

**National Forum on Information Literacy
Meeting Summary
October 3, 2003**

**Host: American Association for Higher Education
Washington, D.C.**

Present:

Patricia Breivik, Chair
Barbara Cambridge, American Association of Higher Education
Ralph Catts, University of New England (Australia)
Joan Challinor, National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
Mary Ellen Davis, Association of College and Research Libraries
Ann Lee Flynn, National School Boards Association
Al Frascella, National Council on the Social Studies
Amy Friedlander, Council on Library and Information Resources/Library of Congress
Craig Gibson, Association of College and Research Libraries
Steve Gilbert, TLT (Teaching and Learning with Technology) Group
Barbara Holton, National Commission on Education Statistics
Lana Jackman, Melange Information Services
Lorna Jones, Melange Information Services
Irene Padilla, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies
Joyce Ray, Institute for Museum and Library Services
Steve RiCharde, Virginia Military Institute
Karen Roberts, The Children's Partnership
Frances Roscello, American Association of School Librarians
Ruth Small, Syracuse University/Center for Digital Literacy
Carrie Smith-Dent, Partnership for 21st Century Skills
Greta Southard, Public Library Association
Kristan Van Hook, Partnership for 21st Century Skills
Julie Walker, American Association of School Librarians
Karen Zill, Alliance for a Media Literate America

1. Opening discussion: Dr. Ralph Catts, University of New England (Australia).

Dr. Catts gave a presentation on his research on information literacy assessment and discussed information literacy initiatives in Australia, an international leader in thinking about, and research on, information literacy.

Dr. Catts' particular interests deal with: design and evaluation of programs; how adult learners learn and relearn; and learning transfer. He has been project officer for CAUL (www.caul.edu.au), the Council of Australian University Librarians. In December 2003,

the evaluation tools he discussed during the presentation to the Forum will be placed on the CAUL web site.

Dr. Catt's presentation focused on one central question regarding assessment of information literacy: *at an institutional level, is information literacy successful?*

In thinking about assessment, Dr. Catts pointed out that the most powerful forms of assessment depend on learning in context, with assessment embedded in learning outcomes.

Assessment options are fourfold: (1) to assess competencies; (2) to infer competencies, based on students' behavior; (3) to assess background knowledge; and (4) to have students self-assess their own knowledge and skills.

The first option: to assess skills or competencies at an individual student level. This approach is not practical at large institutions because of the time commitment and costs involved; in addition, this method is subject to unreliability.

The second option: to assess by inference. This method is inexpensive and easy to administer, and is possibly reliable. (For example, inferences can be made about high school graduates' skills and knowledge by examining their letter grades). However, such an approach is unlikely to be valid.

The third option: assessment of background knowledge. This method would normally employ a pencil and paper test. The approach itself implies competence. It is useful for individual skill assessment, but encourages cheating.

The fourth option: self-assessment or self-reports. This approach is often used for academic staff performance evaluations, in part. This method can be valid and reliable, depending on how it is administered. It is unsuitable for individual assessment, and measures instead what people do.

In assessing information literacy in Australia, Dr. Catts used the 7 CAUL Standards:

1. Awareness/recognition of information need
2. Accessing information (search strategies)
3. Evaluating information
4. Storing and managing information
5. Using information to create knowledge and ideas
6. Using information legally and ethically
7. Using information as a lifelong learner

A group of Australian librarians and faculty met and developed 250 examples of behavior of students and others matching these standards (and more specific learning outcomes underneath each).

Using a blind validation process, Dr. Catts found 60 examples out of these 250 matching specific learning outcomes. Some of these items were determined to be “content valid”; others were found to have “construct validity” (coherent validity of some of the examples).

This process has enabled Dr. Catts to begin developing an assessment tool for information literacy, The Australian Information Literacy Evaluation Survey, under the auspices of CAUL and ANZIL. The overall approach for establishing the validity of this survey involved: (1) confirming content validity of questions against the CAUL Standards—already accomplished; (2) establishing construct validity by structural equation modeling—already accomplished; and (3) establishing criterion validity—to be accomplished.

