

Chapter 3

International Standards

This section includes a proposal for information literacy standards for the IFLA international library community. They are the core component of these guidelines. The standards can be adopted as they are, but, if possible, it would be preferable to adapt them to the local needs of organizations or countries.

Structure of the standards. The information literacy standards for becoming effective learners include three basic components: access, evaluation and use of information. These core goals are found in most of the standards created by library associations, such as the relevant contributions of AASL, ACRL, SCOUNL and the Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy, followed by the work of other countries, like Mexico, and individual educators (Byerly/Brodie, 1999; Kuhlthau, as cited in Stripling, 1999). The IFLA information literacy standards are based on these international experiences and contributions, and are fully described in the bibliography at the end of the document. The IFLA standards are grouped under the three basic IL components.

A. ACCESS. The user accesses information effectively and efficiently

1. Definition and articulation of the information need

Defines or recognizes the need for information
Decides to do something to find the information
Express and defines the information need
Initiates the search process

2. Location of information

Identifies and evaluates potential sources of information
Develops search strategies
Accesses the selected information sources
Selects and retrieves the located information

B. EVALUATION. The user evaluates information critically and competently

1. Assessment of information

Analyzes, examines, and extracts information
Generalizes and interprets information
Selects and *synthesizes* information
Evaluates accuracy and relevance of the retrieved information

2. Organization of information

Arranges and categorizes information

Groups and organizes the retrieved information
 Determines which is the best and most useful information

C. USE. The user applies/uses information accurately and creatively

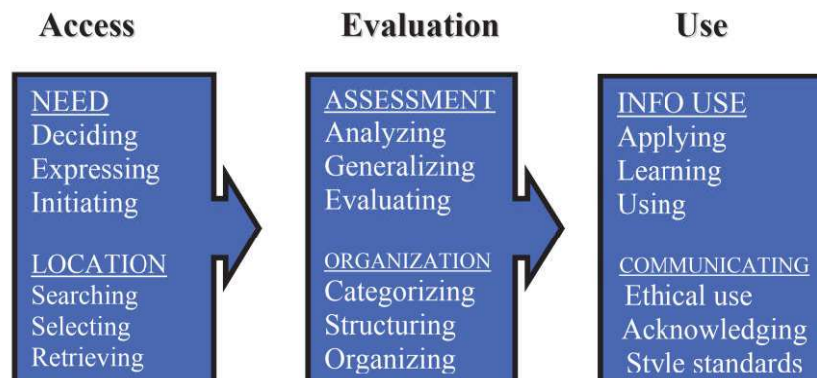
1. Use of information

Finds new ways to communicate, present and use information
 Applies the retrieved information
 Learns or internalizes information as personal knowledge
 Presents the information product

2. Communication and ethical use of information

Understands ethical use of information
 Respects the legal use of information
 Communicates the learning product with acknowledgement of intellectual property
 Uses the relevant acknowledgement style standards

Figure 3. Information Competencies



Information literacy. In summary, information literacy is assumed to be the knowledge and skills necessary to correctly identify information needed to perform a specific task or solve a problem, cost-efficiently search for information, organize or reorganize it, interpret and analyze it once it is found and retrieved (e.g. downloaded), evaluate the accuracy and reliability of the information, including ethically acknowledging the sources from whence it was obtained, communicate and present the results of analyzing and interpreting it to others if necessary, and then utilize it for achieving actions and results.

Avoid taking skills and choices for granted. It must be stressed that having an information need does not necessarily translate into the motivation to want to find the information (Case, 2002; Ford, 2004; Wilson, 1999; and Hepworth, 2004). In Walton's terms (personal communication, November, 2004), it is frequently assumed that individuals who locate information are rational human beings who will make the best choice – research indicates that this is not true. Furthermore, with particular reference to students, we should recognize

the power that the reading list has over their choices. In addition, the other routes students use to locate information, such as between students themselves, sharing what they have found or already know, should also be emphasized. In fact, ‘constructivist’ approaches (particularly in the form of group work) whether face-to-face or virtual, encourage these types of exchanges and should be recognized in these standards.

Finally, information literacy is also sometimes referred to as “critical thinking,” or “learning to learn,” and has been traditionally taught to students in school libraries and media centers and increasingly is being taught to adults already in the workforce, in both formal educational as well as commercial and continuing education training contexts and settings.

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