

Editorial

As we grapple with rapid change in education and learning, change brought about not only by technological advancement but also change inspired by new approaches and understandings in pedagogy, I continue to believe that we must embrace the new whilst not discarding what is of value in the old.

I have recently been reading about research that indicates we retain more of what we learn when we write by hand than we do when we perform the same actions on a keyboard ([Better Learning through Handwriting](#), 2012). Don't get me wrong! I love my keyboard but this is, nevertheless, an interesting discussion as schools consider where to place emphasis – handwriting or keyboarding skills. There is no doubt that more time is needed to inculcate good keyboarding habits at the beginning years of schooling, but should this be at the expense of handwriting skills in what is already an overcrowded curriculum? This is not my focus here; I use this discussion merely to highlight the old/new dichotomy.

Synergy is part of this discussion too. We learn about ideas in many different forums; digital feeds of all kinds make our online professional learning networks immediate, inspiring and fulfilling. Do we still have the time, or the inclination, to read a longish, referenced article? In the same way that we need both handwriting and keyboarding skills to stimulate different areas of the brain and allow us to work and learn in different ways, I would argue that we require a range of information feeds, discussion forums and learning opportunities if we are to remain relevant and informed. We need to both skim the top of issues and immerse ourselves deeply; it is all part of a rich learning environment. *Synergy* has a role in this mix.

This edition of *Synergy* contains some very useful and thought-provoking articles. Once again, we have attempted to bring our readers a range of pieces. Some offerings involve quite complex research, whilst others are more practical or reflective. *Synergy* is not themed but, in this issue, we do have a few articles on the topic of ebooks and a number of other articles grappling with digital literacy and its place within education. Both are topical issues worth exploring from a variety of standpoints and we hope that what we have collected here fuels the discussion.

As usual, our regular contributors continue to challenge us: [Dr Ross Todd](#) makes links between our own National curriculum and other parts of the world, [Dr Carol Gordon](#) encourages us to consider the importance of transliteracy, and [Anne Whisken](#) shares with us her explorations of school library learning spaces.

We are pleased to be publishing a very interesting, refereed article on research into ebook usage, as well as a reprint of a research article from the *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* by Stephen Krashen, Syying Lee & Jeff McQuillan that analyses [the importance of school libraries](#) in student achievement. We also look at [research into game design and learning with Dr Rebecca Reynolds](#) from Rutgers University in the US and the wonderful [Seven Stories, the national centre for children's books](#) in the UK.

Closer to home, the Head of Library at Salesian College, [Tania Stanislawski](#), reflects on the power of relationships and perceptions, while [Dean Groom](#) challenges us to reconsider our role, and the role of education and learning in the digital world. We have also published an inspiring strategies piece by Kate Stewart and Leonie Dyason about [The Batja Malnigan project](#) which documents a learning journey and book, the result of a grant given to a group of indigenous students and their supporters at Mooroopna Secondary College.

Lastly, we acknowledge [the interactions piece](#) in the journal. A discussion by our board member Dr Susan Boyce of the research by Dr Sue Reynolds and Dr Mary Carroll which was published early in 2012 in issue one of *Synergy* - '[Collaborators or Competitors?: The Roles of School Libraries, Classroom](#)

Libraries, Teachers and Teacher librarians in Literacy Development'. We welcome this discussion and encourage others in our community to consider responding to another's ideas, or continuing the discussion from a different viewpoint. We welcome an interaction around the ideas and concepts raised in *Synergy*.

Dr Susan La Marca

Editor

Synergy