be and is read by children from many different backgrounds.

### **Genre of Children Fiction**

Children's books include poetry, historical fiction, biographies, non-fiction, realistic fiction and fantasy.

## **Picture Books**

A picture book is a book in which the illustrations play a significant role in telling the story. Traditionally, picture books (also called "picture story books") are 32-page books for ages 4-8, this age may vary slightly by publisher.

## **Early Readers**

These are also called "easy-to-read". These books are designed for "emergent readers" - children who are just learning to read on their own. Most of these books are intended for primary school children just starting to read on their own (ages 6-8). They have colour illustrations on every page like a picture book but the format is more grown-up smaller trim size, sometimes broken into short chapters.

## **Chapter Books**

For ages 7-10, chapter books are transitional books that help children move from early readers to full novels. Most chapter books deal with contemporary situations that are familiar to the readers and are often humorous books.

## **Middle-Grade Novels**

This is the golden age of reading for many children, ages 8-12. A novel, unlike the picture book, relies entirely on text to tell the story. Kids get hooked on characters at this age. Fiction genres range from contemporary to historical to science fiction/fantasy.

## **Young Adult**

Young adult novels, also sometimes called teen novels, are generally read by children anywhere from age 12 upwards. They are longer books, often 50,000 words or more. Most are contemporary stories and often involve contemporary problems, including drugs, sex and peer pressure; that is, popular themes are usually relevant to the problems and struggles of today's teenagers, regardless of the genre. Examples of these are the African writer series, Mill and Boon Romantic Story Series, James Hardy Chase, Agatha Christie, etc.



## Evaluation of Children's Literature

- Look for an age-appropriate message as the book's focus. It is important to take into consideration the children's physical, cognitive, language and moral developments, as well as what the interests and preferences are of the age group or groups you are recognising.
- Children will lose interest in a book if it is beyond their level of understanding. For example, a book with chapters that involve a plot may not be suitable for a child with a short attention span.
- Read the book cover to cover, paying close attention to details. Randomly select several pages throughout the book, and read through the pages. Scan through books to get a good sense of the language and graphics.
- Evaluate the graphics used in the book. Rule out books that show hint of violence, suggestive body language or illustrate bad habits.
- Check for variety of themes/story in the books. It is important to include poetry, historical fiction, biographies, non-fiction, realistic fiction and fantasy books in the SMLC. These are essential for rounding a child's literary experience. It is important to note that some books may offer a single type of purpose; others are multilayered and "multi-tasked" and should be used as much as possible, especially when they are for use with a multi-level group. Multicultural and international books give a great understanding and appreciation for other cultures. So, make your selections from a variety of cultures and make sure that the characters depicted are positively portrayed.
- Look for children's authors who have several books published.
- Read book reviews in local newspapers or in national consumer magazines. Listen to interviews by children's book authors when aired on television or radio. This is especially helpful when evaluating books by new authors.
- Evaluate the safety of materials and construction of the book. For very young children, buy books that can withstand being chewed

on or having juice spilled on them. The construction of the book also should have no loose items that can come off and be swallowed: The book should stand up to being dropped, crumpled and being stashed in a diaper bag or purse.

- Evaluate the price of a book. Children's interests change at lightning speeds; it may be more beneficial to find a more inexpensive book that meets all the guidelines listed previously.

In evaluating children's literature, the following questions must be asked:

- Are the books you are choosing going to provide enjoyment, an overall positive experience and teach them something along the way?
- Will it get them asking appropriate questions?
- Will you be able to draw inferences from it or transition into other activities, if that is a goal?
- Is there a variety in the books you are choosing?

### **Children's Literature and Language Curriculum Implementation**

- Curriculum in most countries would painstakingly list the benefits of having children's literature in the school syllabus.
- Appreciation of literature brings about personal and emotional gains as enriching the children understanding of themselves and the world around them.
- Literature gives enjoyment while developing the imagination. It also helps children make sense of their own experience and evokes one's feelings on issues related to life.
- The study of literature allows children to learn new ideas and knowledge. It adds to their understanding of concepts and cultural traditions and values and issues in life.

