



**More than surviving -
thriving
in the information age :**
reading as a basis
for using information technology efficiently

John Royce : International School Hamburg
<john.royce@metronet.de>

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Two years hard graft
in a laboratory can often
save several hours research
in a library.

The signs are good!

1991 - '95 US book sales : up 25%
1991 - '95 US computer book sales : up 150%

75% US parents read more to their children than their parents read to them.

1990 - '94 UK children's public library borrowing up 6%

Heavy library borrowers are also heavy book buyers:
"The only real tell-tale sign, it seems,
is that they were hooked when still young.
Most loved reading as a child."

The elements of lifelong reading:

- reading aloud
- reading alone
- reading for enjoyment
- reading role-models

Krashen's coda:

Reading as a leisure activity is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary, and reading speed.

Stephen Krashen

Krashen's caution:

Although free voluntary reading alone will not ensure attainment of the highest levels of literacy, it will at least ensure an acceptable level.

Without it, I suspect that children simply do not have a chance.

Stephen Krashen.

Knowledge has a half-life
- and it is diminishing.

Information

Rate of producing information

Ancient	1 char/ sec
AD 1500	3000 char/ sec
Today	20000 char/ sec

Rate of storage

Ancient	1 char/ cc
AD 1500	500 char/ cc
Today	millions char/ cc

Speed of transport (250 words/ 2000 km)

Ancient	18 days
AD 1900	4 minutes
Today	thousandths of 1 sec.

Information

Human comprehension

Ancient	300 words per min
AD 1500	300 words per min
Today	300 words per min

Visual images

Ancient	100m bits/ glance
AD 1500	100m bits/ glance
Today	100m bits/ glance

Never mind the quality -

- just feel the bandwidth.

Consider the Encyclopedia Britannica. The complete set costs more than \$1,500, weighs 118 pounds, and takes up more than four feet of shelf space. A commensurate encyclopedia on CD-ROM - Microsoft's Encarta, for instance - costs \$99.99, holds up to 650 megabytes of data, weighs under an ounce, and could fit in your purse.

S. Lyall, 1994.

I'm totally addicted to E-mail. When I'm awake, I check it every hour. Last night I checked it at 9 o'clock. And this morning I came in at 5 a.m. and I had 50! They are all-important for me. I respond individually to all my E-mail.

James Cramer.

One of the most valuable things, some would say the most important thing, that schooling should give to students is the ability to learn and go on learning throughout life...

With the increasing need for re-current education and job re-training, and the inevitable increase in individualised, computerised and de-institutionalised learning, it is more crucial than ever that people learn how to learn during their years of formal schooling.

Teaching students how to learn.
Education Department of Tasmania.

Information-handling

- determine what is needed
- locate & access the needed information
- select & reject necessary information
- synthesise the selected information
- present the information
- reflect upon the information AND the information process

Learning is nothing if it is not a deeply reflective activity in which every new idea is internalised and used to refine, or to change, or to upgrade, earlier, more naive understandings ...

Learning is a consequence of thinking.

John Abbott.

Reading

- receptive
- reflective
- rejective

It's hard work!

Reading is, among other things, a skill, and like all skills, the more you use it the better you become at it.

Conversely, the less reading you do, the more difficult it is.

Jim Trelease.

Able users of information develop strategies for finding, choosing and using information.

Their strategies are built upon three skills areas : reading, information-handling, and technical. The skills are interdependent and often practised simultaneously; their boundaries merge and overlap.

If you don't know where you're going, you won't know how to get there.

If you don't know where you're going, you won't know when you're there.

I am very impressed by *Encarta*. My son uses it to do his homework, and he can answer all the questions without having to learn anything.

quoted verbatim by David Johnson, Librarian, Sevenoaks School, 1994.

The overview stage allows one to maximise prior knowledge, even when the subject is completely new and prior knowledge is non-existent.

Skimming those early stages is a sure-fire route to information overload, for when you do not know what is needed, everything seems important, and anything may be misunderstood.

Information-handling and problem-solving strategies

- The Big Six : Eisenberg & Berkowitz
- The PLUS Model (4) : Herring
- FLIP IT! (4) : Yucht
- The Research Cycle (7) : MacKenzie
- Information Skills Framework (9) : Marland
- The Research Process (10) : Stripling & Pitts
and many, many more...

The success cycle

**The more you read,
the better you read.**

**The better you read,
the more you enjoy it.**

**The more you enjoy it,
the more you want to read.**

Bernice Cullinan.