Other interesting research questions in which Dr. Catts is interested:

- investigation of effect of information literacy policy on curriculum and learning outcomes
- relationship between information literacy of students and ease of grading for teachers/faculty (hypothesis: faculty will find it more enjoyable to grade papers of information literate students)
- transfer of information literacy skills to workplaces (nursing and education). This kind of study involves following cohorts of students into the workplace to assess their professional use of information literacy learned in college or university programs.

Comments, questions:

- *Please elaborate on the proposal to study the impact of policy on curricula?*

This will entail developing criteria to assess curricula that embed information literacy.

- *How is “lifelong learning” honored in terms of admission policies at Australian universities?*

Mature students, 23-35 years old, can apply to be admitted in special cases on the basis of an essay.

- *Student responses to the CAUL Standards: what was the reaction of the students:*

Students weren’t shown the Standards as such.

- *What about faculty attitudes toward incorporating information literacy into their courses—the appeal to grading “better papers”?*

Australian colleagues have reported anecdotally that it is easier and faster to grade papers of information literate students. A new assessment instrument will look at satisfaction of grader, the grade itself, and the time required to grade the paper, in

developing data to support this hypothesis. Carol Kuhlthau's research on the information seeking process (students' need to find a clear focus for their research) suggests the idea of "easier and faster" in grading information literate students' papers.

- *What are the differences between discipline-specific information literacy and "grading satisfaction"? How does the first impact the second?*

This goes to the idea of "embedded information literacy." Information literacy, critical thinking, and communication skills all have to be embedded because all support lifelong learning.

- *What about academic faculty and information literacy? Isn't there a general lack of expertise on the part of the faculty?*

The academic faculty as "mature learners" is the issue here. The avoidance strategies of faculty regarding information literacy are sometimes striking. The strategy of librarians, faculty development specialists, and others shouldn't be to confront faculty directly, because it is more productive to use mentoring and mentor training. Senior faculty mentoring junior faculty may be a worthwhile approach because senior faculty thereby have to tap their own "tacit knowledge."

Related to this issue of faculty development: the Dean of Arts and Sciences at University of Virginia did a study on how academic read research articles. An interesting followup study could focus on how students do the same.

- *How will the 20-example Australian instrument (self-report) be used in rural settings?*

The study in Australia was conducted in higher education, among undergraduates. A similar study is possible among American students in various locales and with various demographic profiles. For American audiences, regression analysis factors will be important.

2. Approval of May 2, 2003, meeting summary

The meeting summary was approved as read.

3. Members' Reports

Institute for Museum and Library Services—Joyce Ray

IMLS announced new National Leadership Grants September 23 [see the IMLA Web site at <http://www.ims.gov> for a list of awards]. New awards include a national user study of

the needs, expectations, preferences, and experiences of users and potential users of online information, and two projects to demonstrate the use of broadband technologies for education and learning, using museum and library resources to create digital content and using the Internet 2 high-speed broadband network to deliver this content.

National Leadership Grants support innovative model projects and research designed to enhance museum and library services. IMLS received 205 applications requesting nearly \$60,000,000 in 2003 for National Leadership Grant projects in four categories: Education and Training; Research and Demonstration; Digitization and Preservation; and Library and Museum Collaborations. With the 38 awards announced in September and four awards previously announced in July, IMLS is providing nearly \$12,000,000 in grants funds for this program in 2003.

Awards for the new Librarians for the 21st Century Program, which provides funds to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians, will be announced mid-October. IMLS received 76 applications requesting more than \$27,000,000 and is making 276 awards totaling approximately \$9,900,000 in this program.

IMLS has also established funding priorities for 2004. For National Leadership Grants, IMLS has restructured the Education and Training Category to cover only Continuing Education and Training projects. All proposals for formal education, including curriculum development, should now be directed to the Librarians for the 21st Century program.