- Developing respect for self and others and encouraging one to become aware of one's audience are learning gains to be derived from the study of literature.
- The study of literature aids in language gains as developing the children's awareness of how language works in communication and experiencing the form of narratives. It also allows them to experience new ways of using language that bridges the gap between written and spoken language. Literature also aids the learner in developing an understanding of the meaning of words.
  - Instill and inculcate the reading habit in pupils.
  - Enrich pupils' vocabulary and language content.
  - Enhance pupils' thinking skills.
  - Promote cultural understanding in the Malaysian context.
  - Improve the English language proficiency of pupils.
  - Provide lively, enjoyable and high-interest readings.

## Funding and Budgeting for the School Library Media Centre

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The amount of money spent to establish and maintain a library media centre is cumulatively very large. However, if the initial expenditures made to design, build and operate the learning centre are allowed to languish, then its current value can also quickly diminish. In order to maintain or turn around the school library facility, a library administrator must effectively and sometimes creatively manage and lead in the budget processes. It takes money to keep the library a viable component of the learning community. All the activities must constantly be on the mind of a library media specialist. In order to purchase the materials needed to support the curriculum, funding is needed. The teacher librarian must develop partnerships with classroom teachers and administrators to build authentic information inquiry learning experiences for students.

### General Guidelines as Regards to SLMC Budgeting

- The school's total budget must include an adequate amount for the library every year. This figure must be a discrete item in the school book policy.
- Learning resources need to be regularly replaced in order to be relevant to the needs of the curriculum and the reading and information needs of pupils and teachers.
- Resources such as books, CD-ROMs, Web sites, magazines and story tapes remain useful only when they are up-to-date or in good physical condition.
- There also needs to be a budget for the physical environment and appropriate furniture and equipment.

- It is important to plan ahead and cost for ICT developments including: Internet access, CD-ROM, etc.
- One computer with CD-ROM and Internet access is a basic requirement.
- A computerised library management system greatly improves pupils' access to resources, as well as improving stock management.

### **Assessing Funding Needs for Learning Resources: Budget Preparation**

In order to assess adequate funding for learning resources, CILIP (2002) advises that:

- the cost of replacing outdated or worn out resources and filling stock gaps: regular stock maintenance and annual monitoring and evaluation will identify the items and areas that need replacing and developing;
- the proportion of funding required for developing new curricular areas; and
- the need for funding books and non-book materials, e.g. CD-ROMs and tapes.

### **Responsibility for the School Library Media Centre Budget**

The School Library Media Specialist or Teacher Librarian is responsible for preparing, presenting and implementing the budget, and is accountable to school management for budget expenditure. Budget committee may vary from school to school. Taking into account the evidence that school library media centres do have a positive effect on student achievement and a school's overall effectiveness, the funding and expenditures for the school library media centre are directly related to student achievement. Therefore, the school library media administrator makes important decisions on the use of the budgeted monies. Teacher librarians are typically in charge of specific lines in the budget. However, school library media specialists can often influence other budgets by collaborating with teachers and

administrators. Monies spent by school library media specialists are sometimes limited to the following main categories of budget expenditures:

- salaries and benefits for professionals and staff;
- facilities and their operations and maintenance;
- capital items such as new and replacement equipment and furniture, e.g. bulbs, machines, computers, printer cartridges, etc;
- books (non-fiction, fiction, reference, professional);
- videotapes/DVDs;
- supplies (office supplies, book cards/pockets and barcodes);
- periodicals;
- computer software;
- online subscription services; and
- licences and maintenance agreements (tech support for OPAC or equipment repairs).

School library media budgets are usually based on one of the following wants/needs (Callison, 2003):

- format;
- services;
- circulation; and
- curriculum.

School fund accounts are often categorised by information format: books, periodicals, non-print, computer software, computer equipment, etc. Budgets based upon services are categorised or grouped under headings such as curriculum resources, recreational reading, general reference, management costs, special projects, etc. These budget divisions often place varied outcomes in competition with each other for available monies. Some teacher librarians and administrators maintain that budgets for their

library media collections should be based upon evidence of use. Hence, circulation data would be gathered to find distribution shifts and budget allocations would shift accordingly. Those areas showing more use or demand would receive an expanding budget portion.

### **Establishing Funding Parameters**

There are several methods for establishing a budget for the school library. The two most commonly used by schools are 'lump sum' and 'needs-based' allocation.

#### **Allocation of Lump Sum Funding**

- Some schools use this approach to budgeting, where the funding for the coming year is often based on previous years' budget allocations.
- This style of budgeting is difficult to justify, as it does not provide sufficient accountability or establish clear links between the development of the collection and the curriculum or recognise the continually increasing price of library materials.
- This method does not provide sufficient evidence that the lump sum is adequate to meet the school library's needs.

