

P L Duffy Resource Centre Trinity College website

<http://www.students.trinity.wa.edu.au/library/default.htm>

In February 1999, I joined the staff of Trinity College. The college had just added to the library a large number of computers with internet access. It was very apparent that many of the boys found the quantity of material available overwhelming. They wasted much time searching for sites that were on the correct subject, had appropriate information and were at the right level. To alleviate this problem, I began constructing the library intranet site.

The justification for providing internet access was to create a resource that would enhance and extend the existing library materials. A library catalogue organises library materials so students can find and access the content easier. Just as we would not present a pile of books to students and say 'find what you need', I decided to create a website that would reduce some of the confusion of the internet — a website that would act as a kind of catalogue of some of the sites that would be of use to the students.

Over time, as the website grew, staff and students found it very useful, and so they asked that it be available at home. The Trinity web-site manager arranged it so the intranet site was available as an external internet site. Once in the public eye, many teachers, librarians and students have found the site of enormous use in their own educational settings.

Using FrontPage, available at the school with Microsoft Office software, I created a website on the intranet reflective of the needs of the school, both staff and students. I asked for teachers to inform me of programs, topics and assignments at least a week before they

brought students to library and computer labs (sometimes it was five minutes before, I kid you not!) I searched for appropriate sites and added a webpage for each assignment, linking it to a general page for each subject area.

My main focus was on creating a site that organised the links coherently with easy navigation so that both student and teacher can find what they need quickly. I added site maps and a search facility to assist with this.

I tried to make the pages visually attractive without slowing them down too much. I used large fonts, few illustrations and a simple format. The priority is for each page to load quickly and provide information as easily as possible.

I try, in most instances, to include first Western Australian, then Australian sites so the information is relevant to the students. I try to include a wide range of information from many different points of view. This means the students can examine diverse opinions and begin to develop critical thinking skills.

Of course, the management and organisation of the web-site is not my only task in the library. My passion has not changed from my earlier role. I love helping find 'stuff' for students, whether it be a particular piece of legislation or recommending the latest fiction books or where to buy an out-of-the-way military book for a staff member.

Not only do I give specific instruction and teaching in the use of the website and its links in the library when classes come to use the resources and team-teach with teachers, I also give literature guidance for English classes. I try to adhere to the rule 'never touch



Students accessing the library website

the mouse!' so the student does the exploring and the learning. I believe in Jamie McKenzie's motto — 'guide on the side' — rather than the old 'sage on the stage' model.

I recently was lucky enough to win the whole school section of the Technology Integration Best Practice Awards, Western Australia — the World in My Classroom 2000. The time needed in this undertaking has been huge, and was only possible thanks to collegial help from the librarian community [OZTL_NET Australian teacher librarians' e-list http://www.csu.edu.au/cstl/oztl_net/ and WATLNET the WA school librarian's listserv <http://www.apea.asn.au/~wasla/>. Click on watlnet to subscribe], and a new listserv on Information Literacy [http://www.csu.edu.au/cstl/infolit_oz/intro.html], fantastic library assistants, supportive administration and IT staff, and help from the course I am doing at Curtin in Learning Technologies [<http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/dept/smec/gc/>] — a great course you can do as a graduate diploma, part of Masters or even PhD.

With a site now linking to over nine thousand sites my main difficulty is verifying the links and keeping them current (as well as adding new sections!). So, have a look, use it with your students, e-mail suggestions, and notify me of any dead links!

Rosemary Horton
(hortonr@trinity.wa.edu.au)

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