National Leadership Grant 2004 Priorities (selected):

Continuing Education and Training

- Projects that train librarians and library staff to enhance people's ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Projects that improve the ability of librarians to design and conduct research
- Projects that improve the ability of librarians to create, manage, and preserve digital libraries
- Projects to prepare librarians for professional librarianship.

Research and Demonstration

- Projects that conduct research and/or demonstrations to enhance the individual's ability to make more effective use of information resources;
- Projects that conduct research on users' information needs, expectations, and results, including user studies, usability studies, and outcomes.

2004 National Leadership Grant Guidelines will be posted on the IMLS web site by November 1. The deadline for applications for library programs is February 1.

Librarians for the 21st Century 2004 Priorities:

Master's Level Programs

- Educate the next generation of librarians

Doctoral Programs

- Develop faculty to educate the next generation of library professionals
- Develop the next generation of library leaders

Pre-professional Programs.

- Recruit future librarians

Research

- Provide the library community with information needed to support successful recruitment and education of the next generation of librarians.

Programs

- Develop or enhance curricular within graduate schools of library and information science

2004 Librarians for the 21st Century Guidelines will be posted on the IMLS Web site by October 15. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2004.

National Council for Social Studies—Al Frascella

The annual conference of the National Council for the Social Studies will be held in Chicago in November. There will be a number of sessions dealing with information and media; there will be sessions sponsored by Texas Instruments dealing with handheld devices and teaching; and there will be a special final day session on “media literacy” with representatives from the media.

Al distributed a special issue of Social Education dealing with preservation of the Declaration of Independence.

Virginia Military Institute/NPEC Project—Steve RiCharde

Steve reported briefly on the NPEC (National Postsecondary Educational Cooperative) Project that he has discussed in more detail at previous meetings, which involves assessing learning in a number of domains through a sourcebook. One of the domains studied is information literacy/information skills.

Public Library Association—Greta Southern

PLA has tested a pre-school library program at 20 different sites.

National School Boards Association—Ann Flynn

NSBA's 17th conference on technology and learning will be held in Anaheim, California. This conference seeks to refocus on learning outcomes, rather than on technology. The NSBA programs in spring 2004 will focus on integrating technology into the curriculum and will showcase initiatives in three school districts.

Ann also works for the New York State Department of Education and reported on an AASL initiative, the School Library Campaign, focusing on integrating information literacy into the curriculum.

American Association of School Librarians—Julie Walker

The upcoming AASL conference theme is "Information Matters" and a major conference track deals with teaching and learning.

National Science Digital Library—Susan von Gandy

Susan's organization has a major interest in NSF's digital library for science education, and is an organized point of contact for science, technology, and mathematics education. A recent funding program to showcase projects involved with science, technology, and information literacy involved over 160 organizations; from October 11-16 there was a meeting of these "projects" in Washington, D.C.

Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Group—Steve Gilbert

Steve mentioned the numerous online workshops co-sponsored by the TLT Group and ACRL, dealing with information literacy as a general concept, information literacy and assessment, information literacy and collaboration. He also discussed some of the innovative technologies involved in these workshops, made possible through LearningTimes Network. Such technologies promote collaboration online for project planning, through document sharing and similar functions.

Association of College and Research Libraries—Mary Ellen Davis

ACRL has a new, improved web site available on information literacy—it addresses all the major ACRL initiatives related to information, provides an experts' database, provides faculty development materials, and in general, is a very useful portal for much information about information literacy.

The online workshops co-sponsored with the TLT Group have been well-received. ACRL has also offered a WebCT class on assessment and information literacy.

The two summer 2003 Immersion Programs were held in Rhode Island (national program), and Iowa (regional program). The latter involved both librarians and faculty and participants.

National Center for Education Statistics—Barbara Holton

No award has been contracted for ERIC to date (early October 2003).