#### **Needs-based Budget**

- The library recommends needs-based budgeting which enables the collection to be directly targeted to the needs of the learners.
- The outcome of the collection assessment and user needs analysis are prioritised and collated into a buying plan. User needs are documented in a budget proposal which clearly signals the actual amount of budget that the library requires in order to meet the identified needs.

- This evidence-based approach clearly links library resourcing to your library's role in supporting learning in the school. This gives added strength to any budget proposal that requests a given level of funding compared to a request based only on the previous year's funding allocation.

## The School Library Budget Content

The library budget needs to include the following items:

- **Resource budget** including periodicals and subscriptions to online information. This is the total allocation from the buying plan.
- **Consumables budget.** This is likely to require 10-15% of the book budget. The school librarian should keep a record of processing materials purchased during the year, so as to be able to accurately forecast a realistic amount for the budget proposal. The consumables budget should also include an amount for the librarians' rewards to the users, barcodes and security strips, display materials and incidentals.
- **Library software support.** This includes annual licence fees, upgrade requirements and support charges.
- **Professional reading /subscriptions** such as reviewed journals and professional associations.
- **Environment:** minor items, for example, cushions, signs, display materials, etc.
- **ICT hardware and costs** associated with networking.
- **Internet costs and telecommunications charges.**
- Furniture, shelving and other major capital items.
- Salaries.
- Professional development for the library team.

## Budget Allocation

Budget allocation will be based on the budget proposal and available funds. If the full amount requested cannot be allocated, then resources



required may need to be re-prioritised and teaching departments informed of cutbacks.

The Buying Plan is used to:

- inform and guide budget spending;
- monitor how successfully the budget is implemented; and
- note any problems such as insufficient resources available for a particular topic.

Bookshops may offer a discount, negotiated according to how much the school is spending. The SLMS needs to get to know his suppliers with specialist book knowledge who will source the required items.

### **Budget Management and Review**

The SLMS need to do the following during budget management review:

- maintaining accurate records of expenditure;
- monitoring outstanding 'back orders';
- keeping copies of invoices; and
- liaising with school administration personnel with responsibility for overall school budgeting.

Information on resources purchased can then be included in the budget process for the following year and may be used to amend the buying plan. Reporting on the budget is a key component of the library's annual report.

In order to ensure that the library receives its fair share of the school's financial resources, the following points are important:

- understand the school budgeting process;
- be aware of the timetable for the budget cycle;
- know who the key staff members are; and
- make sure that the needs of the library are identified.

The components of the budget plan will need to include the following:

- an amount for new resources (e.g. books, periodicals and non-printed material);
- an amount for promotional materials (e.g. posters);
- an amount for stationery and administrative materials;
- an amount for promotional events; and
- the costs of using ICT equipment, software and licensing costs, if these are not included in a general ICT budget for the school.

As a general rule, the school library material budget should be at least 5%-10% of the per student expenditure for the school system, exclusive of all salaries, transportation and capital improvement funds. Staff costs may be included in the library budget but, at some schools, it may be more appropriate to have them included in the general staff budget. It is, however, important to emphasise that estimating staff costs for the library is a task which the school librarian should be involved in. The amount of money available for staffing is closely related to important issues such as how many opening hours the school library can manage and what standard and range of services it can offer. Special projects and other developments such as new shelving may require a separate bid for funds.

Spending of the budget should be carefully planned for the whole year and be related to the policy framework. Annual reports should throw light on how the library budget has been used and clarify whether or not the amount of money spent on the library has been enough to cover its tasks and attain the policy targets.

The school librarian must be clear about the importance of an adequate budget for the library and may need to convey this to the senior management as the library serves the whole school community. It may be worth justifying an increase in financial support along the following lines:

- a. the size of school library's staff and collection is the best school predictor of academic achievement; and
- b. students who score higher on standardised tests tend to come from schools with more school library staff and more books, periodicals, and video material regardless of other factors such as economic ones.

## Sources of Funding

It is the school's Board/Governor's responsibility to provide sufficient funding for the school's Library. This board may be governmental (that is the federal, state or local government) or non-governmental (private). Other sources of funding should be additional to, not instead of, the general funding the school provides. Sources of funding to the school library also include sponsorships, grants, PTA donations, school fundraising, book fairs, commercial sponsorships, etc.

