

Information Literacy Projects in the United States: Public Schools, University Libraries, and the Government

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What I hope to accomplish

- Describe information literacy as it is generally viewed in the U.S.
- Discuss U.S. federal education law supporting information literacy initiatives.
- Provide examples of some sample information literacy programs.
- Recommend some excellent web resources for information literacy information.

Core Concepts of Information Literacy

Goals:

- Develop critical reasoning
- Practice informed questioning
- Expose patrons to a variety of information sources and tools for solving problems
- Encourage and sustain lifelong learning
- Use every possible resource to promote a way of thinking about information and its use

What is it?

- A command of information concepts and skills
- Practice of critical inquiry
- A way of thinking about a subject
- Ability to find connections and see relationships among ideas, information resources, and solutions
- Process thinking
- Problem solving skills



Myths about information literacy

- Information literacy cannot be taught without adequate technology
- Information literacy must be taught in the library by librarians
- Information literacy programming can only happen on an institutional scale
- Information literacy can be taught in a single course or encounter
- Others?

The ideal information literacy program:

- Supports all disciplines
- Utilizes all modes of delivery
- Applies to any context
- Integrates learning resources
- Supports various age groups and levels of study
- Promotes collaboration between librarians and ...

From: Debbie Orr, Margaret Appleton, and Margie Wallin. "Information Literacy and Flexible
Creating a Conceptual Framework and Model." *Journal of Academic Librarianship*

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U.S. Department of Education



No Child
LEFT BEHINDSM

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

- Stronger Accountability for Results
- More Freedom for States and Communities
- Proven Education Methods
- More Choices for Parents

Clarksville Middle School

Clarksville, Maryland

- Suburban Middle School
- 748 Students
- 90 Staff members
- Located midway between Baltimore and Washington
- 91-94% of students met state standards over last three years



Information Literacy



A daily edition of the
New York Times
contains more
information than a
17th century person
would have in their
entire lifetime.

Richard Wurman
Information Anxiety, 1989

If Information Literacy is the set of skills life-long learners use to locate, evaluate, synthesize, and communicate information for a variety of purposes, then

how do we build a consistent approach to problem solving?

Information Literacy - The Big 6



- Task Definition
Define problem. Identify information needed.
- Information Seeking Strategies
Determine all possible sources.
- Location and Access
Locate Sources and information.

How do we handle teachers' varied expectations and differing approaches?

Information Literacy - The Big 6

- Use of Information
Pull out the information and then take notes.
- Synthesis
Organize information.
Present the results.
- Evaluation
Judge the result and the process.



How do we handle teachers' varied expectations and differing approaches?

Content Integration

- 6th Grade Reading-
Integrating and connecting research skills with literature
- 6th Grade English -
Integrating into Biography unit
- 7th Grade Reading/Math-
Stocks and investment project



How can we naturally integrate
Information Literacy into the curriculum?

Process Integration



Process

Learning

Knowledge

How do we help our students work smarter, not faster?

Knowing our Learners

- Accelerated Learners
- Special Needs



How do we account for the developmental needs of our students?

Lessons Learned

- Computer skills - responsible use of information
- Online databases
- Plagiarism
- Copyright / fair use
- Citing Sources



How do we manage obstacles faced?

Positive Outcomes

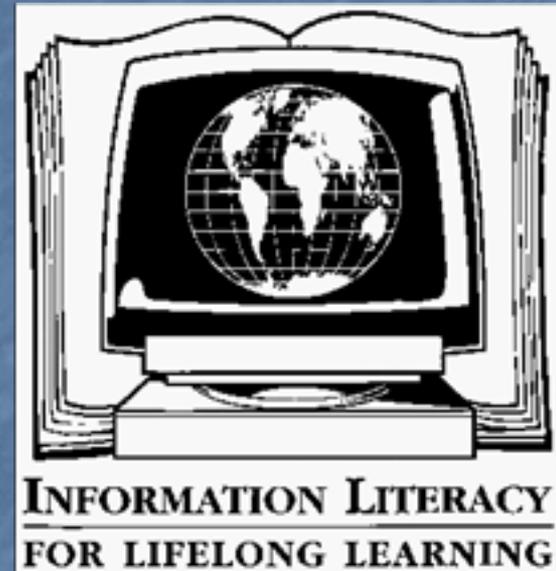
- Students:
 - think more before beginning task
 - have more confidence and less anxiety
 - have more focus
- Consistent Language
- Improved Process / Output
- High school preparedness
- County Initiative

How do we know we have been successful?

Future/County Initiative

Information Literacy has already been incorporated into:

- Kindergarten & 3rd
- Library Media
- Reading
- Social Studies
- Language Arts



Where do we go from here?

Clarksville's charge was to prepare their students for the demands of the 21st century.

... however ...

Given the exponential growth rate of technology, how can they predict what their students will need 10-20 years in the future?

For more information

- The Big6™
 - <http://www.big6.com/>
- No Child Left Behind
 - <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>
- Howard County Public Schools
 - <http://hcpss.org/>

Teaching Government Information

- Using U.S. Government information to teach evaluation of sources
- Proceedings of the 13th Annual Federal Depository Library Conference, 2004, sponsored by the U.S. Government Printing Office
- A program of the University Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

The University's Audience

- Enrolled in freshman writing course
- Facing first college research paper
- Knowledge base:
 - Online catalog
 - General article indexes (i.e. Ebsco, Infotrac)
 - General search engines

Freshman Writing Course

- “Study of the methods of exposition, the problems of argument, the use of evidence, and style; practice in expository writing.”
 - Narrowing a topic
 - Evaluation of sources
 - Critical thinking

Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

Association of College and
Research Libraries

- <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm>

Instructional Goals

- Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education
 - **Standard 3:** The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.

Instructional Goals, continued

- **Performance Indicator 2:** The information literate student articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources.

Instructional Goals, continued

■ **Outcomes**

- Examines and compares information from various sources in order to evaluate reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias.
- Recognizes the cultural, physical, or other context within which the information was created and understands the impact of context on interpreting the information.

Point of View and Context of Information

- Democratic vs. Republican administrations
 - Global warming
 - Social Security
- Executive vs. legislative branch
 - Military appropriations
 - Space exploration

Reliability, Validity and Accuracy

- Trustworthiness of sources themselves
 - Primary sources
 - Influence of point of view
- Trustworthiness of secondary sources that cite government information

Models of Source Evaluation

- Legislative Process
 - Bill as hypothesis or proposed solution
 - Hearing as gathering of sources
 - Report as conclusions and evaluation of arguments

Models of Source Evaluation, continued

- Legislative process, cont.
 - Floor debate as persuasion
- Agencies that analyze and evaluate
 - 9-11 Commission
 - Congressional Research Service
 - Etc...

Results

- Instructors have an example to teach students to interact with sources
- Students know how to evaluate the information their government provides and can apply these skills to other sources
- Librarians have started students on the road to participating in democracy

Additional Resources

- FactCheck.org
 - <http://www.factcheck.org/>
- FactCheckED.org
 - <http://www.factchecked.org/>

Thank you

- İstanbul Bilgi University Library and e-Resources
- Innovative Library Initiatives Promotion Group (ILIPG)
- The Ministry of Education İstanbul Directorate