

research and school libraries: knowing the basic sources

KEEPING UP WITH PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH IS A CHALLENGE FOR TODAY'S TEACHER-LIBRARIAN. THIS ARTICLE COVERS THE ESSENTIAL ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS, RESEARCH PROJECTS, SURVEYS, REPORTS, BOOKS, CONFERENCES, STUDIES, PERIODICALS, AND ONLINE RESOURCES THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO STAY CURRENT AND TAKE YOUR STAND AS A LEADER IN YOUR SCHOOL.

RESEARCH SUMMARIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

International Association of School Librarianship. (2006). The IASL publishes proceedings of its annual conference and a journal containing research studies. Check out its web site at www.iasl-slo.org/isld.html and click the "Research" tab at the bottom of the page.

Lance, K. C., & Loertscher, D. V. (2005). *Powering achievement: School library media programs make a difference* (3rd ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow Research and Publishing. Available for purchase at www.lmcsource.com. Provides summaries and PowerPoint presentations, plus discussion starters of all the Lance studies as well as other evidence linking school libraries to achievement.

Lance, K. C. (2007). *Bibliography of school library impact studies*. Available at www.lrs.org/impact.asp.

Loertscher, D. V. (2007). *LIBR233: School library media centers*. Bibliography of school library media research. Available at <http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/libr233/>.

Todd, R. J., & Gordon, C. (2007). Ross J. Todd and Carol Gordon's Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries web site from Rutgers University lists their research projects at <http://cissl.scils.rutgers.edu/research/projects.html>.

TOOLS FOR LINKING SCHOOL LIBRARIES TO ACHIEVEMENT

Loertscher, D. V. (2007). *Are two heads better than one?* This is an action research project where teachers and teacher-librarians assess their impact on learners when they collaborate. Participate at www.seedwiki.com/wiki/lmc_action_research/lmc_action_research?wpid=709840&searchresult=709840.

Loertscher, D. V., & Todd, R. J. (2003). *We boost achievement! Evidence-based practice for school library media specialists*. Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow Research and Publishing. Provides the most comprehensive list of measures available. Available for purchase at www.lmcsource.com.

Miller, N. A. S. (2003). *Impact! Documenting the LMC program for*

accountability. Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow Research and Publishing. This Excel spreadsheet allows school librarians to track collaborative efforts on a daily basis and then print out amazing reports for presentations. Also, Nancy has a "Time and Task Tracker" that documents time spent on various school library program activities of professionals and support personnel. Both are available from www.lmcsource.com.

Todd, R. J., Kuhlthau, C. C., & Heinström, J. E. (2005). *The School Library Impact Measure (SLIM)*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries. This is a toolkit and handbook for tracking and assessing student learning outcomes of guided inquiry through the school library. Available at http://cissl.scils.rutgers.edu/guided_inquiry/slim.html.

FEDERAL EFFORTS AND REPORTS

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Center for Education Statistics. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005311.pdf>.

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CONFERENCES

The American Association of School Librarians Research Committee usually sponsors a research program at the annual American Library Association conference that reports the results of the Highsmith Research Award winner. The Judy Pitts Research Forum is held at the biennial American Association of School Librarians national conference and features selected research papers. More information is available at www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslindex.htm.

The International Association of School Librarianship annual conference has research reports from varying countries. The 2006 conference, "Multiple Faces of Literacy: Reading, Knowing, Doing," was held in Lisbon, Portugal. Information about future conferences and reports from past conferences are available at www.iasl-slo.org/conferences.html.

The International Society for Technology in Education holds an annual conference known as the National Educational Computing Conference, where research on technology in education always has a spot on the program. More information is available at www.iste.org/.

Treasure Mountain Research Retreat is a group of school library scholars and practitioners who get together to share research and practice. Anyone interested in school library research may attend the retreats. The next Treasure Mountain Research Retreat is scheduled for October 2007. More information is available at www.seedwiki.com/wiki/treasure_mountain/treasure_mountain?wpid=710382&searchresult=710382.

PERIODICALS

School Library Media Research is the online research journal of the American

Association of School Librarians and regularly publishes formal studies done about school library programs. The table of contents from published issues, as well full text of some articles, is available at www.ala.org/aasls/mrTemplate.cfm?Section=slmr.

School library publications regularly review various research studies in a more popular format. Examples include *Teacher Librarian* (www.teacherlibrarian.com), *School Library Journal* (www.schoollibraryjournal.com/), and *Knowledge Quest* (www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/kqweb/kqhome/kqhome.htm).

School Libraries Worldwide is the official publication of the International Association of School Librarianship that reports research from around the world. Contents pages and article abstracts are available at www.iasl-slo.org/slw.html.

THE LANCE STUDIES

Here is a list of the Lance studies and their predecessors, the Gaver studies. All are linked at Library Research Services, a unit of the Colorado State Library and the Colorado Department of Education, at <http://lrs.org>.

Alaska. Lance, K. C., Hamilton-Pennell, C., Rodney, M. J., Peterson, L., & Sitter, C. (2000). *Information empowered: The school librarian as an agent of academic achievement in Alaska schools*. Executive summary and order information available at www.library.state.ak.us/dev/infoemp.html.

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Massachusetts. Baughman, J. C. (2000). *School libraries and MCAS scores* (preliminary ed.). Boston: Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Available at <http://web.simmons.edu/~baughman/mcas-school-libraries/Baughman%20Paper.pdf>.

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Oregon. Lance, K. C., Rodney, M. J., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2001). *Good schools have school librarians: Oregon school librarians collaborate to improve academic achievement*. Salem, OR: Oregon Educational Media Association. Available online at www.oema.net/Oregon_Study/OR_Study.htm and in print from www.lmcsource.com.