## Budget Preparation

In order to assess adequate funding for learning resources, the SLMS must consider the following:

- the cost of replacing outdated or worn out resources and filling stock gaps;
- regular stock maintenance and annual monitoring and evaluation will identify the items and areas that need replacing and developing;
- the proportion of funding required for developing new curricular areas;
- the need for funding books and non-book materials, e.g. CD-ROMs and tapes;
- fill gaps (e.g. not enough resource materials to support the curriculum);
- meet new demands;
- build up a balanced collection;
- construct or maintain a building; and
- pay the librarian and other supporting staff.

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UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

## Appendix 1

### IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto

This section will examine the IFLA/UNESCO school library manifesto published in 2000.

#### **The Mission of the School Library**

The school library offers learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media. The library staff supports the use of books and other information sources, ranging from the fictional to the documentary, from print to electronic, both on-site and remote. The materials complement and enrich textbooks, teaching materials and methodologies. It has been demonstrated that, when librarians and teachers work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem-solving and information and communication technology skills.

School library services must be provided equally to all members of the school community, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, professional or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials. Access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship or to commercial pressures.

#### **Funding Legislation and Networks**

The school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development. As the responsibility of local, regional and national authorities, it must be supported by specific legislation and policies. School libraries must have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities. They must be free of charge. The school library is an essential partner in the local, regional and national library and information network.

Where the school library shares facilities and/or resources with another type of library, such as a public library, the unique aims of the school library must be acknowledged and maintained.

## Goals of the School Library

The school library is integral to the educational process. The following are essential to the development of literacy, information literacy, teaching, learning and culture and are core school library services:

- supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum;
- developing and sustaining in children the habit and enjoyment of reading and learning and the use of libraries throughout their lives;
- offering opportunities for experiences in creating and using information for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment;
- supporting all students in learning and practising skills for evaluating and using information, regardless of form, format or medium, including sensitivity to the modes of communication within the community;
- providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions;
- organising activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity;
- working with students, teachers, administrators and parents to achieve the mission of the school;
- proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy; and
- promoting reading and the resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.



The school library fulfils these functions by developing policies and services, selecting and acquiring resources, providing physical and intellectual access to appropriate sources of information, providing instructional facilities and employing trained staff.

## **Staff**

The school librarian is the professionally qualified staff member responsible for planning and managing the school library, supported by adequate staffing as possible, working together with all members of the school community and liaising with the public library and others.

The role of school librarians varies according to the budget, the curriculum and teaching methodology of the schools, within the national legal and financial framework. Within specific contexts, there are general areas of knowledge that are vital if school librarians are to develop and operate effective school library services: resource, library and information management and teaching. In an increasingly networked environment, school librarians must be competent in planning and teaching different information-handling skills to both teachers and students. Therefore, they must continue their professional training and development.

## **Operation and Management**

To ensure effective and accountable operations:

- the policy on school library services must be formulated to define goals, priorities and services in relation to the school's curriculum;
- the school library must be organised and maintained according to professional standards;
- services must be accessible to all members of the school community and operate within the context of the local community; and
- co-operation with teachers, senior school management, administrators, parents, other librarians and information professionals and community groups must be encouraged.

## **Implementing the Manifesto**

Governments, through their ministries responsible for education, are urged to develop strategies, policies and plans which implement the principles of this Manifesto. Plans should include the dissemination of the Manifesto to initial and continuing training programmes for librarians and teachers.

## **The Mission of the School Library**

The school library offers learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media. School Libraries link to the wider library and information network in accord with the principles in the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto. The library staff supports the use of books and other information sources, ranging from the fictional to the documentary, from print to electronic, both on-site and remote. The materials complement and enrich textbooks, teaching materials and methodologies.

It has been demonstrated that, when librarians and teachers work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem-solving and information and communication technology skills. School library services must be provided equally to all members of the school community, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, professional or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials.

## Appendix 2

### School Library 2.0 – New Skills, New Knowledge, New Futures

*By*

**Judy O’Connell**

Libraries have been an integral part of civilisation – providing a ponderous archive of knowledge and lasting record of the human spirit. From Alexandria to the present, a key purpose of libraries has been to store information and be a place of research and learning. Fast forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where drawing on this heritage we saw the emergence of school libraries positioned right at the centre of learning for our children and young adults.

