
From Library Skills to Information Literacy:

A Handbook for the 21st Century



2nd Edition

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This second edition is a merger of the first edition and of the interim working paper, *Information Literate in Any Language*. Diane Berthoin-Hernandez did much of the cutting, pasting, and interweaving necessary to make a new whole.

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Preface

This second edition of the handbook, *From Library Skills to Information Literacy*, has a history that, in some ways, reflects its major themes. It is a collaborative work that includes the thinking of library media specialists, bilingual coordinators, technology leaders, and classroom teachers. It has evolved from previous works:

- *Research as a Process: Developing Skills for Life in an Information Society* (1989) “began with a small group of high school librarians who wanted to prepare students for on-line database searching” and eventually realized that “everyone needed a new way to think about information.”
- *From Library Skills to Information Literacy: A Handbook for the 21st Century* (1994) built on and refined the earlier research process model to include the thinking of Kuhlthau, Eisenberg and Berkowitz, Stripling and Pitts, and others who were all considering new ways to explore the wildly exploding worlds of information.
- *Information Literate in Any Language* (1995) appeared as a working paper and supplement to *From Library Skills to Information Literacy*. Its mission was to ensure that learners of all languages are included as the focus for instructional planning to develop information literacy. It confirms the obvious, but often overlooked, concept that the need for information literacy is both universal and language dependent; it applies to any – and all – languages.

The present publication is a synthesis, and an extension, of all its predecessors.

- It expands the focus on collaborative planning to include bilingual, ESL, and technology specialists.
- It expands the discussion and provides more examples of instructional strategies that support the development of information literacy.
- It acknowledges and emphasizes the backgrounds and experiences – languages, homes, and communities – of all students.
- It acknowledges and compares both traditional and constructivist teaching and learning.

Finally, although the bits and bytes of information increase exponentially and the sophistication and extension of information access continue to amaze, the basic premise of this and each of the preceding publications remains the same: the need for information is universal and the quest for information is problem-solving based on critical thinking.

Introduction

This handbook is intended as a useful guide for classroom teachers, library media specialists, and others who wish to integrate information literacy into their curriculum. It provides both models and strategies that encourage children and young adults to find, analyze, create and use information as they become productive citizens.

Chapter 1: Schooling for an Information Society

The explosion of information in the past decade has led to a growing awareness that the need for information skills is critical and universal. The increasing diversity of our population demands that we acknowledge sources of information in all languages and recognize that students can and must be information literate in the language in which they communicate. Information literacy is inherent in a thinking, meaning-centered curriculum for all students.

Chapter 2: Information Literacy: A Definition

Information literacy is defined in terms of personal outcomes. Characteristics of an information-literate person are identified and an information literacy model is described. These concepts form the framework on which the rest of the document is based. The chapter ends with a summary of past and current emphases describing the shift from library skills to information literacy.

Chapter 3: The Search Process: Searcher Behaviors and Competencies

This chapter expands the central column of the information literacy model described in chapter two. Characteristic searcher behaviors and competencies for each stage of the search process are described.

Chapter 4: Instructional Planning for Information Literacy: A Team Approach

The curricular planning team that collaborates to guide students toward information literacy includes classroom teachers, library media specialists, bilingual/ESL specialists and aides, other specialists, and the students themselves. Characteristics of both traditional and constructivist approaches to instruction are summarized and related planning processes outlined. Sample curriculum-based problems/units are described in both traditional and constructivist approaches. A checklist on assessing teaching and learning concludes the chapter.

Chapter 5: The Instructional Process: Resource-Based Learning

Resource-based learning requires the planning team to be facilitators who structure the learning environment and guide, track, and assess student learning. The resources on which such learning is based are found in the home, school, community, and beyond, and include people, places, print, and technology.

Chapter 6: The Instructional Process: Strategies for Developing Information Literacy

Instructional strategies for information literacy are presented for various subjects and grade levels. The purpose of each is to engage learners in some aspect of the information literacy model in a way that they might build skill and reflect upon the process. Strategies appropriate for use with English/second language learners are also included.

Chapter 7: Information Literacy in Action: Sample Scenarios

Various scenarios are offered as examples of searchers at all levels meaningfully engaged in the search process. Although these are not intended as lesson plans, potential implications for curricular planning are obvious. Taken from real life, most scenarios are interdisciplinary.

Appendix A: Rubrics for the Assessment of Information Literacy

The Colorado Department of Education has developed an instrument that will help students and teachers define and assess levels of competence in the component skills of information literacy.

Appendix B: Research Process Competencies: A Planning Guide

The list of research process competencies introduced in Chapter three is redesigned as a planning guide that may be reproduced. It is intended to assist in curriculum development and to facilitate collaboration between classroom teachers and library media specialists.