

Reading for Pleasure Resources

Open University, UK (2024). *Research on Reading for Pleasure*
Key resources downloadable at ourfp.org

Reviewed by Joy Whiteside, Library Resource Manager, Christian College Geelong.

Reading for pleasure has been the focus of extensive research by The Open University and the UK Literacy Association. If creating a culture of reading is one of your school's or library's goals, then this website will provide you with excellent professional learning as well as strategies for improvement. An extremely practical website, it presents the results of the research and aims to support a vibrant professional community of practitioners to develop the skills to nurture, motivate and engage lifelong readers.

There are three main sections, and each of the sections includes a research summary, a downloadable audit for you to review your practice, and suggested strategies for supporting children's reading for pleasure. There are also focussed learning videos accompanying each topic.

The following are the *Reading for Pleasure* research sections on the website:

1. Widen your knowledge:
 - Teachers' knowledge of children's literature and other texts,
 - Teachers' knowledge of children's reading practices,
2. Develop robust Reading for Pleasure pedagogy:
 - Reading for Pleasure pedagogy: social reading environments, reading aloud, independent reading and informal book talk,
3. Create inclusive communities of readers:
 - Reading teachers: teachers who read and readers who teach, and
 - Reading communities.

As well as presenting research, the website includes additional resources to support practitioners to explore further. There is a section on reading at home, the latest news and updates, recommended authors and texts, and a section where you can share your practice by sending research informed reading for pleasure practice to be published on the website.

The resources on this website will support your goal of developing a culture of reading and provide resources to audit your current practice and strategies for improvement.

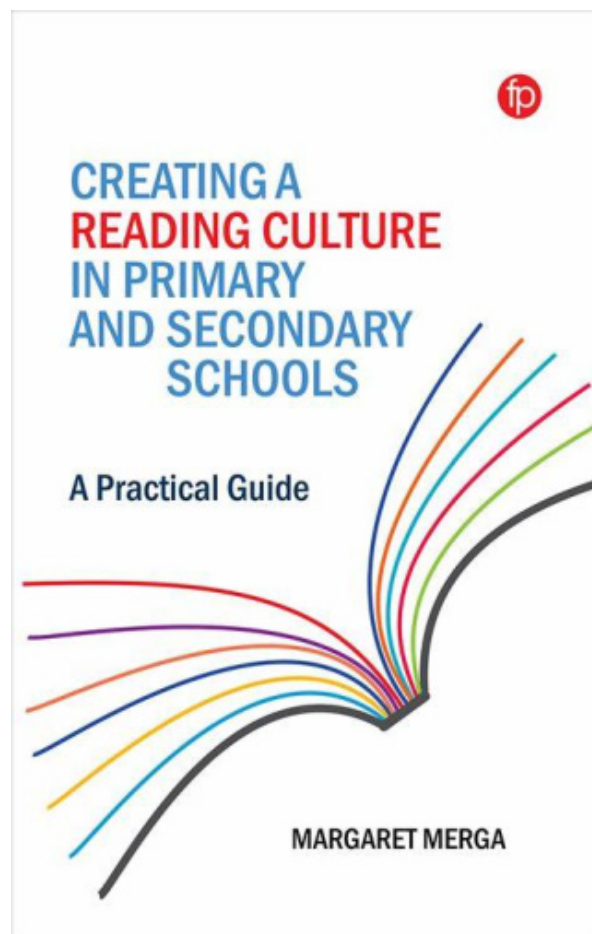
Merga, Margaret (2024). *Creating a Reading Culture in Primary and Secondary Schools*. Facet, London.

Reviewed by Kasey Garrison, Senior Lecturer, Teacher Librarianship, Charles Sturt University.