In Spring 2004, a questionnaire on information literacy will be posted. Also, an academic library survey is in the draft/planning stage.

Melange, Inc.,--Lana Jackman & Lorna Jones

Melange, Inc., is a consulting and training business concerned with workforce development and information literacy.

Most recently, Melange Inc. has conducted a workshop for telecommunications professionals from developing countries, dealing with technology and information policy. This workshop involved the expertise of Jerry Miller, well-known for his writing and speaking on “competitive intelligence”. An important topic related to this workshop is the relationship between business and telecommunications people, and national libraries (and access to business databases for business/telecommunications professionals).

Alliance for a Media Literate America—Karen Zill

The AMLA held its second bi-annual conference in Baltimore this past June (2003). The National Media Education Conference (NMEC) brings together a wide variety of educators, activists, media professionals and parents. Of the more than 70 workshops at the conference there were many on Internet usage and credibility, as well as sessions on the evaluation of information from media sources in the context of different curriculum areas.

The NMEC also brought together Dept. of Education media arts grantees in a special session. AMLA is continuing to build bridges between media arts and media literacy and will be doing outreach to the media arts community in the coming year.

The AMLA contributed to the final report of the **21st Century Skills Project** and arranged for an east coast release of the report at the NMEC, which coincided with the release of the report that took place at NECC in Seattle.

⇒Media Literacy Strand at NCSS

At this November's conference of the National Council for the Social Studies, several members of the AMLA will present sessions that will help build teaching strategies and content to meet the needs of students living and working in a media saturated age. Dr. David Considine, Professor of Instructional Technology and Media Studies at Appalachian State University and a former AMLA board member, will be a featured speaker. Other conference sessions led by AMLA members Faith Rogow, Cyndy Scheibe, and Karen Zill will focus on the importance of understanding the role of media in the lives of today's students; ways to incorporate media education into the existing curriculum; and the relationship between the news media and citizenship.

At AMLA's June conference, NCSS President-elect Denee Mattioli delivered remarks underscoring the necessity of learning about the media as institutions in our society and understanding how to use the media as tools for knowing about the world we live in. The AMLA and NCSS are at the beginning of what is hoped to be a long, cooperative relationship.

⇒FCC Filing

AMLA publicly filed its opposition to the FCC media consolidation issue earlier this year. We believe that the response to the FCC needs to include media literacy education in addition to political action. Although hundreds of thousands of Americans voiced their opposition to the FCC's action, millions more did nothing because they do not understand enough about the media they use to understand why the FCC decision might be important or how it might affect them.

⇒Web Resources

The *Media Literacy Clearinghouse* is a comprehensive Web site containing articles, lesson plans, and a wide range of resources to use for teaching media literacy. The site was developed and is constantly updated by AMLA's immediate past president, Frank Baker. Selected by School Library Journal as a Site of the Week on Sept. 9, 2003, the site can be found at <http://www.med.sc.edu:1081>.

⇒Taking Media Literacy to a Wide Audience

AMLA officers and members will be presenting media literacy sessions at a variety of professional conferences this fall. These include the American Public Health Association annual meeting in San Francisco; the Annual Conference of New York State Youth Bureaus in Lake Placid, NY; the National Council of Teachers of English conference in San Francisco; and the National Association for Multicultural Education in Seattle.

Center for Digital Literacy/Director of Syracuse University—Ruth Small

Syracuse University's Center for Digital Literacy (CDL) seeks and supports interdisciplinary research and development projects related to:

- understanding the impact of information, technology, and media literacies on children and adults in today's technology-intensive society,
- building appropriate tools and instruments to teach and assess these new literacies, and
- studying the impact having/not having these literacies has on various individuals, organizations, and society.

CDL has a number of exciting developments to report. The CDL held its first Board of Advisors' meeting on Friday, September 26. Our Board includes faculty, students, and others working in the area of information and instructional technology, information literacy, and the media, such as Robert Wedgeworth, President of ProLiteracy Worldwide, Michael Terpin, CEO of the Terpin Group, Don Ely, Professor Emeritus and the first director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology, and Patricia Breivik, Founder and Chair of the National Forum on Information Literacy.