Pennsylvania. Lance, K. C., Rodney, M. J., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2000). *Measuring up to standards: The impact of school library programs and information literacy in Pennsylvania schools*. Greensburg, PA: Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries. Available online at www.lrs.org/impact.asp and www.state.library.state.pa.us/libraries/lib/libraries/measuringup.pdf.



**JOHN
PETERS**

PICTURE BOOKS

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

Alfie the apostrophe. Moira Rose Donohue. Ill. JoAnn Adinolfi. Whitman, 2006. \$16.95. 978-0-8075-0255-6. Grades 1-3. Little Alfie does not think that he is going to do too well in the Punctuation Talent Show—but after showing that he can make letters disappear (*can't*) and change (*won't*), plus one other special trick, he becomes the star.

Nouns and verbs have a field day. Robin Pulver. Ill. Lynn Rowe Reed. Holiday House, 2006. \$16.95. 978-0-8234-1982-1. Grades 1-3. When the children in Mr. Wright's class stampede out to the playground for a field day, the nouns and verbs left behind in the classroom decide to organize a tug of words.

Superhero ABC. Bob McLeod. HarperCollins, 2006. \$16.89. 978-0-06-074514-1. Grades K-2. A crew of super men and women (plus the occasional animal or alien) pose heroically in this colorfully illustrated gallery—from Astro-Man, who is always alert for an alien attack, to the Zinger, zany zigzagging through the zero zone.

Waltur buys a pig in a poke, and other stories. Barbara Gregorich. Ill. Kristin Sorra. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. \$15.00. 978-0-618-47306-9. Grades 1-3. Introducing figures of speech, Gregorich repeatedly has Waltur (a bear) too literally take the advice of his more cautious friend Matilda (a beaver), with hilarious results. Searching for a new pet, he repeatedly refuses to buy piglets in bags (pokes), but without question he takes one that is in a box—and it turns out to be a real house wrecker. More misadventures ensue—but emergent readers will enjoy watching Waltur, who is not entirely a dim bulb, learn wisdom in these three episodes.

Texas. Smith, E. (2001). *Texas school libraries: Standards, resources, services, and students' performance*. Austin, TX: EGS Research and Consulting. Available at www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schlibsurvey/index.html.

OTHER RESEARCH STUDIES ON SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND ACHIEVEMENT

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Delaware. Todd, R. (2005). *Report of the Delaware school library survey 2004—On behalf of the governor's task force on school libraries, Part 1: Facts, findings, and recommendations*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries.

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Indiana. Association for Indiana Media Educators and Indiana University, School of Library and Information Science. (2004). *Survey of Indiana school library media programs*. Indianapolis, IN: Author. This is an ongoing study. Follow it online at www.ilfonline.org/Units/Associations/aime/Data/index.htm.

Minnesota. Baxter, S. J., & Smalley, A. W. (2003). *Check it out! The results of the school library media program census*. Saint Paul, MN: Metronet. Available at <http://metronet.lib.mn.us/survey/index.cfm>.

Missouri. Miller, J., Want, J., Whitacre, L., & Quantitative Resources. (2003). *Show*

me connection: How school library media center services impact student achievement. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Missouri State Library. Available at <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/librarystudy/libraryresearch.pdf>.

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**KATHLEEN
ODEAN**

> YA FICTION

SUSPENSE RULES

Black duck. Janet Taylor Lisle. Philomel, 2006. \$15.99. 978-0-399-23963-2. Grades 5–8. Framed in a story of a modern boy seeking a good article for his school paper, this dark, fascinating story concerns two boys who find a dead body on the Rhode Island shore during Prohibition. They are pulled into a frightening world of organized crime, local corruption, and rum runners.

Firestorm. David Klass. Frances Foster Books, 2006. \$17.00. 978-0-374-32307-3. Grades 8–11. Move over, Alex Rider. Seemingly normal 18-year-old Jack finds himself pursued down the East Coast by mysterious, heavily armed strangers. Mystery, a futuristic element, and ecological concerns come together in a gripping read.

The rules of survival. Nancy Werlin. Dial Books, 2006. \$16.99. 978-0-8037-3001-4. Grades 7–10. This taut thriller about three children who live in fear of their mother combines heart-thumping tension with a deep understanding of how psychological abuse affects kids. This book is brilliantly plotted and narrated.

Wired. Sigmund Brouwer. Orca, 2005. \$8.95. 978-1-55143-478-0. Grades 7–12. Perfect for reluctant readers, this fast-moving story is about a skilled skier who starts investigating thefts at a ski resort. The help of a detective's daughter adds romance, whereas chase scenes provide excitement.

Literacy Enhancement. Available at <http://72.14.209.104/search?q=cache:rHRYpRUavMsJ:personal.tcu.edu/~cblock/executive%2520summary%2520to%2520scholastic.doc+Institute+for+Literacy+Enhance+Research+Report+1739-004+A+Research+Investigation&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=us&client=firefox-a>.

Center for Applied Research in Technology. Center for Applied Research in Technology is the research on technology databank sponsored by the International Society for Technology in Education. Articles, reports, and other documents are available at <http://caret.iste.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=resources>.

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Chelton and Cool. Chelton, M. K., & Cool, C. (2004). *Youth information-seeking behavior: Theories, models, and issues*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

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What Works Clearinghouse. From the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, the What Works Clearinghouse was established to provide educators, policy makers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. Technical working papers are available at www.whatworks.ed.gov/whoware/overview.html.

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