From such an august heritage, our school libraries have shown their value and purpose many times over, and their successes have been recorded through personal experiences and research studies. There are many school library impact studies (Library Research Service, 2007), the most well-known being the Colorado Studies, which proves that school libraries have a direct link to student achievement. We know that school libraries make a difference to student learning (International Association of School Librarianship, 2007).

Two elements of a school library have stood the test of time. The first has been to nurture literacy and promote the pleasure of reading. The second has been to provide pathways to information and knowledge by promoting information literacy skills and processes. The point is that school libraries have a distinct function and purpose, that is both similar and different to other libraries, which draws on past, present and future possibilities in that unique school library mix of literary, cultural, recreational, and research needs of our ‘learner’ students.

The school library provides an organisational and educational centre for students and teachers striving to meet the demands of modern learning,

and the requirements of the learning programmes associated with schooling as outlined by local authorities or governments. What is it about learning that is changing the scope of the school library's function and purpose? What does it mean to be a teacher librarian, a school librarian or school media specialist in a Web 2.0 world? The internet is undergoing a transformation. The 'net' is a child in terms of the maturation of information technology, and in its current evolution to the 'semantic web' with its emerging methods of information extraction, concept tracking and semantic analysis of data. Consequently, our approaches to information literacy have to change – no question!

Marc Prensky (2006) calls today's students '**digital natives**'. Raised with an easy familiarity with video games, e-mail, instant messaging, MySpace and other Web 2.0 social networking habits, they have developed patterns of engagement that are different from earlier generations. Educators are challenged to recognise these differences and to develop school library services that are appropriate in depth and diversity. Web 2.0 tools are important, but their impact goes much deeper than their networking novelty might suggest. The tools for information seeking, and the spaces for information sharing are rapidly changing and developing. Johnson (2006) considers that there are three critical societal changes that impact on libraries' survival and opportunities to thrive:

- the growing digitisation and portability of information;
- emerging fundamental changes in the nature and sources of information; and
- the critical need for new skills for workers in a global economy.

In its 2.0 incarnation, the digitally re-shifted school library must transcend the physical space to bring services and programming to every student and teacher throughout the school, wherever learning takes place in new spaces and places, to prepare our students for the digital world of work.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Web 2.0 social networking makes participation fast. Our students are living that connection and driving Web 2.0 transformation. It is often teenagers or those in their 20s who create revolutionary new social

networking tools, e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Wordpress and more. This is confirmed by research reported by Business Week (2007), which indicates that there are significantly more people aged from 12 to 26 years than older groups who are 'creators', 'critics' and 'joiners' – in other words, who publish web pages, write blogs, upload videos to sites like Youtube; who comment on blogs and post ratings and reviews; and who are members of social networking sites like MySpace or Bebo. So we must ask ourselves just how Web 2.0 can support our school's learning and teaching agenda – because if we do not, it threatens to make the difference between teachers and learners more acute than ever.

On the other hand, by embracing a Web 2.0 mindset, we just might close the gap. This mindset will include accepting a transition from formal to informal learning spaces; accepting a shift from whole class to personalised learning opportunities; and accepting a change from restrictive and constructed learning activities to creative and extended learning opportunities. In all these instances, the learner (Web 2.0 style) is the author of personal creativity, knowledge and understanding. In other words, flexibility and personalisation are at the core of re-purposing information literacy instruction in a Web 2.0 world. If students think about the internet as a virtual locker, backpack, notebook, diary, and communication tool, then we must create flexible learning environments which support the use of multiple bibliographic and digital resource tools, including Web 2.0. In such a context, our information literacy instruction framework needs to be personalised, real, physical, virtual and even visceral. This is very different. But in a Web 2.0 world, our students must be passionate about their personalised learning, and it is the role of school librarians to help make it so.

### **Smart Tools, Smart Research**

The information literacy dilemma starts with the word 'find'. Searching is an essential skill for any generation – but more so for the Google generation. Have you noticed the primacy of Google in the minds of students? Have you been told that libraries don't matter because we have Google? Students of all ages are heavy Google users, despite the existence of many other and more specialised search engines. 'The disturbing reality is that the internet is replete with out-of-date, conflicting and inaccurate information. Rumour mills abound, and even trustworthy sites can be slow at updating

facts and figures, leaving both 'Googler' and 'Googlee' exasperated' (Vise, 2005: 147). Valenza (2006) explains that young information seekers do not have the sophisticated skills or understanding needed to navigate complex information environments and to evaluate the information that they find. Students prefer natural language searching. Couple this with difficulties in identifying information needs in environments that require appropriate terminology or vocabulary in search interfaces, it becomes clear that we have a potentially 'dangerous' problem.

