



# CHILDREN NEED TIME TO CHOOSE

One of reasons I became a teacher librarian was to promote literature in primary schools. However, over the years I have found that the library time being spent in recommending and sharing books with students, and borrowing time is not given the priority I believe it should have.

Think of your last visit to a library or book store. On entering, one tends to look at the new release shelf, the top 10 books, and move slowly to your favourite section. Before you make a selection, you tend to flip through a few books, read several blurbs and you may even read the beginning of a chapter. Once happy with your selection, you borrow or purchase the book. Yet students do not have the same luxury in a library session.

A library session often consists of two parts. Part one is when the teacher librarian promotes literature through reading a story or facilitates some kind of book promotion. This is often followed by time for students to read and or select books to borrow. Part two is a structured lesson or research time,

focusing on the teaching and learning of information literacy skills.

I have found that many classroom teachers value the second part of the library session more than the first. During this part of the library session it is easy to define which Essential Learning Areas (ELA) and essential curriculum content is being taught.

It is more difficult to define which essential content is fulfilled during the promotion of books and the time given to book selection for reading or loan but this does not make this part of a library lesson less important than the information literacy component. The promotion and selection part of a library lesson is when students show that they understand the inquiry process and can successfully apply that process and make considered decisions.

I have often felt pressured to minimise this part of the library lesson. In some cases, a five minute time limit has been put on selecting and borrowing time, or a request is made to leave the borrowing of books until

after the lesson work is finished. The result of this is that no books are shared or promoted, or that students rush their selection or don't get to select a book to borrow.

In the political world in which we teach, teachers are required to show that their lessons can produce outcomes. I believe that outcomes in education are extremely important, but not at the expense of learning skills that are not so easily measured.

Sharing stories, developing a love of literature and quality authors, and growing the skill of choosing voluntary reading material is becoming devalued in our schools. The curriculum calls for students to be able to "respond to text in a variety of ways" and this can only happen if they have the time and opportunity to select from the collection.

Our challenge is to educate all school staff about the important role library lessons play in the promotion of literature.

**Leanne Barrett**

leannebarrett@bigpond.com

## ACT

### 18 Mar EndNote for Information Professionals

Introduction/refresher. Use, train and support EndNote user more peffectively. For more information, contact Kirrin Sampson, ph 1800 020 171, training@alia.org.au

## NSW

### 1 Apr EndNote for Information Professionals

Introduction/refresher. Use, train and support EndNote user more peffectively. For more information, contact Kirrin Sampson, ph 1800 020 171, training@alia.org.au

### 2-23 Mar Introduction to Library Strategic Planning

Syd 2nd Melb 9th, Adel 10th, Bris 23rd of March. Workshop Presenter Roger Henshaw. This practical workshop provides an overview and platform on which to explore then successfully implement a strategic plan for your library. 10% Disc for ALIA members For more information, contact Alan Moor, ph 61 3983 5890 x0, alanmoor@pics.com.au

### 24 Mar How to become Library Senior Management in 12 Easy Steps

Have you ever been curious how Library Senior Managers got to where they are today? Come along after work for some nibbles and insight as this panel discusses their paths to the top and

what they think will be needed from senior managers of the future. For more information, contact Kate Byrne, ph 0414 955 258, aliasydneygroup@gmail.com

## QLD

### 14-18 Mar The Somerset

**International Conference** Our theme for 2011 is *Inform, Engage, Inspire* – working with the best and features a diverse array of conference and workshop presenters. For more information, contact Andrew J Stark, library@somerset.qld.edu.au

## VIC

**28 Mar Skool library trek** Event that will focus on the innovative work being undertaken in and around school libraries. Delegates will tour a number of sites and be able to share new ideas and network with others working in the area. For more information, contact Kim Wilson, ph 03 8664 7138, kwilson@slv.vic.gov.au

## WA

### 17 Mar Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Working as a Library Technician

Are you studying or thinking about studying library technology? Would you like to find out what library techs do in their jobs? Come and ask techs working in a variety of libraries

about their day at work. RSVP Essential by 10 Mar For more information, contact Judy Allan, ph 08 9275 2506, pjallan@arach.net.au

### 22 Mar-12 May Event Management for Libraries

Perth 22 Mar, Bris 30 Mar, Melb 5 May, Syd 12 May. Workshop Presenter Adam Le Good. This course uses a project management approach to take the risk out of the event management process. 10% Disc for ALIA Members. For more information, contact Alan Moor, ph 61 3983 5890 x0, alanmoor@pics.com.au

### 23 Mar Marketing Records Management to your Organisation

Information Enterprises Australia training workshop - offers participants the ability to be able to develop an awareness and understanding of marketing the value of information management. ALIA discount 10% For more information, contact Lorraine Bradshaw, ph 08 9335 2533, lorraine@iea.com.au

### 23 Mar Policy Writing for Information Managers

Information Enterprises Australia training workshop - learn how to write effective operational policies and guidelines. ALIA discount 10% For more information, contact Lorraine Bradshaw, ph 08 9335 2533, lorraine@iea.com.au

## EVENTS