CDL now has its own spacious headquarters at 3-224 Center for Science & Technology on the Syracuse University campus. In addition to our director and two associate directors, the Center staff now includes four research assistants.

CDL fosters an interdisciplinary approach to digital literacy research, development, and training. CDL staff are involved in a wide range of funded projects, such as SOS for Information Literacy, a multimedia, web-based database of information literacy lesson plans for educators funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and Reinventing Urban School Libraries, a project to study the impact of transforming a group of 30 New York City elementary teachers into school library media specialists and documenting their subsequent impact on their schools.

In addition, CDL sponsors three annual activities:

Distinguished Lectures on Digital Literacy series. CDL held its first distinguished lecture on August 28 with Bernie Dodge, Professor at San Diego State University and creator of the WebQuest, a Web-based teaching and learning tool used in schools throughout the country.

Authors in the Digital Age series. This series combines basic literacy skills with the use of digital technologies to work with a noted children's author.

Conference on Digital Empowerment. This summer conference will bring together researchers and developers on the area of digital literacy to share their research and ideas through presentations, a monograph, and the Web. CDL hopes to offer its first conference in summer 2004.

For information about Syracuse University's Center for Digital Literacy, contact cdl@syr.edu, or watch for our Web site <http://digital-literacy.syr.edu> to be launched in October 2003.

Chief Officers of State Library Agencies—Irene Padilla

Irene is the Assistant Director of the State Library of Maryland and an officer in COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies).

Reports from members not present:

Creative Media Solutions—Marilyn Arnone

The Center is happy to report that its information literacy book project entitled “The Strangest Dinosaur That Never Was” will be showcased at the AASL national conference in Kansas City in October. The book was a joint project of Creative Media Solutions and Libraries Unlimited and includes both a storybook and educator’s guide. The storybook and guide address evaluation of Web sites as a critical information literacy skills.

Announcements:

In June 2004, an International Conference on Lifelong Learning will be held. In previous Lifelong Learning conferences, business people, educators, and librarians have all been involved.

The UCLA/PacBell Project is now at an end. Three publications will be forthcoming, and will be available on the PacBell web site. The video produced as part of this project, previously shown at a meeting of the Forum, was also shown at the International Leadership Conference in Prague.

APA (American Psychological Association) is a new member of the Forum.

ETS (Educational Testing Service) has issued a press release regarding collaborating with major university systems on assessing 21st century skills. This initiative, involving the California State University system and six other leading college and university systems, is called the National Higher Education ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Initiative. The goal of the initiative is, according to the press release, “to conceive, design, and build assessments that gauge whether students possess the ability to use digital technology to solve problems in order to function in an information society.” ETS will use the most advanced measurement techniques, delivered through technology and using scenarios, to assess these skills.

Tom Goad, a previous discussion leader at a Forum meeting, is working on a book in information literacy and small businesses; and has also written a series of articles on information literacy in the National Small Business Association newsletter.

In the United Kingdom, a recent study of information literacy involves business students and how understanding the concept of information literacy helps with their learning. Also, Sheffield University in the U.K. has developed an information literacy weblog.

4. Report on Prague Conference (International Conference of Information Literacy Experts)

The International Conference of Information Literacy Experts was held in Prague, the Czech Republic, September 20-23, 2003. This was a first-of-its-kind conference co-planned and co-sponsored by UNESCO, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and the National Forum on Information Literacy. The conference brought together over 40 experts from 23 countries to discuss wide-ranging issues relating to information literacy; there were 30 invited papers given that formed the basis for discussion. About one-third of attendees were not librarians. The staffs of UNESCO and NCLIS did extraordinary work in making the conference possible.

Some important messages that participants gained from the conference include: the overriding importance of education and lifelong learning in very specific cultural contexts; the crucial nature of politics; and the need to consider information literacy as an emotional, not just a cognitive, issue.