So the first challenge in the Web 2.0 information literacy environment is the matter of 'search'. While we may have considered that we addressed 'searching' successfully by teaching students to use a range of search engines (including advanced and Boolean searching) and then to analyse the authority of the sites and sources they visit online in order to determine the value of the information found – we really have only just begun. Working with search software in a school library has become critically important. At the school level, there may be a library system, content or learning management system, a system for distributing videos and other multimedia, and more. In all of these, the school librarian needs to consider how to develop the library catalogue or information retrieval systems, and how to define the required metadata so that automated capabilities of these systems allow students to easily find the resources they need to support their learning. By reverse-engineering organisational information structures to match the information literacy strategies that support students' information seeking habits, school librarians can really make a difference and encourage good information literacy habits in their students at the school level.

In a Library 2.0 world, it has become essential to work more closely with technology to enhance information retrieval and to look beyond existing structures and forms of information organisation. Subject indexes are no longer sufficient in an environment where students expect (rightly or wrongly) to get easy answers to complex questions. Library systems are notoriously unfriendly, seemingly designed for the expert rather than the user. At the simplest level, consider aligning keywords to terms used in subject and knowledge disciplines, and then linking these key terms as 'non-preferred' or 'See' terms within your library catalogue. In other words, develop your subject indexes to reflect real learning needs unique to your students. Utilise the knowledge expertise of your teachers and the practical usage of your students to enhance your existing taxonomy. You

have to do this to align your system to the flexible mindset that is Web 2.0. Then turn your focus to all areas where information is to be retrieved. Does your school have a recommended thesaurus of terms for information organisation in its digital repository or video repository? What metadata does it include? Do you know what you could do to optimise search for files and information across your school's content management system (think knowledge management here!)?

Does your library system import metadata for other sources included in your catalogue, e.g. web resources, image repositories, learning objects, e-books, audio-books, other content enrichment such as those provided by Syndetic solutions ([www.syndetics.com/](http://www.syndetics.com/))? When any of these resources are blended into a library information system, school librarians need to consider information literacy requirements for students and adapt indexing options to facilitate information access and information retrieval. Schools are also providing access to many different digital and online resources, often on a subscription basis. Has your library incorporated 'federated searching' (the ability to simultaneously search multiple data sources) into your library catalogue or information system? Once again, decisions at the institutional level have an impact on the nature of information literacy interactions in your school and the type of training and personalised learning support that is made available. The answers to these questions will inform the nature of the structures that you build in your school and school library in order to embrace an information literacy teaching model that represents Web 2.0 search usability and functionality.

### **Search Engines – One Model for All?**

Mitchell (2007: 6) has reiterated that searching for information is more than just a rules-driven process, and that there is no one correct way to search for information in this diverse Web 2.0 landscape. It is the big picture processes, not the intricacies of a single interface (that could change at any time), that we need to take into consideration. Our duty as teachers of information literacy is to help develop learners who can adapt with, and as a result of, knowledge in each new learning situation. A school librarian need only visit Pandia Powersearch and their 'all-in-one' list of search engines ([www.pandia.com/powersearch/index.html](http://www.pandia.com/powersearch/index.html)) in order to be prompted to develop new ways to help students learn how to incorporate alternative search strategies into their personal information-seeking toolkit

– and then work with teachers to integrate deeper understanding about search strategies into the fabric of the learning and teaching experiences in the school.

Better still, school librarians can use their new knowledge of searching, Web 2.0 style, by showing students how to ‘roll their own’ search from resources they trust using Rollyo, ([www.rollyo.com/](http://www.rollyo.com/)) or build their own Google search engine (<http://google.com/coop/cse/>), or Yahoo Search builder (<http://builder.search.yahoo.com/m/promo>), for specifically targeted information needs. Teaching students to identify their information need and shape the discovery of information with a Web 2.0 approach empowers the learner, rather than reducing learning to a quick fix, ‘cut and paste’ option. Of course, a school librarian can also adopt these tools to effectively support the information literate Web 2.0 school community. For example, building a topic search tool or book review finder, and incorporating this tailored search tool right into the school library website or the school library blog, is a proactive information literate strategy to support the developing information literacy skills of students.