While Merga has focused a lot of her research on school libraries in recent years, this book expands that audience and setting, targeting any educator interested in building a reading culture in their school. Thus, it creates a great opportunity for teacher librarians to collaborate with teachers and the rest of the school community to read the book together. The book totals 401 pages although the introduction starts on page 24 and references and index follow from page 353 so it is about 329 pages of content with 40 pages of useful references (seven pages citing Merga's own extensive works). The book includes six chapters with the first setting a strong foundation for the benefits of a whole school approach to building a school reading culture and progressing sequentially through the various stages and process, using research for support and culminating in useful evaluation and reporting chapters.

The progressive structure will prove valuable for practice, detailing the different approaches schools can take to implement a schoolwide reading culture for their particular contexts. Teacher librarians and those working in school libraries will find chapter two especially beneficial with discussions about investing in the school library program, collection, and qualified school library professionals. In chapter 3, another highlight is the list of 15 key steps in pursuing grant funding for your program which gets into the details one must consider from the ideation stages to the final outcome, whether that be success or "failure." The crash course in research methods and data included in chapter 5 is also constructive for readers as having a data-driven, evidenced-based approach to building your reading program will be looked upon favourably by school administrators and funding bodies. This section offers a strong baseline for designing basic research to measuring program success and make improvements for greater impact.

Overall, the biggest strength of this book is the very current and relevant research base Merga cites combining international perspectives and research in addition to Australian-focused studies, including many of her own from the last decade which have really targeted reading in Australia. With its broad focus on the whole school community, this book presents a strategic opportunity for teacher librarians and other school library professionals to begin (or continue) critical schoolwide conversations about the importance of reading and how they can work together to develop a school reading culture.



Pavey, Sarah (2024). *The Networked Librarian: The School Librarian's Role in Fostering Connections, Collaboration and Co-creation Across the Community*. Facet, London

Reviewed by Margaret Sinnott, Library Coordinator, Emmanuel College, Warrnambool.

This is the latest book from Sarah Pavey, library consultant and trainer, which speaks directly to the library staff, most particularly, the library leader in a school.

The book is a toolkit of vignettes and cameos and discussions that allow a library leader to explore their role and make changes to improve their leadership and library roles. There are eleven chapters in the 429-page book. Each chapter includes many examples of real-life situations where the reader can take time to reflect on what has occurred in the examples and see if there is relevance to their own school library situation. The examples could be used individually by a school librarian for reflection or in a library team setting where the situations and the points of view can be discussed and made relevant to their school library.

The general theme of the book is library leadership, the roles of a leader and the qualities found in a strong leader who is able to build meaningful relationships with the many stakeholders in a school library, in a school and in the wider community and the benefits of being able to network with others.

The chapters cover:

- team building (Chapter 1)
- change (Chapter 2) where the Lewin model, McKinsey framework, Kotter's 8 step process among others are worked through
- communication (Chapter 3)
- dealing with difficult people (Chapter 4)
- leaders (Chapter 5)
- working with students (Chapter 6)
- working with teachers (Chapter 7)
- working with senior leaders (Chapter 8)
- working with parents, guardians and carers (Chapter 9)
- working with others (Chapter 10)
- and finally building networks (Chapter 11).

Each chapter has links with other chapters, with suggestions of what else to consider for the topic. The chapters could be read in sequential order or a school librarian could 'dip into' the relevant chapter. For example, if there was an issue with a student or staff member, they could

read Chapter 4 to find out more about restoring baseline behaviour, conflict and managing difficult meetings. A library staff meeting schedule for a year or semester could include one of these chapters and following on discussion, for each meeting.