Other comments about the conference from participants:

- The need to engage all the stakeholders in moving information literacy forward internationally
- Momentum will come out of this international conference because it offers usable recommendations
- The love/hate relationship much of the rest of the world has with the United States; attendees at the conference kept reminding themselves that this was truly an international conference and that information literacy isn't just a U.S. agenda.

The NCLIS web site has information on the conference, with links to the invited papers. A second international conference is being planned for the first half of 2005 (spring 2005).

The conference developed a "Prague Declaration" that challenges all nations to make information literacy a priority, emphasizing the global needs for information-literate citizenries in widely diverse countries, pointing out the need to address digital divide issues. The Declaration also calls on the United Nations to make information literacy part of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). The Prague Declaration is available from the Forum's web site (www.infolit.org) as both Word and PDF documents (find the link on the web site for "International Conference of Information Literacy Experts"). The Forum, at the October meeting, endorsed the Prague Declaration.

Other points:

- Should there be an International Forum on Information Literacy, patterned after the National Forum? There needs to be better sharing internationally of the work of the Forum. There is currently interest in setting up a comparable group in Australia that could become a member of an International Forum, and organizations such as NORDINFO could also be founding members.
- LearningTimes Network, Inc., may be willing to provide software tools to support international cooperation and collaboration through discussions, workshops, and other points of contact.

5. 21st Century Skills Project

Kristan Van Hook and Carrie Smith-Dent of InfoTech Strategies, Inc., gave a presentation on the 21st Century Skills Project, previously discussed at meetings of the Forum. This project, part of the Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind" initiative, involves extensive collaboration among many stakeholders, including some members of the Forum. A larger coalition is being sought, including more representation from the business world.

Van Hook and Smith-Dent distributed a report about the project, and discussed overarching goals, including: (1) synthesizing research, insights, and best practices about 21st century learning, and sharing this information widely; (2) creating a common language for discussing 21st century skills; (3) providing educational leaders with tools and strategies for change; and (4) building consensus in public and private sectors about the need for 21st century skills.

During the first year of the project, the main discussion involved the need to blend 21st century skills with "basic skills." There was much discussion of terminology—computer and technology literacies, etc., --that must be used in talking about 21st century skills. During the second year of the project, much attention will be focused on meeting the requirements of the "No Child Left Behind" law, specifically the mandate that all 8th graders be "technology literate."

21st Century Skills are conceptualized with the following five elements:

1. Core subjects—the content foundation
2. Learning skills—information and communication skills; thinking and problem-solving; and interpersonal and self-directional skills
3. 21st century tools—information and technology tools
4. 21st century content—new subject areas such as global awareness, financial/economic/business literacy, and civic literacy
5. 21st century context—making 21st century content relevant to students; tapping awareness of outside experts

Another crucial element is assessment, which ties together all the other elements; classroom assessment and real-time assessment are increasingly important to expand upon annual “high stakes” testing.

ICT Literacy is conceived of as a combination of learning skills using 21st century tools. The integration of ICT literacy into core subjects is a key initiative for the future of this project.

Questions, other comments:

- Will technology skills + problem-solving skills equal ICT literacy? Certainly both of these skill sets are prerequisites, but there appears to be a learning crisis related to information literacy.
- ICT literacy is the preferred term of the 21st Century Skills Project.
- The assessment tool developed at James Madison University in Virginia (to be showcased at the January 2004 meeting of the Forum) promises to assess 21st century skills.

6. Update on ERIC Clearinghouse situation

No report at this meeting.

7. Setting of January and May Forum meeting dates

January meeting: January 23, 2004. Location: American Association of Higher Education, Washington, D.C.

May meeting: May 21, 2004. Location: National Education Association, Washington, D.C.

Suggested topics for future meetings:

- Adult literacy
- Information literacy of faculty
- Comparative international perspectives on information literacy