These are very simple strategies indeed but are the new face of ‘search’ in Web 2.0 information literacy. It is a shift of thinking from simply developing a search strategy, to understanding search engines and then using the power of Web 2.0 to making your own search strategy come to life. It can then be embedded into another Web 2.0 tool such as a blog or wiki (which may be created for a particular unit of work or to support a particular requirement for the learning and teaching needs at your school).

As part of the information literacy toolkit, school librarians should also familiarise students with the differences between natural language, visual, clustering or metadata search engines in order to appreciate ‘Search 2.0’ *versus traditional search as explained by Ezzy* (2006). Remember to explain to your students about the tools available for searching the deep end of the web for information that can only be found by very specific and direct queries (Turner, 2006; Trinity College, 2007).

Smart tools and smart research will make information literacy search strategies in Library 2.0 an essential learning experience for students. Teach them how to search – but only after you have taught yourself how to improve search functionality within your institution and beyond!



## Flexibility, Folksonomy and Favourites

It is clear that flexibility is a critical component of Library 2.0 and comes in a number of guises. The whole point is to keep students 'on task' engaging with learning, and collaborating with teachers and other learners in the process. Blogs and wikis provide ideal flexible environments which allow for asynchronous collaboration and learning in a global context. Synchronous communication is also possible in a learning setting using collaboration tools such as Elluminate, or by embedding communication widgets into wikis and blogs, for instant messaging or tools like Meebo, Twitter or more. Stephens (2006) describes a wealth of tools and ideas for best practices using Web 2.0 social software. Bradley's conference presentation (2007) provides a neat summary of Library 2.0 possibilities. Richardson (2006) tells about one of the earliest and best school library blogs from Galileo High School in San Francisco, where the librarian uses a 'Li-Blog-ary' to identify resources for classes, update the school community on new offerings, link to online databases and publish student reviews.

If you are still not convinced, explore the Blogging Libraries Wiki for more and see how others have incorporated these ideas. Amongst them, Dr Charles Best Secondary School Library and Delany Library are excellent examples. Investigate the various widgets that are used to enhance information access and communication options for the students. What a good 'school librarian 2.0' needs to do is to incorporate Web 2.0 tools into the information dissemination framework while modelling exemplary information literacy strategies for students and teachers. Most school librarians will begin this adventure by starting a book blog or a project wiki. The Horizon Project (2006) successfully showcases the collaborative learning potential in these Web 2.0 environments. While the assessment rubrics include information literacy concepts, clear scaffolding of development of information literacy skills and competences is not included. So even such a wonderfully creative project would benefit from Web 2.0 information literacy guidance from the school librarian.

One of the easiest yet most critical areas for Library 2.0 operations is in the field of 'taxonomy'; in the new generation version, known as 'folksonomy' and used for social bookmarking and 'tagging' information in shared online spaces. Tags are a means for individuals to organise and

describe resources in personally meaningful language and classification schemes. Tagging is a bottom-up, grassroots phenomenon, in which users classify resources with searchable keywords. The tags are free-form labels chosen by the user, not selected from a controlled vocabulary. For the first time in history, students and teachers can sort and organise information ‘naturally’ and online, thus organising and managing information for personal use or with groups of learners. Godwin-Jones (2006) elaborates on tagging and the semantic web (which provides a common framework that allows data to be shared and re-used across application, enterprise and community boundaries) and in so doing highlights the fact that the tagging process is by no means simply technical – a way of categorising resources. It also has a strong social dimension as users of the site find common interests and create online communities.

Show information literacy students how to ‘tag’ and manage bookmarks with Del.icio.us, Furl, Magnolia or others; make annotations on web pages with Clipmarks or Wiz; and use these tools to organise their sources, share their collaborative project information, manage their personal knowledge repository and tie this information via a widget to their blogs and wikis. In addition to being a popular way of organising resources, tags enable the formation of unexpected connections with others sharing similar interests. Use tagging for photosharing (Flickr, Photobucket) podcasting (iTunes, Podomatic, Podbean), videosharing (YouTube, Teachertube), slide sharing (Slideshare, Slidecast) and so on. The Horizon Project (2006) makes excellent use of distributed information using tagging, sharing resources across the globe with the tag ‘hz07’ in the social bookmarking site Del.icio.us, and video sharing site YouTube. It was easy for global participants in the project to provide 24/7 support by using this tag. School libraries are also embracing this collaborative method of sharing web resources, with school librarians and teachers establishing social bookmarking as a library service or service to a particular project team or school year group.