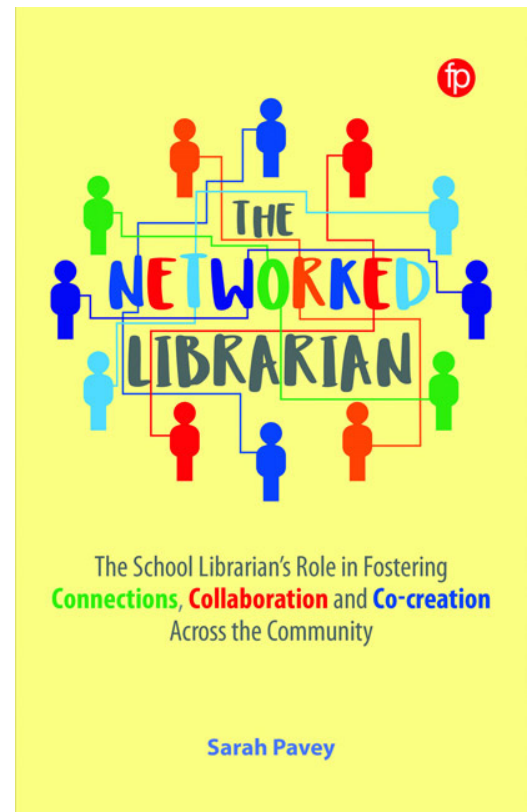
The chapter that stood out most for me was Chapter 5: Librarians as Leaders. How to be a good leader was studied. Goleman (2000) suggested six leadership styles and Pavey asks us to reflect on which one we are. Techniques to follow to lead a library team effectively (p. 209) and types of leadership (p. 210) are useful to use for reflection or discussion. Pavey references organisations such as IFLA and calls us as library staff to use our talents and skills to be library leaders.

The Networked Librarian puts the school librarian abruptly in the middle of the school, challenging the library staff to be leaders, to partner with others in the school and in the wider community, to be instructional leaders, to be equal partners in any teaching, planning or library development. In Chapter 8 Pavey states the importance of the library being integrated with the school's goals and the importance of good communication channels with the school's senior leaders. In Chapter 11 on page 367 there is a list of key attributes of library staff.

As a result of reading *The Networked Librarian*, a school library team or librarian could document their library or their library role and how it has been able to include many of the processes and thinking, making their school library the best that it can be and reflect on what further development of processes and programs could be achieved.

I enjoyed the real-life snippets of other library staff and the happenings in their schools, presented as the cameos of Silvie, Margaret, Giana and Suki and many others, each trying to improve and develop their library, giving easy access to looking at future improvement ideas or new ways of viewing day to day library happenings.

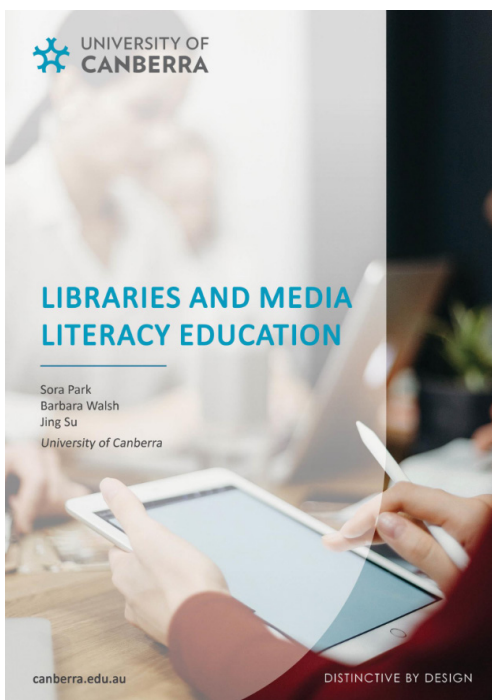
The challenge, put to all of us who work in school libraries, by Pavey, is to be a networked librarian. We can decide where we will begin our reflection and growth to be a networked librarian through the chapters that we read first of *The Networked Librarian: The School Librarians Role in Fostering Connections, Collaboration and Co-creation Across the Community*.



Park, S., Walsh, B. & Su, J. (2023). *Libraries and Media Literacy Education*. Canberra: News & Media Research Centre.

Reviewed by Nell Day, Teacher Librarian, University High School

In today's complex and rapidly-evolving media landscape, it is increasingly crucial for citizens to have a strong grasp of media literacy in order to parse the avalanche of information that is now part of everyday life, and thus to fully and safely participate in society. Libraries and library staff across a range of contexts know that we are at the forefront of media literacy education, but not all staff feel confident in their capacity to effectively educate library patrons. This report, produced under the auspices of ALIA, details a project in which the authors surveyed library and information service (LIS) workers about their views on media literacy education and then developed a short course addressing the needs identified in the feedback gathered. LIS staff undertook this short course and then reported back on their experiences and on the impact of this intervention on their professional practice.



