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# TEACHER LIBRARIAN

October 2006

The Journal for School Librarians

Skills for the  
Knowledge Worker

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Sustaining Statewide  
Digital Libraries for a  
Second Decade

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They Might Be Gurus

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Using Amazon.com to  
Radically Extend Your  
Library Catalog

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Protecting Your  
Home Computer:  
An In-Service Workshop  
With Teachers

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- Best Web Sites for the  
Technology Leader
- What You Need to Know  
About Social Technologies
- Wikis and Literacy  
Development



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Little Blisters Rubbing Stories Into Life: An Interview With Helen Hemphill



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## features

### SKILLS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE WORKER

Doug Johnson encourages educators to seriously examine what constitutes knowledge worker skills and what must be done to ensure that graduates have these skills.

### NOW WHAT DO WE DO? SUSTAINING STATEWIDE DIGITAL LIBRARIES FOR A SECOND DECADE

Dan Fuller discusses the current status of statewide digital libraries and describes why effective planning by teacher-librarians and teachers is needed to carry statewide digital libraries into the next decade.

### THEY MIGHT BE GURUS

Joyce Kasman Valenza reviews the issues surrounding young adult Internet-searching capabilities and the differences between what educators think they know and what students really know.

### TIPS AND TACTICS:

#### USING AMAZON.COM TO RADICALLY EXTEND YOUR LIBRARY CATALOG

William Thompson and Brian F. Clark offer great tips for teaching students to use Amazon.com as a searchable full-text database.

### MORE TIPS AND TACTICS:

#### PROTECTING YOUR HOME COMPUTER: AN IN-SERVICE WORKSHOP WITH TEACHERS

Phyllis R. Snipes and Matthew N. Clay provide a collaborative in-service for teacher-librarians to conduct, sharing tips for resolving computer slowdowns, eliminating annoying pop-up windows, protecting against identity theft, and more.

**58** Little blisters rubbing stories into life: An interview with Helen Hemphill



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notebook by esther rosenfeld

## Lucy at the chocolate factory

About 10 years ago, I attended a workshop on the "Big6" research skills program presented by Mike Eisenberg. To illustrate the concept of information overload, participants viewed a video clip from an episode of the old *I Love Lucy* show. In the episode, Lucy and Ethel get a job on an assembly line at a chocolate factory and are trained to pick chocolates off the line and put them into boxes. Of course, the line starts moving faster and faster, and Lucy and Ethel hilariously try to cope with the ever-increasing deluge of chocolates. As a workshop participant, I laughed and thought that the video clip was a particularly apt choice to illustrate the concept of information overload. At the time, however, I did not internalize the concept, because I did not feel stressed about coping with the large volume of online information that I was encountering.



I must confess that I now feel more and more like the overwhelmed Lucy and Ethel as I try to cope with an avalanche of online information and rapid change. Over the past 10 years, as a teacher-librarian, school library consultant, and instructor in teacher-librarian training programs, I have enthusiastically adopted new technologies and adapted my thinking and professional practice to reflect technological innovations. I have recently learned as much as I can about Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 and their implications. I have tried to incorporate blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, Flickr, Skype, and Podcasting into my professional practice. And I will not even begin to list the types of files that I have loaded onto my iPod. But there are far too many blogs, wikis, and RSS feeds to read closely (much less respond to); too many Podcasts to listen to; and far too many new web-based tools to attempt to use. I assume, dear readers, that many of you find yourselves in a similar situation. Perhaps, as thoughtful practitioners, we all need to take a collective deep breath and ask some difficult questions about Web 2.0 and Library 2.0:

- If students are learning differently now, how should we change curriculum and instructional practice to incorporate these changes? As teacher-librarians, how do we change what we teach and how we teach?

- What does the 21st-century school library look like? What does the 21st-century school library have to do to be essential to students and teachers? What does the teacher-librarian have to do to be relevant and essential to students and teachers?

- If Web 2.0 is all about online communities, social networking, and collaborative learning, then what do teacher-librarians need to do to ensure that students acquire the critical-thinking skills needed to use information wisely and the social responsibility skills necessary in a social networking and collaborative environment? In the K-12 environment, how do we ensure that students have the basic literacy skills that they need to work in the Web 2.0 interface?

The answers to these questions form the subject of much online discussion, and just following the discussion on issues can be time-consuming and overwhelming. Because I admit to having the Lucy syndrome, I am now restricting the number of sites I access; but I have found that several blogs and wikis are well worth the time spent. David Warlick's wiki at [http://davidwarlick.com/wiki-warlick/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://davidwarlick.com/wiki-warlick/index.php?title=Main_Page) provides much thoughtful discourse on the 21st-century school and includes many of his conference workshops and keynote addresses. Joyce Valenza's NeverEnding Search, at <http://joycevalenza.edublogs.org/>, is cogent and inspirational. Ditto for Doug Johnson's Blue Skunk Blog, at <http://doug-johnson.squarespace.com/blue-skunk-blog/>, and Alice Yucht's Alice in Infoland, at <http://aliceinfo.squarespace.com/blog/>. Chris Harris's School Library Blogs, at <http://libraryblogs.suprglu.com/>, is a useful collection of blogs

## Spotlight on Dr. Joe Marone, an expert in one-to-one computing:

The Quaker Valley School District in Sewickley, PA, instituted one-to-one computing in 2000.

Dr. Marone's observations on the benefits of one-to-one computing:

### Efficiency

Teachers become more efficient (e.g., 4 minutes per day saved on attendance; school attendance clerk repurposed).

### Technology in General

Technology becomes transparent in the teaching and learning process, rather than the focus of attention or the concern because of its malfunction.

Systems are monitored through brief online surveys to teachers and students.

### Learning

The entire district is rated in the top 2% of quality school districts (it is not an affluent district).

Students report 80% savings in finding information, so they concentrate on doing and learning. One-to-one computing has become a parental expectation but is a culture shock for students moving into the district.

The district motto is TO MEASURE STUDENTS AGAINST THE WORLD'S BEST. Visit the Quaker Valley School District web site at [www.qvsd.org/qvsd/site/default.asp](http://www.qvsd.org/qvsd/site/default.asp)

# toward one-to-one computing—the research

## COMMENT:

Thirty international studies involving students who were in a one-to-one computing environment were synthesized, and the researchers concluded that these students were more technology literate and better writers because of word processing. However, the research studies did not indicate a rise in achievement in core subjects such as math and social studies (Penuel, 2006).

In another study, 186 teachers in fourth- and eighth-grade classrooms in 11 southern rural school districts rated themselves on the use of constructivist principles, through a \$10 million technology grant. After extensive professional development, those teachers who rated themselves as constructivist were those who had adopted their personal computers as extensions of themselves; that is, the computer was used in all aspects of their personal lives (Rakes, Fields, & Cox, 2006).

## IMPLICATIONS:

Technology is becoming a part of the culture of education, supporting Tom Friedman's idea of the flat-world society (2005).

Teachers who personally embrace computers as a part of their everyday lives are the most likely to use that technology in constructivist teaching methods. This news is important for teacher-librarians who are seeking collaborative partners in building improved learning experiences.

It is still a challenge to link technology with content learning in the core subjects. Better measures and improved educational practices with technology are still needed.

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