What tagging highlights (since it applies to a large range of interfaces) is the need for supporting students with information literacy strategies that are multi-modal and collaborative in nature – and which embrace the natural language functionality of folksonomy.

## RSS that Information Needs

RSS is definitely changing the web, changing our classrooms and changing the information literacy needs of our students. Because students need to access both traditional and emerging sources of information, both formal and informal, RSS needs to be part of their information literacy toolkit and the toolkit of school librarians. Utilise RSS feeds to assist students to subscribe to journal collections, media sites and other information sources, as well as to your library's blog, book lists, photo collections, videos, podcasts and more. It is essential to provide students with information skills training in how to maximise the use of RSS feeds for information gathering and sharing.

Collaboration is the key. Have your students subscribe to their fellow student's blogs or wikis; or have teachers subscribe to student's work and related sources. However, the power of RSS comes into its own with web-based information aggregators such as Pageflakes, iGoogle, Netvibes or other choices. Web 2.0 educator Will Richardson shares his 'flake' at [www.pageflakes.com/weblogged.aspx](http://www.pageflakes.com/weblogged.aspx), which also has an excellent demonstration of this RSS tool for topic aggregation on the Darfur tab. The information is dynamic, constantly updated and shows what is happening in Darfur and in other parts of the world in response. RSS pages of this type can be pretty effective for gathering content, making it easier to make decisions about what to do with that content.

The natural extension of this concept is for libraries to 'mashup' and enrich their OPAC with maps, reviews, jacket images or folksonomies—though this is not common in school libraries yet. Blyberg (2006) demonstrates the power and flexibility of API programming in creating mashups with his Go-go Google Gadget. At any rate, the development of products for collecting and organising data continues. For example, Second Brain (your personal internet library), at [www.secondbrain.com/](http://www.secondbrain.com/), allows users to aggregate all their creations, services and favourites and then share and/or publish them online. Capturing data is easy and all existing tags, comments and thumbnails are manageable and easily identifiable ones. Second Brain looks at Web 2.0 as a widely distributed desktop, albeit a huge one. What a significant area of development for school librarians—a personal library, resource and research space for each student.

School librarians can use RSS to deliver professional learning programmes, as well as news and information. The thing about RSS is

that it goes both ways – providing school librarians (and students) with a Web 2.0 tool with almost limitless opportunities for blending knowledge and information sources, organising them, and having them ready for the rich learning tasks as set out by the teacher or school librarian.

## **Build your Support for Information Literacy Programmes**

Of course, in order to promote an information literate school community, school librarians (in a Web 2.0 world) need to develop online tutorials, videos (for Youtube for example), audio podcasts, slideshows and more, so that students will have access to these as part of their personalised skill development toolkit. Even a small school library can create a free Group space in TeacherTube or embed a podbean audio compilation into your library blog (also hosted free on edublogs or blogger).

School librarians also need to create social networking spaces as virtual learning and collaboration spaces. School librarians are active members of many online spaces, such as Facebook, Ning or Twitter. Librarians and their professional associations are embracing the possibilities, as demonstrated by the School Library Learning 2.0 project of the California School Library Association. These and other social networking sites provide the ideal way to create a learning community, for a few or many engaged in a rich learning task, where they can share and collaborate with ease 24/7.

The Web 2.0 options are fun, engaging – and most certainly extend the range of information literacy instruction needs we have to meet for our net savvy students. So, school librarians, in collaboration with teachers, need to ensure that they are facilitating information literacy programmes in this 2.0 environment that allows them to learn independently and in ways that allow students to engage with expert guides and mentors in order to have their information literacy needs addressed. Students need the support of guided enquiry, the intervention of an instructional team of school librarians and teachers to guide students through curriculum based inquiry units that build deep knowledge and deep understanding of a curriculum topic and gradually lead towards independent learning (Kuhlthau & Todd, 2007).

What does Web 2.0 really mean for school libraries? As we create conversations, connections and a Web 2.0 learning community, we are

opening the door to a better school library future – one that embraces the digital identity of our students and their multi-modal minds. We need to look for new ways of working with literacy, information literacy and digital fluency. School libraries need to embrace Web 2.0 and change the focus and purpose of information services. In so doing, our new learning communities will be able to get involved in responsive academic discourse and new processes and products will emerge, leading to new forms of digital scholarship and personalised learning.

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