The authors open their report by discussing the complexities of the current media environment and the ways in which the increasing prevalence of mis- and dis-information, deep fakes, AI and the like mean that members of our society now require ongoing media literacy upskilling that goes beyond the bounds of what they may have been offered in their formal secondary and/or tertiary education. Media literacy skills as conceived of by the LIS workers surveyed cover a wide range of capabilities but include things as basic as 'the ability to find reliable information to make decisions, take action, make judgments and responsibly share information through online platforms and social media' (p5). The survey commissioned by ALIA and carried out by the authors at the University of Canberra (UC) asked LIS workers from public, school, academic and other libraries about what they perceived as their library

users' media literacy education needs as well as their capacity to meet those needs, and the results reported provide a very interesting snapshot of the concerns of different types of library users that goes into granular detail about the extremely varied work that LIS workers do with their patrons. Unsurprisingly, the survey found that teacher librarians are the most confident of all LIS workers in their ability to deliver media literacy education to their library users. However, across all respondents there was an overwhelming demand for upskilling in media literacy education.

In response to the survey data collected identifying media literacy education needs, the News and Media Research Centre teaching team at UC developed a seven-week course delivered online to 44 participants from across Australia (and a couple internationally). Participants were interviewed at the midpoint and end of the course to gather feedback. One theme

that comes through very strongly in the course evaluation feedback is the extent to which LIS staff are committed to and invested in professional development opportunities and the importance placed by members of the profession on lifelong learning and continuous evolution of professional practice. Librarians also believe strongly in their professional responsibility to combat misinformation and disinformation in the community and many were very committed to doing this even in the absence of formal media literacy education programs in their workplaces. One recommendation coming out of the course feedback was that ALIA should establish an LIS Professional Media Literacy Network to facilitate the sharing of ideas and resources in an ongoing capacity, and it will be interesting to see if this eventually becomes a reality.

This report is well worth a read for any library professionals who are interested in the teaching of media literacy. It feels as though the authors and everybody involved in designing the surveys and course has really foregrounded the voices and needs of LIS professionals and that rather than being a top-down professional development initiative, they have designed a project that draws on the existing professional expertise of library workers in order to target the specific gaps in media literacy education competency. As LIS workers in a school library context, this report also gives us an understanding of the connections between the work that we do and the work of public and academic libraries which is interesting to both compare and contrast.

AT A GLANCE

Teen Reading Habits

Final Report of research by a team led by Leonie Rutherford from Deakin into the reading habits of Australian adolescents is summarised in a [press release from the University](#)

The Full Report can be accessed [here](#)

AI

School Library Journal (SLJ). [Librarians Can Play a Key Role in Implementing Artificial Intelligence in Schools](#), August 31, 2023.

A practical and useful article with links to a number of related items.

The News and Features section of SLJ highlights current issues, including Affirming Autism, Eco-action.

ASCD (2024). [Education Technology Essentials: 12 Strategies for Every Classroom in the Age of AI](#). 2nd ed. Due out in June 2024

This new edition has been updated to ensure relevance and usefulness in the age of AI.

[The AI School Librarian](#) on Facebook:

The mission of this group is to empower educators, librarians, and students to harness the potential of AI to create engaging and enriching learning experiences.

Impact of News Media

Notley, Tanya and others (2023). [News and Young Australians in 2023: How Children and Teens Access, Perceive and Are Affected by News Media](#) University of Western Sydney, Penrith.

This is the report of a longitudinal study providing comprehensive findings about young Australians' news attitudes, practices and experiences. This is the third time this triennial survey has been carried out.

Student Wellbeing

National Literacy Trust, UK.

[Blog post on wellbeing](#) in a series called Library Lifeline

Many of the posts on their blog will be of relevance and interest to the profession